



**TOWNSHIP MANAGER  
COMMITTEE**

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June 16, 2008

Tuscarora Township Board  
Eric Jacobson, Supervisor  
Susan Fisher, Clerk  
Bobbie Balazovic, Treasurer  
Craig Waldron, Trustee  
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**Background**

Following the January 3, 2008 Township Board Meeting, a group of citizens met with the Board to discuss the restructuring of Township government to include the services of a Township Manager. Those present expressed views both for and against the concept. As a result of this meeting, a committee was formed to research the idea and report back to the board with their findings.

The group had some concerns. Specifically, over the past years our township has benefitted from a long-term supervisor and dedicated board members. However, with the retirement of the current supervisor, there was concern that a future supervisor or board member might have little or no government administration experience leading to possible confusion and lack of township leadership and direction. In addition there seemed to be a lack of communication and coordination with local service organizations. With the goal of ensuring continuity during changes of elected officials, the committee took on the task of researching whether Tuscarora Township would benefit from the professional services of a Township Manager working full time on behalf of the township.

The Committee met and assigned sub committees the task of 1. Interviewing the current board members to better understand the workload of the elected officials and 2. Interviewing officials from townships who have hired or considered a township manager to learn from their experiences.

**Results**

The two subcommittees have completed their research and provided their findings to the entire committee. It is the opinion of the committee that the results should be provided to the Tuscarora Township Board. Many on the committee believe there is much work yet to be done, specifically a job description with specific duties and of course the ability to fund such a position without eliminating current services or burdening the taxpayers with additional taxes. Attached is a copy of the findings from both sub committees. The Committee is prepared to present a summary of the findings at the Annual Meeting on the 24th of June. In addition the committee remains available to provide whatever assistance the board may request regarding this issue.

Sincerely,

Larry Renaud, Chair  
Tuscarora Township Manager Committee

# Township Manager

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June 9, 2008

Our Township Manager research subcommittee was charged with identifying a number of Townships that currently have managers to determine the following:

1. What prompted them to hire a Township Manager.
2. What were the “Pro’s and Con’s” of that decision.
3. How long did it take to implement the change.
4. How has the hiring of a manager impacted the Township.
5. Whether there were any other factors we should consider in making such a decision

The Townships we were able to obtain information from were: Delhi, Hartland, Howell, Independence, Lyon, Plainfield, as well as the City of St. Ignace. We also attempted to identify and contact any Townships that, after researching the possibility of hiring a manager, had decided against that move. Unfortunately, even the Michigan Townships Association had no way of identifying any such Townships, if there are any.

Of the Townships and Cities that did respond to our inquiries, we found that the move to hire a Township Manager was in some cases initiated by Township Board members who recognized their inability or lack of expertise to deal with such issues as grant research and application, and infrastructure project management. In other instances, the move to hire a manager was prompted by citizens groups wanting a more accountable, cost efficient, and pro-active local government.

The responses to our questions revealed several common themes. In response to our question, “what prompted your Township to hire a manager?”, most all of them found it necessary in order insure oversight and project management as they built their infrastructure such as sewers, water, streetscapes, etc. In most instances, their Board members either lacked the necessary management skills, or simply did not have the time required to research, develop, and oversee these projects.

Another common theme was the desire to coordinate a variety of Department heads, all answering to the manager in order to increase accountability and promote continuity of local government. Each Department head reporting to the Township Manager insures that the left hand knows what the right hand is doing, and decreases the possibility of projects or issues falling through the cracks. The ability of a manager to network and research the availability of various grants and matching funds for infrastructure projects was also important to most.

When asked about the “pro’s and con’s” of their decision to hire a Township Manager, they were all very positive about the results. Again, a common response was that they couldn’t have achieved the growth, the improvements, or the streamlining of their governments without a manager. In some responses, they cited actual cost savings when their departments were managed better as a result of the new accountability. In some cases, it was pointed out that their managers regularly attended State and County meetings on behalf of the Township rather than the elected officials “who may not be up to speed on a variety of projects or issues”. The only “con’s” or cautions that we received had to do with personalities and power. One Township was on their third manager in a short number of years, but that appeared to have more to do with them not clearly defining what they expected of their manager, as well as a less than adequate interview / hiring process. Another caution was the importance of the Township Board members acceptance of a manager. Some Board members were, at first, somewhat reluctant to relinquish some of their non-statutory roles. In addition, we were alerted to the possibility of Department heads objecting to a new chain of command.

When asked how long it took to implement the change to a Township Manager, the general time frame was approximately one year.

In response to our question, “how has a manager impacted your Township”, the responses were all very positive. A more efficient, effective and streamlined local government. More growth which has resulted in a larger tax base. Sewers, water, streetscapes, and other infrastructure getting completed. Citizens can see the change in their community and now have a “go-to person” they can approach with questions and concerns. Citizens no longer hostile toward the Twp. board.

Our last question was whether there are any other factors that we should consider in making the decision to hire a Township Manager. It was again pointed out that the Township Board members must support the manager, and understand that the manager reports directly to the Township Supervisor. The importance of a well defined job description and interview process were also pointed out as being key to a successful relationship between the Township Board and Township Manager.

One of the Townships that responded to our inquiries did hire a manager at one time to help them as their infrastructure grew, bringing in sewers, water, etc. Once those major projects were completed, they no longer felt the need for a manager and now operate without one. They were, however, quite satisfied with their decision to hire a manager in order to accomplish those projects.

In addition, there is another Township in the Metro Detroit area that chose not to hire a full time manager. They are under contract with a consulting firm that provides a person to assist them in dealing with their local projects and issues.

In summary, our research found that all of the Townships that we spoke with were at one time in a similar situation that Tuscarora Township is currently in. They wanted to bring in sewers, water, parks, streetscapes, etc. They wanted controlled growth to boost their tax base. They wanted a more pro-active, accountable, and efficient local government. In order to accomplish those goals, they all chose to hire a Township Manager. Every one of those Townships is satisfied that they made the right decision. Most indicated that they could not have accomplished what they have without their manager.

Submitted by: Henry J. Herpel



## **Assessing the Need for a Township Manager: A Workload Analysis**

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## Background

Over the last 5 years there has been much debate regarding the need for a full-time township manager in Tuscarora Township. Opinions are many and varied -- to date no data has been gathered to support a decision, one way or the other. The process to hire a township manager will require many decisions. The first being does sufficient workload exist to warrant a full time manager position?

Full time = 40 hours

A study was undertaken to better understand the workload of the Township Board (elected officials)

The duties and hours spent will provide a needed metric in determining sufficient workload to support a manager position

## Research Process

### Objective

To standardize and aggregate the workload of the Township Board

Do sufficient hours (duties) exist to support a full time township manager position?

What does the township board do and how much time do they spend doing it?

If sufficient hours exist to support a manager, how might duties be parsed and bundled to create a full time position?

It is not

A referendum on the current administration.

No judgments are being made about performance or accomplishments, past or present

### Methodology

Five (5) two-on-one interviews with the Board

Each Board member was interviewed by Dann Balesky (for continuity) with one other person (to aid in probing for clarity)

Guided interview focused on understanding roles, responsibilities and time commitment on a daily basis (guide appended)

No job shadowing was conducted to validate self reported workloads

### Analysis

Deconstructed workloads into statutory and non-statutory duties

Aggregated into yearly hours to measure full time equivalencies (FTE)

FTE = 2080 hours/year

## Summary Findings

A review of elected officials duties performed and hours spent falls 20% short of a full time position

≈ 32 hours

Other administrative duties exist that could be assigned to a manager position

HR function

Parks Commission

Grant leadership

Do the unassigned duties require eight (8) hours?

## Treasurer, Clerk and Trustee duties straightforward and specific...

Treasurer responsible for revenue

“...treasurer shall receive and take charge of money belonging to the township, or that is by law required to be paid into the township treasury, and shall pay over and account for the money...”

MCL 41.76

Clerk responsible for disbursements and records

“...the safekeeping of the records, books, and papers of the township in the manner required by law,...”

MCL 41.69

Trustees responsible for fiscal oversight

No specific MCL code

Residency requirement

## Deconstructed Workload:

### Township Clerk

#### Statutory - 15 hrs/week

- Maintains custody of all township records
- Maintains general ledger
- Prepares warrants for township checks
- Records and maintains township meeting minutes
- Keeps the township book of oaths
- Responsible for special meeting notices
- Publishes board meeting minutes
- Keeps voter registration file and conducts elections
- Keeps township ordinance book
- Prepares financial statements
- Delivers tax certificates to supervisor and county clerk by September 30
- Must appoint a deputy

#### Non-statutory - 15 hrs/week

- Arrange flag for veteran's in the cemeteries
  - Share sexton duties
  - Make burial arrangements if Lintz has not
  - Fireworks – all planning, letters, insurance, & follow through. Available day of and reschedule if necessary due to wind or rain
  - Negotiate Police contract
  - Managed a separate 457 for police
  - Cover for treasurer, if away
  - Point person on many community projects – road re-surfacing
  - Filled out CCRC paperwork (in timely fashion)
  - Prepared budget
  - Scheduled meeting room
  - Lock & unlock bldg
  - Proration of bldg expenses, workmen's comp., liability insurance
  - Benefit administration
- Kept meeting minutes & Marina meetings – sent out agendas

## **Deconstructed Workload: Township Treasurer**

### **Statutory 10.5 hrs/week**

- Collects real and personal property taxes (includes new road assessments)
- Keeps an account of township receipts (revenues) and expenditures
- Issues township checks
- Deposits township revenues in approved depositories
- Invests township funds in approved investment vehicles
- Collects delinquent personal property tax
- Responsible for jeopardy assessments in collecting property tax
- Collects mobile home specific tax
- Must appoint a deputy

### **Non-statutory (job related) – 4 hrs/wk**

- Conferences, eg MTA
- Spreadsheets
- Attends Economic Development meetings
- Continuing education – Economic Development class at NWMC

### **Non-statutory - 2 hrs/week**

- Website updates
- Township newsletter
- Developing a book of policies/procedures for elected officials, deputies & employees

## **Deconstructed Workload: Township Trustee**

### **Statutory 3 hrs/week**

- Township legislators, required to vote on all issues
- Responsible for township's fiduciary health
- Trustees are the "pure" legislators on the board and should have an understanding of all aspects of township board affairs.
- Other duties as assigned by board

### **Non-statutory 3 hrs/week**

- Committee appointments
- Meeting with citizens
- Promoting the township
- Personal projects

## Township Supervisor role today has a broad range of responsibilities

By law the Supervisor is responsible for

“... chief assessor...making of the rolls, the rolls shall be deposited with the supervisor.

The supervisor shall be secretary of the board of review.”

MCL 41.61

From a practical perspective the supervisors role has evolved well beyond statutory mandate.

De facto chief administrative officer

The day-to-day running of the township is not codified in the MCL.

Responsible for nearly all administrative activities within the township; statutory and otherwise.

Why?...

“(I do them because) Somebody has to do them. The day-to-day stuff takes up more time than the statutory stuff.”

## Deconstructed Workload:Supervisor Duties

### Statutory - 10 hrs/week

- Moderates board and annual meetings
- Secretary to Board of Review
- Chief Assessing Officer
- Township’s legal agent
- Must maintain records of supervisor’s office
- Responsible for tax allocation board budget (if applicable)
- Develops township budget
- Appoints some commission members
- May call special meetings
- May appoint a deputy

### Non-statutory - 10 hrs/week

- Maintenance troubleshooting
- Reviews all bids
- Cemetery sexton (\$300/yr)
- Oversees maintenance person shared with Parks Commission
- Go-to person for all miscellaneous township business
- Road Issues

### It must be noted...

Currently the aggregate duties of the supervisor, based on hours, do not constitute more work than one man can reasonably be expected to handle.

This does not include issues of community expectation, efficiency or effectiveness

Those issues should be considered in any decision-making process, but are beyond the scope of this investigation

**Aggregated duties of full Board (Statutory and Non-statutory)  
represents  $\approx$  2 full time employees**

<b>Hours per Week</b>		
	<b>Statutory</b>	<b>Non-Statutory</b>
Supervisor	10	15
Clerk	15	15
Treasurer	10.5	2
Trustee (2)	6	6
Total/week	41.5	38
Annualized Total	2158	1976
FTE	1.04	0.95

Note: Annualized Full Time = 2080 hours

**Hours Available to Support Manager Position: Calculation Criteria and Assumptions**

- Trustee hours taken out of the calculation
- Duties are oversight oriented not administrative
- No potential for delegation
- Only non-statutory hours were considered in the calculation of hours needed to justify a township manager
- While there may be precedent for delegating Administrative statutory duties, none was assumed in this process

## **Unassigned duties/Potential duties**

- Currently no one is specifically responsible for human resource issues
- Job descriptions, personnel files, reviews, benefits, policies and procedure files
- Manage the parks
- [Parks Commission outside the purview of this group]
- Organizational anomaly
- Elected Board
- Budget provided by Township
- Shared employee(s)
- No over oversight
- Grant Research
- Other?
- Does this equate to an additional 8 hours a week?  
adding Parks & shared employees oversight will easily add 8 hours

## **Township Manager Job Description - An Example of potential duties would equate to FT 40 hours + week**

- Oversee day-to-day management of the township
- Oversee enforcement of township ordinances and laws;
- Manage public improvement projects; oversee construction, repair, maintenance, lighting and cleaning of township property, including streets, sidewalks, bridges, and sewers;
- Manage construction, repair, maintenance of sidewalks, streets, bridges, sewers, pavements of all public buildings and other township property;
- Oversee operation of township utilities and maintenance of township property, tools and appliances;
- Oversee terms and conditions of township contracts;
- Attend township board meetings and take part in discussions, but without the right to vote;
- Serve as ex-officio member of all township board committees;
- Prepare and administer the annual budget under township board direction and apprise the township board of the township's financial status;
- Make recommendations to the township board as necessary;
- Administer all township departments;
- Serve as the purchasing agent for the township or delegate this responsibility to some other officer or employee;
- Conduct authorized sales of township personal property;
- Serve as personnel director or delegate this duty to some other officer or employee,
- Perform any other duties delegated to him/her which are not assigned to some other official

## Conclusions

Can a township manager position be justified – yes

Based on these data, it would appear sufficient workload exists to create a full-time position

However, current workloads do not appear too much for any one person to handle

## Four Options

### 1. Keep things as they are

Given the Board maintains its current workload – statutory and non-statutory

No evidence to suggest taxpayers are unhappy

### 2. Expand the role of the deputy

There is precedent, provided for by statute, fits within existing governmental structure

Reports to Supervisor not the Board

Some or all of the duties in the pro forma job description could be assigned on trial basis – 1 year?

### 3. Create a manager position

Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer, and Trustees will have to relinquish some non statutory duties.

Board has to create a job description

Board will need to determine how to fund position within current budget

Board will need to hire and implement the position.

### 4. Become a charter township

Tuscarora qualifies

Flexibility in organizational structure and enhanced tax authority (to fund position)

Expanded board – (more Trustees with no changes to Clerk or Treasurer)

The township board has the power to appoint a township superintendent and delegate to him any or all duties required to administer the day-to-day operation of the township

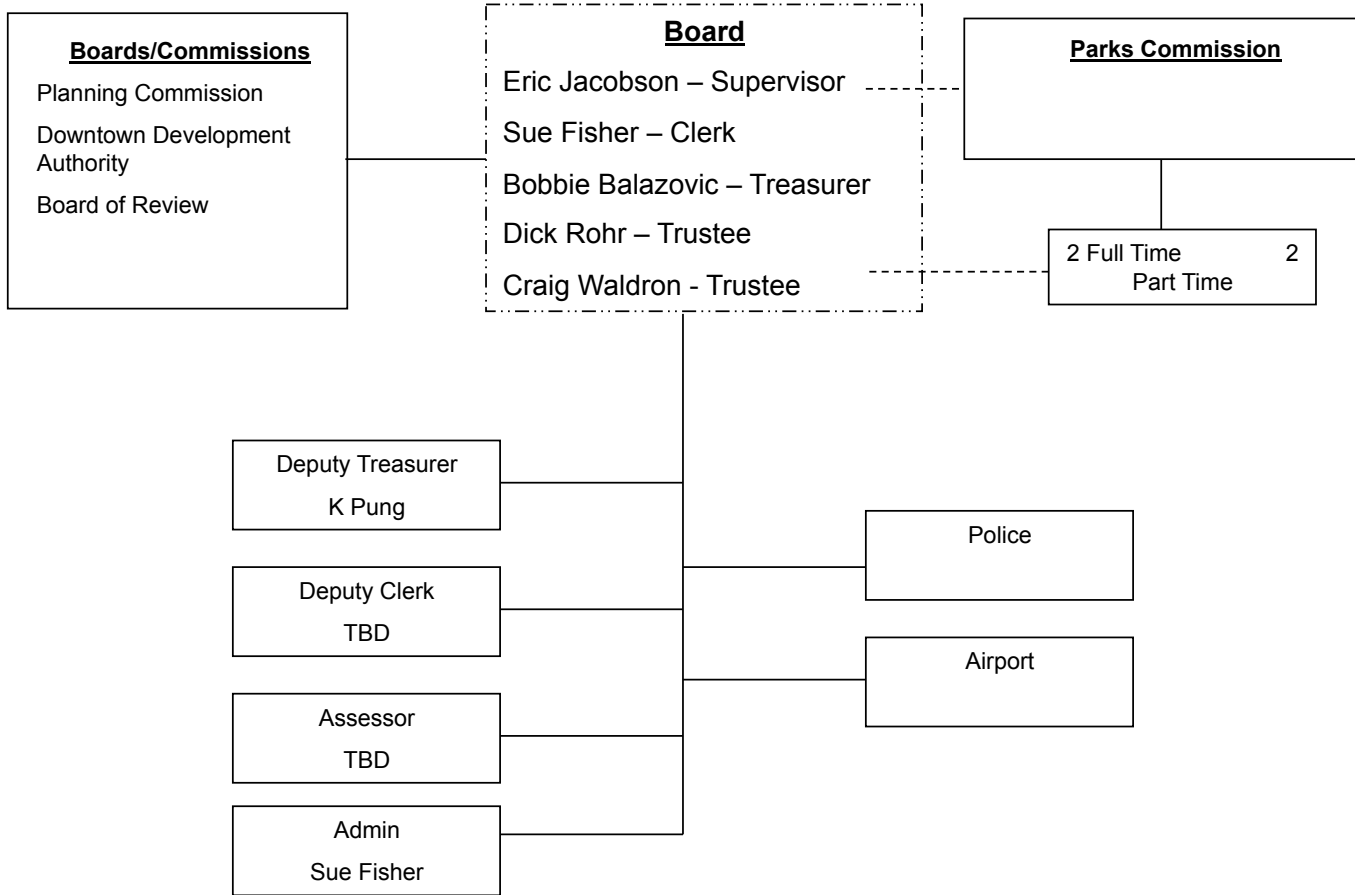
## Other Considerations ...

- Does the electorate want or desire another layer of Government?
- Is it their decision?
- No guarantee a manager will produce desired outcomes
- Greater effectiveness, efficiency or continuity
- Change may necessitate modifying structure of township government
- E.g. Parks Commission

## Interview Guide for Tuscarora Township Elected Officers

1. Please explain the statutory duties you perform?
2. How many hours a day/week do you work fulfilling these statutory duties?
3. In addition to your statutory duties, are there other duties you perform?
4. Please explain what they are and why you perform them, as opposed to someone else.
5. Are any of those duties Board delegated/mandated/appointed?
6. How many hours a day/week are needed to perform these additional duties?
7. Could any of these additional job responsibilities be delegated to another person/position?
8. If yes, who?
9. If not, why not?
10. What are the duties of the Township Administrative Assistant?
11. Please Explain
12. Should this be part-time or full-time?
13. What could Board Members and/or the Administrative Assistant do differently to help the township run more smoothly?
14. There is statutory provision for a Deputy Supervisor, is one currently on staff?
15. If yes, what are that persons duties?
16. If not, what criterion determines the need for a Deputy Supervisor?
17. What other township paid positions are there and who do they report to?
18. Please explain their general responsibilities?
19. How many employees are paid by the Township?
20. Is township government operating as efficiently as it could? What could/can be done to make it more efficient?
21. Please explain
22. Are there tasks/responsibilities which need to be done by the Township Board which are not being done?
23. Are you aware of job responsibilities which overlap or are redundant?
24. Do you feel Tuscarora Twp's process for capturing grant money (Federal, State, County, and Private) is satisfactory?
25. If not, what can or needs to be done to make it more effective?
26. The township has grown over 35% in the last 10 years, has this growth put increased pressure on the delivery of township services?
27. Yes or no. If yes, what areas of township government are feeling the most pressure from this growth?
28. How do you propose to cope or deal with the growing needs of the township assuming this growth continues?
29. Is there anything you would like to add to this discussion?

# Tuscarora Township Org Chart



**Office Administrator (Part time)  
Job Description Currently Performed by Clerk**

9:30 – 1:30 M-Th (4:30 F) – 22 hrs/week

Provide investment research and make recommendations

Assist in budget preparation

General phone answering

Handle walk-in traffic

Handle special mailings

General typing as needed

Handle incoming correspondence

Pick up and distribute mail

Make reservations for the meeting room

**Treasurer**

**41.77 Township treasurer; duties generally.**

Sec. 76.

The township treasurer shall receive and take charge of money belonging to the township, or that is by law required to be paid into the township treasury, and shall pay over and account for the money, according to the order of the township board, or the authorized officers of the township.

**Supervisor**

**41.61 Supervisor as chief assessor; additional assessors; certification; depositing rolls with supervisor; supervisor as secretary of board of review; deputy township supervisor.**

Sec. 61.

(1) The supervisor of each township is the chief assessor of the township. The township board may provide for the appointment of additional assessors. If the supervisor is not certified at the proper level, the township board shall provide for the appointment of properly certified assessors. The assessors so appointed shall receive compensation allowed by the township board. If assessors are appointed pursuant to this section, the supervisor shall be the chief assessing officer and the assessors shall be subordinate to the supervisor. Upon completion of the assessment and the making of the rolls, the rolls shall be deposited with the supervisor. The supervisor shall be secretary of the board of review.

(2) The township supervisor may appoint a deputy township supervisor, who shall serve at the pleasure of the supervisor. The deputy shall take an oath of office and file the oath with the township clerk. In case of the absence, sickness, death, or other disability of the supervisor, the deputy shall possess the powers and perform the duties of the supervisor, except the deputy shall not have a vote on the township board. The deputy shall be paid by salary or otherwise as the township board determines appropriate. With the approval of the supervisor, the deputy may assist the supervisor in the performance of the supervisor's duties at any additional times agreed upon between the township board and the supervisor, except the deputy shall not have a vote on the township board.

The statute does not define any duties of a "personnel director."

## Clerk

### **41.69 Township clerk; bond; deputy.**

Sec. 69.

Each township clerk, within the time limited for filing the oath of office and before entering upon the duties of the office, shall give a bond to the township in the sum and with sureties that the township board requires and approves, conditioned for the faithful discharge of the duties of the office according to law, including the safekeeping of the records, books, and papers of the township in the manner required by law, and for their delivery on demand to the township clerk's successor in office. The bond shall be filed in the office of the supervisor. The township clerk shall appoint a deputy, who shall serve at the pleasure of the clerk. The deputy shall take an oath of office and file the oath with the clerk. In case of the absence, sickness, death, or other disability of the clerk, the deputy shall possess the powers and perform the duties of the clerk, except the deputy shall not have a vote on the township board. The deputy shall be paid by salary or otherwise as the township board determines. With the approval of the township clerk, the deputy may assist the township clerk in the performance of the township clerk's duties at any additional times agreed upon between the board and the clerk, except the deputy shall not have a vote on the township board.

## Assessor

### **41.61 Supervisor as chief assessor; additional assessors; certification; depositing rolls with supervisor; supervisor as secretary of board of review; deputy township supervisor.**

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## Deputy

### **MCL 41.61**

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