

January Report

This month saw the announcement of the Federal Energy Grant award which will go toward a sidewalk along Saginaw Street, discounts on building permits for new houses using energy star equipment and a pilot project plan for plug-in chargers for electric and hybrid vehicles and buses. Magna Electronics also presented an overview of the global importance of the corporation and reaffirmed its promise of 525 jobs within the next five years

Unfortunately, it also brought about more reductions in staff with the Township Board's decision to vacate the position of Township Engineer. Mr. Buell's position was added to the twelve positions that had already been removed from last year's staffing level, not including the four full time police dispatchers that were replaced with part-time employees or the drastic cut back in hours and personnel in building inspectors and code enforcement personnel. This also took into consideration that the difference between the adopted budget of 2009 and the adopted budget of 2010 amounted to a cut of \$793,027.00

This was a tough decision since, although the Township Board recognized the lack of need for an in-house engineer, Mr. Buell had been very successful in bringing home-owners together in the Homeowner's Council and making them feel like they had a partnership with the government in their community. I want all of those who responded to Mr. Buell's call (particularly those in the Homeowner's Association) to come to the Thursday night Township Board meeting and support him-- that we did listen and realize the importance of the Association and will continue the communication that Roger provided with the Homeowners. However, being the liaison between the township offices and the homeowners does not require a certified engineer. The Township Board decided to exercise a clause in Mr. Buell's contract that allowed either party to give a 30 day notice "without cause" that they did not wish to continue the contract. However, under the terms of the contract, the engineer would receive severance pay for the time that elapsed until the contract ended. The Township Board felt that this would give Mr. Buell the best opportunity to find another job, rather than wait until April and let him go without wages or benefits.

Although, knee replacement surgery on January 11th did slow me down a little I did manage to attend a meeting with Rowe, Inc. on January 5th, and the Joint City/ Township meeting on Act 57 as well as a late arrival and "best wishes" at the opening of Wild Spurs at the Jewel. Thursday was the Technical Advisory Committee for the Metropolitan Planning Commission and Friday I attended a

meeting in Detroit. On Saturday, I attended a Court of Honor as Brian Kilhr received his Eagle Scout Award.

Monday was the operation and Tuesday evening the Committee of the Whole. I skipped the meeting on the Freight Connectivity Project on Wednesday but Mike Deem attended and filled us in on the meeting. On the 14th, I met with Mr. Dubay, along with others for a pre-arbitration meeting. The 19th was Roads and Bridges and the 20th was the Supervisors' breakfast and the Water and Waste monthly meeting. Thursday, Mr. Dunnill, Mrs. Lane and I met with Mr. Rogers regarding plans for this year's mosquito abatement projects. On Monday, I met with the Historic Commission as they continued their plans for placing the Perry Homestead and cemetery on the state and federal historic registers and on registration as a Certified Local Government for historic purposes. On Tuesday, I attended a preconference seminar on Grant Writing at the DeVos Center in Grand Rapids along with Maria Hobson who is working with me on grants. I then attended the annual MTA conference in Grand Rapids (at my own expense) Wednesday and Thursday returning for the Thursday night Township Board meeting where I found that our Assessor, Peggy Nolde was taking on the job of County Equalization Director. After working with Peggy for 20 some years, and Depending on her expertise, this was a real shock. Reports on the MTA conference and the various meetings such as Water and Waste, Road Commission, etc. are available in my office and I will be giving a summary report on them at the Homeowners Association Meeting on February 17th. That's it for January.