

Publication of the Ohio Township Association Risk Management Authority

“Leading the Way for Ohio Townships”



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UPDATE

Above photo courtesy of Jefferson Township, Clinton County.

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2017

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Equipment Sharing - Are You Aware of the Liability and Legal Issues?

By Bob Gehring, Esq.

The State of Ohio and its agencies have developed and proposed a number of initiatives designed to encourage local governments to share services. The shared services concept is not new. Local governments have long “shared” services, personnel and equipment. But informal and formal shared services programs often do not take into account potential liability issues. Coverage for liability or property damage may not even be discussed in the context of a shared services arrangement.

In 2016, the Ohio legislature enacted R.C. §2711.44 and §2743.31. R.C. §2743.31 provides that if a state agency enters into a “shared equipment service agreement” with a political subdivision, the borrowing state agency may assume potential liability for personal injury or property damage arising out of the use of lender’s equipment. Similarly, R.C. §2744.11 provides that a borrowing political subdivision may assume liability while using the equipment of a state agency or political subdivision.

Example: Township A has a fire department and one of its fire engines will be out of service for repairs for three months. Fire District B has an extra fire engine that is not being used and is agreeable to lending it to Township A. Township A and Fire District B may agree that Township A assumes all liability for personal injury and property damage arising out of the use of Fire District B’s fire engine for those three months.

Using the above example, what if neither Township A nor Fire District B provided notice to liability or property coverage carriers that they had entered into an agreement for the fire engine to be used on a temporary basis by Township A? What if the fire



Cont'd on pg. 2

Routing

(Name)



Endorsed by the
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Association

Member Profile: Pike Township, Fulton County

Pike Township is a primarily rural, agricultural area located in northern Ohio, just 30 minutes west of Toledo, and is home to approximately 1,900 residents.

Mr. Carl Buehrer has a long history with Pike Township, reaching back to when he and his wife built their home in Pike Township. Mr. Buehrer has served as a township trustee since 1991. His additional leadership roles include President of the Fulton County Historical Society, and he recently retired from his service with the Fulton County Fair Board.

“Things have changed in the years since I was first elected trustee,” Mr. Buehrer observed. “One of the most significant changes is our costs have more than doubled. Increasing costs are a big challenge. We have lost income due to cuts in state and federal

funding. Despite the challenges, we have remained financially sound with no tax levies, except for fire. We contract with three fire departments.”

Mr. Buehrer continued, “One thing that has helped to manage costs and keep us fiscally sound is our OTARMA Membership. The advice we receive is always helpful. It does not matter whether your township is rural or urban, large or small; each member township is treated with the same respect. Year after year, when we gather bids for our insurance – OTARMA continues to win.”

“Also, the commitment and teamwork demonstrated by our trustees and fiscal officer helps our township continue to succeed,” Mr. Buehrer commented. “We have always had a very good working relationship with all of the trustees that have served our township.



With 28 miles of roads, two cemeteries, and one employee, we receive many compliments from our citizens about the services that they receive. This past year, we added 1,500 square feet onto the township building for additional office space and storage.”

Thank you, Pike Township, for choosing OTARMA Membership. It has been an honor to serve alongside you for the past 30 years, and we look forward to many more years working together.

If your township is not yet an OTARMA Member and you would like to learn more about OTARMA, please call (800) 748-0554 and ask to speak with an OTARMA Representative.

OTARMA Board Election Results

The OTARMA Board election results were announced at the OTARMA Annual Meeting on Friday, January 27, during the Ohio Township Association (OTA) Winter Conference and Trade Show in Columbus, Ohio, at which time Ms.

Marsha Funk and Mr. Nick Schwab retained their positions on the Board of Directors. Thank you, OTARMA Members, for voting and making this important leadership decision.



Ms. Marsha Funk

Ms. Funk is the Fiscal Officer for Brownhelm Township, Lorain County, an elected position she has held for 20 years. Additionally, Ms. Funk has served on the OTARMA Board of Directors for the past 13 years. “It has been my sincere pleasure to serve on the Board. OTARMA has been successful because of the expertise of our administrator and the conservative directives of the OTARMA Board of Directors. I want OTARMA to continue providing the broadest of coverages, professional claims experiences, and an active loss control program. I will continue the Board’s conservative investment policies and to keep OTARMA financially strong,” commented Ms. Funk.



Mr. Nick Schwab

For more than 30 years, Mr. Schwab has served as a Reily Township Trustee in Butler County. In addition to his trustee responsibilities and working as a full-time farmer, Mr. Schwab has been an active member on the OTARMA Board of Directors for the past eight years. “As an OTARMA Board Member, my first priority is to ensure financial security with broad property and liability coverage specifically designed for Ohio Townships. We need to maintain enough resources to retain our AAA financial stability rating with Demotech. Additionally, I will continue to encourage coverage enhancements designed to benefit small, as well as large, townships,” stated Mr. Schwab.

2017 Ohio Township Association Winter Conference and Trade Show

By Jim DeLucas, OTARMA Representative

More than 3,000 attendees gathered at the Greater Columbus Convention Center, January 25-27, 2017, for the annual Ohio Township Association (OTA) Winter Conference and Trade Show. The conference welcomed township trustees, fiscal officers, employees, administrators, road and cemetery superintendents, zoning officials and legal counsel, as well as companies and organizations serving townships.



Highlights of the conference included more than 90 educational workshops, a trade show with more than 150 vendors, and events for networking. Wednesday's schedule included a public records training from the Auditor of State's office.

On Thursday morning, the general session welcomed remarks by Matt DeTemple, OTA Executive Director. The session featured a presentation on overcoming challenges by Todd Huston, who survived a boating accident at age 14 which resulted in a leg amputation. Mr. Huston went on to become the first disabled person to break an able-body world record in sports by climbing to the highest elevations of all 50 U.S. states with a single leg.

That evening, guests were invited by Burnham & Flower Insurance Group, OTARMA Marketer, to enjoy a casino night and try their hand at blackjack or poker.

The luncheon on Friday welcomed keynote speaker Judson Laipply, whose presentation included his personal narrative, crowd participation, and laughter, which invited conference attendees to recognize how to let go of things beyond their control, and focus on the things they can change. The conference

concluded with the general session on Saturday morning.

We extend our gratitude to Matt DeTemple, OTA Executive Director, Heidi Fought, Director of Governmental Affairs, Elizabeth Antjas, Meetings & Events Coordinator, Heather Whisman, Administrative Assistant, and Angela Stevenson, Bookkeeper, for organizing another exceptional conference. We recognize and appreciate the amount of work it takes to successfully host a statewide gathering of this magnitude.

Thank you to those who were able to attend the conference. If you were not able to join us this year, we hope you can make plans to attend January 31-February 3, 2018, in Columbus. We look forward to seeing everyone next year.

“Sincere thanks for the \$500 MORE Grant! We will use the funds to pay registration fees for the OTA Annual Conference. We consistently look for outside funding to cover some of our expenses and appreciate this award. We find the OTA Annual Conference an outstanding learning experience, not only for our trustees and fiscal officer, but for others on our staff who have gained useful knowledge and made contacts that have provided the hands-on lessons that are critical in small operations. We are delighted to be a part of the OTARMA Family.”

Traci Dietrich, Administrative Assistant, Olmstead Township, Cuyahoga County

“On behalf of Sutton Township, we would like to thank OTARMA for making the MORE Grant funds available to member townships. We purchased a fireproof file cabinet with the MORE Grant money and it is a great enhancement to the office area of Sutton Township.”

Trustees Larry C. Smith, Jerry Hayman, and Charles I. Mugrage; and Jo Ann Crisp, Fiscal Officer, Sutton Township, Meigs County

“We would like to thank you and OTARMA for this excellent program that helps township communities address major safety and security concerns.”

Frederick Hanley, Trustee Chairman, Hubbard Township, Trumbull County



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If your contact information needs to be updated or if you want to receive newsletters electronically, please contact the OTARMA Service Center at (800) 748-0554, ext. 3136.

OTARMA Welcomes New Member

Pierce Township, Clermont County

“In January, we welcomed Pierce Township to OTARMA. The township selected OTARMA for service, coverage and cost savings,” commented Ed Barber, OTARMA Representative.

Founded in 1853, Pierce Township encompasses 23.5 square miles located in the southwest corner of Clermont County, Ohio. Located just 20 minutes from downtown Cincinnati, Ohio, Pierce’s 13,000+ residents enjoy countryside charm comfortably blended within neighborhoods.

Pierce residents and visitors can choose from a variety of family-oriented recreational options; from boating on the



Ohio River, playing golf on one of three highly respected courses, to hiking in our Nature Park and much more. Families who live in Pierce value its rural atmosphere, schools, and professional public services with easy access to shopping, arts, entertainment, and professional sports.

Government services are provided by a three-person board of trustees and a fiscal officer, each elected by Pierce residents to staggered four-year terms. Pierce Township provides professional full-time Police, Fire, Office of Planning, Zoning, and Community Development, Development Facilitation and Service Department services.

Reminder for OTARMA Member Fire Departments: List Your Turnout Gear

Did you know that OTARMA Member fire departments are covered under the township’s general liability coverage as owned premises, subject to agreement terms, conditions, and exclusions?



values have been properly listed on your property schedule in order that coverage to replace or repair this critical equipment is available should a loss occur.

What About Property Coverage? What is Included?

Most often, we think about structures – buildings. Other items to consider are Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including turnout gear. Be sure that adequate and accurate

Example: 20 sets of turnout gear at \$5,000 each equals \$100,000 total.

If you are not sure that these items are listed or if you would like to add coverage, call Wendy French, OTARMA Customer Service Representative, at (888) 748-7966, ext. 3136.

Please Submit Photos for the 2018 OTARMA Calendar

We are now accepting photos to be considered for publication in the 2018 OTARMA Calendar. This is a great opportunity to showcase your scenic township. Photos of people enjoying activities in your township are desired.

Please remember that high-resolution photos work best.

Please visit the OTARMA Website, www.OTARMA.org, and click on Photo Submission on the Home Page for submission guidelines. A signed release must accompany your photo submission. Submit photos to otarma@bfgroup.com no later than September 15, 2017, to be considered for the 2018 OTARMA Calendar!