



Legislative Report

By Taylor Anderson

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NEW LAWS CAN COME in many different shapes and sizes. Some are well liked, others despised and most seem to fit somewhere in between. New laws can often be confusing with convoluted language or exactly clear and written in a straight forward manner. Yet, for all of the many differences they can have, new laws generally seem to share one thing in common no matter what shape or size they arrive; they all generate questions.

SB 2923 (now Public Act 100-0983), which require Township Clerks to “attest” all township payments, is no exception to this rule as many questions have been raised regarding this new law. Last month’s *Township Perspective* had a very good piece detailing the facets of the new public act and answering many questions. If you have not looked at the article, it is highly suggested you do so.

It is not strange that Public Act 100-0983 receives both attention and questions, in fact it’s quite normal. It is a departure from how business has been done at the Township level and change of this kind can feel unnatural at first. However, this change is not as dras-

tic as it might seem at first glance. Townships Clerks already “attest” documents in their role as clerk for things like ordinances, annual levies and other essential official documents that are part of the Township record. Secondly, many institutions consider having two ‘signatures’ to be a matter of best practices. Preventing any potential fraud or abuse. Having the Township Clerk “attest” payments, ensures that at least two elected officials will have to verify every payment out of the Townships coffers. In an age of growing desire for transparency and in a time where residents are demanding increased levels of accountability, having two pairs of eyes on every payment is not just a best practice but also seems like good sense.

None of which means that the processes used before by Townships wasn’t transparent or didn’t hold elected officials accountable to their residents. Several Townships have reached out and detailed their process. As each was described it became clear that many Townships operated in a manner that no one could hope to find fault with. But there is a difference between good practice and law, and this measure aims to safeguards

Townships and taxpayers alike. As well as demonstrates a continued commitment to transparency, accountability, and good government practices by Township government. As is the case with any new law, TOI encourages you to speak with your legal counsel regarding any impacts or changes you may have questions about.



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