



## **STATE OF THE TOWNSHIP ADDRESS**

**Tuesday, April 12, 2011**

**Good Evening Electors of Evanston Township,**

**It is my pleasure to continue to serve you as the Supervisor for the Township of Evanston. In this elected position, I serve in the capacity as Treasurer for both the Town and General Assistance and as the Chief Administrator for the General Assistance Program as defined by the Illinois statutes. I am here to inform you that the Township of Evanston continues to be in sound fiscal health. We do not have a deficit and nor is the Township projected to have a deficit in the**

**upcoming 2011-12 fiscal year. Also, I am not planning to propose an increase in the property tax levied by the Township of Evanston to the Trustees of Evanston Township that will is hoped to be completed and sent to them at the end of this week. The Township for its combined Town Fund and General Assistance found is about \$.05 per \$100 equalized assessed value . This equates to about .77% of your overall tax bill.**

**This is same rate that it has been since 2007 and lower than the rate of 2004 and 2005 which was at .056 and .055.**

**Township government is tax capped. This means that we cannot increase our tax base over 5% or whatever the Consumer price Index is and it must be the lower amount. A further budget implication of being tax capped, means that we must provide our mandated services within the scope of the money that we have available. If there is not enough revenue, we can not simply raise your taxes. We must go to you in the form of a referendum. Township government is “Government for and by the people”. As President Abraham Lincoln said, and I quote, “ Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the Earth” end of quote.**

**Governments at all levels are facing renewed challenges to manage public finances more effectively. Declining or stagnant economic conditions can reduce tax revenues while increasing demands for certain services. We also know that no matter how dynamically the economy develops and expands, it does not eliminate all poverty and need.**

**It is recommended financial practice for governments to budget for revenues to exceed expenditures by an amount adequate to meet unexpected expenses. Maintaining an adequate fund balance cushions the township from short-term financial difficulties and provides flexibility to meet a sudden decrease in revenues or increase in expenditures. Evanston Township has positioned itself at this time to use the fund balance to protect against unanticipated expenses, non receipt of anticipated revenue to meet budgeted expenditures and not increase its portion of the tax bill.**

**Until 1863 Evanston was administered under a loose form of township and county government. In that year, the new town was officially incorporated and five trustees were elected. In 1903, city and township**

**consolidated. No township meeting took place from 1892 (date of Evanston's incorporation as a city) until July 1936. The purpose of the meeting was to provide money by taxation for the administration of General Assistance, a function assigned by Illinois law to township rather than city governments.**

**Township Government continues to be the oldest form of government in Illinois. The functions and duties of the Township is outlined in various parts of the Illinois State statutes. State statutes which are written to maintain and safeguard the purpose and the intent of the form of government.**

**Local governments have specific geographical areas of responsibility. Two local governments do not administer refuse pickup for the same Customers. Nor do two separate units of government maintain the same traffic signal. Let's be mindful of the fact that we as electors should never equate the number of governments with duplication. If you do not, then you will fail to recognize that duplication cannot occur where are specific, exclusive geographical areas of service.**

**Because of the coterminous boundaries of the Township of Evanston**

**and the City of Evanston, we have the elected Alderman of the City of Evanston who also serve as the Township of Evanston Trustees.**

**However, their functions are different in the Township.**

**The Illinois Statues define what a Township can and cannot do. Under Illinois law the Township of Evanston has two elected officials – The**

**Township Supervisor and the Township Assessor. Each of these officials have separate and distinct duties as defined by the statues.**

**Our General Assistance Administrative expenses are in line with other Townships. The services that are provided to our clients are labor intensive and rooted in bureaucratic paperwork that consumes time.**

**Also, it should be noted that the General Assistance staff performs all of the administrative functions for the Township.**

**The Township does not have staff or programs. The Town Fund support services through financial grants.**

**The Township of Evanston was in a financial position to meet all of its statutory mandates for General Assistance. This includes the general assistance grants, employment related activities and medical care. It**

**remains in a position to meet the statutory mandates for General Assistance for the upcoming 2010-2011 fiscal year.**

**Because of the intense case management provided by the staff, the Township General Assistance Office was able to receive back over \$20,000.00 in SSI reimbursements and recoup medical payments thereby decreasing projected medical related expenses from \$75,000.00 to \$35,000.00.**

**Since my election in 2001, I have consistently strived to learn and carry out the responsibilities of my office as Supervisor. These responsibilities pertain to the managing the financial and day-to-day activities of the Township- including Treasurer of all town funds (Town and General Assistance) and supervisor of the General Assistance Program.**

**As Treasurer, I continue to have a fiduciary responsibility to try and ensure that the funds are handled in a manner that will avoid misuse. I must submit a balanced budget to the Trustees for approval. I want to try and ensure that both the Town and General Assistance funds have adequate operating capital.**

**As Supervisor of the General Assistance Office, I have sole**

**responsibility for administering the program according to the Illinois Public Aid Code.**

**While the Township and the City of Evanston has coterminous boundaries, we must all heed the fact that the Township is a separate entity of government. As an entity of government it has separate statutory taxing powers. The budget for projected revenue is governed by tax caps.**

**The township's powers are defined by the State statues. We as a Township can only provide services for those things that are explicitly defined in the statues. While the viability of the continued role of township government is questioned, those of us who work with townships and those who receive services for them have no doubt about their importance.**

**Unlike cities and counties, which also have income and sales taxes available, townships rely on property taxes to fund services.**

**Townships are required to provide General Assistance. There is always a constant challenge to provide services efficiently and maintain the**

**visibility of the Township.**

**Proper stewardship of tax dollars is and always will be an important responsibility. Please know that there are some statutory guidelines that govern how the dollars are spent.**

**Governments at all levels are continuing face renewed challenges to manage public finances more effectively. Declining or stagnant economic conditions can reduce tax revenues while increasing demands for certain services.**

**My role as Supervisor as defined by the statutes continues to be two-fold: to act as the Treasurer of all funds received for the township and to administer a general assistance program.**

**The Town of the City of Evanston has two funds : a town and a general assistance fund. The Town fund pays for the expenses of the Assessor's Office, the Supervisor's Office (which is mainly the accounting and auditing of Township funds), Community Action Programs and Community Purchased Services. During the past fiscal year, the Town Fund was able to fund \$300,000 in Community Purchased Service Agreements in conjunction with the City of Evanston Mental Health**

**Board and \$28,000 in Community Action Programs that included \$15,000 for the Summer Youth Employment Program and \$5000 for the Evanston Youth Summit.**

**The Township was able to do this because of its Fund Balance. The Fund Balance is anticipated to also be able to assist in the 2010-2011 Year. It should be noted, that once this fund balance is exhausted, the Township will not be able to maintain this level of support to the Community Purchased Services. However, the Township does remain committed to trying to assist.**

**From the General Assistance Fund, over \$400,000 in client related GA payments and Emergency Assistance payments.**

**General assistance, while labeled as a Welfare Program, is not centered on welfare, it focuses on WORK for those who are capable and may need additional assistance. Work provides independence and income, but also provides dignity and an opportunity for growth in people's lives. For those unable to Work, staff works diligently to try and help them navigate the system to secure SSI and Social Security Disability payments. Currently have an average caseload of 90.**

**As this township fiscal year ends as of March 31<sup>st</sup> and a new one began as of April 1<sup>st</sup>, it is once again a time when the township board can begin to look into the future and to see the township not as it is---but as it can become. The township took steps during this past fiscal year to see where and how its fund balance funds could be used to support needed services to Township residents who were not eligible for the General Assistance Program or Emergency Assistance programs.**

**A former President of the Township Officials of Illinois once stated The greatness of townships is not where they stand, but in what direction they are moving. We must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it- but sail we must, and not drift, nor lie at anchor. We must prepare to refresh our motivation, direction, and service to our residents.**

**Township government was created to make problems become opportunities and improve the quality of life of our people. We need to maintain a positive attitude as a powerful force. We must develop a team with the township board versus being a group of individuals. We must reach out and listen to our residents regarding their needs and concerns. ACTION IS ALWAYS BETTER THAN**

**REACTION. AN AUDACITY TO HOPE- “A New Look at the Township”.**

**Township government is a source of stability in a person’s life that has no other possible source of economic support. But being a source of stability does not mean townships are stagnant or stuck in the past.**

**Townships continue to evolve and adapt to changes in the communities in which they serve. We make sure that we maximize the dollars during good times and bad times so that vital township services continue to be provided. Technological innovations are being put to use to improve service delivery and provide more information to citizens. We continue to look for ways to maximize the dollars that we receive to deliver a needy service and to possible address other issues. We continue to provide services as efficiently and cost effectively as possible.**

**The Township remains an integral part of the community, we provide services that directly impact the quality of life of our most economically needed, we provide efficient, high levels of service and seek to find innovative, low cost ways to solve problems and deliver services.**

**Township government remains “ a government for the people”. An obligation to help meet the needs of the “needy” remains steadfast as**

**outlined by the statues.**

**I pledge to continue to work for the good of the TOWNSHIP of  
EVANSTON and the statutory requirements of the Township of  
Evanston.**

**I hold steadfast to the views of Mother Teresa:**

People are often unreasonable, illogical and self centered;  
Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives;  
Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies;  
Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you;  
Be honest and frank anyway.

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight;  
Build anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous;  
Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;  
Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;  
Give the world the best you've got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis, It was never between you and them anyway.

**Township government is not a perfect government. In fact, no  
government is perfect. I believe in the government that I was elected to  
serve as Township Supervisor.**

**Our job never ends in Township Government. We must constantly be**

**seeking new ways and methods to meet our obligations. Author, John Steinbeck said, “We want the facts to fit the preconceptions. When they don’t fit, it’s easier to ignore the facts than to change the preconceptions. We can change preconceptions if we join in partnership with others and others must join in partnership with us to make change for the better a reality for all Evanston Electors. As Andy Warhol stated: “ If you don’t like something change it, If you can not change it, change your attitude.” All of us must the change agent for positive perceptions of Township Government and how it can work to affect change for those it seeks to help.**

**I would like to thank my staff at the Township General Assistance Office for continuing to work with me to embrace “change”.**

**Yes, I can and will, continue to carry out the duties of the office of the Township Supervisor of the Town of the City of Evanston. I look forward to embracing the 2010-2011 Township fiscal year.**

**Thank you,  
Patricia A. Vance  
Township Supervisor**

**Thank you,**

*Patricia A. Vance*  
*Township Supervisor of Evanston*