

Fenton Township Supervisor - Vince Lorraine



Charter Township Supervisor's Responsibilities

The supervisor is frequently the first official contacted about any township business or complaint and is often perceived as the township spokesperson. It must be realized, however, that the authority of the supervisor is limited to that provided by statute or delegated by the township board.

Meeting Responsibilities

When present, the supervisor is the moderator of any township meeting, with the authority to place a person under oath on any statement made in his or her official capacity as supervisor. S/he also has the right and duty to regulate the proceedings of any meeting, including deciding questions of order, making declaration of votes cast, granting authority to persons to speak at the meeting and silencing those who may be out of order or disrupting the meeting (MCL 41.97-41.99).

As a member of the township board, the supervisor should vote on all issues upon which a vote is required, unless there is a conflict of interest or some proper legal reason for abstaining. Under the oath of office, as with all other elected officials, the supervisor is required to support the U.S. and Michigan Constitutions and "faithfully discharge the duties of the office of supervisor according to the best of my ability." The supervisor may call special meetings of the township board that otherwise can only be called by a written request of a majority of the township board members or by a majority vote at a previous meeting.

Property Assessment Responsibilities

The supervisor is the chief assessing officer of the township, responsible for assessing property values within the township at 50 percent of its true cash value (MCL 41.61). Even if s/he is not a certified assessor, s/he is still responsible for this duty. Any other assessors required to perform the function are subordinate to the supervisor. In assessing property, the supervisor and assessing officials may use only those manuals approved by the State Tax Commission. The township board is authorized to appoint additional assessors and is required to do so if the supervisor is not certified. Such assessors still remain subordinate to the supervisor.

Fiscal Responsibilities

The supervisor is the township's agent for transacting all legal business, upon whom suits may be brought and defended and upon whom all process against the township is served. Unless some other official has been so designated, the supervisor is considered the chief administrative officer for the development of the township budget. If authorized by the township board, the supervisor may appoint someone to assist in performing official duties and provide compensation as the township board may determine.

Miscellaneous Responsibilities

Planning commission members are appointed by the supervisor, with township board approval. The supervisor, clerk and treasurer constitute the board of township election commissioners in a general law township, with the clerk acting as its chairperson. This board is in general charge of elections within the township under the supervision of the secretary of state.

If the county board of commissioners has not established an animal control officer, the township supervisor may investigate and report on the number and sex of dogs within the township and the name of each owner. The supervisor is paid for this service at a rate determined by the county board of commissioners. If submitted, the report must be made on or before June 1 of each year.

Additional Responsibilities

In addition to statutory duties and responsibilities, the supervisor is frequently delegated additional functions and duties by the township board. The supervisor may be paid extra compensation for non-statutory duties provided the sum is established before the duty is performed (MCL 41.96 and Article XI, Sec. 3, of the Michigan Constitution).

A charter township board has the authority to appoint a township superintendent and to delegate functions specified in the statute. Any functions that are not delegated to the superintendent are exercised by the supervisor. Accordingly, the supervisor may engage in the following activities and duties if they have not been delegated to a superintendent (MCL 42.10).

- a) to see that all laws and township ordinances are enforced;
- b) to manage and supervise all public improvements, works and undertakings of the township
- c) to have charge of the construction, repair, maintenance, lighting and cleaning of streets, sidewalks, bridges, pavements, sewers, and all public buildings or other property belonging to the township;

- d) to manage and supervise the operation of all township utilities;
- e) to be responsible for the preservation of property, tools and appliances of the township;
- f) to see that all terms and conditions imposed in favor of the township or its inhabitants in any public utility franchise or in any contract are faithfully kept and performed;
- g) to attend all township board meetings with the right of the superintendent to discuss issues, but not vote;
- h) to be an ex-officio member of all committees of the township board;
- i) to prepare and administer the annual budget under policies formulated by the township board and keep the board fully advised at all times as to the financial condition and needs of the township;
- j) to recommend to the township board for adoption such measures as s/he may deem necessary or expedient;
- k) to be responsible to the township board for the efficient administration of all departments of the township government;
- l) to act as the purchasing agent for the township or, under his responsibility, delegate such duties to some other officer or employee;
- m) to conduct all sales of personal property that the township board may authorize to be sold;
- n) to assume all the duties and responsibilities as personnel director of all township employees or delegate such duties to some other officer or employee, and
- o) to perform such other duties as may be prescribed by this act or required by ordinance or by direction of the township board or which are not assigned to some other official in conformity with the provisions of this act (MCL 42.10, etc.).

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