



from your Associate Director

By Jerry B. Crabtree

TOI Associate Director / Education Coordinator

WE PROVIDED A WEBINAR in February on the recent new requirement (Public Act 100-0983) for all Township Clerks to “attest” to the signature of the supervisor on all township payments. This is an attestation and NOT a second signature.

The webinar was successful being moderated by attorney John Redlingshafer, Mescher, Rinehart & Redlingshafer, P.C., with over 80 online participants. I thought I would provide a summary of the general questions produced during the webinar in an effort to promote compliance with the new state law. Some of the common questions include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Is it necessary for the Township Clerk to be present at the time of the check being produced?

RESPONSE: NO. The goal of the new law is to ensure that the bill or warrant being issued is the direct approved warrant of the township board. Further, the “attestation” ensures that the Supervisor is signing expenditures that were in fact put before the board for approval.

TOI provided a discussion for the use of a rubber stamp by a deputy clerk. However, the misuse of such a rubber stamp is cautioned. The recommendation by the elected clerk and approval by the township board of a deputy clerk is a safe way to ensure attestation in the absence of the elected clerk. This would also assist with the absence of the clerk.

2. Can a Township Clerk just sign a listing of disbursements that have been put before the board for approval?

RESPONSE: Yes. What needs to be clarified is whether or not this practice is the result of direct on-line payment approval. The legislative intent of the law is for all payments “payouts” made to be attested by the clerk. The exception of approving a list may apply to a listing of electronic or direct deposit payroll records completed by the township supervisor.

3. If the Township Clerk is out of town, may the Deputy Clerk attest in their place?

RESPONSE: Yes. The purpose of a township board approving a deputy clerk for the elected Township Clerk is for the deputy clerk to act in the place of the Township Clerk in their absence.

4. If the Clerk does get a stamp does the stamp need to have the words “attest” included?

RESPONSE: Yes. TOI recommends that the words be included but notes that the law does not mandate. It seems logical to include the word “attest”.

5. Do Township Clerks need to attest credit card charges?

RESPONSE: Yes. Township Clerks are required to attest ANY payout made by the Township Supervisor.

6. Can the Township Clerk use initials instead of a signature to attest?

RESPONSE: The statute only references that they attest. TOI recommends that you affix an entire signature it is preferred however, not required by state law.

7. What if a Township uses a summary sheet?

RESPONSE: Summary sheets would only apply if it were approval for direct deposit (payroll) or electronic payments completed.

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8. Our Clerk already fills out and signs warrants for all bills. How does this affect that process?

RESPONSE: This would not be an official attestation as it is not being affixed to the actual payout of the bill only the submittal for approval. The law specifically states that the attestation be applied to the payout.

9. Does our Township Clerk need to become a notary public?

RESPONSE: NO. The law does not require the clerk to be notary public licensed by the state of Illinois.

If you have questions on the applicability of the new attestation process to your townships approval and distribution of payments, please send them to me at jerry@toi.org.

NEW TOI MEMBER DATABASE UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT TOI — WE NEED YOUR HELP!

The Township Officials of Illinois are asking for your help! We are in the process of converting our membership database into a new Association Management System (AMS) to better accommodate our recordkeeping of YOU the member and what you participate in offered by the association. The completion of the new database is expected in July of 2019.

This new AMS system will take a few years to roll out completely. That being said, we are asking for your continued support to better accommodate the benefits and programs offered to YOU the members of the Township Officials of Illinois. To take full advantage of the system we will need to have an active email address for the single point of contact in each of our 1,428 townships across the state of Illinois. Our current database includes over 10,000 records of township officials. We need to have a single point of contact in each township. Having an email address for each member we serve provides a communication tool that is a success for both the organization and YOU the members. We are asking for each township to help validate the contact information that we have is accurate and email accessible.

If you are not sure if you have an active email address with our organization you may call us toll free at (866) 897-4688 or email Pam Butler of our office at Pam@toi.org to validate the point of contact we have in the database of members.

If you would like to create point of contact email address, I researched the creation of email and would like to provide some comments on the significance of having an email address to communicate within and among township government residents and administrative opportunities.

SOME ADVANTAGES OF EMAIL:

- EMAIL is FREE
- EMAIL is efficient
- EMAIL is effective communication quick and concise

Email is usually included in a package software access point that enables the user to use a calendar, address book for productivity.

If you are interested in using any electronic portal you will need an active email. We encourage the creation of an account separate for township business and communications.

Mail management options: Email service providers have established tools that allow you to file, label, and filter email activity for easy management.

Your privacy is protected by your individual user name and password to access your email. There are many safety precautions provided on all web servers that would make security not a concern for establishing an email account.

Importance of communication. Much of what you do as an elected official can be enhanced with the use of email. We encourage all elected township officials to create an email account exclusively for their township business. We are not promoting the creation of additional work for you as an elected official. We promote the use of separate email accounts for township and personal work.

WEBMAIL PROVIDERS:

In the past, email addresses were provided by the same companies that you obtained internet service. This has changed. You may still be able to get email from your internet provider but there are several free web based email services (known as web mail) that are easy to use and accommodate the need for an email account.

The top three we recommend are Yahoo, Microsoft's Outlook.com (formally Hotmail), and Google's Gmail. These providers are free and allow you to access the email accounts from any internet location.

WHAT WE ARE REQUESTING:

That each member of the Township Officials of Illinois if you have not already created an email account for your elected township position that you do so to ensure communication between the association and YOU!

Send that information to our office as soon as possible.

