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When I read the Auditor of State's November/December 2019 article in the Ohio Township magazine, I immediately agreed an outgoing fiscal officer should have some responsibility to provide help and information to a new fiscal officer.

I am very appreciative to come before this committee to tell you some of my thoughts on this matter. After 16 years as Fiscal Officer for Tiffin Township in Adams County, I decided not to rerun. I vowed to help whoever was elected because I did not want them to experience what happened to me.

My first term started April 2004. At that time I had taken the UAN and Local Government training. But that did not prepare me for things I needed to know that pertained only to our Township, i.e. when the next tax levy was due, our employee was getting a fringe benefit which changed how to report OPERS, Federal Tax ID number, the fire contract. The outgoing Fiscal Officer asked to me come to her office on March 31st, told me where a folder was containing the statements, password to the computer, said to run a fund status report to see if there was enough money to pay the bills, gave me a key to the building, and said "good luck". The April meeting was in six days. When the meeting started the Trustees asked me where was the agenda, something I did not know I was to prepare. And as a side note I was not welcomed to attend any meetings before April by the Fiscal Officer or Trustees. Needless, to say I was ready to quit after that first meeting.

Unfortunately, I have heard some of these same things are happening now to new fiscal officers in our county.

Tiffin Township's new fiscal officer has been coming to our meetings since his election and went through end of year with me. I like to use spreadsheets and to do lists. I have prepared these for year-end, a yearly agenda, and instructions on how to run financial reports. He has expressed his concern getting things done month-to-month and quarterly reports on time. We will go over these again before April 1st. He said my checklists will be used a lot.

The requirements proposed by HB 450 will not only be beneficial to a new Fiscal Officer but will benefit the Township to have a smooth transition.

I would like to see included in the bill some way a new Fiscal Officer could be compensated for their time. Tiffin Township's new officer has probably spent about 15 hours so far, and that does not include meetings or training hours. I told him before April 1st he is on his own penny and after April 1st he is free to call me anytime and I will be on my penny.

Respectively submitted,

Sharon Chenoweth

