

responsibilities taken from a brochure produced for use by members of the Indiana Township Association, Inc. www.indianatownshipassoc.com

- Township Trustees are, by Indiana law, charged with the responsibility of **providing fire protection and ambulance service** for the areas of the township not incorporated into a city or town. Overseeing the poor and distributing poor relief is a primary duty in many townships.
- The trustee is charged to **care for the poor** by the most economical means available and at the same time is charged to be sure that the necessary needs of an individual or family are met. The applicant must show that they are unable to provide those needs through personal effort and that they have exhausted all other means. Many trustees creatively cooperate with other agencies and churches in their areas, keeping costs controlled and delivering services needed. The advantage the Trustee's system has over other forms of welfare is the freedom to discern whether or not an individual has and is willing to put forth that personal effort to help themselves.
- Burial Assistance is available from the Township Trustee when no other means of payment are available. The trustee is to oversee the burial of the indigent according to IC Title 12.
- In township with a population under 10,000, the trustee is also the township assessor and is responsible for assessing the real and personal property within their township. Personal property is assessed yearly and consists of mobile home and tangible personal property of an individual, business, or farm. Real property is assessed during a reassessment period with new buildings being added yearly.
- Each August, the trustee prepares and submits a budget for the incoming year to the three-person township board for approval. As the Chief Financial Officer of the township, the trustee pays and records all claims for township expenses and salaries and is responsible to keep accurate records and follow all the financial guidelines set out in Indiana Code. In January of each year, the trustee presents to the board an annual report, which shows all receipts, expenditures, investments and debts. The approved report is then published in local papers for public inspection.
- The trustee is to provide and maintain cemeteries located in the township. This includes those cemeteries, which have been abandoned.
- The trustee is charged with destroying detrimental weeds within their township. Guidelines for notification to the property owner are set within the law.
- When a dispute arises between two landowners regarding placement and maintenance of line fences, the township trustee is to make a determination according to Indiana law 32-10-9.
- If livestock is killed or damaged by unknown dog(s), the owner of the livestock may file a report with the trustee who investigates the claim. If valid, the trustee reimburses the owner for the loss from the dog fund which receives its monies from the dog tags sold each year by the Trustee and Assessor within the township
- Miscellaneous duties are in other areas that are not widespread: parks and recreation, zoning and planning, small claims court, emergency medical service, schools, community centers, shelters, libraries.

Annual Conference Council Delivers Answer to Query

Following up on an action of this year's Annual Conference in Idaho, the Annual Conference Council on August 15 delivered an answer to the "Query for Clarification of Confusion" sent by Michigan District. Delegates in Boise adopted Standing Committee's recommendation for the query, which dealt with the 2002 Conference action against licensing and ordination of homosexuals. The recommendation stated that the "concerns and questions contained in the query be received and that the Annual Conference Council be asked to answer these matters."



Council chair Earl Ziegler and 2004 Annual conference moderator Chris Bowman gave the answer in person to Michigan District conference. The Council's letter was read to the delegates and others attending, followed by a question-and-answer period. The response of the Council, whose responsibilities include interpreting Annual Conference actions, said that the 2002 action "does not contradict polity in the credentialing of persons to ministry in the Church of the Brethren." That action, it said, "means that no one known to be engaging in