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From The Morning Call

Forks Township creates position of facilities manager

Employee also will maintain township's GIS database.

By Joe Nixon
Of The Morning Call

February 4, 2005

Forks Township supervisors voted Thursday to create a job with the dual roles of managing township facilities and the municipality's geographic information system database.

The board also voted to advertise for a public works director, but then adjourned its meeting and went into executive session late Thursday.

Supervisor Chairman John Ackerman declined to comment when asked if Public Works Director Peter Gheller was in line for the new post. Gheller, a 25-year township employee, became public works director in Forks in 1998, succeeding Joe Murgia.

The township facilities manager will report to the public works director, according to Township Manager Cathy Kichline.

The facilities manager will be responsible for all township buildings, including their maintenance, alarm systems and other aspects. The township's inventory of buildings will increase later this year with the construction of a fire station and municipal building. The same construction project also has doubled the size of the township police station. Forks also has expanded its community center and parks maintenance building.

The GIS database will allow the township to store and retrieve information on numerous aspects of township infrastructure. Kichline said the system will be able to store information on things like stop signs and traffic signals and other areas, including sewer and storm-water lines and the history on their installation and repair.

The system also will allow the township quicker access to crucial information, Kichline said. With space at a premium, Kichline said older files are often packed away. "Then it's hard to recreate something when you need to," she said.

Kichline said increased revenue from the new \$52 emergency municipal services tax would help pay for the new post.

On another personnel issue, supervisors voted to table action on whether to hire Berkheimer Associates of Bangor to collect earned income tax for the township, or continue having its own staff do the work.

The primary earned income tax collection job on the township staff became vacant last week with the resignation

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2/6/2005

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