

# Patrick Sellers: A look at the intergovernmental agreement



The intergovernmental agreement between Freeport Township and the Veterans' Assistance Commission of Stephenson County was put in place Nov. 5, 2012, and addendums were added on May 13, 2013, one week before I took office as the new supervisor. These addendums were made and passed without my knowledge, input or approval by a 4-to-1 vote with Trustee Nickee Bender being the only no vote.

A few conditions of the intergovernmental agreement:

- The township office is responsible to provide the VACSC with the use of our copy machine, paper shredder, toner and copy paper (free of charge).
- The township office was responsible to do VACSC case work at a fraction of the cost we are charging other townships.
- Township is required to provide receptionist services to the VACSC (free of charge).

The previous township administration along with the VACSC entered into an agreement that had questionable conditions. Under the Illinois Military Assistance Act [330 ILCS 45/10] it is stated: The county shall provide the office and furnish all necessary supplies, including telephone, printing, stationery and postage therefore. To view the act in its entirety go to: [ow.ly/CdJ4b](http://ow.ly/CdJ4b)

It is hard to fathom the thought that neither one of these organizations knew about Illinois statute 330 ILCS 45. The statute is actually cited on the VACSC's state website [iacvac.org/purpose.html](http://iacvac.org/purpose.html), so I believe that it is safe to say that both organizations acted with delusions of impunity, as if they were above reproach or that their facades would somehow elude the truth.

It is now being implied that the current township administration is wasting taxpayer dollars by trying to correct the mistakes of the past. But think about it, the previous township administration, with the exception of Trustee Bender, spent \$372,109 of taxpayer dollars in one year. The majority of that expenditure was for a building, which was appraised lower than the actual purchase price. At the same time VACSC spends taxpayer dollars for a building, when they are provided free space by the county, these decisions were not only a waste of taxpayer's dollars but also a disservice to our veterans and clients.

People will respond to this editorial; some positively, some negatively, but it is time that we shed some light on this debacle and it is time for the public to hear the facts. As previously stated, this is not a

reflection on the men and women who served our country so diligently. If it weren't for their courage and commitment, loyalty and sacrifice, we would not have the freedoms that we have, nor live in the greatest country on Earth, so to them we are eternally thankful.

The final chapter of this sad saga seems to be never ending, with each sentence presenting a hindrance, a setback, or in the case of the 201 E. Exchange St. building, a conundrum.

We as the new township administration must correct the decisions, practices and financial blunders bequeathed upon us by the previous administration. These issues must be resolved for the public who asked for transparency and the truth.

*Patrick Sellers is Freeport Township supervisor.*