

COLIN BAENZIGER  ASSOCIATES

EXECUTIVE RECRUITING

Section 10

John M. Shepherd

*Winter Haven City Manager
Candidate Report*

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Cover Letter and Resume

November 9, 2016

John M. Shepherd
13190 Bartley Court
North Huntingdon, PA 15642

Colin Baenziger
Colin Baenziger & Associates
2055 South Atlantic Avenue, Suite 504
Daytona Beach Shores, FL 32118

RE: Winter Haven, FL City Manager Position

Dear Mr. Baenziger:

This reply is in reference to the position of City Manager for the City of Winter Haven, FL. It is with great enthusiasm that I submit my letter of interest and resume for this exceptional opportunity.

Currently, I am employed as the Township Manager for North Huntingdon Township, PA, which is a suburb of Pittsburgh, PA. As Township Manager, I am responsible for implementing the policies and achieving the goals of the elected Board of Commissioners. My direct reports include the Police Chief, Public Works Director, Planning Director/Engineer, Parks and Recreation Director, Senior Project Engineer, Assistant Manager and staff of the Administration Department. An outline of my duties, as well as accomplishments, is included on my enclosed resume.

Prior to my employment with North Huntingdon, I was employed by various local governments throughout the Western Pennsylvania region. Each of my positions has resulted in increased responsibility in a larger, more complex local government organization.

I have carefully reviewed the profile for this position and am confident that I possess the traits that Winter Haven is seeking in its next City Manager. Specifically, I have significant experience interacting with elected officials which at times, have diverse opinions. I pride myself on having the confidence of the elected officials so that consensus is achieved with respect to difficult issues. Additionally, it is apparent that Winter Haven has adopted the goal of developing a formal strategic plan. Likewise, North Huntingdon has just undergone this process with the adoption of the Township's first strategic plan in 2016. This plan was developed in accordance with my recommendation and under my guidance. Quality customer service, embraced by Winter Haven, is also a serious concern of North Huntingdon and is identified in our strategic plan. I personally take the time to contact citizens to discuss work requests and municipal services. Most are truly impressed when they receive a telephone call the same day they make their inquiry.

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Winter Haven is also interested in team-oriented management with attention to detail. This type of management style reflects my personal style which I practice daily. I consider my staff teammates with common goals as the desired outcome. This culture has resulted in a high-performing senior management team. Additionally, I respect the need of the elected officials to possess information concerning issues facing the organization. Again, I believe that I strike the balance of providing equal access to organizational information without providing unnecessary reports. Finally, I have significant experience and specific education with respect to labor relations and collective bargaining. I administer two labor contracts and I also am the chief negotiator for these contracts.

In my approximate 14 years as Manager of North Huntingdon, the organization has been significantly changed which has resulted in a professional, results-driven environment. I have earned the respect of elected officials, department directors, employees, citizen's groups and the general public. If given the opportunity in Winter Haven, I believe that I will again achieve this level of success and lead the City in accordance with the goals and objectives outlined by the City Commission and Mayor.

In addition to my professional experience, I am a graduate from the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs with a Masters of Public Administration. Additionally, I have received the status of a Credentialed Manager by ICMA. Finally, I have received a certificate in Collective Bargaining Studies from Cornell University.

While my current position is both challenging and rewarding, Winter Haven provides an exceptional career opportunity. Accordingly, I am interested in the Winter Haven position and believe that my education and experience would be a great asset to the City. Also, my family and I have visited the Orlando and Tampa areas many times over the years and are excited about the opportunity to relocate to this area.

I would be happy to share more information with you during an interview. I can be contacted during the day at (724)454-7388 or in the evening at (412)751-4990.

Sincerely,

John M. Shepherd

**John M. Shepherd, ICMA-CM
13190 Bartley Court
North Huntingdon, PA 15642
(412)751-4990 (home)
(724) 454-7388 (cellular)**

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Township of North Huntingdon (population 30,000)

July 2009 to present

September 1998 to February 2007

Township Manager

Responsibilities: Daily oversight of Public Works, Police, Parks and Recreation, Planning, Zoning and Engineering departments and direct management of Administration department consisting of approximately 90 employees. Provide direction to the Township Attorney. Duties include operating and capital budget preparation and administration of \$17 million annual budget. Chief negotiator and administrator of two labor contracts. Responsible for contract administration of refuse and recycling collection. Responsible for insuring customer satisfaction and call-taking in the Administration Department. Development of many and varied policy recommendations with detailed policy analysis. Act as chief media spokesman for the Township. Directly interact with citizens, citizen groups, and businesses to address community concerns.

Accomplishments and Improvements:

- Developed ten years of balanced budgets which resulted in surpluses each year
- Proposed and obtained adoption of the first organizational Strategic Plan
- Provided management direction during period when North Huntingdon was recognized as one of the fastest growing residential and commercial communities in the Pittsburgh region
- Development of first concentrated economic development strategy
- Oversaw the construction of a new, multi-million dollar Public Works Department building. Developed the funding component for this project and paid the debt early resulting in a debt-free organization
- Development and implementation of first performance appraisal system linked to pay
- Development and implementation of first organizational personnel policy manual
- Developed computer-based citizen inquiry/complaint tracking systems for various service requests
- Proposed and received approval to hire the Township's first staff Engineer and first Parks and Recreation Director

Township of West Deer (population 12,000)

May 2008 to July 2009

Township Manager

Responsibilities: Daily management of Administration, Public Works, Police, Parks and Recreation, and Development, Planning and Building functions consisting of approximately 30 employees and coordination of projects assigned to Borough Engineer and Borough Solicitor. Duties include operating and capital budget preparation and administration of \$4 million annual budget. Responsible for preparation and

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administration of various grant applications. Chief administrator of three labor contracts. Directly interact with citizens, citizen groups and businesses to address community concerns. Development of varied policy analysis and recommendations. Responsible for attending meetings of Board of Supervisors and other bodies as required.

Accomplishments and Improvements

- Developed computer-based citizen inquiry/complaint tracking systems for various service requests
- Submission and award of various grants

Borough of Jefferson Hills (population 10,000)

September 2007 to April 2008

Borough Manager

Responsibilities: Daily coordination of Public Works, Police, Sanitary Sewer, Parks and Recreation, and Development, Planning and Building functions consisting of approximately 50 employees and coordination of projects assigned to Borough Engineer and Borough Solicitor. Duties include operating and capital budget preparation and administration of \$11 million annual budget. Chief administrator of three labor contracts. Development of varied policy recommendations. Directly interact with citizens, citizen groups and businesses to address community concerns. Responsible for attending meetings of Planning Commission and Economic Development Commission and providing staff support to these agencies.

RWS Development Company, Inc.

February 2007 to September 2007

Responsibilities: Customer service manager for new house construction after closing. Financial responsibilities include accounts payable and receivable.

Accomplishments and Improvements

- Development of database to catalog and effectively manage customer service calls
- Development of database for all permits related to new house construction
- Development of safety program for employees

Borough of Tarentum (population 6,000)

September 1996 to August 1998

Borough Manager

Responsibilities: Daily supervision of Public Works, Police, Electric, Water, Parks and Recreation, Planning and Zoning, and Administration departments consisting of approximately 45 employees and also direction of Township Engineer and Township Solicitor. Duties include operating and capital budget preparation and administration of \$6 million annual budget which included budgets for the proprietary electric and water funds. Serve as human resources generalist for organization including employee recruitment and selection, job analysis and descriptions, benefits administration, and legal compliance. Chief negotiator and administrator of three labor contracts. Responsible for contract administration of refuse and recycling collection. Development of various policy recommendations.

Accomplishments and Improvements:

- Appointed first professional administrator of this community

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- Re-negotiated a bulk electric purchase contract that saved the community approximately \$120,000.00 annually
- Negotiated three labor contracts, including one for police who had worked without a contract for one year
- Negotiated the re-issuance of municipal revenue bonds to achieve substantial cost savings over current bond issue

Township of Chippewa (population 7,000)

Assistant Township Manager (January 1995 to September 1996)

Responsibilities: Assumed daily operational and supervisory duties in the absence of the Township Manager including the management of the Police, Public Works, Recreation, Tax Collection and Planning departments. Responsible for managing various grant projects. Responsible for preparing bid specifications for various contracts. Development of various policy recommendations. Also maintained general duties of Director of Planning position.

Director of Planning (April 1990 to December 1994)

Responsibilities: Providing technical assistance to the Planning Commission; reviewing development applications; and managing the various permit processes of the Department. Responsible for CDBG Program, grant research, proposal development, and administration.

Accomplishments and Improvements:

- Drafted a complete revision of the subdivision/land development ordinance
- Drafted a complete revision of the comprehensive plan
- Managed the complete revision of the zoning ordinance

City of Pittsburgh (population 370,000)

Special Populations Division of Citiparks Department

May 1989 to April 1990

Title V Program Coordinator

Responsibilities: Managed the Title V Senior Employment Program. Responsibilities included employment recruitment, work scheduling, and budget monitoring. Also served as the direct assistant to the Director of the Special Populations Division. Assisted with departmental and City-wide special events.

State of Pennsylvania

Department of Community and Economic Development

July 1998 to present

Peer Consultant

Responsibilities: On a part-time basis, provide consultant services to other municipalities in Pennsylvania. Peer analysis concentrates on human resources function including personnel manual preparation, review of current personnel policies and practices, performance appraisal system development, job description development, and review of compensation plans. Final product is a detailed report for the organization that identifies weaknesses and suggestions for improvement.

EDUCATION, CERTIFICATION, AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

University of Pittsburgh
College of Arts and Sciences
Affairs

Bachelor of Arts, April 1989
1994

Dual Major: Political Science and Urban Studies
Magna Cum Laude: 3.60 G.P.A.

University of Pittsburgh
Graduate School of Public and International

Master of Public Management, December

3.75 G.P.A.

Robert Morris College

Certificate in Professional Human Resources Management
Certificate

April 2001

Cornell University

Collective Bargaining Studies

September 2002

International City-County Management Association (ICMA)

Credentialed Manager

Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)

International Public Management Association for Human Resources (IPMA-HR)

American Planning Association (APA)

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Candidate Introduction

John M. Shepherd

EDUCATION

Master of Public Administration, University of Pittsburgh
Bachelor of Arts, Urban Studies and Political Science, University of Pittsburgh
Collective Bargaining Studies Certificate, Cornell University

EXPERIENCE

Township Manager, North Huntingdon, PA	2009-present
Township Manager, West Deer, PA	2008-2009
Borough Manager, Jefferson Hills, PA	2007-2008
RWS Development Company	2007
Township Manager, North Huntingdon, PA	1998-2007
Borough Manager, Tarentum, PA	1996-1998
Assistant Manager/Planning Director, Chippewa, PA	1995-1996
Planning Director, Chippewa, PA	1990-1994
Title V Program Coordinator, Pittsburgh, PA	1989-1990
Peer Consultant (part-time), State of PA	1998-present

BACKGROUND

North Huntingdon Township is a suburban community located in close proximity to the City of Pittsburgh. North Huntingdon has a population of approximately 30,000 and is considered a bedroom community. Within the past 15 years, North Huntingdon has been one of the fastest growing communities in Western Pennsylvania. In addition to significant residential development, North Huntingdon has also experienced significant commercial development to complement the residential base. This rapid development continues to this day. Recently, Express Scripts located a regional office building in a business park located in North Huntingdon.

North Huntingdon has approximately 90 employees. Of those, I directly supervise 10 employees comprised primarily of Department Directors as well as the staff of the Administration Department. In 2016, North Huntingdon has a general fund budget of approximately \$13,325,000.00 while the overall budget in 2016 is approximately \$15,700,000.00.

One of the most pressing issues currently facing North Huntingdon Township is to ensure that service levels meet current and future needs of the residents and businesses of the community. In recent years, we have made significant progress with improving infrastructure, some of which is old and at times not built to modern standards. We have been able to meet this demand with using both Township employees and contractors. New residents also have different perspectives concerning municipal services, especially recreational opportunities. Currently, we are updating

John M. Shepherd

the Township's long-range recreation plan to ensure that our services meet the needs of both long-term and new residents.

In conjunction with the service-level matter addressed above, there is a concern with the ability to provide adequate funding for municipal services with limited tax revenue. Historically, the Township has been conservative financially so service level enhancements have always been considered with the financial ramifications of those enhancements. Even with this conservative financial principle, the Township has been able to construct a state-of-the-art Public Works Department facility in recent years with no outstanding debt. We have also been able to maintain a low crime rate without increasing the number of patrol officers in the Police Department. We have also been able to expand our programs offered in the Parks and Recreation Department by utilizing private contractors to deliver programs and partnering with the school district for facility usage. However, as we move forward, it is possible that the Township will need to increase taxes so that the desired level of services will be provided.

North Huntingdon will also be faced with the retirement of a great number of senior staff in the coming years. This wave of retirement will affect all levels of the organization. In order to address this concern, the Township will need to develop a more detailed succession plan in order to accommodate the retirements in order to retain institutional knowledge and continuity. To assist with this transition, we have already instituted a program which permits an employee to retire and work in a part-time capacity and continue to provide value through training of new or transferred employees.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT STYLE AND EXPERIENCE

My general management style is a collaborative approach and I consider myself a "team member" of the senior executive team of North Huntingdon. My management style is an inviting one where staff feel very comfortable approaching me to discuss matters of concern. As such, staff are very willing to bring to my attention both positive and negative situations. My goal is for the senior staff to work as a team to address service delivery and other matters of concern. This style of management can then be filtered into the various departments of North Huntingdon.

If you asked my staff about my management style, they would say that I am a "team player" and lead by example. They would also say that I take a genuine interest in their respective departments and make time to discuss areas of concern with them. They would also say that I treat people fairly and am open and honest with staff and citizens. As such, there is a genuine trust that exists between the staff and myself.

Winter Haven provides a transition in my career which has been extensively in local government management. When considering career opportunities, decisions are made by my wife and myself with considering the impact on our two daughters. Because my wife is a remote worker, providing network engineer services, she has flexibility in her location. We are familiar with the Winter

Haven location and have family that reside in the Clearwater area and the Naples area. Through our many travels in Florida over the years, we have become very fond of the area and as such, would consider some areas when contemplating relocation. Winter Haven, because of its size and complexity, is an excellent match for my skill set and experience. If afforded the opportunity in Winter Haven, it could quite possibly be the last stop in my career in local government.

If asked, current and former elected officials would say that I am very knowledgeable concerning local government operations. They would say that I am trustworthy, fair and honest. They would say that at times, I am the bearer of bad news but understand that at times, that is my responsibility. The elected officials would also say that I have assisted moving North Huntingdon forward as a more progressive and professional organization.

I believe that my I have many strengths that lend to success as a city manager. First, I understand the dynamic of the elected officials and am able to act accordingly in order to achieve results. I do not take situations personally and try to avoid battles between elected officials. I also have a passion for local government service. This has been my career tract since attaining my bachelor degree. Because of this passion, I am able to begin again every day with a positive attitude with the thought of moving forward rather than dwelling in the past. I also believe that my honesty permits me to have successful relationships with elected officials, employees and citizens.

I believe that my greatest weakness is being overly trusting of people. I always give someone the benefit of the doubt and at will give people multiple chances. This does not always result in the desired outcome. I will say that over time, I approach certain people with more caution and reservation. That being said, I have been in the unfortunate situation to terminate employees for various reasons. I have also taken this action with consultants who have served as senior advisors. There has never been a time when I have delivered this news that it has not impacted me on an emotional level.

My greatest career achievement has been transforming North Huntingdon into a professional, performance-driven organization from its political roots. When I was first hired as Township Manager in North Huntingdon, the majority of the elected officials had decided to institute professional management in North Huntingdon. Prior to my arrival, there was no professional manager and many decisions, including staffing, were made for political reasons. With the support of the elected officials, I started to implement professional management techniques throughout the organization. I drafted the first personnel manual for employees. We developed job descriptions and hired staff based on knowledge, experience and education. We developed capital plans and made budget decisions based on thought-out policy analysis. During this transition, some staff had to be let go as well as some senior consultants of the Township. However painful these decisions, the ultimate goal of professionalizing the overall operation of the Township made the decisions easier to bear. Today, North Huntingdon continues to professionalize. This year, the Township adopted its first ever strategic plan. This document provides the blueprint forward for the foreseeable future as the collective goals of the elected officials are embodied in the plan.

John M. Shepherd

My greatest failure has been the inability to provide greater stability within the Township's Police Department. Because of differing opinions of the elected officials, there is not a clear direction for the Police Department. Because of strong, embedded opinions of some elected officials, I have not been able to obtain consensus concerning a known direction of the Department. While the officers perform their duties on a daily basis and we are fortunate to have a very low crime rate, the Department would operate with greater efficiency with stable and consistent leadership.

Without a doubt, there will be challenges for the person selected to be the next City Manager of Winter Haven. First and foremost, the next City Manager will need to learn and understand the existing culture of the organization. This culture is defined by both employees and the elected officials of Winter Haven. Once the new City Manager understands the culture, the City Manager will be in a position to institute changes in order to move the organization forward. It is difficult at times for someone to come from outside the organization and be successful. In order for this to occur, the new City Manager will need to build the trust and support of elected officials and staff, especially department directors. Based on my track record, I feel confident that I will be able to repeat my success in Winter Haven as a City Manager who comes from outside the organization.

In this era, there are few communities that do not face financial challenges. The next City Manager will certainly need to review the level of services being provided to ensure that the services match the financial commitment provided by the City. If not currently in place or being utilized, I believe that a strategic plan will assist with providing direction to the City and will also permit departments to focus on desired goals.

The first six months of a job such as the Winter Haven City Manager will be critical to set the stage for success. I have created a "New Job Action Plan" that I would tailor to Winter Haven. Without a doubt, the first six months would be a time of unlimited learning and listening of citizens, elected officials and staff. I would meet with staff and elected officials in both group and individual settings. I would also meet with or attend meetings of the various advisory boards which serve the City. I would also want to quickly grasp the current financial situation of the City by reviewing budget documents, audits and speaking with financial staff. I would also take time to meet with local school and civic leaders. Finally, I would take time to meet with some surrounding city managers as well as state officials that impact the operation of Winter Haven.

As Township Manager, I have direct experience working with various forms of media. I have the most experience working with print media. During my career, I have had cordial relationships with local reporters who have covered both positive and negative news stories. I always am available to speak with the media and return telephone calls and e-mail messages. There are times that I am not at liberty to answer questions posed by the media, but I make it a point to speak with them and answer the questions that are possible.

There is nothing in my background that would create any concern for Winter Haven. There are no community activists that would make any contact with negative stories concerning me.

John M. Shepherd

Currently, I do not communicate directly with residents via social media. However, this is an area that we are currently exploring in greater depth and in 2017, we might begin this type of communication via various platforms. If utilized, I would put forth information concerning city services, events, etc. I would not use the platform to put forth any personal viewpoints of mine. The posts would be professional communication. I currently have a personal Twitter account which is personal and has no reference to North Huntingdon. I have never sent a tweet related to North Huntingdon and I do not identify myself as an employee of North Huntingdon in my profile. In my leisure time, I spend time with my wife and two daughters. Family time is of great importance to all of us so it consumes a lot of our free time. I also like to travel, primarily in the United States. I am also a great fan of college football and enjoy watching games in person and on television.

SIX ADJECTIVES OR PHRASES THAT DESCRIBE ME

If I was asked to describe myself using six adjectives or phrases, they would be: trustworthy; honest; caring; knowledgeable; open to change; and willing to compromise.

REASON FOR DEPARTING CURRENT POSITION

While North Huntingdon is a great place to work and live, I am currently considering a change because of the opportunity for new challenges which energize a person. Additionally, my family is interested in making a change and we are only considering areas of the country that are appealing to us. Winter Haven provides this type of opportunity.

CURRENT COMPENSATION

Currently, my salary in North Huntingdon is \$103,564.00.

CB&A Background Checks

**Background Check Summary for
JOHN M. SHEPHERD**

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
County	
Westmoreland County, PA	No Records Found
Allegheny County, PA	No Records Found
State	
Pennsylvania	No Records Found

Civil Records Checks:

County	
Westmoreland County, PA	No Records Found
Allegheny County, PA	No Records Found
Federal	
Pennsylvania	No Records Found

Motor Vehicle

Pennsylvania	Results Pending
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Credit

Excellent

Bankruptcy

No Records Found

Education

Confirmed

Employment

Confirmed

**Background Check Summary for
JOHN M. SHEPHERD
Personal Disclosure**

Personal Disclosure Questionnaire

Name of Applicant: John M Shepherd

The following questions are designed so that we will be able to make full disclosure to our client concerning your background. Please answer them honestly. Cutting corners or misrepresenting your past will result in you being eliminated from all further searches conducted by this firm. We understand that frivolous charges are sometimes made and that charges do not mean you were guilty. We also understand that you may have been wronged and needed to seek compensation. The bottom line is that we want to be certain that our client is fully informed. If you have any questions, please contact us for clarification.

Please explain any yes answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Have you ever been charged or convicted of a felony?
Yes No
2. Have you ever been accused of or have been involved in a domestic violence or abuse incident?
Yes No
3. Have you ever declared bankruptcy or been an owner in a business that did so?
Yes No
4. Have you ever been the subject of a civil rights violation complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No
5. Have you ever been the subject of a sexual harassment complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No
6. Have you ever been convicted of driving while intoxicated?
Yes No
7. Have you ever sued a current or former employer?
Yes No
8. Do you have a personal My Space, Face Book or other type of Web Page?
Yes No
9. Do you have a personal Twitter Account?
Yes No
10. Is there anything else in your background that, if made public, would cause you, our client or our firm embarrassment if it came to light through the press or any other mechanism?
Yes No
11. Please provide a list of any lawsuits in which you are or have been a party either as plaintiff or defendant.

Attested to:


Signature of Applicant

Please email this form via PDF DOCUMENT to Lynelle@cb-asso.com or via fax to (888) 539-6531 **no later than 5:00 PM PST 12/01/16.**

(Note: Please be sure to sign the form with your actual signature if you are sending Fax or PDF Document)

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CB&A Reference Notes

**Reference Notes
John Shepherd**

Alex Grazioni – Penn Township Manager, Penn Township, PA 724-327-2100

Mr. Grazioni has known Mr. Shepherd since about 2004. At the time, Mr. Grazioni was working for a non-profit firm specialized in smart growth with zoning and land use and Mr. Shepherd was the Township Manager of North Huntingdon. They stayed in contact over the years, and in about 2014 began working together as associates again as they both managed similar townships in the area. Mr. Shepherd's job performance was excellent and they have worked together on various projects, including a masterplan for a highway that went right through North Huntingdon.

Mr. Shepherd routinely communicates with Mr. Grazioni through meetings, phone calls and email, depending upon what is needed. He is good about keeping Mr. Grazioni informed about what is happening in the township. Because Mr. Grazioni did not work with Mr. Shepherd on a daily basis, he was unaware of how he interacted with the public, but Mr. Shepherd loves his job and came back to North Huntingdon, which says a great deal about the work he did.

Mr. Shepherd solves problems constantly and makes decisions in a methodical manner. He completed assigned tasks in a timely manner. The elected officials in North Huntingdon like to create controversy between themselves, which seems to bring about a degree of drama, but Mr. Shepherd has managed to stay above the fray. Mr. Grazioni would hire Mr. Shepherd because he knows the job very well and is a great City Manager.

Words or phrases used to describe John Shepherd:

- Productive,
- Efficient,
- Professional,
- Business-minded,
- Focused, and
- Level-headed.

Strengths: Mr. Shepherd thrives in any environment. North Huntingdon is not an easy place to work as his commissioners are very political. But not only did he survive one term, but he was invited to come back. He has been able to accomplish many things they have required of him.

Weaknesses: None identified.

LaVonne Shields – Accounting Administrator, North Huntingdon, VA 724-493-4823

Ms. Shields has known Mr. Shepherd since 1998 when he was hired as the Township Manager for North Huntingdon and she was working in the Accounting Department. Mr. Shepherd has done an exceptional job as the manager. He has worked with both staff and elected officials very well

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and is respected by those he interacts with. Although Ms. Shields is not involved in private meetings with elected officials, she knows, based on feedback from them, that even if they do not agree with him, he understands his job capacity and what he is expected to do. Ms. Shields has worked with 5-6 managers throughout her career and Mr. Shepherd is at the top. Other managers were just as educated as Mr. Shepherd but the way he treats people with fairness and respect sets him apart in a league of his own.

Mr. Shepherd has an open-door policy for the public and customers. He is committed to meeting their needs and always returns phone calls. Ms. Shields is the head of the union for her department, and is constantly dealing with personnel issues. Recently, Mr. Shepherd demonstrated his ability to problem solve when one of the employees marked a timecard erroneously. Mr. Shepherd took the information and reprimanded him, giving him an oral and written notice. This employee appealed. Instead of saying his decision was set in stone, Mr. Shepherd listened to the complaint and then went to other people involved and came to the conclusion that this employee was not the only factor in the problem and other issues were involved. Because he was willing to continue to work, listen and make sure the correct decision was made, he was able to help resolve the problem before it became a bigger issue. He generally takes this approach with all decisions- he makes sure he has all the necessary facts.

Mr. Shepherd accomplishes assigned tasks in a timely manner and also holds his employees accountable. When involved in projects, he will make sure everyone knows when deadlines for various benchmarks are. Ms. Shields will be jealous of anyone who hires Mr. Shepherd in the future. Nothing in Mr. Shepherd's past would be considered controversial. He is a tremendous City Manager.

Words or phrases used to describe John Shepherd:

- Caring,
- Professional,
- Knowledgeable,
- Detail-oriented,
- Smart, and
- Responsive.

Strengths: Mr. Shepherd has the knowledge background to be a very good township manager, but his strength lies in his concern for those he works with.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Bob Merda – Former Commissioner, North Huntingdon Township, PA 724-244-9879

Mr. Merda has known Mr. Shepherd since 1998 when the township of North Huntingdon hired him to be their manager the first time. At the time, Mr. Merda was a commissioner on their board

**Reference Notes
John Shepherd**

and has kept in touch with him over the years. They have been friends and catch up a couple times a year. Mr. Shepherd's job performance was top-notch. His work ethic, and professional manner are second to none. Any time Mr. Merda needed assistance from Mr. Shepherd, Mr. Shepherd responded immediately. He worked with the other elected officials very well, also. Whenever the board had an issue they were dealing with, Mr. Shepherd was always able to work with them to come up with a successful solution. If personnel issues arose, the board helped address them and Mr. Shepherd carried out the recommendation.

Mr. Shepherd interacted with Mr. Merda in a variety of ways - meetings, emails, phone calls and face-to-face, whichever method was generally the easiest. Mr. Shepherd was very good at communicating with the public and being customer-service oriented, regardless of the audience he was dealing with. Mr. Shepherd solved problems effectively, in a similar fashion to how he makes decisions. In other words, once he has all the facts, he makes concrete and sound decisions; he is not one to shoot from the hip. He consistently completes tasks in a timely manner.

Mr. Merda would hire Mr. Shepherd without hesitation, knowing that he is an excellent City Manager. Nothing controversial exists in Mr. Shepherd's background that would cause embarrassment for a future employer.

Words or phrases used to describe John Shepherd:

- Accessible,
- Professional,
- Good demeanor,
- Strong work-ethic,
- Honest, and
- Intelligent.

Strengths: Mr. Shepherd has excellent interpersonal skills. Within the political climate, it was not uncommon for Mr. Shepherd take the brunt of people's frustration, but he was always able to handle it very well and remain professional.

Weaknesses: Initially, Mr. Shepherd did much of the work himself because he had to. Now he has more help, so he is able to delegate.

Tom Kerber – Commissioner, North Huntingdon Township, PA 724-863-6930

Mr. Kerber has known Mr. Shepherd since 1998 when he was a commissioner and Mr. Shepherd was the township manager. Although they do not work together now, they have stayed in touch over the years. Mr. Shepherd was an excellent manager and has worked very well with the elected officials, even though this particular board is a difficult group of individuals. A few of the

Reference Notes John Shepherd

individuals are self-serving and micro-managers, but even still, Mr. Shepherd always conducts himself professionally.

Mr. Shepherd interacted through meetings, phone calls and emails and consistently kept Mr. Kerber in the loop with things happening in the township. If Mr. Kerber ever had questions, Mr. Shepherd either immediately provided the answers or found the answer and then followed-up. When dealing with the public, Mr. Shepherd would communicate with them readily, whether they were a business customer or a resident. If an issue existed, Mr. Shepherd would get to the bottom of it, and if the township was able to help, he helped align the correct resources to resolve the problem.

Mr. Shepherd did not make decisions quickly. He took the time to research, especially if it was a complex issue. That said, his decisions were sound. Mr. Shepherd is the best manager Mr. Kerber has ever seen. His knowledge is impressive - for example, he knows municipal codes, and contracts for road or police departments without even opening a book. His expertise is consistently evident. Mr. Kerber would absolutely hire Mr. Shepherd.

Words or phrases used to describe John Shepherd:

- Knowledgeable,
- Professional,
- Honest,
- Direct, and
- Qualified.

Strengths: Mr. Shepherd gets things done. He is conscious of details and is able to communicate well.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Jim Morrison – Chief Administrator, Murphysville, PA 724-327-2100

Mr. Morrison has been associated with Mr. Shepherd since about 2002 as they were professional peers in neighboring townships. While they did not work together on a daily basis, Mr. Shepherd seemed to be effective as a township manager. As is often the case when working in politics, Mr. Shepherd works well with his elected officials, but North Huntingdon has some difficult councilmembers. They do not particularly get along with each other and have conflicting goals, which sends conflicting messages to Mr. Shepherd.

Mr. Morrison and Mr. Shepherd communicated via emails and meetings. It is difficult to tell how Mr. Shepherd dealt with the public because the commission at North Huntingdon seemed to like

Reference Notes John Shepherd

to run the show and be the face of the township. Mr. Morrison did not have the opportunity to see him dealing with customers.

Mr. Shepherd dealt with daily challenges that come along with his position and seemed to make good decisions, although the commission generally made decisions and expected him to carry them out. Mr. Shepherd was exceptionally good at accomplishing tasks in a timely manner. Mr. Morrison does not know Mr. Shepherd well enough to know if he would hire him, but he is not aware of anything controversial in Mr. Shepherd's background.

Words or phrases used to describe John Shepherd:

- Competent,
- Good communication skills, and
- Professional.

Strengths: Mr. Shepherd has been able to successfully manage the goals set by elected officials.

Weaknesses: Mr. Shepherd could be a bit more aggressive when managing difficult personalities.

Bob Robinson – Project Manager, KLH Engineers, Inc., North Huntingdon, PA 724-816-2497

Mr. Robinson has known Mr. Shepherd since 2009. Mr. Robinson is a project engineer at a municipal waste water firm, and they are the appointed engineers for the township of North Huntingdon where Mr. Shepherd is the manager. They get along very well and Mr. Shepherd is doing an outstanding job. They meet every other week as part of a staff meeting to go over current projects. Mr. Shepherd is always very prepared and a good listener.

Mr. Shepherd solves problems effectively. He looks at all issues involved before looking for the best solution. One example arose when a couple filed claims for damages on a resurfacing project. Mr. Shepherd required the claimant to submit his claim in writing. The contractor was self-insured and the claim was denied. Mr. Shepherd tried to bring all parties involved in an attempt to come to an agreement. Both sides still refused to budge, so only then did Mr. Shepherd suggest taking the issue to the district magistrate.

Mr. Shepherd keeps Mr. Robinson informed about what is happening in the township and keeps lines of communication open at all times. When dealing with the public, Mr. Shepherd does a very good job. He set up a system of work orders in the township so that any type of public complaint goes through the right channels. He reviews all complaints and ensures that the correct department is involved to address the issue and then report back to him once the complaint is resolved.

Reference Notes John Shepherd

Once Mr. Shepherd has all the facts, he makes good decisions quickly. He has hired several very strong directors for various departments including planning and public works. He understands the importance of budgets and schedules, so he accomplishes tasks in a timely manner. He is not over-demanding, but he also makes sure that his staff is responsible and gets things done. They hold weekly staff meetings to keep everyone on task.

Mr. Shepherd would definitely make a good city manager and Mr. Robinson would hire him without question. Nothing controversial exists in Mr. Shepherd's background that would prove embarrassing for a future employer.

Words or phrases used to describe John Shepherd:

- Good manager,
- Personable,
- Good listener,
- Articulate,
- Compassionate, and
- Responsible.

Strengths: Mr. Shepherd has excellent verbal and written and listening skills. He makes sure he has all pertinent information before making a decision and puts himself in other people's shoes.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Bruce Dice – Attorney, North Huntingdon, PA 724-733-3080

Mr. Dice has known Mr. Shepherd since about 2002. Mr. Dice is an attorney for North Huntingdon, where Mr. Shepherd is the township manager. In addition to working together in various respects, they have also become friends. Mr. Dice represents over 20 public entities, and of all the managers he deals with, Mr. Shepherd is the best of them all. He has a good ethic and represents the town's interests. In addition, Mr. Shepherd has a good interrelationship with his staff.

North Huntingdon deals with many labor unions in EMS, the police department and others, so Mr. Shepherd is constantly addressing labor issues. He works well with the employees. The township probably only has one to three grievances per year. Politics is politics, so opinions frequently change, but Mr. Shepherd works well with his elected officials, who would give him a 100% vote of confidence. When Mr. Shepherd left North Huntingdon the first time, he was not asked to leave. He thought the commission had lost confidence in him and he resigned. But as soon as he left, everyone wondered what had happened and wanted him back.

Reference Notes John Shepherd

Mr. Shepherd is very good at dealing with the public. Before he came to North Huntingdon, 50 to 100 people attended council meetings but now only 5 to 10 show up. Generally speaking, the public only comes to the council meeting if they have first tried to resolve the issue with Mr. Shepherd and were unsuccessful. He does such a good job at resolving their concerns that they have no need to come before the board of commissioners.

When Mr. Shepherd is faced with a problem, he will not commit to a position the first time he hears it. He is not afraid to consult with those he has confidence in. For example, if an engineering issue arises and he is not confident with their internal engineer's opinion, he reaches out to a consultant for a second opinion. One problem he solved effectively related to the plan to build a public complex to house a library, swimming pool, and other things. Acrimony between several commissioners, as well as between commissioners and the public, arose. Mr. Shepherd suggested they put it on a referendum to take the issue out of the hand of the commissioners and public, and also allowed them to see what the true consensus was. The referendum failed, which resolved the issue. The public did not show enough interest to move forward.

Mr. Shepherd is cautious, but a good decision maker. Mr. Dice would hire Mr. Shepherd if he could as Mr. Shepherd is an excellent city manager. Nothing controversial exists in Mr. Shepherd's background to bring embarrassment to a future employer.

Words or phrases used to describe John Shepherd:

- Cautious,
- Great personality,
- Clean-cut,
- Hard worker,
- Honest, and
- Intelligent.

Strengths: Mr. Shepherd is very thorough. He keeps organized lists and if he has an item that needs attention, it is not lost in the shuffle.

Weaknesses: Mr. Shepherd needs more confidence. He is better than he gives himself credit for.

Prepared by: ASHLY BINGHAM
Colin Baenziger & Associates

CB&A Internet Research

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Norwin Star (Monroeville, PA)
November 17, 2016

Early budget holds line on millage rate

Author: JOE NAPSHA

North Huntingdon officials last week discussed a proposed budget for 2017 that increases expenditures by about 8 percent but holds the line on property taxes. The township commissioners reviewed a draft budget that increases the general fund to \$14.5 million, which is supported from the revenue generated by a real estate tax levy of 9.23 mills, township manager **John Shepherd** said. The township also levies a 1-mill tax for its capital reserve fund and another 1.32 mills for seven fire departments.

The general budget proposed for 2017 is \$1.14 million higher than the 2016 budget of \$13.36 million, which was only a 0.4 percent increase from 2015. **Shepherd** attributed the proposed increase to an estimated \$255,000 for remodeling and updates to the Town House, home to the community's municipal offices and police department. The commissioners have discussed the need to remodel the building and make the second floor more handicapped-accessible. The road-paving program will be increased by about \$250,000, to about \$1.2 million; another phase of repairing Ardara Road, which has deteriorated, is expected to cost \$268,000.

North Huntingdon also wants to improve the use of technology in all departments, as noted in a strategic plan completed for the township. The municipality likely will do an analysis of its technology needs in 2017, then implement the recommendations in 2018 and beyond, **Shepherd** said. Training in customer service for new and current employees will begin with the administrative department, **Shepherd** said.

Dan Miller, parks department director, wants to update a 10-year plan to ensure the township is offering residents desired recreation and would like to install new fitness equipment at Indian Lake Park, which he called the "crown jewel of our park system." A master plan will be prepared for Oak Hollow Park, and the department will review possible development of Markvue Park.

Commissioner Zachary Haigis suggested turning over police dispatching services to the Westmoreland County Department of Public Safety as a cost savings. Commissioner Duane Kucera, a retired township police officer, said he believes the department is better served having local dispatchers who know the community. "I think it is something to look at if we become destitute because that is a major cut in services," Kucera said. **Shepherd** said he will present the board with a tentative budget on Wednesday, with final approval expected in December.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Tribune-Review (Greensburg, PA)
October 4, 2016

North Huntingdon considers tax abatement zone

Author: JOE NAPSHA

In an effort to spur development of property that is vacant, blighted or has little chance of being improved, North Huntingdon officials are considering a tax abatement zone. By designating certain parcels eligible for a tax abatement program under the Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act, developers would know in advance how they can get tax breaks for commercial development, Michael Pehur, a development finance consulting director for Duane Morris Government Strategies LLC, told commissioners this week.

In drawing a map for designated tax abatement zones, Michael Turley, assistant township manager, said officials looked for areas where they believe developers would need “incentives” to build on the site. The proposed map has been “scaled back” compared to what it was a decade ago, Turley said. To make the tax abatement program work, the Norwin School District, which levies a higher tax rate than the township or Westmoreland County, must agree to participate.

Norwin Superintendent William Kerr and school board President Robert Perkins indicated in a meeting last week that they favored a program that abates taxes completely on improvements for five years, then returns the property to the tax rolls in the sixth year, Turley said. They will discuss the LERTA program with the school board, he said. Pehur said they have had preliminary discussion about the abatement program with county officials. Another model for the program would stretch over six years, with 100 percent abatement in the first two years and a gradually decrease of the abatement rate over the next four years, Turley said.

Regarding proposed renovations to the township building on Center Highway, the commissioners discussed putting a priority on making the building more accessible to the handicapped. The township should bring the Town House up to code for accessibility, Commissioner Darryl Bertani said. First-floor restrooms could be renovated, a lift could be installed to take people to the second floor and a push-pad automatic opener could be added on the front door, said **John Shepherd**, township manager. The township could apply for funding through its Community Development Block Grant allocation, **Shepherd** said, but the township may not learn about its allocation until March.

Commissioner Michael Faccenda Jr. said he would like the township to start making the improvements in January, but **Shepherd** said block grant money can't be used to pay for projects that are completed. Any proposed renovations could be included in the township's 2017 budget, he said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Tribune-Review (Greensburg, PA)
June 17, 2016

Dispute erupts on police officers' deployment pay

Author: JOE NAPSHA

The battle over whether North Huntingdon paid three police officers all the money they were owed while deployed with the Pennsylvania National Guard erupted at a township commissioners meeting this week. The claim by police officers Mark Hamilton, Justin Wardman and Jay Kettren that they had not been paid according to the provisions of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act has been simmering for the past few months but boiled over last week after their attorney, Timothy Dawson, released a letter he sent to the township May 25, threatening a federal lawsuit if the police officers' claims were not "adequately addressed." Dawson contended that Wardman is due two years back pay for two past deployments, plus 10 additional days after filing a claim under the Uniformed Services act.

Commissioner Tony Martino, board president, said Wednesday that he and township manager **John Shepherd** and solicitor Bruce Dice would meet with Dawson and Hamilton, the only officer not currently deployed, to discuss the issue. Martino said he has attempted to work with the officers to settle the matter but he is only one vote and does not have the authority to reach an agreement without a board majority. Dawson said he was pleased that the township officials have agreed to a meeting. "I believe that we can still discuss the issues and avoid litigation," Dawson said.

During a heated exchange over the issue at Wednesday's commissioners meeting, John Watson of North Huntingdon, a veteran, yelled "they are owed the money" and said the township should pay the officers. "You deny the men who served their country," Watson said, adding he did not want the township to spend money defending a lawsuit.

Amanda Laskey of North Huntingdon, whose husband is a major in the Pennsylvania National Guard, said the township has shown "utter disrespect toward police officers who serve in the military." Dice said he believed that the township has followed its own rules regarding pay during military duty and are following regulations. There was some "mass confusion" over the township's policy, **Shepherd** said.

Commissioner Darryl Bertani, who said he has served 25 years in the military, said he believes "we will take care of the men." Commissioner Rich Gray said he did not want to meet with a select group of police officers who are part of a collective bargaining unit. The township had adopted a policy in 2008 to pay them the difference between their regular pay and their military pay while deployed. "The professional opinion is that we have upheld the law," Gray said. Commissioner Duane Kucera said that the board was told in January that the officers "were made whole."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Tribune-Review (Greensburg, PA)
February 12, 2016

Township asked to fund insurance for memorial

Author: JOE NAPSHA

North Huntingdon commissioners learned Thursday that a veterans group that was instrumental in erecting a memorial in front the Town House about 15 years ago wants the township to cover the cost of insurance for the memorial. Norwin Vet 2000 Inc. requested that the township cover the insurance costs because the group has limited funds, **John Shepherd**, township manager, told the commissioners at the board's special meeting.

On the suggestion of township solicitor Bruce Dice, **Shepherd** said he will obtain quotes to cover both liability and damages to the monument. The township in 1999 leased the memorial site to the Norwin Chamber of Commerce, which assigned the lease to Norwin Vet 2000, **Shepherd** said. The lease requires that the monument to veterans be insured, and **Shepherd** said he believes that the site is insured. The cost of liability insurance for the monument probably would be minimal for the township, **Shepherd** said. It may not be necessary to carry insurance for any damage to it, he said. Commissioner Richard Gray said he had no problem with the township covering the liability insurance but wants the veterans group to maintain the site.

In other matters, Andrew Blenko, township planning director, told the commissioners the board needs to make a decision on the site plan for the Penn-Irwin Motel along Route 20. The planning commission this month recommended the board deny the site plan because of numerous deficiencies, including the severe slope of the road leading from the site to Route 30.

The developer, United Growth Capital Management of San Rafael, Calif., had failed to address concerns that the township and PennDOT had raised about the project, Blenko said. United Growth Capital had proposed building an auto parts store and a strip mall. United Growth Capital did not want to withdraw its plan but asked the planners to deny it, Blenko said. Blenko said the developer of the Compass Bank building at the site for the former Kerber Dairy on Rocky Road off Route 30 is seeking variances for the project.

North Huntingdon developer Robert Shuster said he wants to use asphalt curbs at the site, rather than installing more expensive concrete curbs, as regulations require. If he had to install concrete curbs, the additional cost of about \$40,000 might doom the proposed project, Shuster said. Compass Bank, which is based in Wilmerding, "almost canned the whole project" because of the cost, he said. The two projects are on the commissioners' agenda for its meeting on Wednesday.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Norwin Star (Monroeville, PA)
March 6, 2014

Chief says officer has been creating a ‘negative environment’

Author: TONY LaRUSSA

The North Huntingdon police chief is pressing elected officials to help him solve a problem that he says is dividing the department and has led to three investigations against him. North Huntingdon police Chief Andrew Lisiecki asked commissioners to fire a longtime officer, who the chief said is creating a “negative environment.” He did not name the officer or provide specific actions that warrant disciplinary action. “In May of 2012 ... I was offered, and enthusiastically accepted, the position of chief,” Lisiecki said at a recent commissioners meeting during which he read a seven-page statement outlining the problems he has been experiencing. “Never in my wildest nightmares did I ever expect to be subjected to the vile and malicious treatment by a disgruntled member of the department and his supporters and allies.”

North Huntingdon officials did not identify the officer because it is a personnel matter, which is among the exclusions allowed under the state Sunshine Law. The issue will be handled internally, said township Manager **John Shepherd**. “I believe the majority of this board is taking the chief’s comments very seriously and are looking into it,” Commissioner Rich Gray said.

Commissioner Brian West said: “(The chief) has given us a lot of stuff that we need to process and look into.” While Commissioner Tom Krause said he supports Lisiecki, he does not think the chief should have made the comments in public. Commissioner Zachary Haigis also was critical of Lisiecki’s decision to speak publicly about personnel problems.

The police chief does not have the authority to fire officers, but can mete out limited suspensions, **Shepherd** said. “Cases of what I call lower-level discipline such as suspension for several days or a week would not have to be voted on by the board of commissioners,” **Shepherd** said. “But they would be asked to vote on a longer-term suspension or termination.” Upper-level managers such as Lisiecki, are at-will employees and can be dismissed without cause by the board of commissioners. Most of the township’s employees are covered by collective bargaining agreements containing specific steps that must be taken to fire an employee, **Shepherd** said. Craig Alexander, the township’s solicitor, said the infractions for which an officer can be disciplined are spelled out in the state’s first class township code, which states an officer can be suspended without pay, removed or reduced in rank for the following reasons:

- Physical or mental disability affecting the person’s ability to continue in service, in which cases the person shall receive an honorable discharge from service.
- Neglect or violation of an official duty.
- Violation of any law with the violation being a misdemeanor or felony.
- Inefficiency, neglect, intemperance, immorality, disobedience of orders or conduct unbecoming a police officer.

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John Shepherd

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

- Intoxication while on duty.
- Engaging or participating in any political election campaign while on duty or in uniform or while using borough property.

Any personnel action, however, could be challenged through the grievance process, which includes appealing disciplinary action to the township manager and then board of commissioners, said Det. Kirk Youngstead, president of the North Huntingdon Police Fraternal Relief Association, the union that representing the municipality's 25 officers. "If an officer is not satisfied with the outcome, they have the option of going to (state) arbitration," Youngstead said.

Lisiecki said that during his first eight months as chief, he was the target of two internal investigations. He also referred to a third investigation that was launched against him after township police charged Commissioner David Herold with disorderly conduct in connection with a road rage incident in October. Herold, who was found not guilty of the charges by a district judge, according to court records, did not return messages seeking comment.

According to Lisiecki, the investigations against him found no wrongdoing. According to a spokeswoman for Westmoreland County District Attorney John Peck, there currently are no investigations involving Lisiecki. The commissioners who responded to calls for comment declined to say who conducted the private investigation. The chief said the problem he has been having with the officer has "led to a division among members of the department and have led to a serious morale problem that I alone cannot fix."

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John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Daily News, The (McKeesport, PA)
July 18, 2013

N. Huntingdon ponders fix for water woes
Commissioners say they may consider partnership with residents to tackle problems
Author: Rossilynne Skena

North Huntingdon leaders will continue to meet with residents who are concerned about flooding on their properties, and they may consider a public-private partnership to fix the problem. Three people spoke to commissioners at a meeting Wednesday about flooding woes, which have become more prevalent with recent heavy rainfall. The problem area falls between Adams Drive and Roth Drive in the western portion of the township where a pipe channeling a creek runs beneath four properties, township manager **John Shepherd** said. The township does not own the pipe, nor did they install it, **Shepherd** said. "The pipe is collapsing and filling up with sediment," he said.

Officials will meet with the affected citizens to see if there's interest in a partnership to fix the pipe, which could cost about \$68, 000, he said. Another option, he said, is yanking out the pipe and allowing the stream, a tributary of Long Run, to run its course. Township commissioner David Herold moved for the township to foot the entire bill to fix the pipe. The motion failed 3-3. "I just don't think people should have to live in fear every time it rains," Herold said. "You get water in your house, that's a big thing - whether it's a little bit or a lot. I think we need to stand up. Let's do something so these people can have peace."

Herold, Tony Martino and Donald Austin voted yes. Zachary Haigis, Brian West and Richard Gray voted no. Board president Lee Moffatt was absent. "I'm not in favor of having the township completely doing the project," Haigis said. "I'm not in favor of going on a private residence and fixing a private problem."

Commissioner Richard Gray expressed concerns about what criteria the township would use to decide when to intervene in flooding issues. "The private pipes are failing," Gray said. Officials laid out several options, one of which would include North Huntingdon paying for surveying and maintenance costs, **Shepherd** said. The fix would be costly, considering it would divert a pipe around a driveway and necessitate a manhole, Michael Turley, assistant township manager, said. "It's a costly and not a simple matter to fix," Turley said.

The 24-inch pipe is in disrepair, township planning director Andrew Blenko said. "It's in very poor condition. It's partially blocked," Blenko said. "Why a 24-inch pipe was chosen is beyond me." Roth Drive resident Steve Reese told commissioners that water flows along Adams in between two homes and then onto his yard and driveway. He said water does not enter his home. "Please help my family and the others involved," Reese said. "We don't have this equity to do all of this ourselves."

Township resident Michael Hornyak said he's not directly impacted by the issue, but he urged commissioners to take action. He called on commissioners to use township money to fix the

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John Shepherd

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

problem citing an "obligation to manage that water" because it crosses a road. "People should not live in fear every time it rains," he said. Resident Jonathan Murin, who lives in a different section of the township, also said his yard floods thanks to water that crosses beneath his driveway, even washing out the driveway. **Shepherd** said officials will meet with Murin. Rossilynne Skena is a staff writer for Trib Total Media.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Daily News, The (McKeesport, PA)
September 14, 2012

Officials try to resolve flooding issues in North Huntingdon Township

Author: Michael Divittorio

North Huntingdon Township officials continue to work with four property owners between Adams and Roth drives to solve flooding problems. Roth Drive resident Joseph Maher, who is not one of the four with whom authorities are working, came to Thursday night's workshop/special meeting to talk with commissioners about the issue. "Any time we have any type of rain other than a quarter inch, the system is not able to handle it because there are pipes on private property," Maher said. "This problem hasn't gone away."

Township manager **John Shepherd** said he and township engineer and planning director Andrew Blenko and assistant manager Mike Turley met with four residents affected by the failing pipe crossing their properties and the township wants to present them with options and prices for work to fix the system. Maher said he heard the township does not want to perform repair work on private property, but wants something done to stop the flooding.

Commissioner Richard Gray said flooding in that area has been a problem for about 17 years. "Obviously the pipe has gotten worse and it happens more frequently now," Gray said. **Shepherd** said the township proposed to provide engineering and other services and the four property owners would pay the cost to have the pipe replaced. The township then would take ownership of the pipe and maintain it from then on, **Shepherd** said. "I believe all of them understand there's a problem," **Shepherd** said. "I don't know if all agree on whose problem it is. Some of them believe that the pipe on their property might not be as much of a problem as other pipes. There are problems in different places in that pipe, so it gets to be a little bit confusing. I believe all of them were willing to consider becoming involved in a project. It all comes down to money." **Shepherd** said the initial estimates were \$25,000, but quotes from a contractor came in "significantly higher."

Projected work would include installing a new 250-to 278-foot pipe running between Adams and Roth drives. **Shepherd** said Turley is expected to obtain another quote from another contractor before the township contacts the property owners again. Thursday night's meeting was one of the quickest in recent history, lasting less than 25 minutes. There was only one item on the agenda, a proposed boundary line revision of two lots in the Hampton Heights Plan. The revision was recommended for approval by the planning commission earlier this year. It is expected to be approved at Wednesday's regular meeting.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Norwin Star (Monroeville, PA)
September 6, 2012

Property owner seeks damages from township

Author: BRAD PEDERSEN

North Huntingdon property owner Tom Burk Jr. filed a lawsuit against the township in Westmoreland County Court of Common Pleas, disputing the condemnation of his Hahntown apartment building. John Scales, an attorney for Tom Burk Jr., who owns the brick building at 690 Main St., Hahntown, filed the case last week seeking more than \$30,000 in damages after saying the township caused damages by installing the unnamed alley that connects Main and Rose streets. “They came onto my client’s property and built the road but didn’t stay within the right of way,” Scales said. “It interfered with the support, access to the property and caused water damage.”

The court documents, filed by Scales, say the alley, which is installed against the apartment building’s western wall, disturbed the property’s drainage system. The disturbance forced storm water into the side of the building and over time caused the building to erode and prematurely deteriorate, according to the lawsuit. The township installed the alleyway in 2000 after claiming the right of way along the property, which caused its market value to diminish, according to the court document.

In July, the North Huntingdon commissioners closed the unnamed alley because of the building’s deteriorating condition. In August, the township placed a condemnation notice on the building that required Burk to remove the renters in the two apartments. According to court documents, Burk said the alley is insufficient drainage system damaged the structure, leading to the building’s condemnation. He is seeking compensation for the damage to the building, a change of grade in the alley to improve the drainage system and a removal of the township’s condemnation notice.

Scales said he is unsure of how much compensation Burk could receive. “The major damage is the loss of fair market value,” Scales said. “We’re getting an appraiser to determine the market value before and after the road was installed and the difference between the two determines the loss of fair market value damages.”

In the court documents, Burk said he had made several updates to the building to improve its condition before the township’s condemnation notice. Burk purchased the building from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in March for approximately \$12,000, according to the Westmoreland County tax office. Township manager **John Shepherd** could not be reached for comment on the filing.

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John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (PA)
June 25, 2009

SHEPHERD HIRED AS MANAGER AGAIN, 21/2 YEARS AFTER HE LEFT

Author: Norm Vargo

John Shepherd's progressive thinking and professional guidance are credited for helping to enhance North Huntingdon's rapid growth in recent times. The township commissioners have turned to Mr. **Shepherd** again. The board last week appointed Mr. **Shepherd** as manager by a 4-3 vote. He was among six finalists selected from 60 applicants.

Mr. **Shepherd**, 42, is the township manager in West Deer, northeastern Allegheny County. He was North Huntingdon's manager for nine years before resigning in January 2007 to take a job in the private sector. July 20 will be his first day back as North Huntingdon manager. "**John Shepherd** is recognized as one of the top municipal managers in this state," said commission President David Herold. "The board is fortunate to hire an administrator of his caliber to keep the township moving forward."

"People did not realize until **John Shepherd** was gone how big a loss to the township it was," Commissioner Anthony Martino said. Mr. **Shepherd** replaces James Morrison, who resigned in February after only five months to become the chief administrator in Murrysville. Assistant Manager Michael Turley had served as the top administrator since Mr. Morrison's departure. That was the second time in two years Mr. Turley served in that capacity. Mr. **Shepherd's** annual salary will be \$90,000.

Before the vote, Commissioners Rich Gray, Fred Patter and Lee Moffatt questioned a \$100,000 severance package that was among the terms in Mr. **Shepherd's** new contract. All three voted against hiring Mr. **Shepherd** because of the severance. Mr. Herold, Mr. Martino and fellow Commissioners Don Austin and Angelo Furlin favored Mr. **Shepherd's** hiring. Mr. **Shepherd** did not receive a severance package when he resigned as North Huntingdon manager to accept a job with Robert W. Shuster's RWS Development firm. "I did not receive a severance package when I resigned, either," Mr. Morrison said.

There was a public outcry, however, after Kelly Wolfe resigned as manager in February 2008, after 10 months She had succeeded Mr. **Shepherd**, and received a \$94,000 severance package that included a \$73,000 salary and health-care benefits. "The close vote does not bother me," Mr. **Shepherd** said. "I understand why Commissioners Gray, Patter and Moffatt opposed my severance clause because they don't want another controversy should I leave. They didn't vote against me."

"But times have changed. The trend in municipal jobs, where you serve at the will of elected officials, is to negotiate a severance package which provides some security. A governing body has the right to hire the people they want." Mr. **Shepherd** also has been the borough manager of Jefferson Hills. Political maneuvering allegedly led to his ouster there in April 2008. He agreed

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches

John Shepherd

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

to a settlement of \$25,000 and four months of paid health care. Jefferson Hills did not contest his filing for unemployment benefits, which he collected until he took the West Deer post.

Mr. **Shepherd** expects to make a smooth transition with the North Huntingdon commissioners and administrative staff. "I've worked with the commissioners before," he said. "Most of the staff I worked with is still there. I won't need to evaluate people. I know what they can do." One of Mr. **Shepherd's** achievements during his previous stint in North Huntingdon was to persuade the commissioners to build a reserve fund so the township would achieve fiscal stability while not having to continually raise property taxes.

Currently, that fund balance is more than \$3 million. "I feel the township is on solid ground financially," Mr. **Shepherd** said. "I've been gone for 21/2 years. I need to sit down with the board to find out what their priorities are and in what direction they want the township to move."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (PA)
November 20, 2008

Authority board member resigns

Author: Norm Vargo

John M. Shepherd, former North Huntingdon manager and secretary, abruptly resigned from the Western Westmoreland Municipal Authority board of directors, effective immediately. Commissioners were expected to approve the resignation at last night's meeting and to begin the process to appoint a replacement for the remaining three years of Mr. **Shepherd's** five-year term.

Mr. **Shepherd**, the municipal manager of West Deer, was North Huntingdon's top administrator for nine years. He resigned in late December 2007 and was replaced by his assistant, Kelly S. Wolfe, who then resigned in March. "**John Shepherd** ran North Huntingdon like a business. His achievements prepared the township to meet the needs of the 21st century," said former commissioner Tom Kerber, who was board president during most of Mr. **Shepherd's** tenure.

The commissioners appointed Mr. **Shepherd** to the authority board in January 2007 as one of three township representatives. He replaced John Thornton, who was not re-elected as the 7th Ward commissioner. "**John Shepherd's** resignation is a surprise," said Robert Pioth, authority board president and a representative of North Huntingdon. "He brought in some fresh ideas that our board implemented to improve the overall efficiency of the WWMA sewage treatment system."

Mr. **Shepherd** was instrumental in moving forward an investigation into the fiscal practices and travel expense policy of the WWMA board. That probe was initiated by the North Huntingdon Municipal Authority board of directors in late 2006 at the request of township commissioners. It led to changes in the travel policy and triggered an investigation by the Pennsylvania Ethics Commission. Mr. **Shepherd** was considered a strong candidate to replace Mrs. Wolfe as township manager until he advised commissioners, through township solicitor Bruce E. Dice, that he was not interested in the position.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Tribune-Review (Greensburg, PA)
February 15, 2008

North Huntingdon commissioners OK severance deal

Author: Patti Dobranski

After a spate of accusations of back-door politics and sexist tactics, North Huntingdon commissioners approved a severance package Thursday night for manager Kelly Wolfe of more than \$94,000, and accepted her resignation effective today. Amid the 4-3 votes in favor of both the package and resignation, Solicitor Bruce Dice also dispelled rumors former manager **John Shepherd** will return to the job he held for nine years before Wolfe was hired as his replacement in April. She served as **Shepherd's** assistant for eight years. Wolfe was offered the option of being demoted to assistant manager at her current salary, but she declined, Dice said.

Chairman David Herold, along with commissioners Angelo Furlin, Don Austin and Tony Martino, voted for both the package and resignation, while commissioners Rich Gray, Lee Moffatt and Fred Patter dissented. At the end of last night's meeting, the board unanimously approved the appointment of assistant manager Michael Turley as interim manager at a salary to be determined by the board. Wolfe's \$94,151 severance package includes a \$76,146 salary and 18 months of health care benefits.

Moffatt repeatedly asked the four members of the board who voted to oust Wolfe why they approached her last week to discuss ending her employment without the entire board's approval or input. "How could Mr. Herold and Mr. Austin go into her office and discuss this? How can Mr. Herold and Mr. Martino, who've only worked with her a month, do this? This doesn't add up; I still can't get any answers," he said. "It is what it is," replied Herold.

Moffatt also took issue with taxpayers paying Wolfe "nearly \$100,000 to leave" when **Shepherd** left without any compensation. He added that it was "very commendable" that **Shepherd** was not interested in returning as township manager. Herold said that commissioners paid retired police chief Charles Henaghan a package of \$150,000 "to get rid of him." Furlin attempted to end the discussion by saying it was a personnel matter for executive session. Austin said Wolfe was willing to meet with Herold and him to discuss the "separation agreement" and resignation.

Gray later blasted Austin, Martino and Furlin for alleged sexist treatment of Wolfe and asserted they wanted her removed because she was a woman. "This sets the township back 20 to 30 years. Mr. Austin told Kelly to take a man along with her outside the office. Mr. Furlin, you told Kelly you'd get her a television set to watch soap operas in the afternoon and Mr. Martino ordered her to make coffee. I can't help but think that all this was because Kelly is a woman," he said. Austin shot back that Gray was reacting to not being part of the majority vote anymore.

In other business, commissioners voted 4-3 to ratify a four-year agreement with the township's public works, office personnel and police dispatchers. The 37 workers are represented by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. The pact, which is effective

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John Shepherd

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2011, features a 3.7 percent raise in the first and second years, 3.8 percent in the third year, and 3.6 percent in the final year. Workers will not have to pay for their health care benefits.

Moffatt, Patter and Gray all voted against the contract. Patter and Moffatt said they were against the pact because they favored a 6 percent contribution toward health care just like management employees pay. Martino said the workers do not earn management's higher salaries and should not pay that percentage. "If you're only making \$35,000, that's a heck of a lot of money," he said. Herold said he did not believe anyone should pay for their health care.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (PA)
September 20, 2007

TOWNSHIP MANAGER STARTS JOB TODAY

New Jefferson Hills Manager **John Shepherd** begins work today. He was hired by a 4-3 vote of council on Sept. 12. Council President Brian Militzer, who voted yes, said he especially liked his experience, which included 10 years as manager in North Huntingdon, two years in Tarentum, and six years as assistant township manager and director of planning for Chippewa. He also works as a troubleshooter for the state on municipal matters, said Mr. Militzer. His salary will be \$75,000.

The other candidate on the "short list" was Doug Arndt, who served as interim borough manager since October 2006. Council thought it hired a borough manager on Aug. 23 when former Dormont manager George Zboyovsky, 40, was approved at a special meeting. But Mr. Zboyovsky changed his mind to accept a position as Allegheny and Washington counties director for U.S. Rep. Tim Murphy, R-Upper St. Clair.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (PA)
January 4, 2007

NORTH HUNTINGDON MANAGER RESIGNS

Author: Norm Vargo

North Huntingdon Manager **John Shepherd** has submitted his resignation, effective later this month, and will take a position in the private sector, Commissioners Tom Kerber and Don Austin confirmed yesterday. "It's a shame. **John** is recognized as one of the top municipal managers in the state," Mr. Kerber said. "It will be tough to find a person of his caliber to replace him. People won't realize until he's gone just how big a loss to the township this is."

Mr. Austin agreed. "**John Shepherd** brought a sense of professionalism that guided a municipality which is experiencing unanticipated rapid growth. It's not easy to lose your top administrator." Mr. **Shepherd** would neither confirm nor deny that he submitted his resignation from the \$83,000-per-year position in December. "I feel it appropriate that comments regarding my situation should come from the commissioners," he said.

Lee Moffatt, another of the township's seven commissioners, said he would "try to change Mr. **Shepherd**'s mind. "I know others feel the same." Mr. **Shepherd**, a North Huntingdon native, became township manager in 1999, replacing Charlene Riggins. He also serves as secretary of the Western Westmoreland Municipal Authority, which treats sewage from about half of the township's 11,300 customers. Mr. Moffatt praised Mr. **Shepherd's** work in the township but questioned the timing of the manager's decision. "**John Shepherd's** progressive thinking and professional guidance helped place our township among the fastest-growing municipalities in Pennsylvania," he said. "His diligent effort over the past few years has made our township a better place to live. People want to live here. "This is an exciting time for North Huntingdon. Mr. **Shepherd** knows what's going on. "I'm puzzled," Mr. Moffat added. "I can't believe he would not want to stay and be a part of something he helped create."

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John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Tribune-Review (Greensburg, PA)
March 17, 2006

Official challenges authority's practices

Author: Lori Heller

A North Huntingdon Township official has asked fellow Western Westmoreland Municipal Authority members to change the way the group communicates with the public -- and pays for spouses or guests to attend conferences. Authority member **John Shepherd**, who serves as North Huntingdon Township manager, said at Thursday night's meeting that the authority may be violating the Sunshine Act by failing to provide a detailed monthly meeting agenda.

In addition, **Shepherd** provided all board members with copies of North Huntingdon's travel and training policy for municipal employees with hopes that the authority could limit "unnecessary expenditures, which eventually must be passed along to our customers, the rate payer." In a memo dated March 16, **Shepherd** noted that "while I have been told by various board members that spouse/guest costs are not reimbursed by the WWMA, my review of some 2005 WWMA expense reports from various training events indicates otherwise."

In North Huntingdon, expenses of a spouse or non-employee are not reimbursable. **Shepherd** began questioning past practices of the board shortly after he joined the authority two months ago. Larry Chrzan, a 17-year veteran of the board, was the only authority member to speak to **Shepherd's** request to modify the authority's conference policy and procedures. Chrzan challenged **Shepherd** to come to next month's meeting with the name of any municipal authority in the area that charges less than \$200 per year for sewage service, saying that WWMA's customers pay the lowest rate of any.

As for the monthly meeting agenda lacking information, **Shepherd** said board members need more specifics in order to prepare for meetings. The public, he said, cannot reasonably speak on issues at a meeting if they are not included in a meeting agenda. **Shepherd** asked authority Solicitor John Campfield to review the Sunshine Act to determine if the authority is in violation of the public's right to know.

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John Shepherd
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Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (PA)
November 17, 2005

BUDGET INCLUDES TAX INCREASE

Author: Norm Vargo

Eleven months ago North Huntingdon Township Manager **John Shepherd** proposed a no-tax-hike budget for 2005 but warned that may not be the case in 2006. Folks snickered at his warning then because of the ongoing home construction boom. But last week those snickers turned to groans when Mr. **Shepherd** proposed a \$10,923,100 spending plan complete with tax increases. The plan includes revenues anticipated from a 2-mill real estate tax increase and from a \$52 emergency municipal service tax that commissioners will enact and levy on persons working in the township who earn more than \$12,000 annually.

Commissioners were expected to give preliminary approval last night pending a formal vote in December. "It's a bare bones spending plan," Mr. **Shepherd** said. "We've reduced and cut again to make the millage increase reasonable. Our goal was to prevent staff cuts to balance the budget." Commissioner Richard Gray responded, "People are going to question why the board is raising taxes with all the construction going on. What do we tell them?"

"The township is not swimming in money. That's not the case, even with the building boom," Mr. **Shepherd** said, "We don't get rich on property tax. The [Norwin] School Board and Westmoreland County receive the lion's share. The township is third on the list. "It's different with the wage tax. Although we share with the school district, we still collect a substantial amount. But it's not enough to provide the high level of services the commissioners are committed to providing to residents." An average resident will see a \$50 increase in the property tax, Mr. **Shepherd** said.

Mr. **Shepherd** was expected to present a "fine-tuned" spending plan last night that still included the 2-mill increase. Revisions included some additional trimming in order to find money to hire a parks and recreation director and an increase in the annual funding for the Rescue 8 Squad emergency ambulance unit. Gone from the budget is the D.A.R.E. Program township police administer in the schools to educate students about substance abuse. The program will be replaced by another updated educational program, according to Lt. Michael Daugherty, acting police chief.

The spending plan does include funding for a new specialized township police Emergency Response Team, Lt. Daugherty said. It will only be used during incidents or disaster emergencies in the municipality, and it will be funded by a legislative grant from state Rep. James P. Casorio, Hiring a parks and recreation director is a priority, Mr. Gray said, although Mr. **Shepherd** did not plan for a hiring until the board reviewed the budget.

"A recreation program is essential. Residents want it. They like the parks the township is providing," said Commissioner Tim Hondal. Ralph Yanez, a member of the township Recreation

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John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Commission, informed the commissioners that the entire board was considering resigning in December if nothing is done to keep the parks from further deterioration.

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John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (PA)
October 22, 2003

COMMISSIONERS DON'T PLAN ON TAX DECREASE, DESPITE \$7.5 MILLION SURPLUS

Author: ROSE DOMENICK

A tax decrease for North Huntingdon residents isn't going to happen, even though former Commissioner Bob Merda has asked the board to "give back" a bit of a \$7.5 million budget surplus. Officials acknowledge the township is sitting pretty financially, but add that the surplus is earmarked for improving township facilities and has taken years to accumulate. "The commissioners, as a group, had the foresight to save surplus money during at least the last five years since I've been here, to build and have paid off a new public works building to avoid a bond issue," said township Manager **John Shepherd** after last Wednesday's board meeting. "That was the goal."

Some of the surplus is intended to cover liquid fuel and fire service costs, leaving about \$5,070,000 in reserves carried over from last year. That's more than enough for capital projects such as a \$2.5 million public works building at the former Maple Drive-In site, which includes the property purchase price of \$463,000.

Also planned are a new heating and air-conditioning system for the Town House municipal building at a cost of about \$600,000 and \$70,000 for a new roof and gutters at the Town House, including the cost of a new telephone system. That will leave about \$1.5 million, which will enable the township to avoid taking tax anticipation loans until revenues come in, typically later in the calendar year. **Shepherd** said a final surplus of \$1.5 million might sound reasonable. But citing an accounting rule of thumb that surpluses should be 10 percent to 15 percent of a budget, he added, "It'll be tight."

The 2003 budget, which is higher than usual, is \$12.16 million. Most of that amount is the general fund of \$10.48 million, which includes money for capital projects. The improvements are necessary, **Shepherd** added. The Town House was built in the early 1970s and still has its original roof and heating system. Township officials are renting space for the public works department. The new public works building is expected to be completed next year. Merda, a commissioner for six years who had to resign when he moved to a different ward, is a member of the planning commission. He has been attending the commissioners meetings for four months asking questions about the budget surplus.

He cited the tremendous growth in the township, both residential and commercial, and the steadily increasing revenues such growth brings. If the Mills Point shopping center and proposed Wal-Mart Supercenter are approved, Merda guessed the township could receive at least \$100,000 in annual income from this alone. "I'm not going to the meetings to make anyone look bad," Merda said. "It's about accountability. If they have that much surplus money, the commissioners should give it back. The ball's in their court. I don't have any control over it now. I'm only telling

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John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

the truth. When I was a commissioner, I wasn't there for politics. I was there to do a job managing the township."

Merda said he believes in retrospect that he made a mistake as commissioner voting along with the board for the last tax increase of 1.5 mills in 2001, bringing the tax rate to 10 mills. One mill of the increase was designated for fire services, **Shepherd** said. One-half mill was for capital improvements, which brought revenue for capital improvements up to 1 full mill. One mill in the township equals about \$150,000.

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John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Pittsburgh Tribune-Review (PA)
September 13, 2002

Expanded recycling program could spur funds for township

Author: Craig Smith

North Huntingdon Township officials are hoping an expanded recycling program will give their revenue line a boost. New bid specifications for trash hauling will augment the recycling program — which currently collects aluminum, glass and bimetal containers — to include plastic and newsprint. The township also hopes to spark interest in the program by commercial customers who currently can opt out of recycling. But that may be a tougher row to hoe because of the types of materials businesses routinely discard, said township Manager **John Shepherd**. 'Some businesses go through significant amounts of materials like cardboard, office paper,' he told the commissioners Thursday. Whether those materials are desirable for recycling will have to be determined.

The township currently receives about \$7,000 a year in recycling performance grants from the state, which is based on the amount of recyclable materials it collects, said Kelly Wolfe, assistant township manager. Increasing participation in the recycling program will have an impact on those grants, **Shepherd** said. The new bid specifications, once formally approved by the commissioners, then will be advertised. Wolfe said the goal is to have a bid opening in October and award a new five-year contract in November. North Huntingdon residents pay slightly less than \$6 a quarter for trash removal under the current contract with Waste Management Inc.

In other business, the township hopes to meet with PennDOT officials next week about a drainage problem along Lincoln Way. Lincoln Way resident Chuck Heasley told the panel he is concerned about standing water in the area because of the threat of the West Nile virus. 'I'm concerned about mosquitoes. That's where they're gathering,' he said. 'We all know the outcome. It can happen here.'

Shepherd said a pipe that runs under Lincoln Way is clogged, and a headwall there is collapsing. 'It has to be addressed by PennDOT,' **Shepherd** said. 'I agree it's a problem, but we certainly can't go in and repair their headwall. That's PennDOT's problem.' **Shepherd** characterized the amount of standing water as significant. 'It's a decent-sized piece, not just a puddle,' he said. The township has added Lincoln Way to a list of areas in the township to be submitted to the county for testing for West Nile virus. That list includes a number of retention ponds and Indian Lake.

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John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Pittsburgh Tribune-Review (PA)
May 11, 2001

Nepotism policy under consideration

Author: Jason Togyer

North Huntingdon Township commissioners will have less clout with their relatives if they approve the nepotism policy they're considering. At their workshop Thursday, several commissioners said that's a price they're willing to pay to head off future problems. The proposed policy bans spouses, siblings, children, parents, grandparents and grandchildren of any township official or employee from working under their supervision or discipline. The policy also would allow the township to ask for the resignation or transfer of an employee who marries a supervisor.

Township Manager **John Shepherd** said the policy effectively stops any relative of a commissioner from being hired by North Huntingdon. Current employees would not be affected, and no current situation prompted the legislation, officials said. 'Right now it's not a problem, but what about 20 years from now?' Ward 7 Commissioner Kory Bulloch said. The ordinance will likely be introduced at Wednesday's commissioners meeting and adopted in June, said township Solicitor Thomas P. Cole II.

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John Shepherd
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Pittsburgh Tribune-Review (PA)
February 3, 2001

Township readying for energy review

Author: Jason Togyer

North Huntingdon Township officials are gassed about a plan to help provide some relief from shocking fluctuations in energy prices. The township is soliciting bids for an engineering firm to evaluate all of its municipal energy needs, from light and heat to power for traffic signals. The winning bidder will suggest improvements or changes that provide guaranteed cost savings, said township Manager **John Shepherd**.

If the company proposes replacing lighting or ventilation systems, for instance, 'they would have to show us a savings in utility payments over a 10-year period that would pay for the new equipment,' he said. 'It may or may not work,' **Shepherd** said. 'They may say that for what you need to do, we can't save you enough money.'

The township is currently considering replacement of the 25-year-old heating system at the Town House. **Shepherd** said it seemed like an ideal time to investigate a so-called 'guaranteed energy savings' contract. 'The Town House is all-electric,' he said. 'Maybe one of their recommendations will be that we change to gas service, or a different heating system altogether.' A 1996 state law, the Energy Savings Act, encouraged municipalities to take such action, said Kelly S. Wolfe, assistant to the township manager.

Officials want the winning contractor to examine the construction and energy consumption of every building North Huntingdon owns, including park structures and maintenance sheds, and then suggest improvements to each. 'Municipalities want to be more cost-efficient, and (want) a guarantee by the contractor that the amount they'll save on an annual basis will pay that year's portion of the project,' Wolfe said. 'Moon Township did it, and it worked for them,' **Shepherd** said. 'We've used their (plan) as guidance for ours.' Proposals are being accepted until Feb. 26. The bids will be opened publicly the next day and finalists will likely be selected before March 26.

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John Shepherd
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Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (PA)
October 25, 1998

**YOUNGEST MANAGER, A SELF-PROCLAIMED 'GARDEN VARIETY
PERFECTIONIST'**

Author: PAT WILSON

To describe a guy like **John Shepherd** in 10 words or less, you'd have to come up with a list that sounds a little unrealistic. He's a young professional (that's two words) with a mature outlook, focused, articulate, energetic and driven but playful. At 31, he's become North Huntingdon's youngest township manager, which doesn't bother him one bit. When he returned to his hometown in August, he didn't know what to expect after two turbulent years as manager in Tarentum, where he sorted out the billing problems that followed the borough's decision to operate its own electric system. "I figured after my experience in Tarentum, I could handle just about anything that would come along here," **Shepherd** said with a half-grin, tossing a file onto the "Done" stack on his desk.

"Having lived through that was quite an education. That was challenging, but it made me a stronger manager," he said.

Shepherd, who enjoys trail biking with his wife, Laura, and his chocolate Labrador, Dakota, also admits he just loves his work. "I really do. I'm finding that the resources are here to do the job right, all of our departments are strong and work well together, and the staff is capable," he said. **Shepherd** is zeroing in on a list of priorities that he will have to address in coming months. "We have to get some long and short-term goals. Things can become stagnant," **Shepherd** said. "This is a big community and it needs a strategic plan."

Right now, township planning director Darryl Granata is putting together a final draft of a new comprehensive plan. **Shepherd** strongly feels that in addition to directing where certain kinds of development can take place in the rapidly growing township, a strategic plan can address other key planning questions. "It needs to be attached to a comprehensive plan to ask 'where do we want to go?' and then plot how we get there," he said. "What's nice about working here is that this is a stable community. You can spend the time it takes on something like a strategic plan."

Shepherd, who grew up in North Huntingdon and graduated from Norwin High School in 1985, sees changes in the township over the past 10 years as a double-edged sword. "The growth and development has been rapid, but now you're seeing so much more traffic on the main arteries, especially Route 30," he said. "We have to look at that, too." The township also needs updated zoning ordinances and a revised planning code.

His next step will be addressing quality-of-living issues, including park improvements and recruiting office professionals and high-tech firms to locate there. "It helps to be self-sustaining" by offering good jobs to those relocating in the community, he said. "We need to show them what we're doing that makes this township so attractive." He doesn't see a slowdown in the growth rate in North Huntingdon for many years, "so we want to get the word out that new

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John Shepherd

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

development will have to have character, a lot of green and landscaping. Unattractive development only destroys the character of a community."

Granata, who assisted the township commissioners in its search for a township manager this summer, said **Shepherd** is dedicated to preserving the qualities of the township. "And he's a hard worker. When he's not working on something at his desk, he's on the computer, tracking new developments in planning, changes in the laws and such," Granata said. "This township has never had what it deserved before, an educated and professional manager. He's consumed. He's motivated."

Occasionally **Shepherd** zips out of his office to jest with the secretarial pool. "This is Margie Warden. She's our head computer systems administrator," he said. "Yesterday she had a different title, which was not her title Monday. No, really, I mean it. She'll help anyone with anything on this computer."

While his co-workers describe him as a workaholic, **Shepherd** says he's really a garden variety perfectionist. "I'd like to be known for my professionalism and impartiality," he said, thinking over how he'd like to be thought of in 10 or 15 years. With a master's degree in public administration and a bachelor's in urban planning, **Shepherd** began his career in Pittsburgh city government and decided he liked to work smaller. "I prefer being involved in things from start to finish and seeing if something turns out good or bad one way or another," he said. "If you set a policy and it doesn't work, you can see it and rectify it."

Research Compiled by: Cara Slade
 Colin Baenziger & Associates