

## **BUDGET: So Far So Good**

It wasn't exactly a time for party hats, but it was a time for congratulations from Sylvania Township Trustees to township departments as they studied an overview of expenses so far incurred by the township's four main departments.

John Jennewine, chairman of the trustees, said "the entire staff has been focused and they've done a great job as the numbers show."

At the end of July, departments could be expected to have spent 58.3 percent of their budgeted annual allocation, according to David Simko, fiscal officer of the township.

The report of the four major funds reviewed by trustees showed the general fund at 47.5 percent in expenses, the road and bridge fund at 46.5 percent, the police fund at 54.9 percent and the fire department at 54.5 percent.

Mr. Simko said there can't be any guarantees, but he is "not aware of any major concerns with any of the budgets."

He did note there was an unanticipated expense due to hiring contractors to help with clean up after the July storm left damaged trees littering yards and roadways in some sections of the township.

The cost, he said, was about \$32,000 which was below what he had anticipated.

Reallocating all road department personnel to cleanup duty helped keep down the cost.

Given the amount of damage and the heat of the next days, Mr. Simko said the department did a good job even though some necessary cost was incurred.

John Zeitler, township administrator, said he has been working with Jim Beck, township director of accounting and budgeting, on next year's budget.

He said Mr. Beck is analyzing actual expenditures as opposed to budgeted amounts and the actual costs will be used as a baseline for the 2013 budget. He said there are continuing reductions in revenue from the state and reductions in tax collections due to lower real estate valuations. He said further reductions in spending will be necessary.

Mr. Simko said departments which are holding down costs this year shouldn't feel they are being punished for doing a good job. He said Sylvania Township, like all governments across the state, is faced with diminishing revenue and has to closely watch all expenditures.

Posted: 08/07/2012