



New Jersey Libertarian Party

Open Government Advocacy Project

John Paff, Chairman

P.O. Box 5424

Somerset, NJ 08875-5424

Phone: 732-873-1251 - Fax: 908-325-0129

Email: lpsmc@pobox.com

November 29, 2011

Hon. Fletcher Jamison, Mayor, and members of the
Commercial Township Committee

1768 Main St

Port Norris, NJ 08349

(via e-mail to hnichols@commercialtwp.com)

Hon. Joseph Miletta, Mayor and members of the
Lawrence Township Committee

357 Main St

Cedarville, NJ 08311

(via e-mail to ruthdawson@comcast.net)

RE: Billings by Seeley Law Office, LLC

Dear Mayors Jamison and Miletta and Committee members:

I write both individually and in my capacity as Chairman of the New Jersey Libertarian Party's Open Government Advocacy Project to inquire about some legal services invoices I recently received from both Commercial and Lawrence Townships. Attached are the invoices in question.

I invite your attention to the Seeley Law Office's March 30, 2011 billing entries. As you can see, Mr. Seeley billed a) Lawrence Township \$900 for 6 hours he spent at "attendance at Tax Court for trial re; Fitzgerald v. Lawrence; same to be rescheduled" and b) Commercial Township \$1,275 for 8.5 hours he spent at "attendance at Trenton State Tax Appeal Court re: Ricci Bros."

While I cannot be certain, it appears that Mr. Seeley (and/or perhaps some other lawyer at his firm) travelled to Trenton on March 30, 2011 to handle two tax appeal matters. One of those matters (Fitzgerald v. Lawrence) was apparently adjourned to another day while the other (Ricci Bros.) was heard by the Court. In total, he billed Lawrence and Commercial taxpayers \$2,175 for 14.5 hours.

Out of concern for the taxpayers, would you please ask Mr. Seeley whether he really put in a 14.5 hour day on March 30, 2011? Even if he present for the entire eight-hour business day, and allowing for two hours for travel each way, twelve would appear to be maximum billable hours in that day.

Moreover, if the Fitzgerald v. Lawrence matter was rescheduled, it doesn't seem right for him to have billed Lawrence Township's taxpayers for 6 hours. Even if it really took him that long to drive back and forth to Trenton to learn that the matter was rescheduled, he had to make the trip anyway because of the Ricci matter. Accordingly, it seems that Lawrence's taxpayers should only have to share the travel time with Commercial's taxpayers.

Thank you very much for your attention to this matter. I am interesting in learning the result of this inquiry so I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Paff", with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Paff

SEELEY LAW OFFICE, LLC
 A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY
 163 West Commerce Street
 Bridgeton, New Jersey 08302

Telephone (856) 451-8050
 Fax No. (856) 451-1407

Thomas E. Seeley

James J. Seeley
 1945-2005

April 1, 2011

Ruth Dawson, Township Clerk
 Lawrence Township Municipal Building
 357 Main Street
 Cedarville, NJ 08311

FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES RENDERED:

Re: February/March 2011 Billing

2/14/10	Receipt and review of correspondence from Ruth Dawson re: South Jersey Energy Service Plus and Surplus Sale of Property	.20	\$30.00
	Dictation and preparation of Contract awarded to South Jersey Energy Service Plus and forward same to Township	.70	\$105.00
	Dictation and preparation of Resolution and public notices for Surplus Sale of Property (Dump Truck) and forward same to Township	.70	\$105.00
3/4/11	Receipt and review of correspondence from Judge DeAlmeida re: Bertulis Tax Appeal added to Judge's stipulation calendar	.10	\$15.00
3/7/11	Receipt and review of Stipulation of Settlement signed by Gary Bertulis; dictation and preparation of correspondence to Judge DeAlmeida enclosing Stipulation for filing and requesting that matter be removed from Trial Calendar	.50	\$75.00
3/10/11	Office conference with Don Seifrit, Harry Renwick and Francis & Catherine Fitzgerald re: attempt to negotiate tax appeal property taxes	1.5	\$225.00
	Office conference with Don Seifrit re: Bertulis - County figures insert in Stipulation of Settlement are incorrect	.20	\$30.00
3/11/11	Dictation and preparation of Resolution re: Contract with Renwick & Associates for appraisal services	.50	\$75.00
3/15/11	Dictation and preparation of correspondence to Gary Bertulis enclosing revised and corrected Stipulation of Settlement	.50	\$75.00
3/17/11	Receipt and review of correspondence re: corrections to be made to Resolution for appraisal services; and corrections to same	.10	\$15.00
3/22/11	Receipt and review of letter from Bowman & Company requesting litigation analysis; Review of files and dictation and preparation of litigation analysis letter to Bowman & Company	1.2	\$180.00
3/23/11	Receipt and review of signed Stipulation of Settlement; dictation and preparation of correspondence to Judge DeAlmeida enclosing revised and corrected Stipulation of Settlement to be filed with the New Jersey Tax Court	.50	\$75.00
3/29/11	Preparation for Tax Court trial re: Fitzgerald	2.5	\$375.00
→ 3/30/11	Attendance at Tax Court for trial re: Fitzgerald v. Lawrence; same to be rescheduled.	6.0	\$900.00

SEELEY LAW OFFICE, LLC
A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY
163 West Commerce Street
Bridgeton, New Jersey 08302

Telephone (856) 451-8050
Fax No. (856) 451-1407

Thomas E. Seeley

James J. Seeley
1945-2005

April 5, 2011

Hannah E. Nichols, Clerk
Commercial Township - Township Hall
1768 Main Street
Port Norris, NJ 08349

FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES RENDERED:

Re: Commercial Township February 2011 Billing

2/24/11	Receipt and review of correspondence with attachments from Terance J. Bennett, Esquire, re: Brad Wolfe's property and Land Use Bd. decision	1.2	\$180.00
3/4/11	Telephone conference with Ruth Benz, re: unemployment; dictation and preparation of correspondence to NJ Dept. of Labor re: tax assessor	.30	\$45.00
3/11/11	Receipt and review of auditor's Litigation analysis; review of file	2.5	\$375.00
	Telephone conference with Theodore E. Baker, Esquire re: setback concerns on Brad Wolfe property	.50	\$75.00
3/17/11	Receipt and review of correspondence from Terance J. Bennett, Esquire,	.30	\$45.00
	Receipt and review of correspondence from Anthony Buonadonna, Esquire, re: proposed settlement of Ricci Bros. Tax Appeal; fax same to Hannah Nichols and review same with Harry Renwick	2.5	\$375.00
3/22/11	Dictation and preparation of correspondence to Bowman & Co. re: report and litigation analysis	.50	\$75.00
	Telephone conference with Theodore E. Baker, Esquire, following regulations of setback on Wolfe property	.50	\$75.00
	Receipt and review of Dept. of Community Affairs Small Cities Grant and confirming applicable statute requirements	2.8	\$420.00
3/24/11	Office conference with Harry Renwick and telephone conference with Anthony Buonadonna, Esquire, re: attempt to settle tax appeal, review of file, appraisal report, environmental report	3.8	\$570.00
3/28/11	Receipt and review of correspondence from Kevin King on behalf of his client re: proposal to buy post office	.20	\$30.00

3/28/11	Receipt and review of correspondence from Renwick & Associates re: Scope of Planning and Design; review of N.J.S.A. statutes	2.8	\$420.00
	Review of Professional Services Contract Law; review of N.J.S.A. and N.J.A.C. applicable statutes for appointment of professionals	2.5	\$375.00
3/29/11	Meeting with Harry Renwick and staff re: review of file and preparation for trial	4.0	\$600.00
	Receipt and review of correspondence from Edward Dennis re: Landfill Solar Project; review of N.J.A.C. and N.J.S.A. applicable sections	3.8	\$570.00
	Review of Redevelopment Plan	3.5	\$525.00
3/30/11	Attendance at Trenton State Tax Appeal Court re: Ricci Bros.	8.5	\$1,275.00
3/31/11	Conference with Terance Bennett, Esquire re; Brad Wolfe property and proposed resolution of same	.50	\$75.00
	Total Hours	40.7	\$6,105.00

Out of Pocket Costs:

Photocopies - (8 of copies) @ .30 =	\$ 2.40
Postage -	\$ 1.76
Faxes 7 pages @ \$1.00 p/p	<u>\$ 7.00</u>
	\$11.16

Summary:

(Insert Hrs) @ \$150.00 - Legal Fees	\$6,105.00
Out of Pocket Expenses	<u>\$ 11.16</u>
Total Due	<u>\$6,116.16</u>

TES/lc