

Riley offers office space to St. Clair County sheriff

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Following the purchase of property that came complete with a house for remodeling, the township of Riley extended a proposal for free office space to be used by the St. Clair County Sheriff Department, an offer which sheriff Dan Lane later admitted, he could not refuse.

Lane said he had been searching for a location out of which officers patrolling the western portion of the county could carry out specific duties which would, in turn, alleviate their need to travel back to Port Huron offices. At one time, Lane was considering locations in both Emmett and Mussey Township, but the plans fell through for various reasons.

Then Lane got a call from Gerry Hannon, Riley Township supervisor, who extended the offer after hearing about Lane's desire to explore another location. The township, through a bond sale with a 20-year pay-off, recently purchased a home and 18 acres of land for \$320,000. The property is

adjacent to the current township hall on a 200- by 300-foot parcel. Cramped and overcrowded conditions mark the township hall which currently accommodates the intermittent activities of any number of township officials, several of whom had no choice but to use their homes as locations for office storage. This compelled township officials to consider looking for land to construct a new town hall with more office space.

When the property next door that belonged to the family of resident Sandy Yera went on the market, township officials could not believe their luck.

"The adjoining property is priceless," said Hannon in a recent interview concerning the acreage that extends 800 feet along Riley Center road with another thousand feet of frontage lining Belle River road. With future modifications, the ranch home will accommodate township office needs and leave the town hall devoted to meeting use.

The extra acreage can provide for a number of outdoor possibilities within an

expanding township such as a ball diamond, park or soccer field. A full basement will provide ample storage space and the upper portion of the former residence will house a reception area, offices for the clerk, the treasurer and the assessor who will share a desk with a secretary.

The building will also provide a work area for the building and electrical inspectors, a conference room and kitchen area and still leave room to spare, some of which was then offered to provide for the sheriff department needs.

"This is going to make it easy and convenient," said Lane as he surveyed the room which will soon become a location for officers to take fingerprints, photos and conduct interviews. The office won't be manned on a regular basis at this point and isn't expected to be for perhaps at least a year.

"My part will be to try and get a person 40 hours a week to man it," said County Board of Commissioners Chairman Lee Masters. "We are not currently budgeted for it."



Township officials pose in front of a home on 18 acres of land purchased for \$320,000. The property will be removed for additional office space.

The office has its own outside entrance and will probably contain office fixtures such as a desk, fax machine and fingerprint equipment to be secured with a keypad locking system to which patrol officers will have access.

"It will also make it better for John Q. Citizen," said Lane who added that citizens in some instances will be sav-

ing some mileage to Port Huron through the availability of future documents and paperwork that will ultimately be offered for pick-up at the office. Lane said patrol cars average 18 hours a day patrolling the western area of the county which includes the townships of Riley, Wales, Berlin, Clyde, Kenockee, Brockway, Lynn, Mussey, Greenwood and Emmett.