

**TOWNSHIP OF WORCESTER
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

ORDINANCE 2022-292

**AN ORDINANCE APPROVING REAPPOINTMENT OF SOLICITOR, AND
SETTING INTEREST ASSESSMENT, ATTORNEY FEES AND COLLECTION
FEES ADDED TO THE AMOUNT COLLECTED AS PART OF UNPAID REAL
ESTATE TAXES AND MUNICIPAL CLAIMS FOR DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS**

WHEREAS, to be fair to all taxpayers and other residents of Worcester Township (the "Township"), it is necessary for the Township to recover promptly unpaid, delinquent real estate tax accounts and unpaid, delinquent municipal fee accounts, if necessary, by legal proceedings; and

WHEREAS, the Municipal Claims and Tax Liens Act, 53 P.S. § 7101, *et seq.*, as amended (the "Act"; capitalized terms used but not defined herein shall have the meanings ascribed to such terms in the Act), provides a statutory framework for Municipalities to collect unpaid Tax Claims and Municipal Claims; and

WHEREAS, § 7101 of the Act authorizes a municipality levying Taxes, Tax Claims, Tax Liens, Municipal Claims and/or Municipal Liens that become delinquent (each, an "Unpaid Claim") to recover the Charges, Expenses, Commissions and Fees incurred in the collection of the Unpaid Claims (the "Collection Expenses") as Charges, Expenses and Fees included together with the applicable Unpaid Claim; *provided*, that such Collection Expenses are approved by Legislative Action of such municipality; and

WHEREAS, § 7106(a.1) of the Act requires that the applicable Municipality adopt by ordinance a schedule of Attorney Fees for any Attorney Fees incurred in connection with the filing, preservation and collection of any Delinquent Account, including any Unpaid Claim; and

WHEREAS, the Township has determined after due deliberation and investigation, that it is in the best interest of the Township to collect certain Unpaid Claims pursuant to the Act (such Unpaid Claims, "MCTLA Unpaid Claims") and, after careful review of the Attorney Fees and Collection Fees set forth in this Ordinance, to approve and adopt such Attorney Fees and Collection Fees pursuant to this Legislative Action in accordance with the Act.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Supervisors of Worcester Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania hereby ordains and enacts as follows:

SECTION I

1. Chapter 135, Taxation, Article VI, §135-31 to §135-37, inclusive, shall be deleted in its entirety, and replaced as follows:

§135-31 Attorney Fees and Collection Fees to be Added to the MCTLA Unpaid Claims. The Attorney Fees and Collection Fees set forth below are hereby adopted, approved and determined to be reasonable, including, without limitation, as contemplated by § 7106 of the Municipal Claims and Tax Liens Act (MCTLA). The Attorney Fees and Collection Fees set forth below shall be included and added to the applicable MCTLA Unpaid Claim in an

amount equal to the amount set forth in herein.

(a) Attorney Fees.

Initial review and sending first legal demand letter	\$175.00
File Lien and prepare Satisfaction	\$250.00
Prepare Writ of Scire Facias	\$250.00
Prepare and mail letter under Pa. R.C.P. 237.1	\$ 50.00
Prepare Default Judgment	\$175.00
Research, prepare and obtain re-issued Writ	\$175.00
Prepare Praecipe to Amend	\$100.00
Prepare Motion to Amend	\$150.00
Prepare Motion for Alternate Service	\$250.00
Prepare Motion to Consolidate Claims	\$250.00
Amend claim to add United States as defendant	\$250.00
Prepare Writ of Execution	\$800.00
Preparation for sheriff's sale; review schedule of distribution and resolve distribution issues	\$400.00
Prepare Motion to Continue Sheriff's Sale	\$ 50.00
Prepare Petition for Free and Clear Sale	\$400.00
Preparation and service of Subpoena	\$100.00
Presentation of Motion or Petition	\$ 50.00
Services not covered above	at an hourly rate between \$75.00 - \$275.00 per hour

(b) Collection Fees.

Validation notice	\$ 25.00 per notice
Notice of delinquent claim and fee shifting	\$ 40.00 per notice, plus applicable postage

Bookkeeping fee for payment plan of 3 months or less	\$ 25.00
Bookkeeping fee for payment plan of more than 3 months	\$ 50.00
Handling fee for returned check	\$ 25.00

§135-32 Other Costs. In addition to the Collection Fees set forth under Subsection 1(b) above, the amount of out-of-pocket charges, costs, expenses, commissions and fees incurred in connection with the filing, preservation and collection of the MCTLA Unpaid Claims, including, but not limited to, prothonotary fees and charges, sheriff fees and charges, postage expenses, title search expenses, vehicle identification number (VIN) search expenses, skip tracing and/or other investigatory service expenses, and the costs, fees, charges and/or expenses arising out of any payment by any credit card, debit card or any other payment medium, are hereby approved and shall be included, upon incurrence, together with the applicable MCTLA Unpaid Claim.

§135-33 Interest. Interest will be assessed upon the Unpaid Claims at a rate of 10% per annum and added to the Unpaid Claims. The Township is permitted to waive any interest on any Unpaid Claim when the Township or any attorney and/or third-party collector collecting the Unpaid Claim believes, in its discretion, that such amount is *de minimis* or that the cost or burden of continuing collection outweighs the benefit of collecting the interest.

§135-34 Appointment of Solicitor. The Township appoints Michelle R. Portnoff, Esquire, as Solicitor for the limited purpose of collecting the Unpaid Claims and hereby authorizes her, and all attorneys employed by Portnoff Law Associates, Ltd., to sign any and all documents, including municipal claims and liens, on behalf of the Township.

SECTION II

1. In the event that any section, subsection or portion of this Ordinance shall be declared by any competent court to be invalid for any reason, such decision shall not be deemed to affect the validity of any other section, subsection or portion of this Ordinance. The invalidity of section, clause, sentence, or provision of this Ordinance shall not affect the validity of any other part of this Ordinance, which can be given effect without such invalid part or parts. It is hereby declared to be the intention of the Township that this Ordinance would have been adopted had such invalid section, clause, sentence, or provision not been included therein.
2. To the extent this Ordinance is inconsistent with the Code of Worcester Township, the provisions of this Ordinance shall take precedence. All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.
3. The failure of the Township to enforce any provision of this ordinance shall not constitute a waiver by the Township of its rights of future enforcement hereunder.
4. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon enactment.

ENACTED AND ORDAINED by the Supervisors of the Township of Worcester, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania on this 20th day of July, 2022.

FOR WORCESTER TOWNSHIP

By: 
Richard DeLello, Chair
Board of Supervisors

Attest: 
Tommy Ryan, Secretary