

Former Mitchell Township Re-Establishes

Residents of the former Mitchell Township in Davison County voted earlier this year to re-establish as a township eight years after it had dissolved. It is believed to be the state's first-ever township re-organization. With a 21 percent voter turnout and a vote of 103-32, it became official on April 8, 2010 to re-establish as an official township of South Dakota.

The original Mitchell Township was dissolved back in 2002 when its declining tax base resulted from expansion by the city of Mitchell, and the rising road expenditures prompted the township to abolish their township.

The election for re-establishment was the culmination of a nearly two-year struggle surrounding payment of the former township area's \$17,261 share of a new firefighting grass rig maintained by the Mitchell Rural Fire Association. It was at this point that some of the residents sought to re-establish the township so that taxes could be collected to pay for the firefighting equipment.

“The newly created Mitchell Township is now up and running and feeling its way,” said Mark Schilling, who was elected Chairman of the Mitchell Township board at their first annual township meeting on May 14, 2010. Also elected were the following officers: Chad Van Laecken, supervisor; Jack Docken, supervisor; Karen Pooley, clerk; and Stuart Barns, treasurer. The duly elected Board of Supervisors and officers are now responsible for establishing a budget, setting tax levies to meet that budget, and generally administering the township (road maintenance, emergency services, etc.). The next annual meeting of the Mitchell Township will be held on the first Tuesday in March, 2011.