

# SPRINGFIELD CHARTER TOWNSHIP

SEAN R. MILLER, CLERK

248-846-6510 | 248-846-6538 FAX



## **Ramboll Consultant Interview**

Springfield Township  
12000 Davisburg Road, Davisburg, MI 48350  
Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025  
11:00 AM

PRESENT:                   Richard L. Davis, Township Supervisor  
                                  Sarah Richmond, Parks and Recreation Director  
                                  Greg Need, Township Attorney  
                                  Gerald Fisher, Township Special Council  
                                  Kara Okonewski, Resident  
                                  Chris Todd, Resident  
                                  Amanda Gruzin, Resident  
                                  Scott Hayter, Principle at Ramboll  
                                  Danielle Sink, Supervisor's Assistant/Recording Secretary

Supervisor Davis opened the meeting by explaining that the Township Board had granted authority for him, Need, and Fisher to interview and evaluate independent experts to assist in reviewing the Burroughs/Levy/American Aggregates sand and gravel mining application. Supervisor Davis noted that Amanda had helped in identifying appropriate candidates and stated that the goal of this interview was to determine whether Ramboll could provide an independent, unbiased, and technically superior evaluation. Supervisor Davis emphasized that Springfield Township is an environmentally diverse, highly sensitive community containing wetlands, aquifers, stream systems, prairie fens, and habitats for numerous state and federally protected species. These features, he stressed, are part of the Township's identity and must be treated with exceptional caution. Supervisor Davis repeated that the Township is approaching the application with integrity, transparency, and neutrality, without any predetermined outcome.

Supervisor Davis began by asking Hayter whether Ramboll had any past financial or professional relationship with Levy, Burroughs, or American Aggregates. Hayter explained that Ramboll had submitted two proposals many years ago, one for an unknown project and the second for a Detroit-area site, but neither resulted in work. He confirmed that Ramboll has never performed any work for Levy or related companies. He acknowledged that he knows industry personnel such as Tom Green but stressed that Michigan's environmental field is small and such acquaintance is unavoidable; however, there are no contracts, payments, or operational relationships. Fisher asked whether Ramboll had ever been on the "other side" of Levy, and Hayter stated unequivocally that they had not. Hayter further noted that Ramboll employs around 18,000 people worldwide and that he checked the company's CRM system to ensure no conflicts existed.

Supervisor Davis outlined Springfield's concerns and then began a detailed series of questions. He asked Hayter whether Ramboll could evaluate on-site and off-site groundwater impacts, including

how excavation and dewatering may alter groundwater flow patterns. Hayter answered yes, explaining that groundwater and hydrogeology are core strengths of both his personal background and the firm's capabilities. He stated that assessing changes to groundwater flow caused by excavation, pumping, or dewatering is routine work for Ramboll.

Supervisor Davis described the Township's concerns related to the adjacent Springfield Township Woodland Trails Superfund Site and asked whether Ramboll could assess interactions between the proposed mine and the Superfund plume, including whether mining could change hydraulic gradients or mobilize contained contamination. Hayter said yes, noting that half of his career has been spent working on major Superfund sites across the country. He described his experience with fate and transport modeling, exposure pathways, risk assessment frameworks, and the development of conceptual site models. He stated that Ramboll routinely evaluates how new activities could affect existing contamination and confirmed that they could model potential contaminant migration under various mining scenarios.

Supervisor Davis asked whether Ramboll could analyze ecological impacts, including effects on endangered species as well as impacts on prairie fens and other sensitive habitats. Hayter responded that ecological evaluation is not his personal specialty, but Ramboll has strong internal ecological teams, including biologists and ecological risk assessors who routinely evaluate impacts on aquatic and terrestrial species, habitat systems, and vegetation. He referenced examples from Illinois, the Dow Midland area, and river and floodplain projects where Ramboll evaluated impacts on wildlife, vegetation, and habitat restoration.

Supervisor Davis asked whether Ramboll could assess dust migration, diesel emissions, and airborne particulates generated by mining and truck traffic. Hayter confirmed yes, explaining that Ramboll performs air-quality assessments through a National Environmental Policy Act-aligned (NEPA) process and risk assessment framework. He noted that Ramboll would look at both on-site and off-site impacts, including downwind exposures, using risk-based methodologies.

When Supervisor Davis asked whether Ramboll could evaluate noise and vibration impacts on homes, infrastructure, and natural areas, Hayter answered yes. He said Ramboll has staff who specialize in noise and vibration analysis, though he would need to determine who specifically within the U.S. team would handle the task.

Supervisor Davis asked whether Ramboll could evaluate traffic impacts and review the applicant's traffic study prepared by Fishbeck. Hayter said Ramboll does have a traffic and safety group, but it is primarily European, and he would need to check whether U.S. staff were available. He stated that Ramboll could review the Fishbeck report and provide commentary on methodology, assumptions, and conclusions.

Supervisor Davis asked whether Ramboll could review the reclamation plan, phase-by-phase mining plan, and long-term monitoring strategy. Hayter confirmed yes, explaining that Ramboll works extensively in the mining and extraction sector and that reclamation is typically a major component of that work. He said he would likely involve specialists with mining reclamation expertise.

Supervisor Davis asked whether Ramboll had experience in environmentally sensitive communities with strong public engagement. Hayter confirmed yes, citing his extensive work in Michigan and national projects involving major rivers, sensitive wetlands, residential areas, and public oversight. He referenced work along the Saginaw and Tittabawassee Rivers, which involved contaminated

floodplains, residential cleanup, and ecological risk assessments affecting homes, wildlife, and fisheries.

When Supervisor Davis asked whether Ramboll had previously evaluated sand and gravel mining applications, Hayter explained that he personally had not and would need to search the company's database to determine whether others in the firm had. He noted that Ramboll does not frequently work for municipalities in the U.S., though they do perform municipal environmental work in wastewater, ecological remediation, and government-led natural resource projects.

Supervisor Davis asked whether Hayter was familiar with the risks of dewatering, ground vibration, diesel emissions, and dust exposure for homes and residential wells. Hayter confirmed yes. Supervisor Davis asked whether Ramboll could evaluate cumulative and off-site impacts, and Hayter responded yes, explaining that cumulative impact evaluation is commonly required in risk-based environmental reviews.

When Supervisor Davis asked whether Ramboll could assess changes to groundwater flow under different excavation and dewatering conditions, Hayter answered yes without hesitation.

Fisher asked whether Ramboll could handle diesel exhaust evaluation internally or whether that would require subcontracting. Hayter stated that Ramboll typically handles diesel and air emissions internally, though he would need to determine which specific staff member would be assigned.

Supervisor Davis then asked whether Ramboll was qualified to evaluate potential interactions between the proposed mining operation and the adjacent Superfund plume, and whether they could model contaminant mobilization. Hayter again confirmed yes, reiterating that he has extensive experience in modeling contaminant migration, designing cleanup strategies, and evaluating impacts of new disturbances on contaminated sites.

Need asked Hayter to identify his area of expertise. Hayter described himself as a hydrogeologist and environmental engineer with 33 years of experience, including more than two decades of Superfund work. He explained that he founded Ramboll's Michigan office in 2008 and works across both hydrogeology and environmental engineering programs.

Supervisor Davis asked whether Hayter was familiar with regulatory requirements under EGLE, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act. Hayter said yes.

Supervisor Davis then approached the topic of climate and environmental change. He asked whether Ramboll could evaluate how sand and gravel mining may interact with long-term shifts in climate, including increased rainfall, storm events, drought cycles, altered aquifer recharge, and changes in wetland hydrology. Hayter said the question was broad, but that Ramboll has handled major climate resilience projects, including stormwater and climate vulnerability assessments in New York. He said he would connect with Ramboll's climate experts to determine the best approach. When Supervisor Davis asked whether it was necessary to examine winter-versus-summer differences in infiltration and hydrology, Hayter confirmed yes, noting that such differences can significantly affect water movement depending on how the mine is structured.

Supervisor Davis asked whether Ramboll could determine whether the proposed mine could increase environmental vulnerability or reduce Township climate resilience over the long term. Hayter said this was a complex question, but that Ramboll could evaluate the issue qualitatively or

quantitatively depending on the available data, drawing on frameworks used in climate and risk assessments.

Kara asked how Ramboll approaches critically imperiled species and highly delicate ecological systems. Hayter said Ramboll would rely on biological and ecological specialists who understand species-specific needs, hydrologic dependencies, and habitat sensitivities. Richmond noted the Township's collaboration with university and conservation experts. Hayter responded that Ramboll works frequently with government agencies, conservation districts, and habitat restoration programs, including major projects on the Rouge and Detroit Rivers.

Kara asked whether Ramboll would speak up if missing data prevented them from forming conclusions. Hayter confirmed yes, explaining that Ramboll routinely identifies data gaps and would not issue conclusions until necessary information is provided. He recommended a draft-review process to ensure no concerns are missed.

Supervisor Davis asked whether Hayter believed any issues had not been raised. Hayter responded he would need to review all documents and confer with additional team members, and he would include any recommended scope expansions in Ramboll's proposal.

Supervisor Davis asked whether Ramboll could attend Township Board and Planning Commission meetings. Hayter said yes but needed assumptions about the number of meetings. Supervisor Davis explained the timeline: proposals due in December, additional applicant data expected by year-end, review beginning in late January, and a total process likely lasting a year. Hayter said Ramboll could work within that framework.

Supervisor Davis asked whether Ramboll was comfortable with the escrow agreement under which the applicant may review expert reports, but the Township is under no obligation to revise anything. Hayter said yes and noted that the ability for the applicant to ask questions could be helpful, provided the Township retained full control.

After Hayter left the room, Supervisor Davis asked Need and Fisher for their impressions. Need stated he saw no weaknesses. Fisher said Hayter was thoughtful, credible, and cautious in answering. Supervisor Davis commented that Hayter presented himself calmly, professionally, and in a manner that would translate well to Planning Commission and public meetings. Supervisor Davis stated he saw a strong role for Ramboll in the Township's strategy.

The group discussed the need for a certified industrial hygienist on a separate track, as well as a property valuation expert. Supervisor Davis said his strategy is to compartmentalize each specialty—hydrogeology, ecology, industrial hygiene, traffic, and property valuation—and then have independent reviewers such as Wilczynski and O'Mara serve as final evaluators of the combined record. He emphasized that Springfield Township intends to create a model process that other communities can look to.

Supervisor Davis ended the meeting by stating that the Township staff would circulate the minutes and all future proposals. He thanked attendees for their contributions and reiterated his commitment to an honest, transparent, fact-driven process. The meeting adjourned with Supervisor Davis wishing everyone a happy Thanksgiving.