This email is in regards to the drain project at Pioneer Cemetery and the seasonal contract for grass cutting.

This drain project was designed by your engineering firm and originally supposed to be below vault level to eliminate ground water, not surface water and to keep vaults from floating out of the ground. This drain was supposed to be put in at some places 12' deep and below ground water levels exposed by a paid for engineering firm during testing water levels to eliminate water in graves.

Bids were taken that were not acceptable because everyone was bidding different things and had to be rebid to all be removing the dirt dug out and bids were taken again.  Bids were reviewed and voted on again where a majority of the board after Jean Graham made a motion to accept Bowman excavating bids simply because they do good work per Jean Graham despite the fact that they were not the lowest bid nor the best bid and voted 6-1 for nearly $70,000 dollars. The Graham's and Bowman's just happen to be lifelong friends and neighbors.

I, Bob Wilson volunteered to oversee this job based on my experience in the field and try to get bids more equal and spent my own money to get prints and figure out what needed to be done to make bids fair because Jean sent prints out that could not be read by at least 2 of the contractors bidding the job. I contacted the engineering firm and they gladly sent me prints that were not shrunk to the point of being unreadable.

After the bid was accepted by Bowman, they clearly contacted Jean Graham and the engineering firm involved and I was left completely out of it and a decision made to change the way the job was to be done. Per Jean Graham at the last meeting informed the board that things have changed but Bowman was still going to be able to do this job for the $70,000 but never said how it got changed.

After this I visited the Cemetery quite a few times to see what got changed because things were being kept secret only to find that the change was to not bury the drain pipe the 12' down like originally planned and the pipe was installed at less than 3' below surface level which means 2/3's less dirt to dig and remove and 2/3's less sand to bring in to fill with and less pipe because now the discharge does not go back to the rear of the property as it was supposed to be done on the original bid.

I have talked to a few of the other people that bid this project and asked them what they would charge for the job that was completed and everyone said somewhere around $20k. This job should have been rebid after the change of plans because now there was a job being done that was 75% less work than the original bid. But it seems that the township is going to be paying Bowman excavating the entire amount of the original bid despite the fact that of it being 75% less work and materials.

This to me is just giving $50,000 dollars to a friend of our tax dollars. I would like to see more bids taken on the NEW project specs and pay Bowman excavating the average of new bids taken instead of the $70 because they are being overpaid for the work that they have done.

Now we get to the lawn maintenance.

At some point years ago, someone has made a decision to separate the Cemetery grass cutting from the list of properties that the township takes care of and maintains. This job was given to with no other bids to a company named Complete outdoor services. This company seems to be owned by this person's mother and not the son and usually when I see this it's because the child may have a criminal record and I do wonder if Howell twp does background checks on their contractors. They even misspelled Cemetery on their quote (cemitary).

The township is paying this company a flat $845 per month to cut this 1.5 acre parcel with no per cut prices and paying them for the entire month of April and November in the agreement and no grass was mowed in April and no one mows grass in November but this company still gets paid.

The grass at this Cemetery has not been cut in 3 weeks at this point and the buckhorns are nearly 3' tall and weeds and debris all over the place and does not seem to be taken care of the way a Cemetery should be. So in turn we are paying this company $845 per cut this month.

There is nothing special about mowing a Cemetery and this one looks like crap right now and I personally believe that this Cemetery mowing needs to be put on Howell twp's grass cut list with all of the other properties being mowed by Sharpes lawn care and not be given to some one's friend for a lifetime with no competition or bids. This to me looks like some palm greasing to me.

I would also like to see some proof of this work being done with photos being sent to the twp every time the lawn got mowed.

I would also like to see background checks on the contractors as I had to provide them in the past to any government agency that I ever done work for. Below you will find photos of the poorly maintained Cemetery and the drain pipe installed at about 2-3' instead of the original bid item