



Shields Township

906 W. Muir Avenue, Lake Bluff, IL 60044

Regular Meeting of the Shields Township Board of Trustees

Thursday February 15, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
LAKE COUNTY) ss.
TOWN OF SHIELDS)

THE TOWN BOARD OF SHIELDS TOWNSHIP held its Regular Monthly Meeting on Thursday February 15, 2024 at 5:30 pm.

PRESENT:

Jeff Urso	Supervisor
Lisette Rothing	Deputy Clerk
Brady Andersen	Town Trustee
Michael Machnicki	Town Trustee
David Weil	Town Trustee
Matt Garrity	Town Trustee

ABSENT:

Vanessa Grum	Clerk
--------------	-------

- I. **Call to Order & Roll Call** - Supervisor Urso called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance** - Supervisor Urso led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 5:30 pm.
- III. **Public Comment** – Three (3) minutes per speaker:
 - a. **Janice Schnobrich** – For the last 28 years of attending Shields Township meetings, Mrs. Schnobrich has found its leadership to be lacking in concern for its constituents. In recent years, she thinks there is a lack of ability to collect, file and store critical documents. However, believed its leadership has found a way to fund employees’ IMRF accounts monthly. Records seem to have been lost or destroyed by those managing the Township. Mrs. Schnobrich says the taxpayers

have had to pay for the incompetence when the Township should protect the people's tax dollars. In the very least, the situation seems disturbing. Mrs. Schnobrich said It appeared that managers of Shields Township have been operating outside of the laws.

- b. Constantina Dina Papas** – Said her family has been in Shields Township for over 50 years and they are the owners of Gus' Grill. They keep hearing from other businesses and neighbors around them that there are plans in the works for Starbucks to change their parking lot and layout of their drive-thru. She believes if there are any plans in place, the families and business owners surrounding the property should be notified. She would like more transparency from the Township. Mrs. Papas realizes Starbucks was built in an area that does not quite fit so she understands if things need to be changed, however she does not want to be in the dark during the process.
- c. Ben Miller** – Said he is a Shields Township resident and works for Open Lands. Mr. Miller believes that residential yard waste is being illegally dumped into Lake Geneve by Mr. Rogers. Mr. Miller shows a picture of the area to the Board of Trustees and lets them know that the pile of wood chips in the picture needs to be addressed. Mr. Miller thinks Shields Township should call the Sherrif so that all parties involved are held accountable.
- d. Alderman Carl Evans** – Said he is extremely concerned by the amount of FOIA's being directed towards the Township by the same people. These FOIA's are costing the Township thousands of dollars in legal fees. The money that is being spent could be used somewhere else to benefit our community. Alderman Evans begs everyone to please try and start working with the Township instead of going against them. He stated that FOIA's are not a joke or a game, there are real legitimate situations going on.
- e. Rachel Rubino** – Said she is the store manager of Walgreens. She is also hearing through neighboring businesses that there may be plans in the works to reconstruct the parking lot and layout of the Starbucks drive-thru. She would like to know what's going on and is curious to hear about the construction plans if there are any.
- f. Stephanie Victor** – Stated that she is a Shields Township resident with a few concerns about the website and the Lease. Mrs. Victor wanted to know why video content has not been posted to the website and lets the Board know that

there were a few errors that needed to be corrected on the website as well. Mrs. Victor also addressed the fact that she came to the Board a few months back with concerns about the Shields Township Lease and found the CAM (Common Area Maintenance) fees to be high. She asked the Township if they could provide her with a current lease.

IV. Approval of Bills

- a. Town Fund:** Supervisor Urso moved to approve the Town Fund for \$14,488.03. Trustee Machnicki motioned to approve and Trustee Garrity seconded the motion. Deputy Clerk Rothing took roll call. All trustees were in favor and the motion passed.
- b. GA Fund:** Supervisor Urso moved to approve the General Assistance Fund for \$358.84. Trustee Weil motioned to approve and Trustee Machnicki seconded the motion. Deputy Clerk Rothing took roll call. All trustees were in favor and the motion passed.
- c. Road & Bridge Fund:** Supervisor Urso moved to approve the Road and Bridge Fund for \$24,764.43. Trustee Machnicki motioned to approve and Trustee Anderson seconded the motion. Deputy Clerk Rothing took roll call. All trustees were in favor and the motion passed.

V. Reports

- a. Supervisor** – Supervisor Urso immediately addressed all resident concerns. First, he stated that he appreciated pointing out the errors on the website and they will get corrected immediately. We are also looking into finding a more current lease and if it's something that we need to update in the near future we can look into doing that. As for the recorded meetings, Supervisor Urso has kindly asked the Community Services Committee to recommend to the Board new video equipment to record the meetings. The Board has not gotten that recommendation, but the committee has decided to record with the equipment they already had. Supervisor Urso was told a copy of the video would be sent to the staff to upload to the website and that has yet to be provided. Supervisor Urso addressed the Starbucks reconstruction concern and let all parties know that there are different agencies talking and working together to come up with a plan. Ultimately, all those plans will go through Lake County Building and Zoning. The Township does not have any say in making changes and plans of that nature. Once plans have been submitted to us then we can keep everyone

aware, but right now nothing is set in stone. Mrs. Papas of Gus' Grill jumped in and stated that she has major concerns that a new layout will create more traffic and water mitigation problems in that area. Supervisor Urso continued his report and goes on to talk about the concern for hourly and salaried employees and whether they are required to punch in and out. He stated hourly employees punch in and out on a time clock or use timecards. Salaried employees work fixed schedules and record their time off. He reassures everyone that these practices are commonly used and lawful. Finally, Supervisor Urso addressed the number of FOIAs that keep getting submitted to the office. These FOIA's are generally from the same people and some of which are on our committees. In January alone, the Township incurred over \$10,850 in legal fees to respond to these FOIA's. We would like to keep these bills down so that we can use the money elsewhere to help with other issues in our community. All Trustees were shocked to hear this news. Trustee Weil put into perspective how much money would be spent if we continued this process and it would not be good.

- b. **Trustees** - None
- c. **Assessor's Office** - None
- d. **Community Service Committee** - None
- e. **Road & Bridge Committee** - None

VI. Old Business - None

VII. New Business

- a. **Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of January 18, 2024** - Trustee Weil motioned to approve and Trustee Anderson seconded the motion. Deputy Clerk Rothing took roll call. All trustees were in favor and the motion passed.
- b. **Consideration of Staff Compensation** – Supervisor Urso double checked the Department of Labor website and found that the current COLA (Cost-of-Living Adjustment) rate of 3.1% would be an appropriate CPI raise for all Shields Township employees.
 - 1. **Office Staff** – Supervisor Urso seeks a motion to increase the office staff salary 3.1% starting March 1, 2024 which starts the next fiscal year. Trustee Garrity motioned to approve, and Trustee Anderson seconded the motion. All trustees were in favor and motion carried.
 - 2. **Road Staff** - Supervisor Urso seeks a motion to increase the road staff salary 3.1% starting March 1, 2024 which starts the next fiscal year.

Trustee Garrity motioned to approve, and Trustee Machnicki seconded the motion. All trustees were in favor and motion carried.

c. Consideration of Private Road at 500 block of Quassey Avenue in

Knollwood – Supervisor Urso talked about Shields Township taking over the private road at the end of Quassey Avenue but feels we are unable to do so just yet because the road was not paved to the specs that were given. Supervisor Urso calls up the owners of the paving company from Mundelein IL. to explain why the specs have not been met. They have an additional person on the phone named Tony who is the one who did the work. Tony stated that they were aware of the core sample and despite that they were willing to back up their work for at least 7 years. Tony put 4 inches of binder and 4 inches of asphalt and is sure the road will maintain. The asphalt company checked the road in 3 different spots and believed they had a good base. While the base was 8 inches it should have been 12 inches according to the specs that were given by Shields Township Roads Representative. The asphalt binder should have also been thicker. The Paving company assured Shields that the base was rolled all day long before any asphalt was put down. Office Staff Carl Kitzerow reads a letter on behalf of Dan Rogers, the road representative, and it stated that there will be serious ramifications if the road fails and we would have to redo the whole thing. None of the conditions were met. Supervisor Urso reiterates that the specs were given ahead of time and none of the needs were met. He stated Mr. Merrit is a good man trying to improve our community and thanked him for everything he does. Since Mr. Merrit deals with sports and Supervisor Urso runs sports bars, Supervisor Urso must recuse himself from the decision to take over the road as it is a conflict of interest. Supervisor Urso turns to Trustee Machnicki and Trustee Weil for their opinions on the matter since they also work in contracting, construction and restoration. Trustee Weil thinks it would be a good Idea to get a second opinion on the core sample and Trustee Garrity chimed in and said the Burden of Proof is necessary and would be very good for this case. If they can get core samples from another company to present to the Board that would be ideal. (A lot of discussion ensued). The Board consensus is to deny the current core samples and get a second opinion. Mr. Merrit asked the Board what the consequence would be if another core sample was taken. Supervisor Urso stated that if the core sample comes back and follows the specs given by Shields

Township in the first place, then we can accept the road. If this does not get handled properly and meet the specs, then it ultimately stays a private road. All trustees agree to get the second opinion before making any final decisions.

VIII. Executive Session - None

IX. Adjournment – Supervisor Urso Adjourned the meeting at 6:19p.m.