

Minutes – Shields Township Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting March 16, 2023

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STATE OF ILLINOIS,) }  
Lake County,        ) } SS.  
Town of Shields    ) }

THE TOWN BOARD OF SHIELDS TOWNSHIP held its regular monthly meeting on March 16, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

**PRESENT**

Lisette Rothing	Deputy Clerk
Jeff Urso	Supervisor
Brady Andersen	Town Trustee
Kathryn Walker-Eich	Town Trustee
Matt Garrity	Town Trustee

**ABSENT**

David Weil	Town Trustee
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- I. **Meeting Called to Order & Roll Call** Supervisor Urso called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Supervisor Urso opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.
- III. **Approval of Bills**
  - a. Town Fund expenses approval \$43,782.59. Trustee Garrity motioned to approve, Trustee Anderson seconds the motion, passed by 4-0 on a roll call vote.
  - b. General Assistance expenses approval \$1,297.78 Trustee Andersen motioned to approve, Trustee Walker-Eich seconds the motion, passed by 4-0 roll call vote.
  - c. Road & Bridge expenses approval \$12,993.25. Trustee Walker-Eich motion to approve, Trustee Andersen seconds the motion, passed by 4-0 on a roll call vote.
- IV. **Public Comment**
  - a. Jan Schnobrich - There are 37, 390 people living in Shields Township. There are 15,000 cadets housed at Naval Training Center Great Lakes throughout the year. These cadets are supported by 1,000 or more military personnel that live on the base. There are approximately 21,390 people that reside in the other parts of Shields Township. Of these,

5,600 individuals live in Lake Bluff, approximately 5,500 live in North Chicago and on Government property, and 7,400 live in Lake Forest. There are approximately 2,800 individuals that live in the 3 unincorporated areas of Arden Shores North, Arden Shores South and Knollwood. Knollwood is the largest unincorporated area and holds approximately 2/3 or 1,900 individuals. A sizable number of these individuals are housed in three apartment buildings in the Knollwood area. Knollwood is not the capital of Shields Township. From Consolidated Election Terms 1997 – 2009, four- five of 8, Shields Township elected officials lived in Knollwood. For the term 2009-2013, only the Supervisor and the Assessor were Knollwood residents. Since the term beginning in 2013, the number of Shields Township elected from Knollwood has fluctuated between 2 and 3. Today, 2 of the 7 elected officials are from Knollwood. All Shields Township residents pay taxes to support the 9.32 miles of unincorporated Township Roads. The residents in the municipal areas contribute approximately 94% of the taxes designated to support the unincorporated roads. Townships are mostly supported by the property taxpayers. Shields Township now must pay TOIRMA several thousand dollars a year for a \$60,000 deductible liability policy, when ten years ago the deductible was \$25,000. The Township is required to defend its elected officials and employees against lawsuits filed against them while working on its behalf. Most of the lawsuits filed against Shields Township have been instigated due to the actions taken by one elected official and an employee. Any further lawsuits could easily bankrupt the township. Townships have only two mandated functions: To care for its indigents and construct and maintain the roads and drainage ditches in the unincorporated areas. The State since the 1970's has taken care of the indigents. In the last few years, less than 1% of tax receipts have gone to care for them. In the last 15 years, much of the tax receipts received for the repair and maintenance of the unincorporated roads and their surrounds has had to be used to pay for the folly of its 2001-2005 elected highway commissioner. Enough is enough!!

- a. Heather Meyers – The Community has addressed concerns and questions about drainage, but we also need to make sure that we address the speed bumps that are going to be put in and the bike path that may take place. Some of these plans directly affect the property in front of people's homes. It would be beneficial for Shields Township and the Board of

Trustees to contact the homeowners that would be directly affected by the plans before the plans take place.

- b. Robert Metz – He is a recruiter and matches people with necessary Job Positions. He states that the Road Representative position needs to be addressed and filled as soon as possible. He has many questions about why the position has not been filled yet. “Nothing like a lack of options to control the mind” says Rob Metz. If there are no alternatives why not hire the only candidate. There should not be a delay in making the decision if someone is qualified. Mr. Metz then pulls out a new resume of someone he knows that would do the job for \$400/hour. He then hands Deputy Clerk Rothing the alternative resume for the job position of a man named Nduju Feldstein, which looks exactly like the same resume format as the Dan Rogers Resume with some informational changes. This was not presented to the board upon first glance due to time constraints but was eventually brought to the Boards attention. Mr. Metz then turns to the Board of Trustees and advises them not to overthink this decision.
- c. Richard Goshgarian – Last month there were many people in the community that were in support of Dan Rogers. I am not sure why this position still has not been filled. The residents of Shields Township need an answer. There are not many people that are willing to take on this position at this price. It’s important that we move this decision forward.
- d. Penny Graw – She is concerned for the community all together. Not only are flooding and drainage issues a concern but there is also a major concern for the people that are at the parks or walking their dogs. There are so many patrons that want to speed down the side streets especially where there is a cut through. A lot of people want to cut through our neighborhood to avoid the lights and traffic on 176 and Waukegan rd. Is there anything that can be done? We need suggestions on how to mitigate the problem. Supervisor Urso responds to Penny’s concern letting her know that it is a major concern of his as well and we are looking in to putting speed humps into the neighborhoods to calm down the traffic and speeding.

## V. Reports

- a. **Supervisor** – Supervisor Urso lets the community know that Shields Township is now a fully ADA compliant building. The elevator is finally up and running properly. He also

addresses residents' concerns with the flooding and drainage issues in the Knollwood area. Supervisor Urso has met with SMC (Storm Water Management) to address the issues but realistically there is only so much money in the budget to improve the roads and ditches. There is going to be some ditch digging on Talbot and Green Avenue for better water flow and drainage. We also have a paving project in the works on Birch Ave which will most like coincide with the Talbot and Green Avenue Project. We also have plans to put in additional Stop sign(s) at Safford and Birch. We appreciate hearing from our community and want to let everyone know we truly care about your concerns, and we are doing the most we can with the budget we have to create a safer and more functional environment. Committee Person Walker-Eich is surprised by how many people in our community are affected by flooding and drainage issues. She wants to know if there is still a roads committee to help oversee these issues and wants to be involved in moving these projects forward in a timely manner with the available resources that we have. Supervisor Urso states we are doing everything we can in a proper and timely manner with the budget we are given.

- b. **Assessor's Office** – Assessor Scott Helton talks about the three main exemptions that are owed to our homeowners. The General Homestead Exemption went from \$6,000 to \$8,000 in the year 2023. This is great news for our community. Anyone who has one primary residence is owed this exemption no matter what age you are. This means that we take \$8,000 off the assessed value of your home which will help give some tax relief. We also have a Senior Homestead Exemption which went from \$5,000 to \$8,000 this year. So, if you are age 65 and older, you are owed the Senior Exemption as well as the General Homestead Exemption. We also have a third exemption called the Senior Citizen's Assessment Freeze. The Exemption is for Senior Citizens who are the age 65 and older and have a total household income of \$65,000 or less. They also must own their property for the past two January 1. We will be sure to post all this information on the website for our community to easily review.
- c. **Community Service Committee** – No report
- d. **Road & Bridge Committee** – No report
- e. **Trustees** – No report

## VI. New Business

- a. **Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of February 16, 2023** – Supervisor Urso Motions to approve the minutes from February 16, 2023. Trustee Garrity approves, and Trustee Walker-Eich seconds the motion.
- b. **Discussion of IGA with Waukegan Township** – Supervisor Urso mentions that he had a meeting with Supervisor Jones of Waukegan Township to discuss having an IGA (Intergovernmental Agreement) that would allow for all of Shields Township to have second access point for General and Emergency Assistance. Both Supervisors think it’s a good idea to continue to grow together and learn more from one another about the programs, services and training they provide to our community.
- c. **Discussion of Senior Information** – Supervisor Urso says that transportation is a large concern when it comes to our seniors so, it’s especially necessary and helpful to our community to be able to work with Waukegan Township in providing that second hub for our poor and elderly.
- d. **Discussion of Snow Removal for 2023-2024** – Supervisor Urso lets the community know that we inherited extremely old trucks that have not been maintained for years. We are looking to streamline the way Shields Township is running and eventually want to start subbing out our Snow Removal and Grass Mowing. If we sub out Snow Removal alone, we could potentially save several thousands of dollars a year. He reassures the community that we are going in the right direction by subbing out these vendors. Trustee Anderson asks where he sees those savings coming from. Supervisor Urso says the maintenance and repair of the current trucks we have could save us about \$45,000 a year. To buy a new reliable truck would cost upwards of \$150,000 and we would have to deal with the uptick in overtime on payroll during the winter season.
- e. **Discussion and Action of Mowing Contract with Fleck’s Landscaping for 2023-2026**
- f. **Approval of Annual Town Meeting Agenda** – Every second Tuesday in April of every year the Annual Town Meeting will be held. The Township Clerk must accept and sign the Agenda and Annual Treasurer’s Report from the previous year. Supervisor Urso Motions to approve the Annual Town Meeting Agenda. Trustee Garrity motions to approve, Trustee Anderson seconds.

## VII. Old Business

- a. **Discussion and Action of Road Representative Position** – Supervisor Urso reminds the trustees that he must recuse himself from the discussion because he does business with Dan Rogers who is one of the possible candidates for the position. He turns to trustees for the discussion. Trustee Garrity Motions to discuss the possible position of Road Representative for Shields Township. Trustee Walker-Eich seconds. Trustee Anderson asks if this is something that would need to be a hired position or are we going to contract out? Trustee Walker-Eich states to the Supervisors previous point that we seem to be trying to move to a 1099 outsourced world. Historically have you seen any Board Members willing to get involved and help out in sharing the job posting? Trustee Anderson asks if we could possibly continue the search seeing as though we did not receive many offers for the position. Can we possibly continue to post the Ad through other avenues like craigslist, indeed or LinkedIn. The previous Shields Township Highway Commissioner made \$25,000 and he had an engineering degree while other Highway Commissioners in various other Townships make upwards of \$60,000-\$80,000. Trustee Walker-Eich wonders how quickly we can expect to get someone in here at the rate and hours that we are offering. We also need to consider the budget. Trustee Anderson requests to discuss the position further. Trustee Walker-Eich agrees seeing as though the Board was recently presented with another resume during Public Comment. We need to understand the position and look to see what is fair, especially if we are looking to move towards a 1099 position. Supervisor Urso interjects as he realizes the Board of Trustees are not going to come to a conclusion during this meeting. He reminds everyone that we will need this type of position sooner than later because it would be beneficial for the Shields Township Community to have a liaison between the Roads Department and Vendors. Supervisor Urso Motions to table the discussion of the Road Representative position. Trustee Anderson is the first to motion and Trustee Garrity seconds the motion.

VIII. **Adjournment** – Supervisor Urso motions to adjourn meeting at 7:32p.m.