

Minutes – Shields Township Road Commission Meeting  
Special Meeting June 22, 2023

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STATE OF ILLINOIS, )

Lake County, ) SS.

Town of Shields )

THE SHIELDS TOWNSHIP ROADS COMMISSION COMMITTEE held its monthly meeting in person on Thursday, June 22, 2023 at 10:00a.m.

**PRESENT:** Lisette Rothing Deputy Clerk  
Jeff Urso Supervisor  
Dan Rogers Committee Chair  
Mark Wussow Committee Person (on phone)  
Scott Volpe Committee Person  
Rob Beake Township Employee

**ABSENT:** Mike Carlson Committee Person

- I. Call to Order & Roll Call** – Deputy Clerk Rothing called meeting to order at 10:05a.m.
- II. Approval of February Roads Meeting Minutes** – All Committee members present approved the Minutes from February 8, 2023.
- III. Public Comment – Three (3) Minutes per Speaker**
  - a. Heather Meyers (In person)** – Wanted to touch base on the speed hump issue. I’m all for a speed calming plan to keep all folks safe however I’ve done some research into speed

humps, and I am concerned about the negative impact it will have on the community. There are studies that show they damage snowplows, cars and roads over time. They impact bus drivers and slow emergency responders. They may even lower property value. A better solution would be to get some metrics together by doing a speed study and things like that first to see if the humps are even necessary. I just want the township to do their due diligence to keep everyone safe and if we find its necessary to have speed humps at least consider making them removable during the winter months or even relocated based on traffic patterns.

- b. **Penny Graw (In person)** – Disappointed with the meeting times of the Roads Committee Meeting and wants to look into changing the time to an evening slot so that it opens up the opportunity for more patrons to come after work.
- c. **Ben Miller (In person)** – No sufficient explanation has been provided to residents as to why we are being subjected to the installation of speed humps on Foster Ave. We all care about the safety of our community. However, there have been no traffic studies to corroborate anecdotal evidence that speeding is a big enough safety concern to validate the use of traffic calming measures, especially permanent speed humps, which the slightest independent research will tell you are not recommended by most communities and are often taken out years later at taxpayer expense. Those that have pushed for these speed humps reference the little league incident several years ago as the main driver. We all still remember that tragedy that shook our small town, and we never want it to happen again. However, those familiar with the incident will recall that double parking along Foster Ave was primarily to blame, not speeding. To claim otherwise is disingenuous. It's an appeal to emotion, seeking to burden the taxpayers with a costly placebo to calm the paranoia of a few rather than fund measures that will protect our children and community members. We deserve solutions to any traffic problems that are grounded in facts, research, transparency, community input, and due diligence. My wife and I have lived at 822 Foster

Ave (directly opposite the West Park Parking Lot) for 10 years now. It is our observation that overtaking of parking spaces and continuous overburdening of street-side parking have created a repeatedly hazardous situation. From our point of view, the danger on our street is NOT moving vehicles but those creating stationary visual obstructions. Between the redirection of game-day traffic to the parking lot and the installation of “No Parking” signage along the north side of Foster Ave, incidents of double parking are now non-existent. Consequently, the true threat to the safety of pedestrians and little leaguers has already been reduced since the incident. Even if we work with the assumption that there is a speeding problem (something that any responsible government body would corroborate with an independent study before any costly and permanent action is taken), no evidence has been presented that the installation of speed humps will, in fact, reduce incidents of speeding. It is assumed speeding on Foster Ave stems from drivers attempting to make it through the stop light at Foster Ave & Waukegan Rd. That by putting speed humps in place, people will slow down as they approach the light. However, I believe incidents of dangerous driving may increase if speed humps were installed. Those forced to slow to cross the humps would need to accelerate adjacent to West Park even more aggressively in an effort to reach the Foster/Waukegan light quickly. They might also cut through the parking lot itself at high speeds to avoid the speed hump between the two entrances, a behavior that has been shown to be common in studies of similar situations to ours, therefore crossing recklessly through where children and other residents are attempting to get in and out of their cars. Aside from the poor placement of the speed humps (such that they would interfere with any fire suppression response), there are also many studies showing that emergency vehicle response time is slowed by the installation of speed humps and air pollution increased. With all of this in mind and no local studies that say otherwise, the only logical conclusion is that the installation of speed humps will likely make our neighborhood far more dangerous than it is today. Additionally, it is apparent that little

thought has been put into the long-term ramifications of this installation. In the otherwise quiet neighborhoods of Knollwood, Foster Ave sees an exponential increase in traffic in the Spring/Summer months. This can be attributed to school and little league attendance. The cyclical nature is something our block has come to peace with and welcomes as part of the charm of the community. However, the proposed humps would be a permanent fixture on Foster Ave, not a seasonal installation for the benefit of Little League. They would be present year-round, including for the winter months, after the waves of outdoor recreation have long subsided for the year.

- d. Kri Grenier (Emailed comment)** - It's come to my attention that there is a meeting about the Foster Avenue speed humps on Thursday at 10am. As I am a full-time employee and this meeting is being held during normal business hours, I won't be able to attend. Considering that, please read the following into public record for the Shields Township meeting on 6/22/2023 in opposition to the installation of speed humps along Foster Ave. Speed humps are no longer a recommended traffic calming method by most municipalities [Example: [Naperville, IL traffic calming toolkit](#)] because modern research shows they are often the worst choice for residential areas. Consider the following facts about speed humps as reported by various scientific studies and media outlets across the US:

**Speed humps cause displacement of speeding problems rather than solving them.** In Knollwood, this would risk other neighborhoods becoming more dangerous or the parking lot next to West Park being used to avoid speed humps and encourage even faster driving. [Source: [San Jose State University study](#), 2015]

**Speed humps are expensive to install and expensive to maintain**—Speed humps can cost \$4,500 to [\\$7,500](#). [Source: [The Washington Post](#), Sept. 9, 2008]

**Speed humps interfere with response times of emergency vehicles**—Each speed hump costs fire trucks ten or more seconds in response time. [Source: [ABC Orlando/WFTV](#), Jan.

28, 2010; and Fire Capt. Jeffrey Martin, [St. Petersburg Times](#), Feb. 2, 2008; and the [Tampa Tribune](#), Sept. 20, 2008, [The Herald Sun](#), Aug 12, 2026]

**Speed humps reduce property values**—Prospective homebuyers reject home sites near speed humps. [Source: [Tampa Bay Online](#), Sept. 30, 2009]

**Speed humps increase noise levels**—Speed humps usher in a constant barrage of scraping cars and engines revving over the humps. [Source: [Tampa Bay Online](#), Aug. 12, 2009]

**Speed humps increase wear and tear on residential and commercial vehicles**—Speed humps are a source of excessive wear on tires, brakes, suspension systems, shock absorbers, and rattle dashboards. This would include damaging our snowplows that were already out of commission for 2 months last year. [Source: [The Natchez Democrat](#), Oct. 28, 2009]

**Speed humps are expensive to remove**—Municipalities, under pressure from citizens and enforced by the courts, have been forced to remove speed humps at great expense to taxpayers, from tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars. [Source: [Tampa Bay Online](#), Sept. 30, 2009, [Yakima Herald](#), Dec 11, 2017 ]

**Speed humps increase air pollution**—On roads with speed humps, carbon monoxide emissions increase by 82 percent, carbon dioxide emissions double, and nitrogen oxide increases by 37 percent. [Source: [BBC.com](#), April 22, 2009]

**Speed humps reduce fuel efficiency and increase gas consumption**—By forcing drivers to brake and accelerate repeatedly, speed humps will cause a car that normally that gets 58.15 mpg travelling at a steady 30mph to deliver only 30.85 mpg. [Source: [BBC.com](#), April 22, 2009]"A better option for Foster Avenue, assuming the need for traffic calming, would be to install radar speed signs instead.

**Radar speed signs are highly effective at controlling traffic speed.** They have been shown to slow vehicles in school zones by 4-9 mph. [Source: [Texas Transportation Institute](#), [Carmana Traffic Study in Chandler, Arizona](#), July 2018]

**Radar speed signs are proven to reduce traffic fatalities.** This holds true even with increasing traffic. [Source: [Carmana Traffic Study in Chandler, Arizona](#), July 2018]

**Radar speed signs can be tested for efficacy and moved as necessary.** This is especially important on Foster Avenue since we have cyclical traffic patterns unique to the area when West Park is in use.

**Radar speed signs aren't expensive to install or maintain.** They may cost around 55% less than speed humps - starting at \$1900. [Source: [Radarsign](#)]

**Radar speed signs do not interfere with snow removal or emergency vehicles.**

**Radar speed signs are liked by drivers, and their compliance stays high over time.** This is unlike speed humps, which can cause driver irritation and more dangerous driving from repeated interactions. [Source: [BYU Study](#), April 3, 2006]

**Radar signs pose no risk to pedestrians, bikes, or low-suspension vehicles.** Speed humps and bumps have been known in neighborhoods to cause serious injury to bikers, motorcyclists, and pedestrians due to being a tripping hazard. As we have no sidewalks on Foster Avenue, this is a relevant concern. [Source: [Chicago Tribune](#), Nov 26, 2004]

The evidence is clear. Permanent speed humps on Foster Avenue are an irresponsible choice and would be detrimental to our community. I challenge our board to do better. Actively reach out to the residents of Foster Avenue, such as myself, for comment. Conduct independent traffic studies and have open board meetings with experts to discuss those findings at times that working members of our community can reasonably attend (not 10am on a weekday, as this meeting is). The community of Knollwood deserves to have a transparent, fact-driven discussion about this subject - the decision of how we tackle our traffic problems in Knollwood will greatly affect our daily lives, safety, children, and property values, which means we cannot afford to force through any hasty decisions made by a few. Thank you for your time.

- e. **Jake Terlap (Emailed comment)** - I would like the following to be read into the public record and take this opportunity to voice my opposition to the installation of speed bumps along Foster Avenue. I was very surprised to find out from neighbors about the speed bump installation that appears to be taking place without a traffic study or even a letter to the residents of Foster Ave. Such a change could have easily been communicated with a simple letter letting people know about this plan. The unfortunate part about this situation is that this is going to happen whether people are for it or against it. As I drove home tonight past the two deteriorated areas close to the stop light, I noticed markings on the pavement for locates and as I drove further down, I could see the areas marked for the speed bumps. Since this does not seem to be able to be stopped, I would like to ask about the speed rating of these obstacles. Will a vehicle be able to safely cross over these traveling at the posted speed limit of 25 mile per hour? I hope to hear the answer to this question read aloud and answered in a response to this email since the board meetings are not televised or recorded to be viewed later.

#### **IV. Discussion of Shields Township Road District**

##### **a. New Business**

1. **Recommendations of Speed Humps and Traffic Calming Devices** – Supervisor Urso states that several members of the community think that traffic calming devices would be more beneficial while others are fighting for speed humps on their roads to eliminate speeding and cut-through traffic all together. As a township we are trying to find a balance and our ultimate goal is to keep the community safe. In the last five years there have been more young families moving to the neighborhood. We have no hidden agenda. We just want to keep these kids and families safe. Since there is no consistent police patrol present, we do not see a

better option than to install speed humps at this time. We completely recommend and endorses them.

2. **Comments from Supervisor Urso** – Supervisor Urso addresses all public comment concerns. Since there are only two Sheriffs that patrol our area of roads, they are barely able to enforce things like speed limit signs and ‘no parking’ areas. We must do what we can to help keep the community a safe place. We do care a lot about the neighborhood. Supervisor Urso asks if they feel their kids are safer with or without the speed humps. Most agree that its safer with the humps however some disagree. Supervisor Urso states after talking to the patrons on Basil and Smith Avenue, they have stated that the speeding has not only slowed down but is eliminated altogether. Shields Township understands that this can be an inconvenience to some of you, so we are looking to extend the length of the speed hump to be more a of a calm speed table. We also talked with Assessor Scott Helton to make sure this would not affect people’s property value and he assured it would not. In fact, in some cases, it may help the property value especially for the ones who live near a park. While the community is also concerned with plowing the humps in the winter the committee members say that while it can sometimes be inconvenient there will be no issue keeping them clean, cleared and salted throughout the winter season.
3. **Birch Avenue update** – New pipe has been laid under Birch Ave to begin the paving process. Once paving begins it should take a week or less.
4. **Green Avenue SMC update** – This project has come to a screeching halt as they hit a watermain that was not expected to be there. The watermain must be relocated before the project can rebegin.

**b. Old Business**



1. **Foster Avenue SMC Drainage Project** – The Foster Avenue grant is being worked on with Janice Aull and SMC. They are looking to possibly coordinate with the Birch Avenue paving project to possibly pave the end of Foster Ave as well.
2. **Starbucks update** – Committee Person Wussow talked to Starbucks, and they said they switched their engineering company and are now in the process of the redesign phase. They are looking to make the area a more functional space for the surrounding community.
3. **Skid Loader update** – The committee is looking to trade in our current Wheel Loader for a more functional Skid Loader. The Skid loader is a much more efficient piece of machinery for the township. The average cash value for the machine is \$55,000 however with the trade-in we will come out on top with a \$5,000 parts and service credit. The committee members support the trade-in and will bring it up to the Board of Trustees for a final vote.
4. **2023-2025 Mowing Contract Review** – The committee feels that that everything with Fleck’s landscaping is going very smooth and all ROW (right-of-way) locations are getting mowed in record time. We are extremely pleased with their work.
5. **Bike Path update** – The committee is looking at the best way to make this a cost-efficient option for our community. We are working with state and county officials to possibly get some grant money to help this process move forward.

V. **General Road Issues and Recommendations** – Committee Person Wussow addresses the parking issue on the roads in Knollwood that run East West by Luke’s and McDonald’s. When there is an influx of people there seems to be a parking shortage and then people park on the side of the road folding the edges of the asphalt. The parking is not sufficient and the stalls are too small. This then creates a lot of congestion during peak hours. Supervisor Urso suggests that the committee bounce

ideas off other local businesses on how to collectively increase parking. Committee Chair Rogers says the committee will come up with ideas and numbers on how to expand the parking spaces.

**VI. Non-Agenda Items** – Supervisor Urso addresses the fact that there is a new ‘No Turn on Red’ sign by target that the Township fought for so that bike path patrons could cross more safely. We are looking into having that sign on all four corners of that area. We also noticed there was a small sink hole that needed to be addressed right away and was repaired within hours of arrival.

**VII. Adjournment** – 10:52a.m.