

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

THE TOWN BOARD OF SHIELDS TOWNSHIP met at the Shields Township office for its regular monthly meeting on November 18, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT: <u>Gale Strenger Wayne</u>	Supervisor
<u>David Barkhausen</u>	Town Clerk
<u>Lynn Baehr</u>	Town Trustee
<u>Laura Carney</u>	Town Trustee
<u>Mary Woodson</u>	Town Trustee

Trustee Cele Bull was absent. Highway Commissioner Bill Goodman and Assessor Teresia Yakes were also present.

I. Meeting Called to Order

Supervisor Strenger Wayne called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. and requested an attendance roll call. All Board members were present other than Trustee Bull.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Supervisor Strenger Wayne opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Consideration of Minutes from the Previous the Town Board Meeting

A motion by Trustee Baehr, seconded by Trustee Woodson, to approve the minutes of the monthly meeting of the Board held on October 28th was approved on a voice vote. With regard to minutes of the Special Board Meeting held on November 9th to discuss the functions and services of the supervisor’s office held on November 9th Supervisor Strenger Wayne asked for a number of additions and corrections to those that Clerk Barkhausen had circulated to the Board. It was decided to defer consideration of these minutes to the next monthly meeting to give the Board members a chance to review these requested changes, and their further consideration was tabled on a motion by Trustee Woodson, seconded by Trustee Baehr.

IV. Payment of Bills

Town Fund Bills: A motion by Trustee Carney, seconded by Trustee Woodson, to approve the payment of Town Fund expenses in the amount of \$82,261.48 passed 4-0 on a roll call vote. Trustee Carney asked about a subscription to The Economist magazine, a donation of \$100 to the North Chicago library, and payments to Chambers of Commerce in for the supervisor and assessor. Supervisor Strenger Wayne said these payments are appropriate as long as there are line items in the budget consistent with these items. Trustee Carney said she would like to discuss items like these and the payment of Rotary Club dues in the upcoming deliberations over the budget for the next fiscal year.

Road & Bridge Bills: A motion by Trustee Baehr, seconded by Trustee Woodson, to approve the payment of Road Fund expenses in the amount of \$53,245.98 passed 4-0 on a roll call vote.

General Assistance Bills: A motion by Trustee Woodson, seconded by Trustee Baehr, to approve the payment of General Assistance expenses in the amount of \$7,282.17 passed 4-0 on a roll call vote.

V. Public Comment – Non-Agenda Items

County Board Member Susan Gravenhorst of Lake Bluff mentioned the following items: the latest issue (the winter edition) of the Lake County Forest Preserve District’s Horizons quarterly publication, an exhibit at the County’s Discovery Museum relating to the Beatles, her appreciation for the support she received in the recent election, and a request for public comments about any matters coming before the County Board in the next term. In response to a question from Trustee Carney about the question of a golf course at Fort Sheridan, Mrs. Gravenhorst mentioned the recently concluded recommendation of a local advisory committee to build a 9-hole course along with preservation of part of the area as open space and said that Request for Proposals would be issued to determine what such a project might cost. She indicated that the County Board probably would not vote on the matter until January or February.

Janice Schnobrich of Lake Bluff complained about what she said was a display of inappropriate behavior by two employees of the assessor’s office at the November 9th Special Board Meeting to discuss the

functions and services of the supervisor's office. She said that they "snickered and scoffed" at questions the trustees had posed to staff members of the supervisor's office relating to the time required to carry out certain functions and services. She characterized the general deportment of the public audience attending the meeting, which she said included many people from outside Shields Township, as "partisan" and more appropriate to a "Roman coliseum." She asked the Board to focus on the questions of the number of staff members required to provide Shields Township services and whether certain non-mandated services could be eliminated with the remaining ones provided more efficiently. She then compared staff levels in West Deerfield Township with those in Shields Township, saying that the West Deerfield supervisor's office, providing similar services to those in Shields Township, has one and a half employees in the supervisor's office versus three in Shields and that the West Deerfield assessor's office with 11,729 tax parcels uses two employees versus three and a half employees in Shields, which she said has 9,741 tax parcels. She concluded by commending the Board for some of the steps they had already taken but said there are significant savings that should still be achieved when the Board makes its upcoming decisions with regard to the property tax levy and budget for the next fiscal year.

Supervisor Strenger Wayne said it is correct that there are one and half employees in West Deerfield office but added that this is because the clerk there spends quite a bit of the time in the office handling certain responsibilities.

VI. Presentation by the Lake Forest-Lake Bluff Senior Center

As part of a series of presentations by the Township's "Community Outreach Partners," Marge Burda, the outgoing Executive Director of the Lake Forest-Lake Bluff Senior Center, appeared on behalf of the organization, briefly described its mission and services, and introduced social worker, Janet Freyer. Ms. Freyer described her services of providing counseling and emotional support and practical advice about finances, housing options, and Medicare options to about 300 separate clients. Ms. Freyer mentioned two sample client cases and said her services often help individuals to stay in their homes or to identify appropriate assisted living facilities if they need to make that transition. Ms. Burda said there are many services available to seniors whether they are Senior Center members or not. She said the hospital care coach comes monthly to the Center and is available to anyone. Podiatry and massage therapy services are available once a week for fee. Transportation is provided to those who need it who are over 65 or afflicted with a disability. A senior car provides about 5,000 subsidized rides annually. Six part-time paid drivers and additional volunteers help seniors to go shopping or run other errands. Additional assistance is available for tax preparation and computer training. The Senior Center organizes many trips, and the recent annual veterans' breakfast included more than 100 veterans. In response to a question from Supervisor Strenger Wayne about membership levels, Ms. Burda said membership is down somewhat currently. Membership fees are \$35 for an individual and \$55 family and may be lower for those on limited incomes. Those age 50 and over are eligible for membership, and the average age of members is in the low 70's. Supervisor Strenger Wayne said she had been a volunteer driver, and Ms. Burda said there is a need for additional volunteer drivers, especially in the winter when some of the volunteers are out of town.

VII. Old Business

a. Food Pantry

Supervisor Strenger Wayne mentioned that there had been a discussion at the prior week's special Board meeting about the food pantry and alternatives and that she was uncertain of the direction the trustees might be taking on the subject. Trustee Baehr said she was in favor of food pantry assistance and that it was a question of the most effective location. Trustee Carney said it was a question of whether the most people come from and expressed an interest in breakdown of this information. There are 105 households in North Chicago that have been served by the food pantry this year and 84 or 85 in Lake Forest and Lake Bluff. Of the latter group, 12 are in Lake Forest, 10 in Lake Bluff, and 60 in the unincorporated area. Trustee Woodson said the majority of the need is in North Chicago and expressed an interest in having the assistance close to where it is needed the most. Trustee Carney noted that the records show that there were 150 individuals and 63 families served in October and asked for more detail of where they are from, suggesting that if most of those served live near the Township office, those who might need it who live elsewhere might not have the transportation to reach the food pantry. Supervisor Strenger Wayne said that, since the food pantry items are being funded with passport fees, she hoped that one location would not be chosen over another but that consideration be given to expansion, possibly through a mobile food pantry. She mentioned having contacted Christ Church and the Church of the Holy Spirit in Lake Forest and said that Christ Church donates to anyone in need but that they only serve about one person per day on average. She added that the Church of the Holy Spirit operates on a referral basis and that Shields Township is a referring agency, as are other churches in the area. She said that Shields Township is the only food pantry in the Lake Forest-Lake Bluff area that provides assistance without a referral. There are three food pantries in North Chicago, she said, two in Shields Township and one close to the northern Township border. Two of them are open on Tuesdays, respectively, from 10 a.m.-noon and noon-2 p.m., and the third is open on Thursday evenings from 5:30-7:30.. Trustee Carney again expressed an interest in more information and noted that the demand seems to be seasonal in that is up in the summer when the school lunch program is not operating. Trustee Baehr volunteered to study the pattern of where the people come from and to maintain any necessary confidentiality about individual food pantry users.

Trustee Carney mentioned that Youth Build is operating in the building across from the North Chicago High School and speculated that might be an appropriate site for an additional North Chicago food pantry location.

b. Outsourcing of Payroll and Accounting Services

Supervisor Strenger Wayne noted that Trustee Bull was to help gather information about possible outsourcing alternatives but that she is out of town. Supervisor Strenger Wayne said that she had made some inquiries herself, beginning with the Township's auditing firm to see if they provide such services. The auditor said that they do handle payroll and accounting functions but reportedly noted that a number of clients that had outsourced had taken decided to handle these functions internally as a cost-saving measure. The auditing firm charges \$54-\$60/hour for payroll and accounts payable and \$66-\$140 hour for accounting functions. Trustee Baehr pointed out that information was lacking as to how many hours this work would require. A local accountant with whom Supervisor Strenger Wayne spoke said they would start at \$150/hour. She also called ADP, which provides payroll services. Trustee Carney said there was a distinction between an accountant and a bookkeeper, and that functions performed by the latter might be much less expensive. Supervisor Strenger Wayne mentioned the special accounting required for public bodies with their various reporting requirements and observed that many bills have to be assigned to more than one among four different funds. Trustee Carney noted the advantages of switching to QuickBooks and a possible savings with electronic payments. She also voiced an interest in a simplified financial reporting system for bills that would more clearly explain the purpose of the various payments.

VIII. New Business

a. Discussion of Amendments to Open Meetings Act (Public Act 96-1473)

Supervisor Strenger Wayne noted that Township attorney Richard Cowen had sent a memo regarding amendments to the Open Meetings Act that take effect on January 1st. They require public bodies to adopt rules for public participation at their meetings concerning when the public can comment and the length of time for such comments. Mr. Cowen said that the law had previously allowed local governments to prohibit public participation altogether. Supervisor Strenger Wayne said that Trustee Bull had mentioned in an e-mail that she thought the Board was already observing these new legal requirements, a point that Trustee Baehr also made during the discussion of this matter.

Supervisor Strenger Wayne said that flexibility is allowed with the specific provisions of such rules. Mr. Cowen said allowing 3-5 minutes for individual comments is common, as it is to limit repetitive comments. Trustee Woodson noted said that the public comment and behavior towards the trustees at the previous week's special meeting had seemed meeting quite "nasty" and that the public needs to be respectful. She said everyone should make an effort to do better by, and to care, for each other. Trustee Carney observed that the trustees' job is to be fact-finders and to save money where possible and that it is difficult to be attacked personally and vehemently when trying to provide a public service. Mr. Cowen added that the Board is already in compliance with the Act. Whether to allow comment at the time an agenda matter is being discussed or before or afterwards is discretionary with a board. The discussion concluded with a decision to consider the adoption of a resolution on the subject at the December Board meeting.

IX. Public Comments – Agenda Items - None

X. Township Officials' Reports

a. Highway Commissioner's Report

Highway Commissioner Goodman said that the Road District's work of the previous month had included road patching, tree trimming, and preparation for the winter that he hoped would be mild. He said there was nothing new to report with regard to the money expected from the State to reimburse the Township and Road District for drainage work that had been completed once the work had been paid for by the Road District. Supervisor Strenger Wayne mentioned the desirability of a committee from different parts of the Road District to assess the needs of the area and discussing the participation of Knollwood Neighbors in such an activity. Commissioner Goodman acknowledged that there are a number of road and drainage issues that need attention. Commission Goodman mentioned the upcoming closure of 176 at the railroad tracks east of Route 41 on Monday through Wednesday of the following week.

b. Trustees' Report

Trustee Woodson mentioned a community open house to be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the following Saturday, November 20th at the North Chicago Library, which had organized the event. Supervisor Strenger Wayne said the Township would have a table there, that she would be present from 10 a.m. until noon, and Trustee Woodson said she would be there from noon until 3 p.m.

c. Supervisor's Report

In her Supervisor's Report, Supervisor Strenger Wayne mentioned the following items:

- A busy time in connection with the Shields Township Food Pantry, including two large donations from the annual Knesley family food drive and the Church of the Holy Spirit in Lake Forest, which has limited storage space for their food donations; a food drives by Girl Scout Troop #1305 and the Lake Bluff elementary school teachers that included cash donations to the Township's Phoenix Rising Foundation that can be used for food purchases; donations of personal paper products by the . sophomore poms form Warren High School; and the purchase of 100 Thanksgiving holiday meals through Phoenix Rising that had been distributed the previous day.
- Participation with three other townships in an "Options and Opportunities" employment opportunities seminar held in Highland Park, organized by State Senator Susan Garrett, attended by an estimated 200 individuals, and including representatives of 33 different agencies.
- A thank you from Mother's Trust for the Township's assistance with a recent Mother's Trust Teen coat drive that provided 1,200 items to 800 North Chicago residents.
- Her appreciation of a picture of a veterans memorial in North Chicago that had been presented by Frank Wortham to the Township. The memorial commemorates the World War II contributions of 100,000 African-American Navy veterans.

XI. Executive Session

A motion by Trustee Carney, seconded by Trustee Woodson to go into to Executive Session to discuss specific personnel was approved 4-0 on a roll call vote at 7:54.

XII. Miscellaneous – Scheduling of December Meeting

When the Board resumed its open session at 8:39, there was a general discussion of how to provide for the desired degree of deliberation leading to the adoption of the annual property tax levy at the December meeting. Supervisor Strenger Wayne said it was her goal to have proposed budgets to the trustees by Thursday, December 2nd. After some discussion of how to arrange for an informal discussion of budget and tax levy matters and also an executive session prior to the meeting at which the levy would be adopted, including advice from attorney Richard Cowen that the Board could go into executive session for a proper purpose immediately after the convening of a meeting, it was decided to schedule the December monthly meeting for 4 p.m., to begin with an executive session, followed by a "workshop" to discuss the levy and the budget, and then by the regular monthly meeting agenda.

XII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn by Trustee Baehr, seconded by Trustee Woodson, was approved unanimously on a voice vote at 8:44 p.m..

Attest

David N. Barkhausen, Town Clerk