



Shields Township

906 W. Muir Avenue, Lake Bluff, IL 60044

**Regular Meeting of the Shields Township Board of Trustees
Thursday, October 16, 2025, at 5:00pm**

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

THE TOWN BOARD OF SHIELDS TOWNSHIP held its Regular Monthly Meeting on Thursday October 16th, 2025, at 5:00 pm.

PRESENT:

Kamila Urso	Supervisor
Vanessa Grum	Township Clerk
Michelle Parnell	Town Trustee
Catherine Oliver-Salbilla	Town Trustee
Christopher Prager	Town Trustee
Trent Swarhout	Town Trustee
Mark Kimzey	Township Attorney
Lisette Rothing	Deputy Clerk

ABSENT: None

I. Call to Order & Roll Call: Supervisor Urso called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm and Clerk Grum took roll call. All trustees and Supervisor Urso present.

II. Pledge of Allegiance: 5:04 pm

III. Presentations:

a. Mothers Trust Foundation - Julie Hallas was the representative who spoke. She started as a volunteer and became co-chair of Mother’s Trust Foundation. They support low-income children in crisis in Lake County. They work with 220 community schools and programs to make sure gaps are filled for immediate needs. Usually, they offer one time help. The biggest areas of need are education and extracurricular needs, camps, sports, baby gear for new and

single mothers, and help paying utilities. They also have service events annually like the coat drive event on Nov. 15 and pop-up events for prom dresses and suits. They are hosting a Fundraiser Soiree on November 8th at Knollwood Country Club which will include a live auction. Last year they helped 4,000 children and this year they are already past that number with an annual increase of 25%. She thanked Shields Township for helping and supporting their foundation. Trustee Prager asked where they focus their efforts, and Julie answered that they serve all of Lake County. He thanks her for their work. Trustee Oliver-Salbilla thanked her as well and asked her to please reach out if there is any other way that we can help.

- b. City of Lake Forest-Lake Bluff Senior Citizens' Foundation (commonly known as "Dickinson Hall")** - Representative Tricia Schwall spoke about this Foundation. It has been in existence for over 50 years in Southwest Lake Forest. There are 1,000 members. She is proud of the staff for putting on parties, lectures, and playing games with seniors. They have senior services funds that they use to help seniors replace appliances etc. as well as scholarships to allow some seniors memberships. They have a transportation program and fitness program. Trustee Prager asked if they do home evaluations. Tricia answered not typically, but they refer to Partners in aging to do those things. She thanked Shields Township for support. Janice Schnobrich commented that she has been a member for many years, and she says there are so many wonderful things they do for seniors.
- c. Waukegan Township Senior Center (Patricia A Jones Center)** - Alderman Carl Evans and Supervisor Mike Jones of Waukegan Township presented. They thanked Shields for the grant in the past to help them provide the many services they do including activities to build interactions, woodshop, cribbage groups, billiards, exercise programs, and field trips (internationally - London and Martha's Vineyard). They offer seniors support groups including diabetes and Alzheimer's. Their data tells the story of how this partnership and this program are effective. They have had a food truck festival, an ice cream social, their 1st annual country line dancing soiree, and daily exercise and wellness (15 % shields township residents). They offer Lake County Connect (Tech at your pace class), and then they receive a free laptop at the end and 15% of Shields Township residents participated in this. They send out a Bimonthly newsletter. They give seniors

coupons to attend and purchase from the farmers market called Grow at CLC. They offer complimentary lawn maintenance and a snow removal program for seniors in which they have 582 signed up. Supervisor Mike Jones would love to expand out and offer this to others. He has been the manager for a transitional housing facility for 8 years and many people in different area codes have needs. They give a hand up not a handout to make sure they are sensible with tax dollars. They also partner with Mothers Trust Foundation. Trustee Parnell asked who do they pay to do the lawn maintenance program; Supervisor Jones replies that they hire people as seasonal employees who are usually college students.

IV. Public Comment: Three (3) Minutes per Speaker

- a. Janice Schnobrich** - At 5:25 pm, Janice made a statement noting that eight policies and procedures approved by the Board in May–June 2025, with associated legal fees of \$12,500, lack documentation on how they were implemented or whether staff or officials received related training. Concerns were raised about unclear purchasing approvals for “Road Maintenance” expenditures, including \$26,000 spent without evidence of required authorization. The statement also highlighted a potential violation of the Ethics and Gift Ban Policy involving a Road Department employee attending an election recount while on compensated time. Janice emphasized the need for greater transparency regarding township operations, spending, and employee activities.
- b. Kathy Blahunka** - At 5:29 pm, Kathy expressed concern about the lowering of the Road Levy in December 2022 and the lack of CPI adjustments, which has resulted in an estimated \$600,000 loss in Road Funds and could reach more than \$1.5 million over the current Board’s term if continued. She noted that past reductions to the Road Fund lacked documented rationale and may not have been fully understood by prior officials. It was emphasized that although the Road Levy was reduced, the total tax collected did not decrease; instead, funds were shifted to the Corporate Town Fund, which increased by 54% during the same period. Kathy also cited legal requirements under Illinois Township Law stating that Road Funds can only be moved with voter approval and expressed concern that board members were previously unaware of certain statutory obligations. Additionally, tax receipt information presented to the current Board was described as misleading regarding actual Road Fund revenue. She urged the Board to explain why money was removed from the Road Fund, ensure

transparency, and take responsibility for restoring fair road funding for Shields Township when setting the upcoming levy.

- c. **Alderman Evans** - At 5:31 pm, Alderman Evans spoke to thank Supervisor Urso and Scott Helton because they came to the North Chicago meeting and spoke about taxes and the taxes themselves. We want to share benefits between townships. He encouraged the board to keep doing what you are doing, stay focused on what you believe in, and keep your head up when people come and go against things you want to do.
- d. **Jeff Urso** - At 5:33 pm, Jeff stated that, according to an auditor, Shields is one of the most fiscally sound Townships. In the last three years, Shields Township has accomplished a lot including hiring a law firm that has fixed 30 years of mistakes, purchased two new vehicles to replace 20-year-old ones, installed speed humps to improve safety, and started a contract with Waukegan Township. The law changed in 2021 and Jeff encourages the board to read this law. He states that if there was anything illegal that occurred, it would have been addressed years ago. He encourages the board to continue the grants to the three different organizations who presented today. Those leaders helped make sure Shields Township residents were being serviced. He is proud to partner with them.
- e. **Mike Pierret** - At 5:35 pm, Mike urged the board to make sure they get the road levy and corporate funds adjusted. He stated that we need to take care to get it right.
- f. **Commissioner Carmecia Hawthorn** - At 5:36 pm, Carmecia who is a resident of Shields Township, precinct committeemen, and Vice chair of Lake County democrats asked board to consider moving the meeting time to later; preferably 5:30 so that people can attend these meetings because this is important and there is a lot of information. She stated that she appreciates the work we are doing. She is looking forward to working with Shields Township.
- g. **Ed Duffy** - Ed encouraged the board to look at the road levy and the disbursement of money from the Road Fund; was it lawful? Why did that happen? It's the taxpayer's money and should be used for roads not the general corporate fund. Hopefully we can redirect the money back into the road fund.

V. Reports:

- a. **Supervisor** - Supervisor Kamila Urso stated that she went to North Chicago City Hall to answer questions of residents and allowed them to provide clarity on

important topics. The deputy clerk attended an event in Naperville with many sessions. Trustee Swarhout and Supervisor Urso visited the Senior Center for a tour. She has been working on infrastructure improvements with drainage projects to maintain safety and reliable infrastructure for residents. This month is blue cards which many residents call with concerns and questions, so she thanked Deputy Clerk Lisette Rothing and Administrator Carl Kitzerow for their dedication, patience, and professionalism in handling these questions.

- b. Assessors report** - Carl Kitzerow spoke on behalf of Scott Helton who said he set up a review process to have residents come in and ask questions about their property value. There were 100 informal requests this year, almost all of them settled, and some got “no change.” They learn to use the tool (comparison grid) which they could use if they went to the appeal board. Most people left knowing why their taxes are what they are and have more of an understanding even if they are unhappy.
- c. Administrator** - Carl Kitzerow explained that next month we must approve a levy. He stated that there is misinformation happening. The Township requests to levy the maximum 4.99 to make room for new builds. 2.9 is the maximum. He will send information about what the figures represent. He suggests contacting our accountant before the meeting, so please make sure you are informed and have made a decision in your own mind. We have had a clean audit and have been fully vetted by the Township attorney, so it is fully legal.

VI. Approval of Bills: At 5:46 pm, Supervisor Urso moved to approve the bills as presented. Trustee Swarhout motioned to approve, and Trustee Parnell seconded the motion. Clerk Grum took a roll call. All Trustees agreed and the bills are approved for the following amounts:

- a. Town Fund:** In the amount of \$27,943.09
- b. General Assistance Fund:** None
- c. Road & Bridge Fund:** In the amount of \$32,674.08

VII. New Business: 5:48 pm

- a. Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of September 18, 2025** - Trustee Oliver Salbilla motioned to approve the minutes and Trustee Swarhout seconded the motion. Clerk Grum took a roll call and all approved. The motion passes 5-0.
- b. Approval of Service Contract with Mothers Trust Foundation** - Trustee Swarhout motioned to approve the service contract and Trustee Parnell

seconded the motion. Trustee Oliver Salbilla asked about where the contract was located? How much? There was an email. Clerk Grum took a roll call and all approved. The motion passes 5-0.

c. Approval of Service Contract with the City of Lake Forest-Lake Bluff Senior Citizens' Foundation commonly known as Dickinson Hall - Trustee Parnell motioned to approve the service contract and Trustee Oliver-Salbilla seconded the motion. Clerk Grum took a roll call and all approved. The motion passes 5-0.

d. Approval of Service Contract with Waukegan Township Senior Center - Trustee Oliver Salbilla motioned to approve, Trustee Swarouth seconded the motion. Clerk Grum took a roll call and all approved. The motion passes 5-0.

VIII. Old Business: None

IX. Executive Session: None

X. Other Business:

- a. **Trustee Oliver Salbilla** suggested adding an agenda item for the next meeting to move the meeting 30 minutes later. She stated that a lot of people who don't work from home are in transit and another factor that may start contributing to needing a later start time is inclement weather.
- b. **Trustee Prager** stated that we had a boil order and was wondering about why this happened and why we didn't get more information for residents of Shields Township. Can Shields be informed sooner so that we could get it out to our residents sooner? It was answered that you have to sign up online for notifications. He will follow up on it himself and ask why we didn't get a heads up so we can better serve the community and inform them more quickly. It was also added that you can go to the township websites themselves.

XI. Adjournment: At 5:56 pm, Supervisor Urso moved to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Swarouth motioned to adjourn the meeting and Trustee Oliver-Salbilla seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:57 pm.