



Shields Township

906 W. Muir Avenue, Lake Bluff, IL 60044

Regular Meeting of the Shields Township Board of Trustees

Thursday, December 18th, 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 December 18th, 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 Swarthout	Town Trustee
Lisette Rothing	Deputy Clerk
Carl Kitzerow	Township Administrator

ABSENT: Attorney Mark Kimzey

- I. **Call to Order & Roll Call:** Supervisor Urso called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm and Clerk Grum took roll call. All trustees and Supervisor Urso present.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance:** 5:03 pm.
- III. **Presentations:**
 - a. **Josh Bandak** - He is from the Illinois Policy Institute (Non-profit 501 3C organization). He has an opportunity to bring more money to our schools which

comes from the Educational Choice for Children Act. He wants us to add a referendum question on the ballot. He explains that the program is simple; Americans can receive a federal tax credit dollar to dollar for up to \$1700 per year for educational institutions. The state has to actively opt-in to the program. This gives students greater access to educational opportunities through scholarships, tutoring, fees for exams and dual enrollment. Illinois only stands to lose money if they fail to opt-in, he states. We think voters deserve a say on this program.

- i. Trustee Prager asks a question: What is the projected opportunity here if it went through? Response - the best scenario is that people could choose to form an SGO (Scholarship Grant Offers) (10 students from 2 different schools) - we could form this between our two communities served by Shields Township to make sure the scholarships are received by local students. This is coming nationally, and it could come here, so we are trying to support it coming here.

iv. **Executive Session:** None.

v. **Public Comment: Three (3) Minutes per Speaker:**

- a. **Janice Schnobrich:** Mrs. Schnobrich explains that she attempted to pick up a township meeting recording but found the office unexpectedly closed the day before Thanksgiving, a closure not listed as an official holiday in the Employee Manual. After comparing policies with nearby townships, she concludes Shields Township likely did not formally approve the closure and questions whether employees were improperly given an extra holiday. Mrs. Schnobrich calls for clarification, board review, possible updates to the Employee Manual, and transparency to taxpayers regarding unauthorized holidays or policy errors.
- b. **Mike Pierret:** Mr. Pierret states that attending shields meetings has been very informative and shared some end of the year observations:
 - i. He found the explanation about changing the distribution for funds make sense.
 - ii. He understands FOIA requests can be costly, but he still views them as an important part of a democracy.

- iii. He complimented and thanked all members of Shields Township Board, Shields employees, and Mrs. Blahunka and Ms. Schnobrich stating that he commends all for being a voice for the people of Shields. He addressed each person individually offering complimentary observations and gratefulness for each person and his/her role.

VI. Reports:

- a. **Supervisor: 5:34 pm** - Supervisor Urso stated she has been working with Carl to determine the best path forward for the Assessor's office position. Exploring 906 W. Muir lease is moving forward. Deputy Lisette has been doing great work updating the website. A company called Revise is going to help us with the website who are government website experts.
- b. **Administrator:** None.
- c. **Road and Bridge Report:** None.

VII. Approval of Bills: Supervisor Urso moved to approve the bills as listed below. Trustee Parnell motioned to approve, and Trustee Oliver Salbilla seconded the motion. Clerk Grum took roll call and all approved. The motion carries and the bills were approved.

- a. **Town Fund:** In the amount of \$56,277.32.
- b. **General Assistance:** This amount is included in the Town Fund.
- c. **Road & Bridge:** In the amount of \$6,055.66.

VIII. Old Business: 5:24 pm.

- a. **Approval of Ordinance No. 112025-01, An Ordinance Levying Taxes for all Corporate and Road Purposes for Shields Township, Lake County, Illinois, for Tax year 2025:** Supervisor Urso moved to approve the ordinance No. 112025-01 in the total amount of \$1,588,022.00 with the breakdown of amounts levied for each object and purpose as listed below. Trustee Swarhout motioned to approve, and Trustee Parnell seconded the motion. Clerk Grum took roll call and all approved. The motion carries and the ordinance is approved.
 - i. Total General Township/Corporate Fund: \$1,083,022.00
 - ii. Total IMRF Fund: \$5,000.00
 - iii. Total General Road & Bridge Fund: \$500,000.00

IX. New Business: 5:26

- a. **Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2025** - Supervisor Urso moved to approve the minutes. Trustee Oliver Salbilla motioned, and Trustee Swarthout seconded the motion. Clerk Grum took roll call and all approved. Motion Carries.
- b. **Renewal of 2026 Health Insurance and Ancillary Benefits for Full-Time Staff:** This item is for discussion only tonight. In the past several years, 3 Insurance and benefit options have been offered to employees. We have a small group of government insurance. We will provide quotes at the next meeting. Trustee Oliver-Salbilla asked about the opportunity for group insurance plans for public employees in the state of Illinois. Discussion ensued.
- c. **Renewal of Independent Contractor Agreement to Address Vacancy in Office of Township Assessor:** The new term begins January 2026. The former assessor was Scott Helton. Supervisor Urso is seeking a motion to hire Scott Helton as an independent contractor with a year-to-year contract. Discussion ensued. Trustee Oliver Salbilla motions, seconded by Trustee Prager. Clerk Grum took roll call and all approved. Motion carries.
- d. **Approval of the 2026 Township Board Meeting Dates and Times:** Shields Township Board Meetings will be held on the following 3rd Thursdays during the year 2026: January 15th, February 19th, March 19th, April 16th, May 21st, June 12th, July 16th, August 20th, September 17th, October 15th, November 19th, and December 17th. Trustee Prager asks for the meeting time to be moved from 5:00 pm to 5:30 pm for every meeting because he states that we have had multiple people say that it is difficult for them to attend at the earlier time. He suggests that maybe staff want to go for a longer lunch break to make up for the later hours. Trustee Oliver Salbilla motions to approve the listed meeting dates at the revised 5:30 pm time. Trustee Prager seconded the motion. Clerk Grum takes roll call and all approved. Motion carries.
- e. **Approval of 2026 Township Holiday Closures:** Trustee Oliver Salbilla was asking about putting a note in there that the office will be closed early the day before a holiday. Nov. 25th and Dec. 23rd, and New Years Eve or maybe amend the schedule for these holidays. Discussion ensued. Trustee Oliver Salbilla

motions to approve the closures as amended. The motion was seconded by Trustee Swarthout. Clerk Grum takes roll call and all approved. The motion carries.

- f. Approval of A Resolution to Submit an Advisory Referendum to the Voters of Shields Township Regarding Federal Tax Credits:** Supervisor Urso explains that the Township code provides that the township can add three questions to the ballot. Josh Bandak presented earlier so she motions to add a question on the ballot regarding his presentation. Discussion ensued about how many question slots we have available on the ballot. There is a proposed language for it in the packet. Trustee Parnell motions and Trustee Swarthout seconded the motion. Clerk Grum takes roll call. Trustee Oliver Salbilla votes nay, all others yay. Trustee Oliver Salbilla explains that she doesn't know enough about it and she is worried that it would take money out of our public schools and into the hands of private schools. Motion carries 4-1.

x. Other Business: None.

xI. Adjournment: Supervisor Urso moved to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Parnell motioned and Trustee Prager seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 5:52 pm.