



# Shields Township

906 W. Muir Avenue, Lake Bluff, IL 60044

## Rescheduled Meeting of the Shields Township Board of Trustees Monday May 19th, 2025 at 5:00pm

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

**THE TOWN BOARD OF SHIELDS TOWNSHIP** held its Rescheduled Monthly Meeting on Monday, May 19th, 2025 at 5:00 pm.

### PRESENT:

Kamila Urso	Supervisor
Vanessa Grum	Clerk
Lisette Rothing	Deputy Clerk
Michelle Parnell	Town Trustee
Catherine Oliver-Salbilla	Town Trustee
Christopher Prager	Town Trustee
Trent Swarthout	Town Trustee

### ABSENT: None

**I. Swearing in of New Members of the Board of Shields Township:** Prior to the start of the regular monthly meeting, Supervisor Jeff Urso introduced Judge Rosetti to swear in the new members of the board of Trustees for Shields Township.

- A. At 5:01 pm, Kamila Urso was sworn in for the office of Shields Township Supervisor.
- B. At 5:02 pm, Vanessa Grum was sworn in for the office of Shields Township Clerk.
- C. Between 5:03 and 5:05 pm, Michelle Parnell, Trent Swarthout, Catherine Oliver-Salbilla, and Christopher Prager were each sworn in for the offices of Shields Township Trustees.

**II. Call to Order & Roll Call:** Supervisor Urso called the meeting to order at 5:06 pm. Clerk Grum took roll call; Trustee Parnell, Trustee Oliver-Salbilla, Trustee Swarthout, and Trustee Prager were present. Also in attendance was Administrator Counselman Kimzey, Clerk Grum, and Deputy Clerk Rothing.

**III. Pledge of Allegiance:** Supervisor Urso opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 5:06 pm.

**IV. Amended Agenda:** Supervisor Urso motioned to amend the agenda by moving item 8-J to next on the agenda to accommodate the City Council Meeting at 6 pm. Trustee Oliver-Salbilla seconded the motion and Clerk Grum took roll call; all agreed.

**V. Approval of Appointment of Committee Chairs:** Supervisor Urso moves to re-appoint North Chicago Alderman Carl Evans to continue as Chair of the Community Service Committee and appoint Knollwood resident Michael Dunn as Chair of the Road and Bridge Committee. Trustee Oliver-Salbilla motion to approve the appointments as presented, and Trustee Swarthout seconds the motion to approve. There is no discussion and Clerk Grum takes roll call. All approve at 5:09 pm.

**VI. Public Comment:** Three (3) minutes per speaker.

- A. **Richard Gellersted** - At 5:12 pm Richard Gellersted of 244 W. Sheridan Place introduced himself as an attorney who practices immigration law in Waukegan. He has just completed the

courses to be an Assessor in Illinois on January 1st. He states that he is aware of the vacancy at Shields Township, so he wanted to express his interest in this position.

**B. Janice Schnobrich** - At 5:13 pm Lake Bluff resident Janice Schnobrich commented on the cost of Township Attorney. She cited the history of the Township's engagement with various law firms which cost the Township and it's taxpayers roughly \$10,000 per term. She states that during the 2021-2025 term, a new law firm was hired which accrued annual bills exceeding \$110,000. She recommends that the new board may want to consider monitoring legal activities for several months before deciding whether or not to rehire the current attorney.

**C. Paul Blahunka** - At 5:17 pm, Lake Bluff resident for 36 years Paul Blahunka whose wife Kathy ran as a write in candidate in this past election commented on how Kathy accrued 43 percent of the vote. He congratulated Kamila Urso. Mr. Blahunka spoke about a "small group of online cowards who stalked my daughter and posted terrible things about my wife." He continued by stating that Jeff Urso and Dan Rogers liked these posts. He encouraged Kamila to consider opening up communication and accounting records to the public.

**D. Kathy Blahunka** - At 5:20 pm, Lake Bluff resident Kathy Blahunka stated that she would like to show that there are some gaps in the road department accounting records which were destroyed, and we have not seen a report in years but tonight you are being asked to approve the purchase of a new truck. Who is using all of this equipment? She asks the new board to be educated prior to approving any new spending.

**E. Jessica Chappell** - At 5:22 pm, the owner of a vacant lot located at 201 Melvin Dr. in Lake Bluff wants to make everyone aware that they were not aware of the need to approve a road when they originally purchased the property. The county has said that the Township is okay with the length of the road being 140 feet. She is asking the Township for their approval and help with this. She is looking forward to the acceptance of the 2020 road standards.

**F. Michael Chappell** - At 5:23 pm Mr. Chappell stated that the county instructed them to go for variance but there was nothing there. He states that their timeline is very important because they are under financial stress and want their kids to start school here - we want to be good neighbors. Congrats to the new board.

**G. Michael Pierret** - 5:25 Lake Forest resident for 40 years introduces himself and comments that the notes for these meetings have been well done and compliments Clerk Grum. He urges the new board to consider everything carefully before approving. For example, he was surprised that we are purchasing another new truck after purchasing one last year.

**H. Brian Sobolak** - Mrs. Sobolak introduces himself as a Lake Bluff resident who would like to ask 4 questions of the board:

i. When will meetings be moved back to 6:30 to accommodate working families?

ii. Who is going to update the website?

iii. Could we have the agenda packet posted on the website before the meeting?

iv. Why have the budgeting amounts not been entered into the accounting system?

## **VII. Approval of Bills -**

**A. Town Fund:** Supervisor Urso moved to approve the Town Fund in the amount of \$40,408.74. Trustee Parnell motioned to approve and Trustee Swarthout seconded the motion. Discussion ensued between Trustee Prager, Karl Kitzerow, Counselman Kimzey, Trustee Oliver-Salbilla, and Deputy Clerk Rothing regarding standard budget amounts and what constitutes different categories within the budget. Deputy Clerk Rothing suggests asking the accountant for more detail. Clerk Grum takes roll call and all approve at 5:35 pm.

**B. Road and Bridge Fund:** Supervisor Urso moved to approve the Road and Bridge Fund in the amount of \$2,781.23. Trustee Parnell motioned to approve and Trustee Swarthout seconded the motion. Clerk Grum takes roll call and all approve.

## **VII. Reports -**

**C. Supervisor's Report:** Supervisor Kamila Urso introduced herself. She was born in Poland and moved here at 8 years old and has lived in Shields Township for most of her life. She states that she is very passionate about her community, and is looking forward to working with each other to make Shields a great community for everyone. She is asking Mr. Carl Evans who she is appointing as the community services Chair to take on projects like the Food pantry and senior services. She will be asking Mike Dunn as the Road and Bridge Chair to review and recommend future paving, draining projects and speed humps in unincorporated areas of Shields. She suggests that trustee Prager join the roads committee because he will bring good perspective. Urso plans to ask Trustee Parnell to assist in recommending next steps to the board regarding our 30 year lease coming to an end for the location of Shields Township offices. She states that her goal is to make the unincorporated roads as safe as possible by plowing and salting roads, looking into crossing guards by target, and fixing damaged roads. She states that information is key and she will get our residents that info as quickly and efficiently as possible. We are now recording the meetings and will be putting the video on the website.

**D. Clerk's Report:** Clerk Vanessa Grum welcomes the new board members!

**E. Assessor's Office Report:** Carl Kitzerow states that it has been a busy last few weeks explaining tax bills and helping some residents file exemptions. They are conducting studies to make sure everyone is paying fair share.

**VII. Old Business:** None.

**VII. New Business -**

**F. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of April 17, 2025:** Supervisor Urso moved to approve the Meeting minutes from April 17th, 2025. Trustee Parnell motioned to approve and Trustee Oliver-Salbilla seconded the motion. No discussion and all approved at 5:41 pm.

**G. Approval of Budget and Appropriation Minutes of April 17, 2025:** Supervisor Urso moved to approve the Budget and Appropriation Minutes from April 17th, 2025. Trustee Oliver-Salbilla motioned to approve and Trustee Parnell seconded the motion. No discussion and all approved.

**H. Appointment of Freedom of Information Officer and Open Meetings Act Officer:** State law requires that the board designates one or more FOIA officers and one or more OMA officers. Supervisor Urso seeks a motion to appoint Mrs. Lisette Rothing to serve as both a FOIA officer and an OMA officer. In Mrs. Rothing's absence, Carl Kitzerow will do so in her absence. They will both be required to complete annual training programs. Trustee Parnell motions to approve and Trustee Prager seconds the motion. No discussion and - all approved. Motion carries at 5:45 pm.

**I. Appointment of the Township Attorney:** The Township attorney is appointed by the supervisor. Supervisor Urso appoints Airdo Werwas LLC as Township attorney. A copy of this agreement was provided to the board members in advance of this meeting. Supervisor Urso seeks a motion to approve, Trustee Parnell motions and Trustee Swarhout seconds the motion. Trustee Oliver-Salbilla requests more discussion on this and to move this to next weeks agenda so we have time to dig into why we have increased the spending by so much. Trustee Prager agrees that he would like to know more so he could make a more informed decision. Discussion ensued. Supervisor Urso called on former Supervisor Jeff Urso to give more information about where the spending was happening. He states that a big chunk of it was due to a very expensive legal case. He emphasizes the need for an attorney because we need them to help us make sure things are being done correctly unlike in the past. Trustee Oliver-Salbilla moves to table this discussion. Trustee Prager seconds the motion. Clerk Grum takes roll call vote: Trustee Oliver-Salbilla, Trustee Swarhout, and Trustee Prager agree to the motion to table and re-visit. Supervisor Urso and Trustee Parnell vote "nay" and the motions passes 3-2 to table the township Attorney discussion until next week.

**J. Appointment of the Township Accountant:** Supervisor Urso seeks a motion to ratify the Agreement with Government Accounting and Professional Services, LLC for the provision of

accounting services. Trustee Prager motions to approve and Trustee Swarthout seconds the motion. Clerk Grum takes roll call and all approve. Motion carries at 5:54 pm.

**K. Appointment of the Township Auditor:** Supervisor Urso is seeking a motion to ratify the agreement with GW & Associates PC for the provision of auditing services. Trustee Oliver-Salbilla makes the motion and Trustee Parnell seconds the motion. Discussion ensued. Trustee Salbilla asks for a breakdown of fees of audit and frequency? It is done yearly, and what is the hourly rate? Deputy Clerk Lisette Rothing responds stating that they charge \$8,000 for the audit to be completed (contracted price - not to exceed 10,500). Clerk Grum takes roll call and all approve; motion carries.

**L. Approval of Intergovernmental Agreement with Waukegan Township:** Supervisor Urso states that this item was for discussion only and no action was needed. This arrangement has allowed our township a second location to provide access to services for township residents. It allows our seniors access to the services offered in Waukegan; Supervisor Urso ratified this agreement to continue this partnership.

**M. Approval of Township Policies:** Supervisor Urso seeks a motion to approve the following township policies:

1. Board Meeting Rules of Procedure:
2. Policy Regarding Rules of Decorum
3. Policy and procedure for electronic attendance at board meetings
4. Township Board Committee Policy
5. Policy regarding purchasing of goods and services
6. Policy for pre-approval of Township expenditures
7. Ethics and gift ban policy
8. Policy to prohibit sexual harassment

Trustee Parnell makes the motion and it is seconded by Trustee Swarthout. Discussion ensued. Trustee Prager and Trustee Oliver-Salbilla request the language to be changed in regards to how, when and who can spend \$30,000 of Township funds in an emergency situation. Trustees Prager and Oliver-Salbilla suggest amending the language at the next Township meeting. Clerk Grum takes roll-call and all approve.

- I. **Appointment of Deputy Township Clerk:** Supervisor Urso seeks a motion to approve Resolution 05-19-25-01 to appoint Lisette Rothing as Deputy Township Clerk. Trustee Swarthout motions and Trustee Parnell seconds the motion; no discussion and Clerk Grum takes roll call vote. All approved and the motion carries.
- I. **Approval of Appointment of Committee Chairs:** *This item was moved up on the agenda. See notes above.*
- I. **Approval of Purchase of Road Equipment:** Supervisor Urso seeks a motion to approve the bid proposal from Raymond Cheverolet in Antioch for a new 2025 Chevrolet Silverado 2500 4x4 standard cab pickup truck with snow plow prep package and 8 ft snow plow in the amount of \$56,195. Trustee Parnell motions and Trustee Swarthout seconded the motion. Discussion ensued. Carl Kitzerow explains that we are trying to do all the plowing in house and this purchase would help us replace a 20 year old truck so that we are operating safer and more reliable equipment. Clerk Grum takes roll call and all approve. Motion carries.
- I. **Acceptance of Private Road at 201 Melvin Drive, Lake Bluff, Illinois:** Supervisor Urso seeks a motion to accept the private road subject to final review and approval by the township attorney and to authorize the Supervisor and Clerk respectively to sign and attest such documents as may be

necessary to effect the acceptance following approval by the Township Attorney. *More information regarding details related to this request can be found in previous meeting minutes.* Trustee Parnell motions to approve and Trustee Prager seconds the motion. Clerk Grum takes roll call and all approve. Motion carries at 6:31 pm.

**XI. Executive Session** - None

**XI. Other Business** - None

**XI. Adjournment** - Supervisor Urso seeks a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Parnell motions to adjourn and Trustee Salbilla seconds the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 pm.