Shields Township

906 W. Muir Avenue, Lake Bluff, IL 60044

Regular Meeting of the Shields Township Board of Trustees

Thursday September 24th, 2026, at 5:30 pm

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

THE TOWN BOARD OF SHIELDS TOWNSHIP held its Regular Monthly Meeting on Thursday September 24th, 2026, at 5:30 pm.

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Kamila Urso	Supervisor
Vanessa Grum	Township Clerk
Catherine Oliver-Salbilla	Town Trustee
Christopher Prager	Town Trustee
Trent Swarthout	Town Trustee
Jake Leahy	Township Attorney (via Facetime)
Carl Kitzerow	Township Administrator
Michelle Parnell	Town Trustee

ABSENT:

Lisette Rothing	Deputy Clerk

I. **Call to Order & Roll Call:** Supervisor Urso called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm and Clerk Grum took roll call. All trustees and Supervisor Urso present.

II. **Pledge of Allegiance:** 5:38 pm.

III. **Presentation:** Honoring Rob Beak's 30 Years of Service

a. Supervisor Urso and Dan Rogers thanked Rob for his service and spoke to his hard work. He comes in every time it snows in the middle of the night. He knows everything about Shields Township roads, neighbors, always professional with every person he has worked with. Does everything he is asked to do. Rob was presented with a plaque honoring his commitment to Shields Township.

IV. **Executive Session:** Supervisor Urso says that she sees no reason to go into executive session and asks if anyone does. Hearing none, she closed this portion of the meeting. Clerk took the roll call, and all agreed. The regular meeting continues.

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

a. **Janice Schnobrich:** Janice stated that on August 29, 2026, the Waukegan and Shields Township Assessors met with North Chicago residents to explain property tax exemptions, assessment procedures, and how property values affect tax bills. Concerns were raised regarding delays in recording new construction, inaccurate property data, and potential inequities in assessments since 2022. The discussion highlighted the need to address data accuracy and staffing concerns to ensure fair and accurate property tax assessments for the community.

b. **Jacalyn Ramdin-Johnson:** Jacalyn thanks Supervisor Urso for inviting her and for opening the conversation about her cause. She introduced “Winter Packs” which is a new initiative to help gather winter necessities for students in North Chicago. 95-100 % of students qualify for Free/Reduced lunch and there is a 51% chronic absenteeism problem. There is a 2-year achievement gap for black children compared to peers. Evidence has shown that having the proper clothing and income levels determine attendance. This program would serve Shields Township residents with Winter packs. It is a pilot program developed to keep the youngest students in North Chicago warm at school and engaged in the 3rd-8th grade. They are assembling 1,000 packs including winter clothing and activity packs. They are partnering with Brushwood center (501 C3) and working with North Chicago City Hall and have coordinated a common distribution site. Shields Township has already contributed in different ways, but this would be another opportunity.

c. **Stephanie Victor:** Lake Forest resident - Stephanie noted that Supervisor Urso wanted to meet with an architect regarding the township offices. She states that a 2–4-person office does not need its own office building. She continues to say that while the Shields Township website looks good, it confirms that it doesn't actually provide anything, just lists services. It does not include maps. Why are there still full-time staff? Plus, we outsource accounting services. Trustees were not presented with additional bids. The roads department is less than 9 miles. She asked the township to dump the status quo to minimize staff.

d. **Jeff Urso**: Jeff thanked the trustees and the staff for doing their jobs. He commented that it is hard to hear someone who lives in a nice house in Lake Forest saying that all your jobs should be taken away. It's ok that some people have different opinions which is what a democracy is. A lot of people who don't see it firsthand do not know all the work that you all do to make this Township run. He expressed gratitude for the members of the board and all that they do.

e. **Mike Pierret:** Lake Forest resident - Mike would like to agree with Jeff that the staff is doing a great job. He suggests that we should add more to the website about all the good things being done.

VI. Reports:

a. **Supervisor:** Supervisor Urso reports that the crossing Guard on 176 has been working well. She has reached out to grant recipients to prepare for the next meeting. She is looking forward to our audit to present information for the public. If anyone wants to sign up for free woodchips, there is a sign up.

b. **Administrator:** None.

c. **Assessors report**: None.

d. **Road and Bridge Report**: Dan Rogers mentioned the woodchips that we had because of storms and announced that we are donating the excess. He reports that the resident who lives at the corner of Birch and Foster is receiving a lot of water back up because the native plants are holding water. Therefore, he plans to cut the native plants back. He comments that it is great to see the crossing guard working and thanked Kamila for her hard work. The truck was bid out and awarded through the state process. He started the process 6 months ago. It will take a long

period of time to prepare the truck for use. Rogers says that there is no municipality in Lake County that uses trucks 20 years old like we are, we are not wasting taxpayer dollars. We worked hard to look at all of the options - hiring it out would quadruple the cost. We have talked to Lake County and Libertyville, and no one wants to take it on because they can't make any money on it. Carl and Dan worked to save $9,000 on it. This board has been working well together to make this community better. In regard to the building - we would be delinquent if we didn't look at using the space and land we already have. We are at the beginning of the process and are looking at all options so we can save money and use it for the roads. Please reach out if anyone has questions about the road. But to go onto social media and rant and rave about misuse of money is simply not true. This is an engaged board.

i. Trustee Prager asked whether the ditch program is part of the water reclamation study and raised concerns that small pipes in Lake Bluff may be contributing to drainage issues. Dan Rogers explained that a retention pond is the proposed solution, but the project is approximately $30,000 short of funding, and clarified that native plants would be relocated rather than removed. Trustee Oliver-Salbilla suggested exploring a water collection project and other innovative solutions, while Rogers mentioned a possible rain barrel program and expressed interest in exploring additional options.

VII. Approval of Bills: Supervisor Urso moved to approve all bills as listed below for a total expenditure amount of $135,289.60. Trustee Oliver-Salbilla motioned to approve, and Trustee Parnell seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and all agreed. Clerk Grum took roll call, and all approved the bills as presented below. Motion carries all agree.

e. **Town Fund:** In the amount of $69,910.24
f. **General Assistance:** In the amount of $24,000
g. **Road & Bridge:** In the amount of $41,379.16

VIII. Old Business: None.

IX. New Business:

h. **Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes August 20th, 2026**: Supervisor Urso moves to approve the minutes. There is no discussion. Trustee Swarthout motions to approve and Trustee Praeger seconds the motion. All are in favor and the motion carries.

X. Other Business:

i. **Trustee Oliver-Salbilla:** She requested more information on Winter Packs - what kind of support do you need and what can we help you with? Jacalyn Ramdin-Johnson responded with more information including the plan to source items through non-profit organizations like Brushwood. Uline and Grainger can allow us to source items cheaper. Our focus is education and giving children a leg up and opportunity. Their plan is to pilot in North Chicago and then expand into the Lake County Area.

XI. Adjournment: Supervisor Urso moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:19 pm. Trustee Prager motioned, and Trustee Swarthout seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 6:19 pm.