

Minutes – Shields Township Community Services Committee

First Committee Meeting August 10, 2022

STATE OF ILLINOIS,)

Lake County,) SS.

Town of Shields)

THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF SHIELDS TOWNSHIP held their first meeting in person on Wednesday, August 10, 2022 at 4:15pm.

PRESENT

Lisette Rothing	Deputy Clerk
Jeff Urso	Supervisor
Kathy Blahunka	Committee Chair
Vickie Brown	Committee Person
Carl Evans	Committee Person
Heather Meyer	Committee Person
Janice Schnobrich	Committee Person

I. **Meeting called to order** - Clerk Rothing called the meeting to order at 4:15pm

II. **Roll Call** – In Attendance – Paula Turelli, Executive Director of Mothers Trust Foundation.

III. **Community Services Committee Policy** – Handled Under the OMA Act. This is an advisory committee that will be primarily dealing with situations like General and Emergency Assistance for Shields township. Problems and situations will be taken to the committee where the board will vote yes or no. We will be fine tuning any guidelines or parameters for this assistance program.

IV. **Township Laws**

Committee Chair Blahunka - Went over the laws and corporate powers of the Township – TOI

Townships are charged with three basic functions:

- a. General Assistance for the indigent
- b. The assessment of real property for the basis of local taxation
- c. Maintenance of all roads and bridges outside federal, state and other local Jurisdiction

*Wants to make sure committee reviews township corporate functions that we are allowed to take on by law.

*Review Document (60 ILCS 1/85-13) Township Services.

V. **Shields Township Background**

a. Boundaries

Committee Person Evan – Stating how Seniors in certain parts of North Chicago get certain assistance (I.e., free grass cutting) being that they are in Waukegan Township.

Committee Person Schnobrich – Talks about the wanting to stay in political boundaries. Shields Township does not provide the same services as Waukegan township. Goes into the history of the townships and their political Boundaries.

b. Census data - The current boundaries of the 2020 census seem to be off by about 1,000 but otherwise fairly accurate.

c. Demographic and economic data

Committee Person Evans – Talks about the 3rd ward getting a redistrict and going together with Waukegan township. Wards 4 and 5 would count as being part of North Chicago.

Supervisor Urso – Ward 1 & 2 a purely in Waukegan.

d. Political units within Shields Township

Committee Chair Blahunka - reiterates that the Township services code packet is going to be helpful to the committee for our information and understanding of the policies.

VI. **Current Community Services Offered by the Township**

a. **Mandated by Law** – Reimbursed by the State of Illinois.

1. **Election Preparedness**

2. **General Assistance** – Gets reimbursed by the State. GA through the state includes such things like Snap benefits, link card, etc. If a patron already has these benefits, they may not qualify for additional GA assistance through the township. General Assistance should have a computer system where you can log in situations and track them as a client's case.

b. **Not mandated by law:** Rules made by township with legal agreement.

1. Emergency Assistance

Supervisor Urso – EA is set by the supervisor. We are going to figure out how much funding we have for assistance. Going forward Shields Township is doing a reset and dialing down the parameters for Emergency Assistance. We are trying to create a new structure with solid metrics for our deciding factors. We are also working with other Assistance programs to turn our community over to in times of need. This Committee needs to hone in ways to get data from our local community.

2. Assistance Programs

* Mothers Trust - **Paula Turelli** – Executive Director partners with caseworkers and suggests that if anyone has any emergency assistance that goes above our Township budget parameters, to turn the client to Mother Trust Foundation for any additional help or overages. You do not need to be a single mother to qualify. They have several case workers at Mothers Trust Foundation to help our community.

* Senior Activities at Foss Park and Senior Center – **Committee Person Brown** – In the Past there was a check cut for Foss Park in the amount of \$10,000. Foss Park presented at a meeting last October and stated the ways in which they have utilized their budget.

* Senior Snow Removal Program in North Chicago – Still Working on what we are going to do with this program and what the budget will be. Will this coincide with the Senior grass cutting program?

3. Transportation registration – Is now through Pace dial-a-ride Program. Pace helps seniors and disabled with reduced fare with RTA permits.

4. Passports – Passport office did not seem to be a good source of revenue for the Township. We are going to decide if this service is necessary going forward. At this time, Carl and Lisette are redirecting clients to the Lake Bluff Library and their website for help. People are finding

their process to be just as user friendly if not more efficient. They have a website with clear instructions for our community.

VII. **Non-Sanctioned service, Not offered by the Township** – Phoenix Rising Food pantry

- a. **Committee Person Evans** – Will trouble shoot the process by putting up signs on the township doors directing our community to Mr. Evans for support. He volunteered to be the sponsor person to take food to the communities and he will talk directly with the food pantry.
- b. **Supervisor Urso** – Information is key. There are 65 food dependent families in Lake Bluff. We need to bridge the gap between that and the food pantry.

VIII. **Ideas for services: Committee Chair Blahunka** – Ideas for service are always welcome

- a. **Supervisor Urso** – Suggests a Program like ‘Pack the Foyer’. We could have information to redirect our patrons to other resources.
- b. **Committee Person Brown** – Suggests that we also turn our community to the 211 number for additional resources. Brown states she can probably get a hold of the ‘Red Book’ that has such resources like PADS and Catholic Charities for Shields Township to compile in their own ‘Book’. Also Suggests a resource box for the food pantry and other information that Shields township has to offer.
- c. **Executive Director Turelli (MTF)** – States partnering with a caseworker would help stream line the process. She also offers up help via Zion Township Supervisor Cheri Neal. Cheri is a good resource for questions. Mrs. Turelli also suggests Mothers Trust Foundation to step in and pay the difference, or be the supplemental portion of any outstanding (emergency) bills the community has.

*For example: If Shields Township can only pay up to \$500 for a person's utility bills and they have \$600 in bills, then Mothers Trust would be happy to provide the rest of the money (\$100) for that patron.

- d. **Supervisor Urso** – Suggests contracting out a caseworker from a different township for final review of assistance applications until we get our feet on the ground. Says we may not have enough cases to hire our own caseworker full time.
- e. **Committee Person Evans** – Says caseworker would make a big difference to have a reference for people in our community to contact directly.

IX. Action Items for Committee Members

Committee Person Evans – Will take charge on food pantry information. Suggests a resource box or at least a sign on the door.

Committee Person Brown – Suggests having a meeting to connect the dots for all the supplemental resources. She wants to put together a packet for services like snow removal. Wants to look into setting up a resource box for Shields Township information that we provide to the township.

Committee Chair Blahunka – The issues with all of this, is that there was no collection of data to begin with. If we tract the metrics for one year maybe we can see a better pattern. Proposes introductory meetings with other townships to gather more information on the parameters of their EA and GA process.

Committee Chair Meyers – Wants Shields Township to be a drop off facility for things like food, clothing etc. We also need to figure logistics if this is going to happen. Where will these things be stored?

X. Public Comment

Committee Person Brown - Feels that most people in the township don't even know about the assistance that we can provide for our community. She proposes that we market General and Emergency Assistance to the community and possibly have people come once a month on a designated day to get help with assistance applications or have any questions.

Supervisor Urso – States Emergency assistance *cannot* be marketed as they will be enticed to come up with problems. It's an emergency for a reason.

Committee Person Schnobrich – States the GA system guidelines are very strict and people that already receive money from the state most likely will not qualify for GA through the township. Emergency Assistance has different parameters.

Committee Person Evans – Wants to know what the budget is for EA and GA.

Supervisor Urso – States that Shields Township is waiting to receive their budget and once we hit that budget we have to be done with assistance at that time. The EA budget has historically been \$20,000.

Deputy Clerk Rothing – Asks if there a separate budget for EA and GA?

Committee Person Schobrich – States in 1991 Townships changed the process and merged the budget so from her understanding is that the budget is now one. Townships like West Deerfield and Cuba had too much back log so they decided not to levy GA.

Committee Chair Blahunka – Stops the conversation so that we don't get side tracked and proposed to have the next meeting on the second Thursday of the month around 4:30pm. This is subject to change.

Supervisor Urso – Concludes conversation with reiterating that meeting is not supposed to veer from agenda items. We can have a separate discussion time for questions so that we do not go off path.

XI. **Adjournment** - Meeting adjourned at 5:35pm.