

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Supervisor and Board of Trustees of Wheeling Township, for February 24, 2026 was held in the Paula Ulreich Meeting Room, in the Township of Wheeling, 1616 North Arlington Heights Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois. Supervisor Zeller Brauer called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Clerk Gauza called the roll and the following members were present, Supervisor Maria Zeller Brauer, Trustee John Geier, Trustee Lorri Grainawi, Trustee Austin Mejdrich (joined remotely), Trustee Sheri Williams and Clerk Joanna Gauza.

Also in attendance: Wheeling Township Assessor Ken Jochum, Wheeling Township Attorney Ross Secler, and Wheeling Township Director of Finance and Administration Regina Stapleton.

Absent: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Supervisor Zeller Brauer led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Joan Huening with Forest River Civic Association, expressed concern regarding abandoned property in the unincorporated area. This property has been a problem for 10 years. The property is neglected, it diminishes the value of property owners around the area. There is a concern about safety for the children in the community, coming to the abandoned property. She is asking for help to get these concerns addressed.

MOTION #1: APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING ON JANUARY 27, 2026

Motion by Trustee Geier, seconded by Trustee Williams, to approve the minutes of January 27, 2026 Regular Board Meeting.

VOICE CALL VOTE: All Ayes.... Motion #1 Carried.

AUDIT

MOTION #2: AUDIT FOR TOWN FUND

Motion by Trustee Grainawi, seconded by Trustee Williams, to approve batch #1/29/26, #1/30/26, #2/13/26, #2/23/26 and #2/24/26 against the Town Fund in the amount of \$245,232.99 to be paid.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Grainawi, Williams, Geier, Zeller Brauer
NAYS: None.... Motion #2 Carried.

MOTION #3: AUDIT FOR CEMETERY FUND

Motion by Trustee Grainawi, seconded by Trustee Geier, to approve batch #02/24/26 against the Cemetery Fund, in the amount of \$1,820.00 to be paid.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Grainawi, Geier, Williams, Zeller Brauer
NAYS: None.... Motion #3 Carried.

MOTION #4: AUDIT FOR ROAD MANAGEMENT FUND

Motion by Trustee Grainawi, seconded by Supervisor Zeller Brauer, to approve batch #1/29/26, #2/13/26, and #2/24/26 against the Road Management Fund, in the amount of \$44,506.96 to be paid.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Grainawi, Zeller Brauer, Geier, Williams
NAYS: None.... Motion #4 Carried.

MOTION #5: APPROVAL OF HAVING TRUSTEE MEJDRICH JOINING THE BOARD MEETING VIA ZOOM CALL

Motion by Supervisor Zeller Brauer, seconded by Trustee Grainawi, to approve Trustee Mejdrich joining the Board Meeting Via Zoom.

VOICE CALL VOTE: All Ayes.... Motion #5 Carried.

REPORTS

SUPERVISOR: Supervisor Zeller Brauer reported:

- Met with ALPHA Construction to discuss long-term capital improvements to the building to increase capacity and safety on February 2.
- Attended the Village of Arlington Heights Mayor's Prayer Breakfast with staff on February 5.

WHEELING TOWNSHIP MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING FEBRUARY 24, 2026

- Gave a tour to members of the Arlington Heights Memorial Library who are considering creating their own food pantry on February 9.
- Attended the Civic Connections Networking event in Mt Prospect on February 9.
- Attended Mount Prospect's State of the Village Breakfast on February 19.
- Attended Northern Illinois University's Township Academy seminars on Hospitality and Customer Service and Social Media on February 20.
- Conducted a donor tour on February 23.
- The food pantry has begun virtual meetings and volunteer deliveries in Wheeling in partnership with the Wheeling Rapid Response team.
- Expanding food deliveries to more than a dozen potential families in Arlington Heights through AHSD 25.

CLERK: Clerk Gauza reported:

- There have been changes at the post office regarding postmarks and this could affect whether mail in ballots are received in time.
Previously: Mail was postmarked on the day it was dropped in the mailbox.
Now: Mail is postmarked the day it is processed at the post office, sometimes days later. In order to avoid a late postmark, Cook County urges people to:
 - GO TO THE POST OFFICE COUNTER AND REQUEST HAND - STAMPED POSTMARK Or
 - STARTING MARCH 2ND MAIL BALLOTS MAY BE DROPPED OFF AT ANY SECURE DROP BOX LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT SUBURBAN Cook County.
- We received 26 voter registrations from the League of Women's' Voters
- REMINDER: Early voting starts on March 2nd
- Wheeling Township will have Precinct #40 for the Primary Elections on March 17th.

ASSESSOR: Assessor Jochum reported:

- TAX YEAR 2026
- Wheeling Township is still awaiting result letters from the Board of Review.
- The Cook County Assessor will be sending exemption letters shortly. Senior Freeze and some other exemptions will need to be renewed or applied for upon notification.
- The first tax bill, to be paid in April, is available online at the Cook County Treasurer website.
- Certificates of Error have not yet been processed by the County.
- OTHER ACTIVITY
- The first seminar presented by the four local assessors was conducted at the Elk Grove Township office with approximately 30 attendees. The focus of the meeting was the RECAPTURE ACT and its impact on property tax bills.
- We will be holding a similar meeting in Wheeling Township in April.

MENTAL HEALTH BOARD: Trustee Grainawi reported:

- The Mental Health Board met on Saturday to work on strategic planning. The Board will draft one- and three-year plans.
- The Board discussed informing taxpayers how the Board is spending money.
- The Chairperson of the Board is moving later this year and that will create a vacancy on the Board.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Administrator Stapleton reported:

- The transition to Ecolane went well. The Transportation staff did a great job! The riders are warming up to the new way of things; no more calling in that they are ready to go home.
- Our fiscal year end is February 28, 2026. Helga and Administrator Stapleton are busy wrapping up the year.
- Administrator Stapleton has been working on the 2026-2027 budgets. She has been meeting with the Supervisor and Department Heads to plan for their needs in the upcoming fiscal year.
- We started AARP Taxes on January 30, 2026, through April 10, 2026. Administrator Stapleton believes we have only a few appointments available.
- The newsletter will be in the homes by March 9, 2026
- We have partnered with Wheeling Rapid Response to deliver food to people who can't come into the Township. Everyone must still qualify for the Food Pantry and meet the delivery criteria.
- Cook County Veterans will be at Township every 3rd Friday of the month to help veterans learn about available benefits.
- Stats for January 2026
 - 1,699 rides – 873 non-medical, 826 Medical, (Disabled 280 rides)
 - 1044 - meals delivered
 - 563 - visits to the Food Pantry – 1,130 people, 370 Children, and 519 Seniors

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION #6: APPROVAL OF TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEE

Motion by Supervisor Zeller Brauer, seconded by Trustee Geier to Terminate an Employee Hombre Darby.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Zeller Brauer, Geier, Williams, Mejdrich, Grainawi
NAYS: None.... Motion #6 Carried.

MOTION #7: APPROVAL OF AMENDED CONTRACT WITH VICARIOUS MULTIMEDIA

Motion by Trustee Williams, seconded by Trustee Grainawi to approve the Amended Contract with Vicarious Multimedia.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Williams, Grainawi, Mejdrich, Geier, Zeller Brauer
NAYS: None.... Motion #7 Carried.

2026-2027- FUNDED AGENCY DISCUSSIONS

There are 12 human services agencies that are applying for continued funding and three new agencies are applying. The current total budget for these agencies is \$204,000, but they are asking for \$274,000. The budget will not allow for funding all these new requests. Therefore, the budget allocates \$225,000 or a 10% increase. Supervisor Zeller Brauer asked Board members to rank needs and which agencies are helping the most people. She also stressed that the agency and Mental Health funding cannot overlap.

2026-2027- BUDGET DISCUSSIONS

In the March Board meeting, the Board will vote on a tentative budget. Staffing is a significant part of the budget. In calculating the staff budget for next year, we started by considering a 3% increase for most staff and then considered who may not be paid market rate. Will consider a 4-5% raise for those persons needing to be brought to market rate. In addition, some staff may be taking on additional duties and hours, so they will need to be compensated for these duties and time. This will lead to about a 10% increase in overall staffing salaries. This is similar to other Townships.

DISCUSSION AND COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES:

Trustee Williams: Stated she will be meeting with the Trustee in another township about food pantry ideas.

MOTION #8: ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Supervisor Zeller Brauer seconded by Trustee Williams to adjourn.

VOICE CALL VOTE: All Ayes.... Motion #8 Carried.

The meeting for Tuesday, February 24, 2026, was declared adjourned at 8:10 p.m. The next scheduled regular board meeting is set for Tuesday, March 24, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Joanna M. Gauza
Wheeling Township Clerk