

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Supervisor and Board of Trustees of Wheeling Township, for October 28, 2025, 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 6:00 pm.

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.

AGENCY FUNDING HEARINGS

The Harbour, Inc.: The Harbour is a community-based nonprofit and DCFS-licensed Child Welfare Agency providing housing and supportive services to runaway, locked-out, and otherwise homeless youth ages 12-23 in the north/northwest suburbs of Cook County. Mary Burke Peterson, Grants and Donations manager, spoke and asked for \$10,000. Harbour has an emergency shelter that is open 24 hours. Harbour tries for family re-unification. Because of the loss of a federal grant in October 2024, Harbour has had to close programs such as a parenting teen program. In FY24, Harbour served 111 youths and in FY25 it served 137 youths. Harbour is at capacity and has a wait list. It houses a lot of youths from Evanston and Skokie. The Township funds would go to the parenting teens program.

Shelter, Inc.: Shelter, Inc. is a community-based organization focused on ending the cycle of abuse by providing emergency shelters, transitional housing and trauma-informed therapy that helps young people heal and rebuild. Xochitl Soto, Shelter's Grants Manager, requested \$60,000. Shelter has emergency shelters in Palatine and Arlington Heights. Clinical program is privately funded and does not charge youth. Shelter served 337 Wheeling Township residents. 100% of youth have entered stable housing. Shelter has a small wait list and refers to other agencies.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Arlen Gould thanked the Board for doing a wonderful job.

MOTION #1: 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 #1 Carried.

MOTION #2: APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

Motion by Trustee Geier, seconded by Trustee Grainawi, to approve the minutes of September 30, 2025 Regular Board Meeting.

VOICE CALL VOTE: All Ayes.... Motion #2 Carried.

AUDIT

MOTION #3: AUDIT FOR ROAD MANAGEMENT FUND

Motion by Trustee Geier, seconded by Trustee Williams, to approve batch #10/10/25, and #10/28/25 against the Road Management Fund, in the amount of \$312.44 to be paid.

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

MOTION #4: AUDIT FOR CEMETERY FUND

Motion by Trustee Grainawi, seconded by Trustee Williams, to approve batch #102825 against the Cemetery Fund, in the amount of \$507.01 to be paid.

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

MOTION #5: AUDIT FOR TOWN FUND

Motion by Trustee Grainawi, seconded by Trustee Williams, to approve batch #10/10/25, #10/27/25, and #10/28/25 against the Town Fund in the amount of \$164,113 to be paid.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Grainawi, Williams, Mejdrich, Geier, Zeller Brauer

NAYS: None.... Motion #5 Carried.

REPORTS

SUPERVISOR: Supervisor Zeller Brauer reported:

- Met with Cook County Commissioner Maggie Trevor and gave her a tour of the Township on October 3.
- Attended the MTA Annual Symposium on October 9 with Trustee Mejdrich, Regina Stapleton, Lynndah Lahey, and Hombre Darby.
- Hosted a donor tour on October 20 that included Arlington Heights School District 25 Director of Food and Nutrition Services, Sandy Voss. We discussed promoting the food pantry to families in need at the schools.
- Gave a presentation about the Township to nurses at the Arlington Heights Senior Center on October 22.
- Met with Commander Bonnie Busching, Patrick Flannery, Director of Community Engagement, and other members of the Cook County Sheriff's Office on October 27. I gave them a tour of the Township, and we discussed future partnerships.

Food Pantry

With SNAP benefits expected to be cut on November 1, in addition to the increased needs of residents in our Township, we have been preparing to handle the expanded needs.

- Online donations have been increasing, receiving nearly \$2,000 in one week alone.
- Ongoing meetings with officials from school districts, municipalities, and community members who are helping with expanded outreach.
- Increased social media posts to solicit for donations and food drives.
- Starting a small group of volunteers who will be able to make food pantry deliveries for residents who are unable to make their food pantry appointments.
- Meeting with and creating lists of other food pantries in the area as additional resources for clients.
- Opening the food pantry for two additional days during the week of Thanksgiving for new clients only to ensure that they have food for the holiday.
- Discussing ways to provide emergency food bags to residents who may be "one time only" for clients whose needs are temporary.

ASSESSOR: Assessor Jochum reported:

- TAX YEAR 2024
- The Cook County Treasurer website provides the following information regarding tax bills:
- "The Tax Year 2024 second installment Property Tax due date has yet to be determined. When tax amounts are finalized the Treasurer will print and mail the bills."

- When tax bills are issued we anticipate large walk-in numbers. This influx of taxpayers will likely occur at the same time we are working Board of Review appeals, we will be very busy during that period. Taxpayers inquiring with issues regarding their tax bills will be given a list of taxing bodies as well as contacts for elected officials.
- TAX YEAR 2025
- The final numbers of appeals to the County Assessors are as follows:
 - Cases: Walk-ins 2225. Appeals over 2000 plus exemptions.
- We anticipate the Board of Review opening for appeals in mid-November.
- We have a scheduled outreach with the Steele Team on December 3 at the Township office. The Cardenas outreach is to be scheduled.
- We currently have over 1400 pre-files for the Board of Review appeal. This is the new service we have initiated which allows the taxpayer to only make one visit for both appeals. This new process should improve our internal efficiency allowing us to handle a higher volume of traffic. Pre-files alone will represent 175 manhours of work. The Board of Review appeal period is 30 days versus 45 days for the Assessor.
- Payroll will be slightly higher and there are some expenses for in-office lunches. Costs should be covered by contingency money already budgeted.
- PERMITS
- We have been working diligently to keep up with the permit process in order to meet County deadlines to include newly assessed value in the assessment process.
- To date we have evaluated 3,670 permits for a total permit amount of \$187,700,690 thru October 25, 2025. We appear to be on track to meet last year's numbers.
- In order to complete this work our staff interfaces with each of the Municipalities within the Township to ensure effective flow of information, we are grateful for their cooperation and partnership.

MENTAL HEALTH BOARD: Trustee Grainawi reported:

- Approved a 2026-27 Preliminary Budget of \$1.4 million.
- Approved a Levy request of \$1.4 million.
- Member Jim Ruffatto is resigning from the Board, effective November 12.
- The WTCHB sincerely appreciates Member Ruffatto's valuable contributions and thoughtful guidance during his time on the Board.
- Seeking new Board Member for upcoming vacancy.
- Receiving resumes and cover letters through October 31, 2025.
- An interview panel will interview qualified candidates and report to the full Board at the November 12th meeting.
- The WTCHB will submit their recommendation to the Supervisor and Board of Trustees.
- Updates to the Board Member Policy Manual are in progress.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Administrator Stapleton reported:

- Onboarding with the Director of Social Services, and Communication and Outreach is going well.
- The Social Services Department has been inundated with calls for LIHEAP. They are scheduled out to the Week of Thanksgiving.
- As always, the Community has been very supportive of the Food Pantry and our Holiday Programs. We have 9 food drives scheduled for this month. We are still seeking additional donors for the Adopt-A-Family Program.
- We are starting an Amazon Wishlist for the Food Pantry, which will be live next week.
- We have started the planning phase of Ecolane. We are anticipating a go-live date of January 23, 2026.
- The Food Pantry Coordinator, David Bujak and I attended a Greater Chicago Food Depository Roundtable on October 14". We were informed about all the SNAP changes.
- The Cemetery Trustees, Linda Hallett, and I met on October 13 to discuss the improvements that will be made at the cemetery.
- As a reminder, the TOI Conference is November 10-12. I have emailed your hotel confirmations.
- Our next Board Meeting is November 18 at 7 pm.
- Stats for September 2025
 - 1,821 rides - 870 non-medical, 951 Medical, (Disabled 241 rides)
 - 1,023 - meals delivered
 - 514 - visits to the Food Pantry - 1,105 people, 268 Children, and 468
 - 515 Seniors

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION #6: APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2025-05 PURCHASING & ACCOUNTS PAYABLE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Motion by Supervisor Zeller Brauer, seconded by Trustee Williams to approve the Ordinance 2025-05 Purchasing & Accounts Payable Policy and Procedure.

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

MOTION #7: APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2025-06 BUILDING ACCESS AND VISITOR POLICY.

Motion by Supervisor Zeller Brauer, seconded by Trustee Grainawi to approve the Ordinance 2025-06 Building Access and Visitor Policy.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Zeller Brauer, Grainawi, Williams, Mejdrich, Geier

NAYS: None.... Motion #7 Carried.

MOTION #8: APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2025-07 TRAVEL EXPENSE FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES OF WHEELING TOWNSHIP

Motion by Supervisor Zeller Brauer, seconded by Trustee Geier to approve the Ordinance 2025-07 Travel Expense for Elected Officials and Employees of Wheeling Township.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Zeller Brauer, Geier, Williams, Grainawi, Mejdrich
NAYS: None.... Motion #8 Carried.

MOTION #9: APPROVAL – REAPPOINT SEAN SENO TO THE FOREST RIVER FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT TO A THREE-YEAR TERM EXPIRING 10/2028

Motion by Supervisor Zeller Brauer, seconded by Trustee Williams to approve the reappointment of Sean Seno to the Forest River Fire Protection District to a Three-Year Term Expiring 10/2028.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Zeller Brauer, Williams, Grainawi, Geier, Mejdrich
NAYS: None.... Motion #9 Carried.

MOTION #10: APPROVAL OF 2025-2026 BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY VEHICLE INSURANCE RENEWAL

Motion by Supervisor Zeller Brauer, seconded by Trustee Grainawi to approve the 2025-2026 Berkshire Hathaway Vehicle Insurance Renewal.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Zeller Brauer, Grainawi, Geier, Williams
ABSTAIN: Mejdrich
NAYS: None.... Motion #10 Carried.

MOTION #11: APPROVAL OF 2025 -2026 HEALTH INSURANCE RENEWAL

Motion by Supervisor Zeller Brauer, seconded by Trustee Williams to approve the 2025-2026 Health Insurance Renewal.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Zeller Brauer, Williams, Grainawi, Geier
ABSTEIN: Mejdrich
NAYS: None.... Motion #11 Carried.

MOTION #12: APPROVAL OF SUBMITTABLE SOFTWARE FOR AGENCY FUNDING APPLICATION AND TRACKING

Motion by Supervisor Zeller Brauer, seconded by Trustee Grainawi to approve the Submittable Software for Agency Funding Application and Tracking Subject to Negotiation of terms.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Zeller Brauer, Grainawi, Williams, Geier, Mejdrich
NAYS: None.... Motion #12 Carried.

Discussion of 2025 Tax Levy for Mental Health Board

Administrative costs would be approximately \$229,000 of the \$1.4 million tax levy. The needs assessment stated that the Mental Health Board Budget should be \$1.2 million. The Tax Levy and Budget request is for \$1.4 million. The Township is supposed to receive tax levy money in December and March, but the amount to be received is unclear. The Tax Levy will be approved at the December 9 Board Meeting. The Board discussed a \$1.4 or \$1.5 million levy and asked the Mental Health Board to review their request.

Discussion of 2025 Township Tax Levy

Administrator Stapleton discussed options for the Town Fund's tax levy. A 3% increase would raise some \$69,000. Currently, operating on a \$2.5 million budget, which does not include Mental Health Board or Capital Improvements, with an approximate \$200,000 spending deficit. The Town Fund's cash reserves at the end of the fiscal year will be approximately one year. The Towns Fund's reserves enable it to continue operations despite the delay in the 2nd installment. CPI is 2.9 percent for this 2025 Tax Levy.

MOTION #13: APPROVAL OF MENTAL HEALTH BOARD PROPOSAL

Motion by Trustee Mejdrich, seconded by Supervisor Zeller Brauer to approve the Mental Health Board Proposal.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Mejdrich, Zeller Brauer, Geier, Williams, Grainawi
NAYS: None.... Motion #13 Carried.

MOTION #14: APPROVAL OF OPENING THE EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Supervisor Zeller Brauer, seconded by Trustee Williams to approve the Opening the Executive Session.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Zeller Brauer, Williams, Grainawi, Mejdrich, Geier
NAYS: None.... Motion #14 Carried.

MOTION #15: RE- ENTERING REGULAR BOARD MEETING

ROLL CALL: Williams, Grainawi, Mejdrich, Geier, Zeller Brauer

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- December 10, 2025 – Holiday Lights Tour, 5 pm for registered riders.

MOTION #16: ADJOURNMENT

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

VOICE CALL VOTE: All Ayes.... Motion #16 Carried.

The meeting for Tuesday, October 28, 2025, was declared adjourned at 8:28 pm. The next scheduled regular board meeting is set for Tuesday, November 18, 2025, at 7:00 pm.

Joanna M. Gauza
Wheeling Township Clerk