



**2024**



**WHEELING TOWNSHIP**  
**DECENNIAL COMMITTEE ON**  
**EFFICIENCY REPORT**





# **Wheeling Township Report**

## **for compliance with Decennial Committees on**

### **Local Government Efficiency Act**

#### **Introduction**

On June 10, 2022, the Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency Act, 50 ILCS 70/1 et seq., was signed into law. This law required Illinois Townships, Road Districts, and Township multi-assessment districts to convene a committee to study and report on local government efficiency. This committee was tasked to meet a minimum of three (3) times and produce a final report to be submitted to the County in which the taxing district resides.

#### **Township Description**

Wheeling Township is one of 29 Townships within suburban Cook County. Excluding elected officials, the Township has 32 full and part-time staff members.

The Township's budget for FY 2024 - 2025 is \$ 3,163,995.00. The 2023 equalized assessed valuation of Wheeling Township is \$ 6,421,521,833.00. Wheeling Township has one physical location, which is located at 1616 N. Arlington Heights Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60004.

#### **Township Jurisdiction**

Wheeling Township encompasses an area of approximately 36 sq miles in Cook County, with all, or portions of, the following municipalities: Arlington Heights, Mount Prospect, Wheeling, Prospect Heights, Buffalo Grove, Northbrook, Des Plaines, Rolling Meadows, and Palatine. The Township's boundaries are: Lake Cook Rd to the north; Central Rd to the south; Wilke Rd to the west; and River Rd to the east. The Township has a population of approximately 155,000 residents (or 58,000 households).



**Wheeling Township**  
**Decennial Committee**  
**Committee Meetings**

- Organizational Meeting: 5/23/22
- Second Meeting: 5/28/24
- Third Meeting: 8/27/24
- Fourth Meeting: 10/22/24



# **PROGRAMS/SERVICES OFFERED**

## **BY WHEELING TOWNSHIP**

### **GENERAL ASSISTANCE**

Like all Townships, Wheeling Township is mandated by state law to provide General Assistance, a program to aid those experiencing financial hardship who do not qualify for other state or federal cash assistance programs. State Statutes require Townships to levy taxes to provide monthly allotments to those that qualify for aid such as shelter, food, utilities, transportation and personal essentials. Recipients are thoroughly screened by staff and also referred to other programs. Those who are able, are also required to search for employment.

### **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE**

Emergency Assistance is available to qualified individuals and families facing life-threatening emergencies (once every 18 months). Applicants must be residents of Wheeling Township and meet financial and non-financial eligibility requirements.

### **MOBILE DENTAL CLINIC**

The Mobile Dental Clinic is the award-winning partnership program between the Endeavor/Northwest Community Healthcare Foundation and these Townships: Elk Grove, Palatine, Schaumburg and Wheeling. The clinic provides basic dental care to qualified individuals, and is staffed by a paid dentist and manager, as well as volunteer dentists and hygienists. The General Assistance staff of each Township qualifies their residents for service.

### **LIHEAP**

Wheeling Township is a LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) intake site for energy services. Grant funds are provided through CEDA and are used to pay energy bills for income-eligible households. The General Assistance staff completes all applications; a cash stipend is received by the Township for each application approved. Until CEDA notifies us that funds are/were exhausted, staff completed PIPP (Percentage of Income Payment Plan), Weatherization, ComEd Hardship, and furnace applications for eligible clients as well.

### **SNAP**

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps, can be completed by General Assistance department staff using the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) online application portal. Training was provided by the Greater Chicago Food Depository in order to assist residents in obtaining the needed food benefit, which is especially important for residents unable to go to the IDHS office in person. GA staff complete the application with residents, including the uploading of required documents. Following the online application completion, residents are scheduled for a telephone interview with IDHS staff to complete the process.

## **SALVATION ARMY SERVICE EXTENSION UNIT**

The Wheeling Township General Assistance Office serves as a Service Extension Unit of the Salvation Army for residents of Wheeling, Prospect Heights and Buffalo Grove. Salvation Army funds are earmarked for emergencies such as eviction or utility disconnection. The funds are available no more than once in a 12-month period to qualifying residents. Individuals or families facing life-threatening circumstances are evaluated using Salvation Army guidelines, including the ability to return to self-sufficiency once the emergency situation has been resolved.

## **HOME DELIVERED MEAL PROGRAM**

Freshly prepared meals are delivered to homebound Wheeling Township senior citizens and permanently disabled residents (over the age of 18). Residents who qualify, pay a nominal fee for the meals, which are prepared by the Lutheran Home in Arlington Heights and delivered to residents by volunteers. The Home Delivered Meal Program works with 25 churches and approximately 350 total volunteers throughout the year to assist with delivering the food. While the key focus of this program is ensuring that residents receive nutritious meals, it also provides isolated residents with some interpersonal contact through the volunteers who deliver the meals

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Wheeling Township considers transportation for our senior citizens and disabled residents to be a premier program, and staff members are always seeking ways to strengthen and improve the service. To meet the continually growing need for transportation, especially to and from medical appointments and grocery stores, Wheeling Township employs a Transportation Coordinator, 11 drivers, and maintains a fleet of 9 buses – three of which are Township-owned and six of which are leased from PACE. We provide approximately 20,000 rides annually.

## **TRIP – Township Riders Initiative Program**

TRIP is a transportation collaboration between PACE and five (5) Townships – Elk Grove, Hanover, Palatine, Schaumburg, and Wheeling. These Townships all provide transportation within their boundaries but there is a great need for medical transportation outside those boundaries, and across Township lines. The state of Illinois provides funds for this purpose and TRIP is a line item in the PACE budget. Townships qualify riders, take applications, and make reservations for rides. PACE contracts with a third party to provide the rides. The Township Supervisors make up the voting TRIP Board and attend triannual meetings to establish guidelines and policy.



### **SHIP (Senior Health Insurance Program)**

Highly trained, skilled SHIP volunteers assist residents with Medicare, Medicare Part D, Advantage Plans (Part C), Medicare advocacy, and Benefit Access. Trained initially by the Illinois Department on Aging, SHIP volunteers cannot be affiliated with any insurance company, nor do they sell or solicit any type of insurance. Our five SHIP Counselors provide services throughout the year, but are especially busy during the annual Open Enrollment period of October 15 – December 7.

### **ALZHEIMER'S CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP**

We collaborate with many organizations and other service providers to offer informative and interesting monthly programming to support and assist those dealing with the complicated process of handling loved ones dealing with Alzheimer's disease. Affiliated with the Alzheimer's Association, the group has a core membership of 12, with an average of 6 - 10 attending every meeting. During the pandemic, the group shifted to meeting online via Zoom, and continues to meet in that fashion. The support group was started in 2014.

### **VIP - LOW VISION SUPPORT GROUP**

This inspiring support group has over 40 active members who participate in planned programs and share personal experiences, concerns and knowledge regarding vision loss. Many also participate in an audio-based book club for VIP members. This support group has been going strong since 2000, and continues to meet successfully on Zoom. Average monthly attendance remains about 25.

### **OPERATION SUPPORT OUR TROOPS**

Wheeling Township continues to sponsor its annual donation drive for Operation Support Our Troops America, Inc., a local non-profit organization which provides 'Comfort & Care Packages' for active military personnel stationed around the globe.

### **SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD**

An active group of community residents serves as Senior Advisory Board members. Their role is to advise the Director of Senior & Disability Services about issues that are pertinent to senior citizens in Wheeling Township. They are responsible for suggesting the educational and outreach programs the Township offers such as Senior Scenes monthly presentations and the Generation2Generation inter-generational communication program between Wheeling Township, Wheeling High School and the residents of Bella Terra nursing home.

### **AARP Tax Preparation**

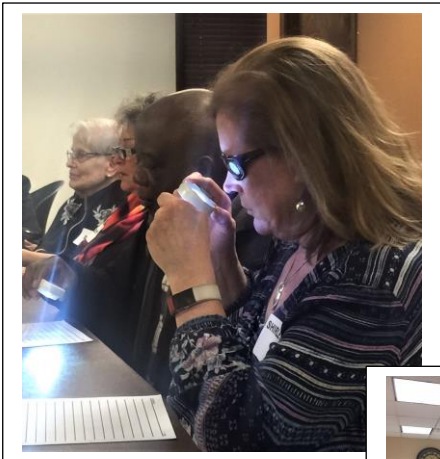
The AARP Tax-Aide Foundation program and its dedicated, highly trained and strictly regulated volunteers provide tax filing assistance to Wheeling Township residents every spring. The 18+ volunteers help over 350 residents every year with the filing of their federal and state taxes for free.

### **HANDICAPPED PLACARDS AND REDUCED RATE RTA PASSES**

Wheeling Township provides residents with 3-month temporary handicapped placards upon receipt of a signed form from their doctor. Permanent placards are obtained from the state. We are also a site where residents 65 years old and over can apply for a reduced rate RTA pass, which provides them with lower cost public transportation on local buses and trains.



# WHEELING TOWNSHIP





## **CURRENT FUNDED AGENCIES**

- \*Ascension Center for Mental Health
- \*Center of Concern
- \*Children’s Advocacy Center
- \*Connections To Care
- \*FamilyForward
- \*Hopeful Beginnings of St. Mary’s
- \*KAN-WIN
- \*Life Span
- \*Northwest Compass
- \*Resources for Community Living
- \*Suburban Primary Healthcare-Access to Care
- \*The Josselyn Center
- \* Avenues to Independence
- \* Center for Enriched Living
- \* Clearbrook
- \* Endeavor/NCH Foundation-Mobile Dental Clinic
- \* HandsOn Suburban Chicago
- \* Journeys/The Road Home
- \* Kindred Life Ministries
- \* Little City Foundation
- \* Omni Youth Services
- \* Shelter, Inc.
- \* The Harbour
- \* WINGS



## **WHEELING TOWNSHIP** **ARLINGTON HEIGHTS CEMETERY**

The Wheeling Township Arlington Heights Cemetery is located on the north side of Euclid, west of Rand Road in Arlington Heights. It was the original burial site for the Kennicott family and a number of tombstones date back to the early 1800's. Names like Kennicott, Sigwalt, Noyes, Landmeier, Klehm, Best and Miner are all there. These early settlers' names also can be found on streets throughout northwest suburban Villages, a tribute to the early and influential role they played in the area's history. About 20 members of the Dunton family - the name by which the town of Arlington Heights was known until 1887 - are also buried in the Township Cemetery.

The three (3) appointed Township Cemetery Trustees are responsible for sales and contracted maintenance of the four-acre cemetery.

- John Glueckert, Jr.
- Jon Kolssak
- Philip Flores, Jr.

## **ROAD MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**

Since January 1, 2017, the maintenance of the approximately five (5) miles of unincorporated roads within Wheeling Township is the responsibility of the Township Board of Trustees. Township staff, under the direction of the Board, contracts for all needed services.

## **WHEELING TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH BOARD**

In November, 2022, voters passed a referendum for establishing a 708 Mental Health Board. In January, 2023, the Wheeling Township Community Mental Health Board was created and Wheeling Township Supervisor Kathleen Penner appointed the following Board Members:

- President – Susan Hayes
- Vice President – James Ruffatto
- Secretary – William Dixon
- Trustee – Jeanne Hamilton
- Trustee – John Lubbe
- Trustee – JoAnne Schultz
- Trustee – Jack Vrett

## **Wheeling Township Emergency Fund Inc., a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization**

For residents in need who do not qualify for other programs, Wheeling Township's Emergency Fund may be able to assist. All funds are donated – NO TAX DOLLARS ARE USED FOR THIS PROGRAM. We gratefully accept donations of food, gift cards, school supplies, and monetary gifts from hundreds of donors, many of whom make donations on a regular basis. Several programs are also funded through the Wheeling Township Emergency Fund, Inc., including:

### **WHEELING TOWNSHIP FOOD PANTRY**

The Emergency Fund runs the Food Pantry. Utilizing the highly successful "Client Choice" model, this respectful and dignified method of shopping provides clients with the opportunity to choose products they will enjoy and eat. Donations are received from generous individuals, organizations, religious organizations, churches, and corporations; all food is donated or purchased with donated funds. The other important component of this very successful operation is the amazing team of volunteers.

**SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

Brand new backpacks, overflowing with crayons, paper, pens, and all the great educational tools kids need to start their school year off right, are donated by generous residents for our lower income residents under 18.

**THANKSGIVING BASKET PROGRAM.**

A holiday meal is provided to lower income families who qualify. We are very grateful to all the residents, businesses, religious organizations and community groups who donate everything from rolls and stuffing to potatoes and dessert. Hundreds of donated gift cards and frozen turkeys are also distributed.

**ADOPT-A-FAMILY PROGRAM.**

This annual holiday gift program is a wonderful reminder of how important it is to give back, and countless residents, businesses, religious organizations and community groups help to make it special for the lower income residents of our community. We remain grateful for the hundreds of gifts, toys, clothes and gift cards which are donated for qualifying families. Numerous donated new hats, gloves and scarves are distributed, and all children were offered new books, which are donated by caring staff members at two local libraries.

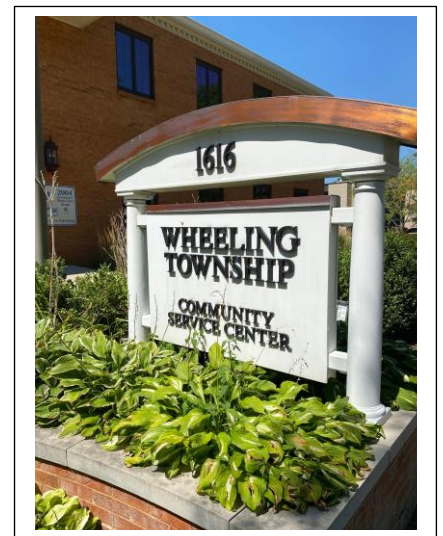




# WHEELING TOWNSHIP

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS

1. **Maine Township, Palatine Township, Schaumburg Township and Elk Grove Township Assessor's Offices.** During the respective reassessment periods the above townships may utilize each other's staff members to assist residents in their specific Assessor's Offices.
2. **Northfield Township Road District.** Responsible for snow removal and distribution of salt to all the unincorporated road areas in Wheeling Township - except for Northbrook, IL.
3. **Village of Northbrook.** Responsible for snow removal and distribution of salt to the unincorporated area of Northbrook, IL.





## **WHEELING TOWNSHIP**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. In reviewing the Wheeling Township Personnel Policy, it was decided that the Township Attorney should review it in its entirety.
2. Wheeling Township follows *Robert's Rules of Order* for Small Boards. While historically the Township follows these rules, going forward, we recommend having written policies.
3. Study best practices for excellence to hire and retain staff.
4. The Township's last major renovation was in 2007. The Township needs to create a formal Capital Plan to start replacing and updating the Township.
5. The website needs to be updated: the current website does not allow fillable PDFs, receiving donations online, and there is no accessibility or translation available.
6. The Food Pantry serves over 500 families monthly. Look into expanding service to include evening hours, possibly two evenings a month, for the Food Pantry.
7. As the community ages, the need for transportation services increases. The Township leases six (6) buses from PACE, and owns three. Most buses are high in mileage. We will be looking into getting more buses from PACE if they are available, and look to having the Township purchase one or two buses. Look into updating the way the township schedules rides and keeps rider information.
8. Update the Meeting Room. Replace flooring, tables, and paint walls, which will be part of the Capital Plan. Also, the A/V equipment should be updated for a better microphone system and projector with streaming capabilities for programs and meetings.

**Submitted by: Kathleen Penner**

*Chair, Decennial Efficiency Committee of Wheeling Township*

**Date: October 22, 2024**