

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Supervisor and Board of Trustees of Wheeling Township, for April 23, 2024 was held in the Paula Ulreich Meeting Room, in the Township of Wheeling, 1616 North Arlington Heights Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois. Supervisor Penner called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Clerk Gauza called the roll and the following members were present, Supervisor Kathy Penner, Trustee Jeanne Hamilton, Trustee Patricia Kozicki, Trustee Joseph Murglin, Trustee Darrel Talken and Clerk Joanna Gauza.

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

Absent: None

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Supervisor Penner led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MOTION #1: APPROVAL TO OPEN MEETING ON TOWN AND GENERAL ASSISTANCE BUDGET**

Motion by Supervisor Penner, seconded by Trustee Kozicki, to approve opening the meeting on Town and General Assistance Budget.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Penner, Kozicki, Murglin, Hamilton, Talken  
NAYS: None....Motion #1 Carried

**OPEN MEETING TOWN AND GENERAL ASSISTANCE BUDGET COMMENTS:**

Denice Dirkes: Where is the budget? It was answered that the budget is available for inspection at the township and is in the packet. Attorney Florey stated there was a newspaper notice published, including budget amounts, some 30 days ago in the Daily Herald. The notice is what the law requires. Ms. Dirkes asked what about if you don't speak English or read English so why no other languages. Attorney Florey stated the notice complies with exactly what the law requires.

Someone asked if there was mental health funding in the budget. Attorney Florey responded that each year social service agencies submit requests for funding. The funding requests include mental health services for Wheeling Township residents. For example, Alexian Brothers asked for \$110,000. The Mental Health board recommended

the funding and the township board approved the funding. The answer is the same for other social service agencies such as Avenues for Independence, Clearbrook Center etc.

Lorri Grainawi: Asked what the \$30,000 for professional fees was for? Supervisor Penner responded that the money is to pay for the mental health needs assessment being done by Harper College.

**MOTION #2: APPROVAL TO CLOSE MEETING ON TOWN AND GENERAL ASSISTANCE BUDGET**

Motion by Supervisor Penner, seconded by Trustee Murglin, to approve closing the meeting on Town and General Assistance Budget.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Penner, Murglin, Kozicki, Hamilton, Talken  
NAYS: None....Motion #2 Carried

**MOTION #3: APPROVAL TO OPEN MEETING ON ROAD MAINTENANCE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE**

Motion by Supervisor Penner, seconded by Trustee Kozicki, to approve opening the meeting on Road Maintenance Budget.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Penner, Kozicki, Murglin, Hamilton, Talken  
NAYS: None....Motion #3 Carried

**OPEN MEETING ROAD MAINTENANCE AND APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE COMMENTS:**

Joan Huering: Is there a way to have a monthly meeting so community knows what road projects being done. Attorney Florey stated that would be communicated to the staff. Joan thanked the board.

Denice Dirkes: Asked why no discussion of budget. Attorney Florey stated that budget spending has already been discussed at several Township Board meetings.

**MOTION #4: APPROVAL TO CLOSE MEETING ON ROAD MAINTENANCE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE**

Motion by Supervisor Penner, seconded by Trustee Murglin, to approve closing the meeting on Road Maintenance Budget.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Penner, Murglin, Kozicki, Hamilton, Talken  
NAYS: None....Motion #4 Carried

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION #5: APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING ON MARCH 20, 2024**

Motion by Trustee Kozicki, seconded by Trustee Murglin, to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2024 Regular Board Meeting.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Kozicki, Murglin, Hamilton, Talken, Penner  
NAYS: None....Motion #5 Carried.

**AUDIT**

**MOTION #6: AUDIT FOR CEMETERY FUND**

Motion by Trustee Kozicki, seconded by Trustee Murglin, to approve batch #3/25/24 and #4/23/24 against the Cemetery Fund, in the amount of \$6,583.37 to be paid.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Kozicki, Murglin, Talken, Hamilton, Penner  
NAYS: None....Motion #6 Carried.

**MOTION #7: AUDIT FOR ROAD MANAGEMENT FUND**

Motion by Trustee Kozicki, seconded by Trustee Murglin, to approve batch #3/25/24, #3/28/24, #4/19/24 and #4/23/24 against the Road Management Fund, in the amount of \$17,695.16 to be paid.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Kozicki, Murglin, Talken, Hamilton, Penner  
NAYS: None....Motion #7 Carried.

**MOTION #8: AUDIT FOR TOWN FUND**

Motion by Trustee Kozicki, seconded by Trustee Murglin, to approve batch #3/25/24, #3/28/24, #4/19/24 and 4/23/24 against the Town Fund in the amount of \$127,841.88 to be paid.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Kozicki, Murglin, Talken, Hamilton, Penner  
NAYS: None....Motion #8 Carried.

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

Joan Huering: She is from Mt Prospect and requested assistance with abandoned properties. The residents in the area need help to monitor and address abandoned properties. Attorney Florey stated to just email township staff with the specific properties and their addresses.

Fred Vogt: He attended April 9 Annual Township Meeting and would like to know how to schedule a meeting to learn about the intent of the township to fund mental health services.

Denice Dirkes: "My name is Denice Dirkes, I live at 110 Lemans Drive, Wheeling. I have been a resident of my village since August of 1991. Tonight, I respectfully request the Wheeling Township Board members levy the tax approved by the 2022 Wheeling Township Mental Health Board referendum as soon as possible. I believe in the Mental Health Board's stated mission, "To ensure that the services related to mental illness, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse are available and known to the residents of Wheeling Township". Mental health issues have touched my life in different ways at different times. I've also seen mental health issues affect friends and neighbors within my community. These issues impact such things as the upkeep of property, the use of illicit drugs, and attendance and behavioral issues in our schools. I do not stand alone in making this request. Over the past 15 months or so more than 50 comments have been presented to this board in support of levying the tax and getting the board up and running. The individuals who've spoken previously have included representatives from NAMI, representatives from our local schools and, most importantly, tax paying citizens of this township. Some of their stories have been deeply personal, some have been presented in broad strokes, but all have outlined the significant benefits of a fully funded and functioning Mental Health Board. Finally, I must note that during this same period, not a single community member entered a comment in the public record stating their opposition of the Mental Health Board or it's funding. Not one. Therefore, I urge this board to immediately reconsider their position and levy the taxes to fund the Wheeling Township Mental Health Board. Thank you for the opportunity to read my comments into the public record."

John Truncala: Resident of Forest River Fire Protection District. We have some safety concerns about abandoned properties and multiple families living in single family residences. He asked the township to address the issue. For example, he stated that a single-family residence has about 6 adults and perhaps 7 children.

## OFFICIALS' REPORT

**ASSESSOR:** Assessor Jochum reported:

- TAX YEAR 2023
- Tax bills will be mailed July 1<sup>st</sup> due on August 1, 2024.
- During this 30 day exemption period we have handled 1395 exemption cases, 882 of which are Senior Freeze. Office visits during this period have been 1,935. We are still handling exemptions thru the end of April so this number will grow to 900-1000 senior exemptions.
- TAX YEAR 2024

- We are anticipating the Cook County Assessor to be open for appeals in mid-August. Currently we are accepting pre-files for the Assessor appeal, to date we have 147 files on hand.
- STAFFING AND WORK FLOW
- At past meetings I have mentioned that both the Cook County Assessor and the Board of Review have shifted work to the Township Assessor offices as a result of changes in filing which have significantly increased our duties. This exemption season has particularly highlighted the increased work attendant to each case. In addition to the work necessary for each case in order to prepare and justify each exemption we are now required to enter the filings which are the most involved cases whereas in the past they were mailed to the Assessor without data entry.
- Our manpower needs have increased significantly in the following way: For a Senior Freeze, we enter the most complicated cases manually each of which requires about 15 minutes to process; 232 cases times 15 minutes = 58 additional hours of work. The cases without complications are mailed to the Assessor.
- Other Exemptions: All of these exemptions must now be manually entered. 513 cases times 10 minutes=86 additional hours.
- In summary, the total of 144 hours that was previously done by the Cook County Assessor's office and not the Township office. In addition to the filing process analytical work was done by the township office to prepare the exemption. A similar calculation will be made during appeals season.
- 3 of 5 township employees that work on exemptions are part-time so we can expand their hours as needed for the high workload periods.
- The exemptions are important to taxpayers and may be worth thousands of dollars to an individual taxpayer. Many taxpayers are scrambling to find money to pay taxes and many are disabled.
- Trustee Hamilton stated that it appears these higher property taxes can put taxpayers out of their homes.' Assessor Jochum agreed. Many people are scrambling to find money to pay these taxes, especially the elderly and disabled. Trustee Hamilton asked if these taxpayers speak against these higher taxes and Assessor Jochum stated that they absolutely are against higher property taxes. Many people are suffering. The double whammy of increased assessments and the highest property taxes in 30 years are causing real suffering and hardship.

**ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:** Administrator Stapleton reported:

- We began the search for an Assistant Director of General Assistance.
- We will start looking for a Senior Service Specialist in May. This person will help with the open enrollment for Medicare.
- The AARP Tax-Aide program helped 351 residents to file their taxes.
- Lynndah and the Administrator will be participating in the Mental Health Fair at the Arlington Heights Memorial Library on May 6, 2024
- Highway Manager Toberman is working with Cook County Building and Zone regarding a Permit Workshop. It will be held at the Township on July 20, 2024,

from 9 am to noon. We will be promoting this workshop in the Summer Newsletter.

- The Administrator will be meeting with the ATA Group this week; the audit will begin in May, and the presentation of the audit will take place in July.
- Statistics for March 2024:

1,728 rides – 835 non-medical, 574 Medical  
 881 - meals delivered  
 555 - visits to the Food Pantry – 1,176 people fed, 439 seniors

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**MOTION #9: PROSPECT HEIGHTS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT TRUSTEE REAPPOINTMENT FOR A 3 YEAR TERM – JOE VERTONE AND JAMES REBECCA**

Motion by Supervisor Penner, seconded by Trustee Kozicki to approve the Reappointment Prospect Heights Fire Protection District Trustee for a 3 Year Term- Joe Vertone and James Rebecca.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Penner, Kozicki, Hamilton, Murglin, Talken  
 NAYS: None....Motion #9 Carried.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**MOTION #10: ADOPT TOWN AND GENERAL ASSISTANCE BUDGET ORDINANCE 2024-01**

Motion by Supervisor Penner, seconded by Trustee Kozicki to adopt the General Town and General Assistance Budget Ordinance 2024-01 in the amount of \$3,163,995.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Penner, Kozicki, Murglin, Hamilton, Talken  
 NAYS: None....Motion #10 Carried

**MOTION #11: ADOPT ROAD MAINTENANCE BUDGET ORDINANCE 2024-02**

Motion by Supervisor Penner, seconded by Trustee Kozicki to adopt the Road Maintenance Budget Ordinance 2024-02 in the amount of \$622,764.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Penner, Kozicki, Murglin, Hamilton, Talken  
 NAYS: None....Motion #11 Carried

**MOTION #12: ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Supervisor Penner seconded by Trustee Kozicki to adjourn.

VOICE CALL VOTE: All Ayes....Motion #12 Carried.

The meeting for Tuesday, April 23, 2024, was declared adjourned at 8:40 p.m. The next scheduled regular board meeting is set for Tuesday, May 28, 2024, at 8:00 p.m.

Joanna M. Gauza  
Wheeling Township Clerk