

**Township Board Meeting
Tuesday, April 12, 2022**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Clerk Liskey at 7:30 PM.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Tax Collector David Scriven-Young led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM

Board Members: Trustees Bansal, Hickey, Jones, and Rotkis attended the meeting.

Board Officers: Supervisor Crowner, Clerk Liskey, Highway Commissioner Wieser, Assessor Kern, and Tax Collector Scriven-Young were present at the meeting.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

4.1 None.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5.1 Approval of March 10, 2022 – Regular Meeting Open Session Minutes

- Trustee Hickey moved to open discussion and approval of the Regular Meeting Open Session Minutes. Supervisor Crowner seconded. The Regular Meeting Open Session Minutes for March 10, 2022, were approved 5-0 per roll call vote.

6. OLD BUSINESS

6.1. None.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 Discussion/Approval of Ordinance #22-01-O Town Budget

- Supervisor Crowner moved to open discussion of the ordinance and Trustee Hickey seconded the motion.

- Supervisor Crowner summarized highpoints of the budget proposal, which had been discussed in detail at the March Board meeting. He noted that despite requests for questions or concerns, none had been submitted. He then opened the discussion for additional comment.

- Trustee Rotis requested to an explanation of the subcontractor costs. Crowner explained plans the subcontractor budget item included additional funds to improve some functions and processes within administrative operations, including making the website to be more user-friendly, intuitive, and easier to update; modernizing the information systems to ensure records are fully digitized and as many as possible are made available online. He noted the vast majority of expenses would be technology related and explained that they would primarily be one-time expenses for special projects as outlined above.

- Trustee Bansal expressed concern regarding the idea of any proposed cost increases above the previous 2021 budget. She inquired about historical services and whether those were changing due to the increase.

- Trustee Rotkis questioned the proposed \$50k increase associated with hiring a new employee for the Township. Specifically, she suggested inflation and the current business environment as reasons to delay the addition of a new position.

-Crowner explained that the Township currently only hand ½ of one employee to handle all administrative duties, respond to the residents/public requests, maintain records, etc., and that the employee, who spends half of the time on Township duties and half for the Road District, was already working above capacity without any backup coverage, resulting in disruptions when the person was out of the office. He further explained that the Township needed to invest in the additional resource to implement improvement-related changes/projects as detailed above and that they would take on more responsibilities over time, especially in the area of grant proposal research, writing and submission which could be additional income for the Township. Additionally, he explained the new position would be responsible for handling ongoing maintenance and updates for the Township website, eliminating the need to pay an outside vendor, as well as assisting with FOIA records gathering, special projects and more.

- Crowner noted the Township operated at a 50k surplus in the 2021-2022 fiscal year and would be receiving an additional \$30k in property taxes as well as further savings from decreases secured in the newly negotiated PACE contract – all of which would serve to cover a majority of the slight increase in the levy while allowing the Township to operate in a more effective manner.

- Trustee Hickey moved to approve Ordinance #22-01-O Town Budget and Trustee Rotkis seconded. Ordinance #22-01-O was approved 3-2 via roll call vote.

7.2 Discussion/Approval of Ordinance #22-02-O Highway Budget

- Crowner made a motion to table discussions/approval of Ordinance #22-02-O until the May Board meeting. Trustee Hickey seconded the motion. Highway Commissioner Tom Wieser explained he would be including a change to the budget proposal and sending the revised document to the Board for their review before voting.

8. APPROVAL OF BILLS AND CLAIMS

8.1 Approval of 03/10/22 – 04/12/22 Town and Road District Fund Bills & Claims:

- Trustee Bansal moved to open discussion for approval of the Town, Park, Assessor, Road & Bridge, Special Hard Road and Cemetery Funds bills and Trustee Hickey seconded.

- Bills in the amount of \$168,027.97 were unanimously approved 5-0 per roll call vote.

9. REPORTS

9.1. ASSESSOR (CHUCK KERN)

– Noting a need to leave early, Assessor Kern confirmed there were no additional changes to the Assessor’s budget and asked for any questions.

-Trustee Hickey inquired about the status of the search for a new employee for the assessor’s staff. Kern responded that the search to fill an open staff position was ongoing but that due to difficulty in finding a candidate given salary demands and limited budget was considering revising the job description to be more of an entry-level position to focus on residential responsibilities.

-Trustee Bansal asked why the equipment line item was decreasing. Kern responded that the decrease was the result of one-time expenses for the purchase of a new server and computer hardware.

9.2 HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER (TOM WIESER)

- Noted that as mentioned in the previous Annual Town Meeting, he was making a change to the Road District budget and would resend the document for the Board's review.

9.3 TRUSTEES:

TRUSTEE (MEGHNA BANSAL)

- Reminded the Board that the first 2022 Senior Luncheon would be held in April. Noted that she is excited to begin offering bingo for the seniors and confirmed food and prizes were set. She also reiterated that the Senior Committee was meeting the first Wednesday of every month.

TRUSTEE (KELLY HICKEY)

- Informed that she had contacted several local restaurants/food companies to see if they would consider subsidizing the senior lunches, which would reduce Township expenses. She plans to follow up with 4-5 of the organizations that expressed interest to secure participation.
- Referenced a past program in which Wheatland Township had worked with Neuqua Valley High School's Transition Program, which helps students who have not graduated gain job training and experience that will ease their transitions from school to the workplace. She plans to meet with the program administrators to determine if Wheatland Township could offer any volunteer/work/intern opportunities that would be appropriate/helpful for these students and useful for the Township.

TRUSTEE (COLLEEN ROTKIS)

- Stated there were no further updates beyond what had been presented in the park discussion during the Annual Town meeting.

TRUSTEE (TERRY JONES)

- Did not have a report.

9.4 TOWNSHIP CLERK (ANITA LISKEY)

- Updated that no new FOIAs had been received in March.

9.5 COLLECTOR/CEMETERY (DAVID SCRIVEN-YOUNG)

- Reported one burial had taken place in March and that a number of grave markings would be taking place now that the weather had improved.
- Reported that he had attended the Lobbying Day on April 6 where Illinois State Senator Meg Loughran Cappel mentioned they had constituents looking for grant funding opportunities. Scriven-Young said he would pass along contact information so Wheatland Township could reach out with information.
- He also updated that the cemetery had received permission from the Historic Preservation Commission to install a new sign.

9.6 SUPERVISOR (MICHAEL CROWNER)

- Reminded the Board that a representative from Plainfield Park District would attend the May meeting to discuss proposals for collaborating on the Wheatland Township Park.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

- Supervisor Crowner moved to adjourn the meeting and Trustee Hickey seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned on a voice vote at 8:51 PM.

Next meeting May 12, 2022

Approved as presented:

Prepared by Anita Liskey, Township Clerk