

**Wheatland Township Board Meeting  
Thursday, September 8, 2022**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Clerk Liskey at 7:32 PM.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Trustee Rotkis 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, Assessor Kern, Highway Commissioner Wieser, Tax Collector Scriven-Young and Clerk Liskey attended the meeting.

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

4.1 n/a

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**5.1 Approve August 11, 2022 – Regular Meeting Open Session Minutes**

- Trustee Hickey moved to open discussion and approval of the Regular Meeting Open Session Minutes. Trustee Rotkis seconded. Minutes for the August 11, 2022 Regular Meeting Open Session were unanimously approved 5-0 per roll call vote.

**6. OLD BUSINESS**

**6.1. Discussion of Ordinance 22-xx-O Vacation of “Old” Normantown Road to Forest Preserve District of Will County, Ill.**

- Supervisor Crowner motioned to postpone this discussion until the October Board meeting as the ordinance re the proposal for Wheatland Township to vacate two parcels of land on Normantown Road had not yet been received from the Will County Forest Preserve District.
- Supervisor Crowner noted that the Will County Forest Preserve District Board would be voting on the ordinance at its October meeting and then the proposal will be presented to the Wheatland Township Board for discussion/approval at its October meeting.
- The Board unanimously approved the request to table discussions 5-0 via roll call vote.

**7. NEW BUSINESS**

**7.1. Discussion/Approval of 2021-2022 Township Audit**

- Supervisor Crowner motioned to open discussion of the annual audit. Trustee Hickey seconded the motion.
- Ed Tracy, a representative from the Township’s accounting firm, Selden Fox, provided an update on the status of the annual audit, detailing materials he had sent to the board and noting that (1) a change had been made to the “Road and Bridge” line item and (2) a new lease standard had been adopted that will require a different treatment re notices going forward. In summary, he highlighted that all three funds were positive, generating strong returns on investment and noting that revenues came in higher than budgeted while expenses trended lower.
- Without further questions, the Board unanimously approved to accept the audit as presented and move forward with filing 5-0 via rollcall vote.

## **7.2 Discussion of Environmental Recycling & Disposal Service Contract**

- Supervisor Crowner motioned to open discussion and Trustee Bansal seconded.
- Jay Ipema from Environmental Recycling & Disposal Service, the firm that provides garbage collection services to unincorporated Wheatland Township residents presented to the Board in advance of the company's contract expiration in May. He detailed the services the firm provides and the positive feedback they had received from residents during the past five years, which is when they were originally retained following a Township referendum to have the Wheatland Township Board take responsibility for selecting a service provider to reduce confusion and road damage from too many garbage collectors. Ipema noted he would be submitting a new 5-year contract for the Board to consider with the following adjustments: (1) elimination of the opt-out clause which only a small handful of residents used (2) include an exclusivity agreement and (3) the addition of a 5 percent year over year increase to cover inflation and gas increases, maintenance, etc.
- Should the contract be renewed Supervisor Crowner requested Environmental distribute postcards to Wheatland Township residents detailing the services available. Clerk Liskey suggested copy and a link to Environmental be included on the Wheatland Township Website as a reference. Ipema agreed to both suggestions.
- Noting that the current contract expires on May 2023, Supervisor Crowner confirmed he would bring the revised contract, once received, to the Board for discussion/approval.

## **7.3 Discussion of Nania Energy**

- Supervisor Crowner motioned to open discussion of Nania Energy and Trustee Rotkis seconded the motion.
- A representative from Nania Energy, an advisor that helps clients, including other municipalities, identify energy suppliers and lock in electricity and natural gas prices. Through this process of "aggregating electricity," he explained that unincorporated Wheatland Township residents can reduce their energy costs.
- Under the current contract, unincorporated Wheatland residents pay only \$.07 per BTU vs the ComEd posted rate of \$.11 and seasonal rate of \$.09.
- Given the need to move quickly in this high-volatility environment, he suggested the Board appoint an individual (i.e., Supervisor Crowner) or a subcommittee to approve a provider and lock in an energy price, noting this process had been implemented in the past. Supervisor Crowner will confirm if the ordinance allowing for the streamlined process remains in effect or requires a Board vote.
- Of note, additional discussion continued re (1) the current rebate credits Wheatland Township residents are receiving from ComEd due to favorable legislation passed last year and (2) the possibility of considering green energy providers.

## **8. APPROVAL OF BILLS AND CLAIMS**

### **8.1 Approval of 08/11/22 – 09/08/22 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 Fund bills and Trustee Hickey seconded.
- Bills in the amount of \$158,889.36 were unanimously approved 5-0 per roll call vote.

## **9. REPORTS**

### **9.1. ASSESSOR (CHUCK KERN)**

- Assessor Kern reported that the volume of assessment appeals this cycle has been lower than in the past years.
- In response to a question regarding ongoing concerns about humidity in the office, Assessor Kern responded that humidity levels remained at satisfactory levels.

### **9.2 HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER (TOM WIESER)**

- Reported that addressing the backlog of drainage work remained the top priority.
- Updated that he had two staff openings to fill after a road crew employee resigned during the month to accept a job with the City of Naperville. He is looking at candidates to fill (1) an experienced position requiring snowplow certification and (2) an entry level position. He noted that to date he had received 3-5 resumes and encouraged the Board to refer interested candidates. He also noted that, if needed, the road crew would be able to use contractors as backup.

### **9.3 TRUSTEES:**

#### **TRUSTEE (MEGHNA BANSAL)**

- Updating on the Aug 17, 2022, Senior Luncheon, Trustee Bansal reported 25 attendees, including seniors, plus trustees and a Wheatland Township employee participated in the monthly event. A local comedy club provided entertainment pro bono, and Popeyes catered the meal at a charge of \$7 per person. Tea, dessert, and a few additional items were purchased from Jewel.
- Informed the next Senior Luncheon will be held on September 21, with catering provided by Caputo's and a speaker yet to be scheduled.

#### **TRUSTEE (KELLY HICKEY)**

- Explained that due to ongoing issues with driver shortages, Pace was taking additional measures to address transportation disruptions. To alleviate delays and ensure better service, Pace is authorizing riders to use Uber, for a flat fee, when Pace service is unavailable.
- Confirmed that the two students from the Neuqua Valley High School Transition Program began working in the Wheatland Township offices every Thursday for 45 minutes. They are completing a variety of tasks with a special interest in clerical assignments.
- Noted that an update on the Scout food pantry planned for Wheatland Township would be postponed to a future Board meeting.

#### **TRUSTEE (COLLEEN ROTKIS)**

- Informed that she was in the process of obtaining quotes to repair a broken spotlight in the park. She expects the repair will be completed next month.

#### **TRUSTEE (TERRY JONES)**

- Updated on discussions he had with a mosquito abatement service and offered to invite the company in to present capabilities to interested Board members.

### **9.4 TOWNSHIP CLERK (ANITA LISKEY)**

- Noted one FOIA had been received and responded to in the month of August, from a media outlet with no outstanding issues and no coverage to date. Additionally, one resident had requested assistance with a block party.

**9.5 TAX COLLECTOR/CEMETERY (DAVID SCRIVEN-YOUNG)**

- Reported three ash burials were completed and four grave sites were sold in August.
- Noted that the Cemetery Board would be meeting on September 14, 2022.

**9.6 SUPERVISOR (MICHAEL CROWNER)**

- Updated that the Plainfield Park District was scheduled to vote on the proposal to absorb the land and operations of the Wheatland Park at its meeting later in September. Once approved by Plainfield Park, Supervisor Crowner will submit the proposal/contract for attorney review and then bring it to the Wheatland Township Board for discussion/approval at the regular October meeting.
- Reported that negotiations on the Pace contract renewal had resulted in cost savings of more than 75 percent. The new terms are much more favorable to Wheatland Township and better reflect its share of riders. Despite current scheduling issues due to ongoing labor shortages, as noted above, ridership levels are returning to more normal levels, up from pandemic lows.
- Confirmed that an offer had been extended to a candidate for the newly created role of Senior Administrator, Finance and Operations, for Wheatland Township. Once hired, Supervisor Crowner will make introductions to all Board members.

**10. ADJOURNMENT:**

- Trustee Hickey moved to adjourn the meeting and Trustee Jones seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned on a voice vote at 9:15 PM.

**Next meeting October 13, 2022**

Approved as presented:

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Prepared by Anita Liskey, Township Clerk