

**Wheatland Township Board Meeting  
Thursday, August 10, 2023**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Crowner at 7:30 p.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

State of Illinois Senator Caplin lead the pledge of allegiance.

**3. ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM**

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

Board Officers: Supervisor Crowner, Cemetery/Tax Collector Scriven-Young and Clerk Liskey attended the meeting. Highway Commissioner Wieser and Assessor Kern joined virtually via Zoom.

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**4.1 Michael Wisniewski, a Wheatland Township resident** attended the meeting to ask about the evaluation process for determining speakers for the monthly senior luncheons sponsored by Wheatland Township for senior residents as well as to express his concern about IT security within Wheatland Township given Supervisor Crowner's mention in the July board meeting that he was handling near-term website updates.

Noting the Board was not required to respond to public comment in its meetings, Supervisor Crowner addressed both of Mr. Wisniewski's inquiries as follows:

*Senior Luncheon Speakers* – explained the senior luncheon programs, including speakers, are determined by the Senior Committee that is made up of senior residents and co-chaired by Trustee Meghna Bansal (R) and Trustee Kelly Hickey (D) who represent both political parties. He added speakers are selected based on participant interest in the topic(s) they can cover as well as availability.

*IT Security* – Confirmed Wheatland Township uses a professional IT consultant, JRM Consulting, to manage all of its IT infrastructure, security and processes. He noted JRM Consulting has been under contract and working with Wheatland Township for many years (prior to this administration) and also provides technology services to a number of municipalities. He clarified his comment from the July Board meeting by stating he was only taking responsibility for updating content on the Website and not overseeing all IT or IT security. He also informed that multiple individuals (staff and elected officials) had rights to post to the Wheatland Township Facebook page and were doing so primarily to promote awareness of events that would benefit Wheatland residents including diaper drives, pet clinics etc., as well as promote and/or generate awareness of initiatives taking place at State, County or City levels that benefit the community at large. In closing comments, Supervisor Crowner recognized the importance of data security, expressed appreciation for Mr. Wisniewski's expertise in cybersecurity and invited him to consider speaking to Wheatland Township staff about best practices in the future. Mr. Wisniewski apologized for misunderstanding prior

references to IT responsibilities and confirmed he would be willing to confer with Wheatland Township staff on cyber issues and hacking prevention.

**4.2. Illinois State Senator Meghan Caplan (D; 49<sup>th</sup> District)** attended the meeting, at the invitation of Supervisor Crowner, to discuss her support of a recent bill that helped townships, including Wheatland Township, gain expanded access to state funds for roads and other local initiatives. Noting the importance of showing tax dollars at work, Senator Caplan emphasized her focus on securing State resources for township-level capital projects to improve roads, parks and more to benefit Illinois residents and their communities. Trustee Rotkis, stepping out of her role as Wheatland Township Board Trustee and asking as a Wheatland Township resident, questioned the Senator's support of Illinois Senate Bill 1909 2023-2024 Deceptive Practice of Limited Services Pregnancy Center Act. Acknowledging deeply held birth control/abortion beliefs are a volatile topic, the Senator confirmed her support of the bill which is designed to crack down on deceptive practices by limited services pregnancy centers and explained her decision was based on her own belief that misinformation is a problem and deceptive practices in any industry are not right.

#### **5.1 Approve July 13, 2023 – Regular Meeting Open Session Minutes**

- Trustee Bansal motioned to open discussion/approval of the minutes for the July 13 Regular Meeting Open Session. Trustee Hickey seconded.
- The amended minutes for the July 13, 2023, Regular Meeting Open Session were unanimously approved 5-0 per roll call vote.

### **6. OLD BUSINESS**

#### **6.1 Discussion/Approval to set a Special Meeting of Electors**

- Supervisor Crowner requested the Board postpone discussion/approval re Special Meeting of Electors one more month, to be addressed at the September 2023 meeting. He then motioned to table this agenda item and Trustee Hickey seconded the motion.
- The Board unanimously approved the request to postpone discussion/approval to set a Special Meeting of Electors until its September 14 Board meeting 5-0 via roll call vote.

### **7. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **7.1 Discussion/Approval Ordinance #23-03-O Overnight Parking Ban**

- Trustee Hickey motioned to open discussions of Ordinance #23-03-O Overnight Parking Ban and Trustee Bansal seconded the motion.
- Supervisor Crowner, noting the topic had been discussed in the past several Board meetings, passed on a draft ordinance for Board review and asked Road Commissioner Wieser to provide background on the issue and the proposed ordinance for a vote at the September meeting.
- Road Commissioner Wieser reviewed the need for the Board to pass a new ordinance to ban overnight parking in industrial areas of Wheatland Township near Wolf's Crossing. He explained the current ordinance had never been approved by the previous Board, resulting in a technical issue negatively impacting enforcement. To further help police enforce the overnight parking ban, he noted the Sheriff's office had suggested Wheatland align the time of its overnight ban with Plainfield Township's so both townships and all signage would consistently ban parking from 1 a.m. – 6 a.m.
- Supervisor Crowner motioned to table approval of Ordinance #23-03-O Overnight Parking Ban until the September 2023 Board meeting. Trustee Hickey seconded the motion.

- The Board unanimously approved the request to postpone approval of Ordinance #23-03-O Overnight Parking Ban until its September 14, 2023, Board meeting

### **7.2 Discussion/Approval of #23-03-R Resolution Declaring Vacancy in the Office of the Assessor**

- Trustee Jones motioned to open discussion/approval of Resolution #23-03-R Resolution Declaring Vacancy in the Office of the Assessor. Trustee Rotkis seconded the motion.

- Supervisor Crouner referenced the Board packet materials and email sent by Assessor Kern regarding his planned retirement on December 31, 2023.- The Board unanimously approved Resolution #23-03-R Resolution Declaring Vacancy in the Office of the Assessor 5-0 via roll call vote.

### **7.3 Discussion/Approval of Updates to Wheatland Township Employee Handbook**

- Supervisor Crouner motioned to open discussion of updates to the Wheatland Township Employee Handbook, noting he would request to postpone the vote to the September Board meeting. Trustee Hickey seconded the motion to open discussion.

- Supervisor Crouner explained State of Illinois laws had changed to require municipalities cover sick time for part-time employees. Previously, part-time employees were excluded from sick-leave benefits. He also detailed a proposal to amend the handbook to require employees to designate sick/personal leave from vacation allocations and harden the payout policy for unused vacation to reduce the occurrence of unanticipated yearend expenses at yearend.

- Trustee Rotkis asked if the policy change to designate sick and vacation time was due to abuse or to create more standardization. Supervisor Crouner confirmed there were no issues of abuse but rather the distinction would policy change would synchronize Wheatland Township's practices with those of other municipalities and also reduce the possibility of confusion or misuse.

- Cemetery/Tax Collector Scriven Young asked about plans for address perceptions of a takeaway with the reduction/elimination of payouts for unused vacation. Supervisor Crouner explained since the new policy would not take effect until January 1, 2024, employees would not be impacted this year and would have ample time to plan accordingly for next year. Trustee Hickey asked about the possibility of capping vacation payout. Supervisor Crouner agreed to consider that suggestion, stating the goal would be to maintain flexibility for employees while increasing predictability for budgetary planning purposes. He also noted there would be exceptions for Road Crew staff who were sometimes required to come in unexpectedly or outside of regular business hours during storms.

- Supervisor Crouner motioned to postpone approval of Updates to Wheatland Township Employee Handbook to the September 2023 Board meeting. Trustee Hickey seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously approved the request 5-0 to table discussions until the September 14, 2023, meeting.

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

### **8.1 07/13/23- 08/12/23 Town and Road District Fund Bills & Claims:**

- Trustee Hickey moved to open discussion to approve the Town, Park, Assessor, Road & Bridge, Special Hard Road and Cemetery Fund bills. Trustee Rotkis seconded the motion.

- Trustee Jones inquired about the charges included for public notice signs. Road Commissioner Wieser explained those expenses were for signage related to the changes taking place around the Wheatland Township building, and Supervisor

Crowner confirmed the allocation was misallocated and would be moved into the road maintenance line item in the hard road fund.

- Trustee Rotkis asked for an explanation of a trailer purchase. Road Commissioner Wieser explained the trailer was purchased to improve efficiencies by allowing the road crew to work on more than one job at a time without traveling back and forth to move necessary equipment around. He also highlighted the low price secured for the second trailer.

- Bills in the amount of \$591,339.82 were unanimously approved 5-0 in a roll call vote.

## 9. REPORTS

### 9.1 Administrator and Deputy Clerk Bill Green

- *Illinois Association of Township Administrators*: Received an update on the need for municipality governing bodies to familiarize themselves with First Amendment laws and the impact on the public's access to government buildings and facilities. Noted the need for signage marking restricted areas within Wheatland Township office and confirmed he would be managing an initiative to post signs to limit public access to such spaces.

Cautioned that activist groups are monitoring civic offices to identify violations of the public's First Amendment rights and promoted a series of IATA video resources that provide instructions on the best ways government staff and elected officials can respond.

- *Shredding*: Confirmed the initiative to dispose of/shred old records, as permitted by and in compliance with the State of Illinois Records Disposal requirements was nearly complete.

- *Plainfield/Shorewood Chamber of Commerce*: Informed a ribbon cutting ceremony was scheduled to take place at Wheatland Township office on August 24 at 4 p.m.

- *Dental Van*: Updated that two residents had requested information and appointments for the mobile dental services van scheduled to be at Wheatland Township on Sept. 14, 2023.

- *Mandatory Training*: Notified the Board that all staff and elected officials were required to complete the annual online harassment training course.

- *Office Humidity Issues*: Confirmed that consultations and bids had been solicited and received from two local HVAC/Plumbing contractors – West Side Plumbing Inc., and TR Miller Heating, Colling & Plumbing. TR Miller was selected to remediate the ductwork and other installation issues determined to be the root cause of the humidity and air quality issues in Wheatland's office building.

### 9.2. ASSESSOR (Chuck Kern)

- Confirmed proposals to reduce/eliminate vacation payouts for unused vacation time would not be an issue for the employees of the Assessor's Office as those staff members generally took all of their vacation time.

- Updated that new assessments had been mailed and resident inquiries were increasing. The primary concern is about how much property taxes will increase given the new assessments. Noted taxes do not increase at the same rate as assessments and a different body would determine potential tax increases. He also informed that the Assessor's Office would temporarily revise its office hours, formally closing for lunch from Noon to 1 p.m., until September 1, and requested any Board members coming to the office during the day park on the street to ensure residents wanting to meet with assessor staff regarding the new assessments would have access to parking.

### **9.3. HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER (Tom Wieser)**

- Noted his report on the need to revise Wheatland's overnight parking ban ordinance discussed earlier during the meeting. Updated that the oversupply of road salt had been relocated from the Wheatland Township parking lot to another facility in Naperville and commended his team for their efforts. In response to Trustee Rotkis' request for an update on the noise complaints from residents in the Carillon Subdivision, Road Commissioner Wieser confirmed the noise problem was a Will County issue and not within the Wheatland Township's jurisdiction. However, he noted he had passed along concerns regarding traffic problems in the area to the City of Naperville which has jurisdiction over those issues.

### **9.4 TRUSTEES:**

#### **TRUSTEE (Meghna Bansal)**

- Reported that 18 senior residents attended the July 19 senior luncheon and confirmed \$110 had been collected for attendance at the lunch which cost \$193. She noted Judge Linda Davenport had been the keynote speaker and that the Senior Pastor of Wheatland Salem Church donated \$20 and confirmed he will be attending the monthly program going forward. Confirmed the next senior lunch would be held on August 16, 2023, and would feature the gardening writer from Naperville Magazine. Naperville Mayor Wehrli is scheduled to speak at the September Senior Luncheon.

#### **TRUSTEE (Kelly Hickey)**

- Noted the Board discussed a proposal to form a Persons with Disabilities Committee during its July meeting. Updated that she had researched several committees and committee structures in place at other townships and confirmed they were all similar to what had been proposed in July. Reported solicitation and an application process for new committee members would begin soon, and confirmed Administrator/Deputy Clerk Bill Green would serve on the committee.

-Updated that discussions with the Secretary of State were ongoing to schedule a Real ID mobile services day for Wheatland Township residents.

#### **TRUSTEE (Colleen Rotkis)**

- n/a

#### **TRUSTEE (Terry Jones)**

- n/a

### **9.5. TOWNSHIP CLERK (Anita Liskey)**

- Confirmed FOIA volume, which had been outpacing 2022 by more than double, had significantly decreased in July. Noted one FOIA had been completed during the month, with response for another currently in process.

### **9.6. TAX COLLECTOR/CEMETERY (David Scriven-Young)**

- Reported one burial and one cremation had taken place during the month of July.

- Provided an update regarding a presentation for photography services from a vendor who would shoot historical tombstones.

**9.7. SUPERVISOR (Michael Crowner)**

- Noted his reporting topics had been covered throughout the meeting in other sections of the agenda, confirmed he had no further updates.

**10. ADJOURNMENT:**

- Trustee Jones moved to adjourn the meeting and Trustee Hickey seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned on a voice vote at 9:12 p.m.

**Next meeting Thursday, September 14, 2023**

Approved as presented:

*Anita Liskey*

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Prepared by Anita Liskey, Township Clerk