

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE TOWN BOARD OF
TRUSTEES OF THORNTON TOWNSHIP HALL
333 E 162nd St SOUTH HOLLAND, IL 60473
(Reconvened Meeting of May 28)**

May 31, 2024

Thornton Township Clerk Wells called the Thornton Township Board of Trustees Meeting to order at 3:34 p.m. Clerk Wells called the roll.

PRESENT:

Trustees Gerald “Jerry” Jones, Christopher Gonzalez, Darlene Gray-Everett, Carmen Carlisle and Supervisor Tiffany Henyard

ALSO PRESENT:

Clerk Loretta Wells, Assessor Cassandra Elston, Gere DePue, and Attorney Tiffany Nelson Jaworski

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Paul Roberts – Lansing Resident - States that all he asks for is a meaningful dialogue between the Residents and the Administration. He’s been asking since December of 2023 for a private conversation with Finance Director, Robert Hunt, to discuss the advertising budget and the deficit. He says that he believes the Township is currently in a deficit. He asks for the Township Clerk to post the grant receipts on the website. The residents would appreciate receipts of the grants when they come so there’s no heated arguments.

Naomi Lapresco – Resident - Questions if it’s possible to get a reprint of the budget and how long would it take to get it. She asks if there has been a salary increase for everyone.

Janell Taylor – Resident - States that she’s heard about a vehicle being paid for by the Township. She questions if it was budgeted last year and is it in the 2025 Budget. Ms. Taylor asks who it is for and where is it on the Budget? She also asks Trustee Chris Gonzalez if he can answer that. He says, “unfortunately he cannot”. She says that she can gladly commend the Supervisor if she can believe some of the things that she says. People are mixing up Dolton and the Township. She talks about how there’s been a Township credit card that’s being used for Dolton’s business. She expresses that she feels that there are too many shady things that are going on.

Robert Hunt – Twp Finance Director, clarifies that there has not been a purchase of a vehicle with Townships Funds, and it can be seen on the invoices.

Jedidiah Brown – States that he’s present because he didn’t know if the Residents were going to make it because of the sudden switch. He states how he doesn’t appreciate the false police report. He states, “You are absolutely right, this is Dr. Kings dream, we may not be judged by the color of our skin but by the content of our character and the reason you have so much heat is because when the righteous are in authority the people rejoice”. He tells the Attorney to make sure she helps the Board decipher what things are. He says that the board thought that the residents weren’t aware and now they’re paying attention. Mr. Brown thanks Trustee Gonzalez for making everyone aware of the difference between an audit which simply verifies payments and a forensic audit. He applauds the Residents for knowing the difference between a surplus and a loan.

Vivian Allen – Resident Says that this is Manipulation of numbers and says anyone can write a report. Mr. Allen states “We have to figure out a way to stop them from stealing our money”. She talks about how the Supervisor wasn’t elected by the Residents and the board is the reason why she’s keeping her seat as the Township’s Supervisor. She also talks about tree removal and questions about who are the people that are doing the job.

Valerie Stubbs – Resident

Asks Trustee Gonzalez if he has any knowledge of the trip Keith Freeman and Supervisor Henyard took to Washington, DC, in January and it came out in the media that the trip was paid for by Township that totaled to be over \$9,000. She says it was intermingling of funds. It should not have been paid for by the township. Ms. Stubbs asks the two to pay that money back to the township and she would like for that go on record.

Stephanie Weideman – Resident

Speaks about the Mental health referendum, and how services were provided all the years she worked at the Township at no cost to the Residents, but now we’re talking about a budget that didn’t include mental health at all, but the Supervisor wanted residents to pay more taxes for it. She Wonders and questions if the salaries have gown down for Zap because they’re going on a BID for Contactors to cut grass. Ms. Weideman speaks on the 4.99% tax increase and says, “Our issue is not the 4.99%, our issue is giving it to you”.

Tasha Holloway – Resident

States how she’s Applaud at the administration and that she pays good money for taxes in Thornton Township. Her son hosted a dance camp and was offered \$200 dollars by Supervisor Henyard for his service that he did not receive, that is until, Resident Jedidah Brown spoke up about it. Ms. Holloway also talks about how she started to notice since she’s been speaking publicly about the things that she’s been tired of and all of sudden, personal, and illegal things have been occurring to her and brought up. She says that we should’ve been given all the pages of the budget instead of the first 10 pages, the audited receipts not the edited.

Sonia – Resident

Questions why we are contracting out lawncare services when “HAP” is a program for teenagers to connect with seniors and make money. Taking the work ethic from teenagers to learn how to do Lawn care. Why haven’t no one gone to any of the 17 municipalities to recruit teens to work for HAP? Where did The Township advertise the BIDS? The HAP program budget was increased to \$440,000.00.

REPORTS / PRESENTATIONS:

Trustee Jerry Jones says that he continues to pray for this Township, Board and Community. He thanks a resident for his comments and says that when there’s issues it’s never too late. Public trust is the most important aspect of what’s done as public officials and any loss of it is for great concerns. There’s no question that there are some challenges that need to be dealt with. Leadership requires many qualities, some are wisdom, good character, and good judgement. He says that it must be done now not later. Things that are not done in the best interest of this Township have taken place. People don’t come out for nothing, rather it’s been a rumor or a fact. People came out because they were concerned. He says that he has no problem with that, but he has a problem with respect, because he’s a respectful person. He expresses how he doesn’t want to see anyone in trouble and at 67 years of age, he will not be constantly

spending his days with nothing being done wrong. We again, must keep in mind that it's not too late. Going forward we must institute Guard rails. We must have committees that are overseeing and not running, as Trustees. Everyone had an opportunity to hear from the Department heads. He says that he sees all the services being done in the departments. There's a problem recruiting people for the Lawn Care program. He says there's guard rails that need to be put in place for the Finance Department, budget, human resources, and all our other departments. He states that the Supervisor and the staff work for the Trustees and the Trustees work for the Community, and everyone needs to do their job and it's not too late. He explains that he's willing to work things out and expresses an apology to all residents for anything that has been going on within the Township. If there's any shortcomings on the behalf of the Supervisor, people have challenges but we as the board need to correct them. He states again that the Supervisor and the staff work for the Board and the Board works for the Community. The commingling of funds is a serious issue and any aspect of this must be addressed and irradiated, that is something that cannot happen and going forward is something that will not happen. We should not have this kind of Turmoil. Those that start rumors and cause trouble, are a part of the problem and it's never going to get corrected. Serious issues that are happening need to be dealt with.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Supervisor Henyard entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the Board Meeting held on May 14, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. The motion was made by Trustee Jones and seconded by Trustee Gray-Everett. There being no questions or comments Supervisor Henyard asked Clerk Wells to call the roll.

On the Roll Call, the vote was:

YES: 5 Trustees Jones, Gonzalez, Gray-Everett, Carlisle, and Supervisor Henyard
NO: 0
ABSENT: 0

There being five affirmative votes, **the motion carried.**

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Supervisor Henyard entertained a motion to approve the Bills of the General Fund as presented to the Board for payment. The motion was made by Trustee Jones and seconded by Trustee Carlisle. There being no questions or comments, Supervisor Henyard asked Clerk Wells to call the roll.

On the Roll Call, the vote was:

YES: 4 Trustees Jones, Gray-Everett, Carlisle, and Supervisor Henyard
NO: 1 Trustee Gonzalez
ABSENT: 0

There being four affirmative votes, **the motion carried.**

Supervisor Henyard entertained a motion to approve the General Assistance Fund as presented to the Board for payment. The motion was made by Trustee Carlisle and seconded by Trustee Jones. There being no questions or comments, Supervisor Henyard asked Clerk Wells to call the roll.

On the Roll Call, the vote was:

YES: 4 Trustees Jones, Carlisle, Gray-Everett and Supervisor Henyard
NO: 1 Trustee Gonzalez

ABSENT: 0

There being four affirmative votes, **the motion carried.**

Supervisor Henyard entertained a motion to approve the Bills of the Road and Bridge Fund as presented to the Board for payment. The motion was made by Trustee Carlisle, seconded by Trustee Jones. There being no questions or comments, Supervisor Henyard asked Clerk Wells to call the roll.

On the Roll Call, the vote was:

YES: 5 Trustees Jones, Gonzalez, Gray-Everett, Carlisle, and Supervisor Henyard

NO: 0

ABSENT: 0

There being five affirmative votes, **the motion carried.**

RESOLUTIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS:

Supervisor Henyard entertained a motion to approve Resolution 24-R-007 approving an equipment purchase and installation agreement with Titan Trucks Manufacturing, LLC. The motion was made by Trustee Gray-Everett, seconded by Supervisor Henyard. There being no questions or comments, Supervisor Henyard asked Clerk Wells to call the roll.

On the Roll Call, the vote was:

YES: 2 Trustees Gray-Everett and Supervisor Henyard

NO: 3 Trustee Jones, Gonzalez, and Carlisle

ABSENT: 0

There being two affirmative votes, **the motion failed.**

Trustee Jones entertained a motion to table adoption of 2024/2025 Budget and appropriation Ordinance 24-002 for Thornton Township General Assistance Fund. The motion was made by Trustee Jones, seconded by Trustee Gonzalez. There being no questions or comments, Supervisor Henyard asked Clerk Wells to call the roll.

On the Roll Call, the vote was:

YES: 3 Trustees Jones, Gonzalez, and Carlisle

NO: 2 Trustee Gray-Everett and Supervisor Henyard

ABSENT: 0

There being three affirmative votes, **the motion carried.**

Trustee Gonzalez entertained a motion to table adoption of 2024/2025 Budget and appropriation Ordinance 24-003 for Thornton Township General Fund. The motion was made by Trustee Jones, seconded by Trustee Gonzalez. There being no questions or comments, Supervisor Henyard asked Clerk Wells to call the roll.

On the Roll Call, the vote was:

YES: 3 Trustees Jones, Gonzalez, and Carlisle

NO: 2 Trustee Gray-Everett and Supervisor Henyard

ABSENT: 0

There being three affirmative votes, **the motion carried.**

NEW BUSINESS:

Supervisor Henyard entertained a motion to approve awarding the HAP Lawn mowing and maintenance services request for proposals to the successful bidder (Larrell's 4 seasons Lawn Care Service) and to authorize Township Officials and the Township Attorney to negotiate a contract consistent with this award. The motion was made by Trustee Jones and seconded by Trustee Carlisle. Trustee Carlisle said she had concerns about this. She says she thinks it's a great program for young people but after talking to Stan Brown, he said they only have 9 employees as of now, so they do need the help. She questions if "HAP" will be replaced or if it was going to be a work together thing between the Teens and the Contactors, but Stan Brown said that for now it's just supplemental thing and they do need the help from someone who will commit to it. She says she thinks it very important to supplement the program until we can get people in and if you know anyone that needs a summer job get them to apply because the help is needed. Trustee Jones mentions that he too, has had conversation with Stan Brown about the Lawn Care service and one of the important things that continue to happen is many of these young teens don't pass drug tests. He speaks about an incident where someone got hurt on the job and says we need to make sure that things are being done the correct way in case something like that incident happens again. Trustee Gonzalez questions how do you enter into an agreement that you don't know the cost of? The attorney explains the cost and the things that needed to be negotiated, so there needed to be a contract consistent with the award and the price will be \$35 per cut. There was insurance presented in the budget for it as well. There being no further questions or comments, Supervisor Henyard asked Clerk Wells to call the roll.

On the Roll Call, the vote was:

YES: 4 Trustees Jones, Carlisle, Gray-Everett, and Supervisor Henyard
NO: 1 Trustee Gonzalez
ABSENT: 0

There being four affirmative votes, **the motion carried.**

SUPERVISORS REPORT: None

CLOSED SESSION: None

ACTION TO FOLLOW CLOSED SESSION:

PERSONNEL:

RESIGNATIONS/RETIREMENTS/TERMINATIONS: None

TRANSFER/PROMOTION/STATUS CHANGE: None

APPOINTMENT/NEW HIRE: None

MISCELLANEOUS: None

Supervisor Henyard entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Trustee Carlisle, seconded by Trustee Jones. There being no questions or comments, Supervisor Henyard asked Clerk Wells to call the roll.

On the Roll Call, the vote was:

YES: 5 Trustees Jones, Gonzalez, Gray-Everett, Carlisle, and Supervisor Henyard
NO: 0 None
ABSENT: 0

There being five affirmative votes, **the motion carried.**

The Meeting of the Board of Trustees was adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

X

Loretta Wells
Clerk

X

Gerald "Jerry" Jones
Trustee

X

Christopher Gonzalez
Trustee

X

Darelene Gray-Everett
Trustee

X

Carmen Carlisle
Trustee

X

Tiffany A. Henyard
Supervisor