

**STATE OF ILLINOIS**

*Diane Wolfe Marlin, Chair*

**CUNNINGHAM TOWNSHIP**

*Charles A. Smyth, Township Clerk*

**CUNNINGHAM TOWNSHIP BOARD**

**Monday, October 7, 2019**

The Cunningham Township Board met in Regular session Monday, October 7, 2019 at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Urbana City Building, 400 S. Vine Street, Urbana, Illinois.

**ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT:**

- Chair:** Diane Wolfe Marlin
- Trustees:** Bill Brown; Dean Hazen; Shirese Hursey; Eric Jakobsson; Jared Miller; Maryalice Wu
- Town Clerk:** Absent
- Supervisor:** Danielle Chynoweth
- Assessor:** Absent

**ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE:** None

**ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT:** Dennis Roberts, Ward 5; Charles A. Smyth, Town Clerk; Wayne Williams, Township Assessor

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Frederic Grosser; William Harris, Wendy Hundley, and Members of the Media

**1. ROLL CALL**

Chair Marlin called the meeting of the Cunningham Township Board to order at 7:01pm. following a special meeting of the Urbana City Council.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Trustee Miller made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held on September 3, 2019. Trustee Wu seconded motion. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**3. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

There were none.

**4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was none.

**5. COMMITTEE TO VERIFY BILLS**

The following items were presented in omnibus fashion:

- 1. Town Fund
- 2. General Assistance Fund

Trustee Brown made a motion to approve the Town Fund for \$ 79,513.89 and the General Assistance Fund for \$ 61,723.46. Motion seconded by Trustee Hursey and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**6. REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

Township Supervisor Danielle Chynoweth provided a written report to the board. She gave a summary of her written statement, mentioning the following updates:

- Currently there are 118 participants and 31 of those are experiencing homelessness
- Rental Assistance – 14 were served, five move-in cases, and nine-evection prevention cases, and ¼ are on subsidized housing.
- Partnership with the U of I Urbana Planning faculty Professor Ken Salo on a project to

amplify the history and perspectives of harmlessness in Champaign-Urbana with an exhibit planned for the end of the semester.

- Public is welcomed to stop by and pick up okra and tomatillos from the Community Garden.
- There will be an October garden harvest festival – date and time of event is forthcoming.

Ms. Chynoweth gave a brief summary about the rental assistance process, adding that residents are eligible to get rental assistance from the Township once every two years. Any needed assistance outside these parameters are referred to housing advocacy for further assistance. Ms. Chynoweth also announced the utility assistance program called Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program ([LIHEAP](#)) that is located at the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission Offices.

#### **a. Quarterly Financial Report**

Ms. Chynoweth said that in her report presented to the board, items that need close attention are the ones that go over 25 – 30 % over the projected budget. Currently there are overages in general assistance and transportation. However, some of the items she will be monitoring closely are office supplies and program expenditures.

Deputy Assessor William Harris gave a brief summary of his recent training trip to The 2019 International Association of Assessing Officers ([IAAO](#)) that was held in Canada. He gave background information about the organization, structure, and mission to help train and educate professional assessors. He shared his take away from the conference. In addition, the future direction of the Cunningham Township Assessor's office. He reiterated the continuous challenge of going paperless and data driven, but noted that at this time all property cards are entered and available electronically.

Mr. Harris ended his presentation by addressing questions from trustees about the budget and current workflow processes. Ms. Chynoweth also added clarification about the budget in regards to legal fees, education, and travel expenditures.

#### **b. Quality of Housing for Township Participants**

Ms. Chynoweth and intern Alan Axelrod presented this item. Ms. Chynoweth added that the reason for this report rose from an incident that happened last year, when a property owner lost his rental registration eligibility. Township General Assistance(GA) participants were affected and this prompted Township staff to partner with the City of Urbana to better help their clients by helping them become aware of property conditions, and their [ratings](#). Ms. Chynoweth recommended a change in the rental registration ordinance, because it leads to the unintended consequence of forcing the relocation of tenants whose property owners do not comply with the program, even when their homes are still fit for human habitation.

Ms. Chynoweth suggested that The City, Township, and Housing Authority of Champaign County (HACC) should collaborate to increase safe affordable housing for Urbana residents. Subsidized housing undergoes additional inspections to ensure basic housing standards are met. Ms. Chynoweth encouraged the City to reach out to the HACC and urged them to consider using some of their surplus fund to give out more housing vouchers. Lastly, although it is illegal to discriminate against subsidized housing vouchers within the City of Urbana, this practice continues.

City Administrator Carol Mitten and Mayor Marlin addressed the board, clarified the incident from the property owner, and assured the public that the city was very involved in working with tenants and owner to resolve the issue without jeopardizing the safety of tenants. However, if the issues have not been resolved the city has funds to assist with relocation assistance when renters are not

at fault. The City has met with Township staff to continue conversations and processes going forward.

7. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was none.

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. **Resolution No. T-2019-10-017R:** Resolution Authorizing Intervention in Assessment Complaint OSF Healthcare System

Cunningham Township Attorney Frederic Grosser presented this item with the recommendation for approval. Mr. Grosser said that OSF Healthcare System has filed a complaint with the Champaign County Board of Appeals claiming asserting that their properties have zero value. Cunningham Township would like to have the authority to participate and ask questions of the appraiser. This resolution will allow the Township to proceed.

There being no questions, Trustee Jakobsson made a motion to approved Resolution No. T-2019-10-017R as presented. Trustee Wu seconded, motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Cunningham Township Board, Chair Marlin declared the meeting adjourned at 7:59pm.

*Wendy M. Hundley*  
Township Deputy Clerk

This meeting was taped and broadcast on cable television.

Website link for this meeting: <https://www.urbanaininois.us/node/7684>

**Minutes Approved: November 4, 2019**