

STATE OF ILLINOIS

Diane Wolfe Marlin, Chair

CUNNINGHAM TOWNSHIP

Darcy E. Sandefur, Township Clerk

CUNNINGHAM TOWNSHIP BOARD

Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 13, 2023

400 S. Vine Street, Urbana, IL, 61801

The Cunningham Township Board met in regular session Monday, November 13, 2023 at 6 p.m. in the Urbana City Council Chambers.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT:

Chair: Maryalice Wu

Township Clerk: Darcy E. Sandefur

Trustees: Maryalice Wu, Christopher Evans, Jaya Kolisetty, Chaundra Bishop, Grace Wilken, James Quisenberry

Supervisor: Danielle Chynoweth

Assessor: Ivana Owona

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: Trustee Hursey, Mayor Marlin

OTHERS PRESENT: Bourema Ouedraogo;

I. ROLL CALL

With a quorum present Chair Wu called the meeting of the Cunningham Township Board to order at 6 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None

III. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

IV. PUBLIC INPUT

None.

VI. COMMITTEE TO VERIFY BILLS

a. Town Fund

b. General Assistance Fund

Supervisor Chynoweth shared the month to date expenditures including \$33,662.15 in the Town Fund, \$118,208.18 in the GA fund, and \$151,870.33 total.

Motion to approve the bills by Trustee Kolisetty and seconded by Trustee Wilken.

Vote by roll call:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None

VII. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Supervisor Chynoweth shared the Supervisor Memo and reported on programmatic service statistics month to date. Chynoweth shared upcoming initiatives on the part of staff and highlighted areas of need in the community. Supervisor also invited the Board to the Friendship Circus on November 18th at the Independent Media Center and invited the public to submit art to be used for the thank you cards at the Township.

No report from the Assessor.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

X. NEW BUSINESS

Resolution No. T-2023-11-012R: A Resolution Authorizing the Supervisor to Sign a contract with FLEX for FSA and LSA Benefits

Presented by Supervisor Chynoweth. Item allows the Township to renew it's medical flexible spending benefit contract with FLEX. Motion to approve by CM Bishop and seconded by CM Quisenberry.

Vote by roll call:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None

Resolution No. T-2023-11-013R: A Resolution Authorizing the Supervisor to Sign a contract with Blue Cross and Blue Shield for Health Insurance Benefits

Presented by Supervisor Chynoweth. Item authorizes the supervisor to renew the health insurance policy for the Township employees. Trustee Quisenberry motioned to approve; seconded by Trustee Kolisetty.

Vote by roll call:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None

Resolution No. T-2023-11-014R: A Resolution Authorizing the Supervisor to Sign an agreement with the City of Urbana for a Grant Supporting Municipalities for Asylum Seeker Services (SMASS)

Presented by Supervisor Chynoweth. Item authorizes the supervisor to sign an agreement with the City of Urbana to accept the Supporting Municipalities for Asylum Seeker Services grant. Discussion ensued.

Trustee Bishop motioned to approve; seconded by Trustee Kolisetty.

Vote by roll call:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None

Decennial Committee

1. *Call to Order and Roll Call*

The Decennial Committee of the Cunningham Township was called to order during the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board on November 13th, 2023 at 6:21 pm by Chair Wu. All officials marked present for the Township meeting were present with the addition of Decennial Committee members: Carol Elliot (resident representative).

2. *Public Input:*

There was no public input to the Decennial Committee.

3. *Research Discussion*

Supervisor Chynoweth invited Township Intern Ethan Garcia to present his draft letter and FOIA request the Township planned to submit to neighboring Townships to assist their Decennial Committees in self-assessment. A copy of this is attached to the minutes.

The Committee took a straw poll to gauge support of the scope of work.

AYE: Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry, Chynoweth, Owona, Sandefur, Elliot

NAY: None

With no further business before the Decennial Committee the meeting adjourned at 6:48 PM.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the body, Chair Wu adjourned the meeting at 6:48 pm.

Darcy Sandefur
Recording Secretary

This meeting was taped and is [viewable on demand](#).

Minutes Approved: 01-16-2024

Memo to Decennial Committee:

Study of Champaign County Townships: Improving Impacts, Collaboration, and Low Income Assistance

About Townships

Township government is the oldest existing unit of government in the U.S. Every area in Illinois outside of the City of Chicago has a township, overlapping with counties and sometimes with cities. Run by elected officials, the Supervisor and Assessor are charged with leading the townships in providing these basic functions:

1. **General Assistance:** Illinois Townships are required by law to provide General Assistance, which are monthly payments or vouchers that provide a last safety net for very low income, disabled, and homeless residents in their jurisdiction. The support townships offer are used by residents to help pay for housing, bus passes, toiletries, and other basic needs.
2. Townships may, at their option, provide Emergency Assistance, which can help with one time payments of rent, utilities, etc. They may also operate or provide grants to social service agencies to provide senior support, youth programs, food pantries or homeless shelters.
3. **Property Assessments:** Ensuring property owners pay their fair share of taxes by setting the value of those properties.
4. **Infrastructure:** Maintaining all roads and bridges not maintained by another jurisdiction.

About State of Illinois Decennial Committee Mandate

Public Act 102-1088 was passed by the legislature which requires all townships to establish a committee by June 2023, and at least once every 10 years thereafter, to study local efficiencies and report recommendations to our county board. Cunningham Township has assembled a committee made up of all elected officials of the township and several appointees. The committee is required to meet at least three times within 18 months and produce a report to be delivered to the County.

Decennial Committee Scope of Work

The recommendation is that Cunningham Township's Decennial Committee study all 29 townships in Champaign County, providing a report on Township officials names, office location, services, budget, savings, with a specific focus on General Assistance and Emergency

Assistance – application, rules, process, # participants, and expenditures. Collaborations between Townships and other governmental, non-profit and business partners will be noted. The report will provide comparables across townships as well as make recommendations for efficiencies and collaborations – and be presented to the County Board.

The Decennial Committee is chaired by the Supervisor and supported by a CTSO Intern from the University of Illinois Department of Urban and Regional Planning who will be charged with producing the report and help present findings to the County Board. Ideally, work will commence in November, 2023 and conclude in April of 2023.

Committee Members

- Carol Elliot, former Cunningham Township Supervisor
- Darcy Sandefur, Town Clerk
- Michelle Jett, Chief of Staff, Office of the Champaign County Executive
- Danielle Chynoweth, Cunningham Township Supervisor
- Diane Marlin, Mayor of Urbana
- All Town Board Members

Timeline of Activities

- June 2023 - Create Decennial Committee
- November 2023- Data collection of township metrics (online research only)
- November 13th, 2023- Decennial Committee Meeting and presentation of research
- November 2023- Certified mailing out of FOIA letters to every township (10 business days maximum to wait for response)
- November 2023/December 2023- Call/email non-responsive townships
- December 2023- Compile findings from FOIA into excel and analyze
- December 2023- Interview of 2 candidates unable to secure general assistance (to be selected from a pool of Cunningham Township contacts)
- November 2023/December 2023/January 2024 (ongoing)- Literature review of accessibility to general assistance services/programs
- December 2024/January 2024- Finish first draft of digital report of findings/recommendations, send them out to stakeholders/ partners
- January 2024- Committee first draft review
- January 2024/February 2024- Revise digital report based on committee feedback
- March 2024- Second draft review
- March 2024/April 2024- Final revisions of digital report

- April 2024 - Committee Sign off on Final Report and send and present to County Board and Executive
- April 2024 - Mail copies of the report to all townships

Participating organizations

This list encompasses the stakeholders and collaborators that Cunningham Township will include in its research process, including the townships that are the subject of this study.

- The Decennial Committee
- Champaign County Clerk
- Champaign County Board
- Ayer Township
- Brown Township
- Champaign Township
- City of Champaign Township
- Colfax Township
- Crittenden Township
- East Bend Township
- Hardwood Hensely
- Kerr Township
- Ludlow Township
- Mahomet Township
- Newcomb Township
- Ogden Township
- Pesotum Township
- Philo Township
- Rantoul Township
- Raymond Township
- Sadorus Township
- Scott Township
- Sidney Township
- Somer Township
- South Homer Township
- Stanton Township
- St. Joseph Township
- Tolono Township

- Urbana Township

Final Deliverables

- Digital Report with resource links - A PowerPoint or an interactive PDF format
- Presentation - PowerPoint of process and key takeaways from each section of report

Conclusion

The final report is meant to be a resource for the leadership of townships and their constituents, to help them better access services and collaborate.

Agency Head [or Freedom of Information Act Officer]

Name of Agency

Address of Agency

City, State, Zip Code

Re: Illinois Freedom of Information Act Request- Cunningham Township

November 14, 2023

Dear _____:

My name is Ethan Garcia and I am an Urban Planning Student at the University of Illinois conducting a research project in which I am surveying all townships within Champaign County as part of the Decennial Committee process. Public Act 102-1088 was passed by the legislature which requires all townships to establish a committee by June 2023, and at least once every 10 years thereafter, to study local efficiencies and report recommendations to its county board.

My final report will be shared with all townships, including you, and presented to the Champaign County Board. It is my hope that the report can be a resource for townships and their constituents.

Under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140, I am requesting an opportunity to inspect or obtain copies of public records that relate to the functionality and execution of your unit of government.

FOIA Act 5 ILCS 140(3) stipulates that you must reply within 5 business days, but to give your office time to respond, I hereby request materials no later than Monday, December 4th.

Specifically, I am requesting:

- Elected Township officials (Supervisor and Assessor, Highway Commissioner, Board/Trustees, etc) names, emails, and official township phone number/s.
- Link to website or online information about your township (if any).
- Office address and hours of operation: this could be any promotional material or business cards with this information, or a link to the website with this information is sufficient.
- Annual budgets FY 2022-2024: town board approved budgets the current and past two years.
- Actuals (income and expenses) FY 2019-2024: final income and expenses for the past two completed years.
- Most recent resolution setting the compensation of Township Officials.
- List of all services/programs that your township provides.
- Application for General Assistance.
- Rulebook used to determine General Assistance cases.

- Number of General Assistance clients currently served.
- Total number of General Assistance clients served in the most recently completed fiscal year.
- Application for Emergency Assistance (if any).
- Number of Emergency Assistance clients served in the most recently completed fiscal year (if any)

Digital copies are preferred and can be emailed to ethan@ctso.org.

I understand that the Act permits a public body to charge a reasonable copying fee not to exceed the actual cost of reproduction and not including the costs of any search or review of the records. (5 ILCS 140/6.)

If you are unable to email and will be copying documents and you are requesting a fee, please inform me of that fee in advance, within 5 business days of this request.

I look forward to hearing from you in writing. Thank you for considering and responding to this request.

Sincerely,

Ethan Garcia
CTSO Decennial Committee Intern
217-384-4144
ethan@ctso.org