

# Minutes – Board of Town Trustees

State of Illinois,

Lake County, ss.

Sept.20th, 2022 EXECUTIVE SESSION #1-FINAL  
Released February 26, 2025

Town of Grant,

The board of town trustees met at the Grant Township Administration Building at 26725 W. Molidor Road on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

## Attendees:

Supervisor:	Kay Starostovic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Present	<input type="checkbox"/>	Absent
Trustee:	Robert Hamm	<input type="checkbox"/>	Present	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Absent
	Bob Selle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Present	<input type="checkbox"/>	Absent
	Tom Lippert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Present	<input type="checkbox"/>	Absent
	Karen Fischer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Present	<input type="checkbox"/>	Absent
Clerk:	Judy Martini	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Present	<input type="checkbox"/>	Absent

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Ms. Kay Starostovic acting as Chairperson and Judy Martini as Clerk, the following official business was transacted:

### 1-2. Call to Order and Pledge:

The meeting was called to order at 4:06 with the pledge to the Flag.

### 3. Roll Call of Officials:

Present: Trustees: Selle, Lippert, Fischer and Supervisor Starostovic; Clerk Martini

Absent: Trustee Hamm

Also Present: Attorney Scott Puma

### 4. Motion to enter into executive session to discuss personnel matter

Motion by Trustee Selle, seconded by Trustee Fischer to go into executive session to discuss pending personnel issues. There being no further comments, the vote was called.

Ayes: Trustees Selle, Lippert, Fischer and Supervisor Starostovic

Nay: None

Absent: Trustee Hamm

Motion Carried

Those in attendance in the room for executive session were Trustees: Selle, Lippert, Fischer, Supervisor Starostovic, Clerk Martini and Township Attorney Scott Puma

### 5. Update from Township Attorney Scott Puma on Whistle Blower Claims

Attorney Puma updated the Board that he has been in contact with the Lake County States Attorney Department. The States Attorney's Division has reviewed the whistleblowers complaints and have stated they will not be pursuing any criminal charges against the Highway Commissioner unless there is any new information supplied. Supervisor Starostovic stated that she is not in agreement with many of the States Attorney's opinions. After some discussion Attorney Puma summarized each allegation.

#### A. Ghost Payroll Claim

Attorney Puma stated that the whistleblowers claim of ghost payroll issue: The States Attorney has stated that there is no evidence of the ghost payroll claim and that the Highway Commissioner has authority over any personnel leave of absences and is responsible for her own department's personnel policies. Discussion ensued.

Supervisor Starostovic claimed that the Highway Commissioner is being discriminatory towards other employees. Attorney Puma explained it is not discriminatory to pay an employee for more vacation time then earned as it is up to the Highway Commissioner discretion to how she runs her department. Attorney Puma stated that there is no actionable items on this matter going forward.

**B. Cell Phone Bill Use**

Attorney Puma addressed the cell phone issue of the Highway Commissioners Husband: In the States Attorney's opinion the Highway Commissioner was well within her right to allow payment of the phone bill and that the Highway Commissioner has control over her own budget.

Supervisor Starostovic stated that there should be no negotiation on the cell phone bill as the amount is probably closer to the \$16,000 estimate. Attorney Pumas stated his opinion is that the Township should settle on the amount owed from the Highway Commissioner for any use of the cell phone which was being paid by the Township for her husband's use to settle this issue.

**C. Truck Repair**

Attorney Puma stated that the States Attorney's Office has reviewed the claim and is unlikely to prosecute on this matter at the moment since the Highway Commissioner has already paid back the money to the Township.

**D. Repairs of Personal Vehicles**

Attorney Puma stated that the States Attorney has reported that they are unlikely to prosecute on this matter at the moment since the Highway Commissioner has already paid back the money for the repairs. Attorney Puma stated that on many of the whistleblowers claim the States Attorney's Office reported that there appears to be a lack of institutional controls and it is his recommendation to have an audit. Supervisor Starostovic commented about using the firm that already does the Township audits. Attorney Puma replied that the Township should look for another firm which specializes in financial controls which will come up with best management practices and audit bench marks.

**E. Improper use of filling personal vehicles with gas**

Attorney Puma stated that the States Attorney will not be pursuing the issue at moment and that there should be more Township institutional controls in place for gas usage. Discussion ensued about putting in more cameras and better department record keeping

**F. Storage of personal items in Highway Department Buildings**

Attorney Puma stated that the States Attorney's Office will not be pursuing this issue at moment as the Highway Commissioner has stated that they have removed the items.

**G. Money from Scrap Metal**

Attorney Puma stated that the States Attorney is not pursuing this issue at moment and that there should be better department financial controls in place.

**H. Gift Cards**

Attorney Puma stated that the States Attorney is not pursuing this issue at moment and that there needs to be better financial practices and controls on the issue going forward.

**Board Discussion:**

Trustee Selle stated that first we need to get the audit done and have it in writing. Then he and Attorney Puma will meet with the Highway Commissioner to go over the findings and recommendations. Then we need to resolve the outstanding cell phone issue. Trustee Lippert commented that we should have the audit done first and then go back to the States Attorney on the findings. Trustee Selle and Attorney Puma agreed that the Township does need to respond back to the Whistleblowers to let them know we have referred the claims over to the States Attorney's Office and that there is no immediate action by the Township until further notice. Attorney Puma stated that he will contact the States Attorney's Office again to let them know the Township will be having an independent audit done.

Respectfully submitted,



Judy Martini, Grant Township Clerk