

New Trier Township



2007-2008 Annual Report

159th Annual Town Meeting
April 8, 2008

Elected Officials & Staff

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|---|--|
| Supervisor | Patricia B. Cantor |
| Clerk | Sheila K. Mitchell |
| Assessor | JoAnn Shrier Gordon |
| Trustee | Diane G. Fisher Alan Goldberg Stefan Mozer Bob Shen |
| Collector | Joe Fell |
| Director of Administration & Finance | Diane S. Tye |
| Administrative Assistant | Ann Zekelman |
| Social Services Administrator | Bette Vitale, LCSW |
| Social Worker | Arthur Sontag, LCSW |
| Community Services Administrator | Brian Leverenz |
| Deputy Assessor | Lois Cross |
| Employment Referral Services | Jean Brandwein |
| Communications Director | Karen Spillers |

Agenda

Township Clerk Calls the Formal Meeting to Order

Pledge to the Flag

Winnetka Boy Scout Troop 18

Approval of Agenda & Adoption of Rules

Election of the Moderator

Acceptance of the Year 2007 Minutes

2007/2008 Financial Report

Reports from Township Officials

JoAnn Shrier Gordon, Assessor

Sheila K. Mitchell, Clerk

Stefan Mozer, Trustee

Patricia B. Cantor, Supervisor

Questions from the Public

Approval of Resolution:

Set Time for the April 14, 2009 Township Meeting

Speaker

Sandi Johnson, Executive Director

North Shore Senior Center

Township Awards

George E. Noyes Community Spirit Award

Superior Service Award for Persons with Disabilities

Supervisor's Award

Agency of the Year Award

Special Service Award

Adjournment

Assessor's Report

As Cook County suffers through budget cutbacks and hiring freezes, the services of the Township Assessor's office become even more vital to our taxpayers.

We provide taxpayers with information and assistance in a variety of areas, including assessment appeals, exemption filings and refunds, legal and property descriptions, name and address changes, sale and building permit data and property tax questions. We also provide access to data for use by attorneys, surveyors, appraisers, businesses, villages, schools, park districts, libraries, and the general public.

This year we responded to approximately 1,800 requests for information and recorded 925 building permits and 1,248 sales. We also maintain the Assessor's Assistance section of the Township's website and provide timely information and reminders to the public in the Township's newsletters, including a special reassessment edition, and the Pioneer Press.

As I am sure you all know, 2007 was a triennial reassessment year for the Township. The median sale price in the Township rose from \$653,000 in 2003 to \$860,000 in 2006. This rise was reflected in a median assessment increase Township wide of 31.9% (or \$19,844). Consequently, we have been busy processing property tax appeals.



Our new computer program proved invaluable and allowed us to quickly and efficiently obtain sales and permit histories and pictures and run a list of comparables. The program actually fills out the appeal forms, too, after we assist the taxpayer in selecting the comps. We filed a total of 468 appeals to the Cook County Assessor from our office (37% of which received reductions) and provided assistance to many more. We had 551 in-person appointments, handled over 200 walk-in requests and mailed data to many more during the appeal period to the Cook County Assessor. We also provided assistance to residents filing appeals to the Board of Review who had missed the County Assessor's filing deadline or were unsatisfied with the result from the County Assessor appeal.

We held two outreach programs last year, one when we were open for appeals to the Cook County Assessor and the other to the Board of Review. We had over 200 people in attendance at our first evening outreach seminar done in conjunction with Cook County Commissioner Larry Sufferdin and the Cook County Assessor's office. The second outreach program was done in conjunction with Commissioner Sufferdin and the Board of Review.

This year also brought a prolonged legislative battle in Springfield over the continuation of the 7% Expanded Homeowner Exemption (EHE). That delayed the 2nd half tax bills until December. The EHE was extended for an additional 3-year reassessment cycle with new maximum exemption amounts. For individual homeowners, the exemption will be renewed automatically unless



there has been a sale.

There is also a new Long-Time Occupant Homeowner Exemption which has no sunset date and is income-based. A homeowner for 10 years or more whose income does not exceed \$100,000 will receive the Expanded Homeowner Exemption with no maximum exemption amount. The amount of this homeowner exemption will be reduced for incomes between \$75,000 and \$100,000.

The Senior Exemption will be renewed automatically for the first time this year unless the property has been sold. This exemption remains at \$3,500 in equalized assessed value savings. The Senior Freeze qualifying income remains at \$50,000, and this exemption must be applied for annually.

Finally, there are three other new exemptions for veterans and the disabled. The Returning Veteran's Homestead Exemption provides a \$5,000 reduction in the equalized assessed value in the year in which the veteran returns from active combat. The Disabled Veterans' Standard Homeowner Exemption also provides a reduction between \$2,500 and \$5,000 in the equalized assessed value. The Disabled Persons Homestead Exemption provides disabled persons with an annual \$2,000 reduction in equalized assessed value.

JoAnn Shrier Gordon, Assessor

Clerk's Report

The Clerk is the custodian of all records of the Township including meetings and official documents. The Voter Services offered are registration in the Township office and a supply source for volunteer registrars and the precinct judges for all elections. We are also an additional source for vehicle registration for the unincorporated areas of the Township.

Sheila K. Mitchell, Clerk

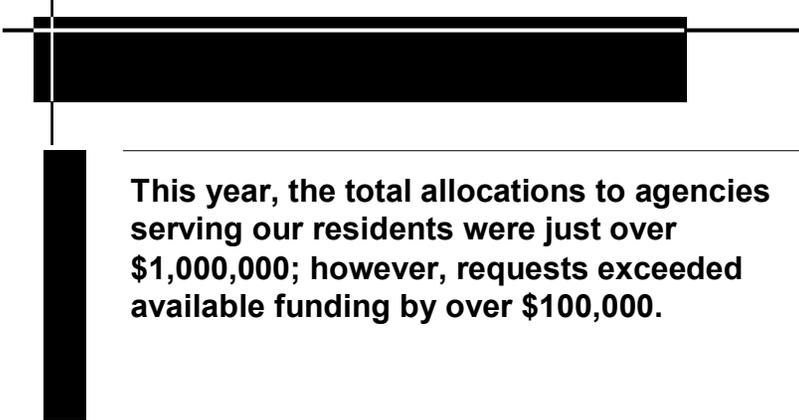
Trustee's Report

This year's Annual Town Meeting is celebrating volunteerism. When one thinks of volunteerism, the most common visions that come to mind may be of people working at a soup kitchen, helping seniors or persons with disabilities, volunteering to serve on an agency board, helping with a fundraising effort, or working with local youth in some capacity. All of these volunteer duties are very important, worthwhile, and performed by many Township residents. Our Township volunteers work on our four Township Committees. These include the three funding committees of Mental Health, Youth, and Health and Human Services, and our Disabilities committee, which does education and advocacy on



behalf of persons with disabilities. Combined, these four committees have approximately 40 volunteers, and they assume duties and responsibilities quite different than the typical volunteer position.

The bulk of the Township's budget is allocated to local not-for-profits serving our residents. These include services for youth, seniors, people with disabilities, individuals and families in crisis, and many other services. The funding committees make recommendations to the Township board regarding which agencies to fund, how much funding they should receive, after evaluating their performance over the year. Let me assure you that giving money can be as difficult, if not more difficult, than raising it. Our committee members on the three funding committees often review lengthy requests from a total of 30 different agencies who are seeking funding for 43 different programs. Members look at agency budgets, outcomes, goals and objectives, service to Township residents, and other funding criteria and develop specific recommendations for each agency and program requesting funding. They have to balance out the diverse requests for funding with the needs of the community, the priorities of the Township, their perceptions of agency performance, and even their own values and opinions. They have to use their brains and their hearts in this process, and it is often as much art as it is science. They must do this in cooperation with the other members of the committee; this requires patience, some compromise and accommodation with other committee members, and a willingness to spend many a late night at the Township office during the Fall funding hearings.



This year, the total allocations to agencies serving our residents were just over \$1,000,000; however, requests exceeded available funding by over \$100,000.

Committee members had to make some difficult choices. Even though requests exceeded available funding, some of the committees still chose not to allocate all of their available funding.

Our agencies appear before many diverse funding sources including: State of Illinois, United Way, foundations, corporations, and other communities. Yet we are often told that the New Trier Township committees are the best informed, ask the toughest questions, and seem the best prepared for the hearings that take place each Fall. That is a testament to the quality of our volunteers, their preparation and diligence in our funding process, and the leadership exhibited by the Township board and staff. Together, the board, staff and committees have detailed knowledge of the agencies and programs serving our community and can assist any residents who have questions.

Our other Township Committee is the Disabilities Committee. Rather than provide funding, it performs education and advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities. During the last year they participated in the City of Chicago's Disability Pride Parade, have responded to requests for information about some



of their past reports, including Access to Worship and Disaster Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities, and have continued their efforts to get persons with disabilities to register with their local first responders. They also review applications and recommend recipients for the Superior Service for Persons with Disabilities Award, part of an annual effort to recognize outstanding volunteer efforts of people who are working on behalf of persons with disabilities. Most of the committee members either have a disability or have a family member with some disability. Their dedication to the integration of persons with disabilities into all aspects of community life has gone a long way toward improving the environment for this population in our community.

All of the Township Committees are currently participating in furtherance of our strategic planning process and many of our hardworking members have volunteered to participate on other committees or task forces that are addressing aspects of our strategic plan. Their participation will help the Township to better utilize the skills, abilities and interest of our dedicated and talented committee members, without whom we could not effectively serve our residents.

Stefan Mozer, Trustee

Supervisor's Report

It is not possible to capture the hours of hard work and dedication over the past year in a few pages. Instead, I hope this report will give you a snapshot of your Township's significant accomplishments of FY2007.

Success of the Township government relies upon four components: elected leadership, volunteer assistance, staff implementation and civic participation. The forefront of our purpose is to enhance the quality of life for Township residents, establish or support an appropriate continuum of community services, and manage local resources in a fiscally responsible manner.

Over the past year, your elected officials undertook a strategic planning process. We were able to identify areas of concern focusing on seniors, youth, persons with disabilities and the working poor. The Strategic Plan sets goals to be addressed over the next five years.

We have identified a new initiative, Projects of Township Significance (P.O.T.S.), which will provide seed money to create new programs and services for our community. Our first pilot program, the Community Support Grants Program for Persons with Disabilities, was launched in Fall 2007. This program is in recognition of services and equipment that a person with special needs or a family who has a child with special needs would require



and when insurance or a school system does not provide the needed dollars. Recipients were selected in a lottery following the completion of an application form. A total of 34 grants were disbursed up to a maximum of \$1,500 per family. The grants were issued to 27 families with children to help with services such as speech and occupational therapy, assistive equipment, specialized activities and medical treatment. Seven grants were issued to adults to help with medication costs and assistive home devices.

While this is an example of a new program, the Township offers many services that have evolved since our formation in 1850, and have been delivered by our dedicated staff.

Specifically in FY2007:

General & Emergency Assistance, which provides for the basic needs of residents who are unemployed or disabled and who have no other forms of income or assets, was administered to 37 persons. The Food Pantry, which offers a variety of canned and packaged food, useful paper goods, and toiletry items, provided a helping hand to 228 persons.

The Angel Fund, which provides emergency assistance to pay for food, shelter, utilities, clothing, medical care and other necessities, assisted 289 persons. Supported solely by donations from private citizens and organizations, the Angel Fund also provided back to school supplies for 109 children and 130 low income individuals were



given Holiday Food Certificates.

Our transit programs, which provide discounted transportation options to eligible seniors and persons with disabilities, continue to be a valued service. Dial-A-Ride, a door-to-door taxi service that provides registered riders with discounted fares, offered 1586 discounted rides. Escorted Transportation, a service for persons who require transportation as well as an escort to and from medical or dental appointments was utilized for 116 trips. Mobility Plus provided 29 one way rides for Township residents with severe mobility impairments who were in wheelchairs or scooters, along with transport for additional passengers who were accompanying them. These rides were for medical appointments, personal business, or provided wheelchair bound Township residents with much needed social opportunities.

We continue to address the needs of our working poor with our Day Care, Before and After School and Summer Camp scholarships for 27 children of income eligible families.

Our commitment to the well being of our residents also provided opportunities for health care screenings. The innovative Alexian Brothers Hospital Network Stroke Assessment Program tested 78 individuals, providing the first step in stroke and heart attack prevention.

We continue to see our service as an acceptance facility for passport applications valued by Township residents. Last year we processed 288 applications. We also issued



272 temporary disabled parking placards.

Our Peer Jury program, which will celebrate its 10th Anniversary in the Fall of 2008, heard 42 cases. These offenders performed over 1,600 hours of community service, with the average sentence being 40 hours and the median sentence being 30 hours. Thirty eight of the 42 offenders successfully completed their sentences, two are currently in service and will complete their hours, and two were remanded back to the police for further disposition for failure to successfully complete their sentence. We received cases from all five Township police departments: 19 from Winnetka, 1 from Glencoe, 8 from Kenilworth, 6 from Wilmette, and 8 from Northfield. Since the program's inception 10 years ago we've heard over 400 cases. Over 95% of the youth successfully complete their sentence and avoid the consequences of having a juvenile record.

The property taxes levied for the year 2006 were:

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Town Fund | \$1,627,054 |
| General Assistance | \$ 84,729 |
| Total | \$1,711,783 |

Beyond our direct services, New Trier Township delivers services and stretches tax dollars by contributing to agencies that serve Township residents. In FY2007, New Trier Township awarded \$1.01 million to 43 different programs that provide



counseling to Individuals and Families in Crisis, Developmental Disabilities Services, Human Services, Mental Health Services, Senior Services and Youth Drop-In Services.

We remain committed to making our services and programs more visible. We are pleased to report that New Trier Township is a multi-year award winner of the Illinois Township Officials of Illinois (TOI) Annual Communications Contest. This year, New Trier Township was awarded top honors: Message of the Year Award. The Township also was the winner of the Mighty Message Award for its news release program. Last year, our website, www.newtriertownship.com was recognized for its exemplary ability to communicate with constituents. Receiving these honors validates our communications strategy and encourages us to continue working towards our goal to increase the awareness of Township government and how we serve our residents.

In closing, Township government is effective government, providing what is needed locally and responding to growing needs. So much of our progress in FY2007 is due to the support of our dedicated staff and the talent, energy and vision of our many citizen volunteers. Their commitment and dedication is the foundation of the Township's success in building and supporting human services that meet the needs of New Trier Township residents with compassion, care and respect.

Patricia B. Cantor, Supervisor

Awards

The **George E. Noyes Community Spirit Award** recognizes an outstanding Township volunteer who is making a powerful difference in their community in ways that support New Trier Township's mission and strategic direction. The award was established in 2006 in memory of George E. Noyes who served as Township Collector from 2002-2006, and displayed a sustained commitment to civic participation during his lifetime. This year's recipient, **Irvina Warren of Winnetka**, has been an active volunteer for over 25 years. A past Township Trustee and Advisory Committee member, she has been a strong voice for persons with disabilities, focusing her efforts on the development of housing so individuals with disabilities could remain in the community with their families and social networks.

The **Superior Service Award for Persons with Disabilities** recognizes individuals or organizations that are committed to the needs of persons with disabilities. **Jane Gallery of Winnetka**, this year's recipient, has spearheaded PELS—Parents Educating, Learning and Supporting—to provide a forum for parents to educate each other, network community resources, and brainstorm potential and realizable solutions. In addition, she has worked with Special Olympics and most recently worked with the Winnetka Public Library to start a book discussion group for young adults with developmental disabilities.



The **Supervisor's Award** recognizes an individual for leadership in moving the Township forward in its mission to serve residents and their needs. The first time recipient of this award, **Diane G. Fisher of Wilmette**, a Township Trustee since 2005, has been a leader in developing a strategic plan that will guide the Township and its service to residents over the next five years.

The **Agency of the Year Award** recognizes an agency serving Township residents that over the past year has shown high levels of innovation, leadership, excellence, and vision in carrying out its mission and meeting the needs of New Trier Township residents. This year's award recipient is **Sandi Johnson, Executive Director** and the **North Shore Senior Center**. NSSC has a clear vision for its clients and the needs of the community and the capacity to translate it into action.

The **Special Service Award** recognizes exemplary individual service to the Township. **Padraig Brennen of Wilmette** has served six years as member and three years as Chair of the Township Committee on Mental Health. **Jerome Ginsburg of Glenview** has been a member of the Township Committee on Youth for six years and served as Chair for the past two years.

Township Volunteers

Advisory Committee on Health & Human Services

Gerri Beth Kahnweiler, Chair

Louise Holland

Margaret Hastings

Dale Davison

Margaret Cornog

Linda Lam Tam

Jon Patrick Talty

Ilene Hechtman

Barry Hoobler

Advisory Committee on Mental Health

Padraig H. Brennen, Chair

Paul London

Rosemary Gwyther

David Nickel

Janet Lerman

Rachel Kuhn

Elizabeth Schreier Madden

Gale Teschendorf

Susan Scanlan Spoeri

Advisory Committee on Youth

Jerome Ginsburg, Chair

Chuen Chow Tam

Daniel Kerrigan

*Gabrielle Ruiz-Funes**

Syril Gilbert

*Andrew Nathan**

Norma Rittenberg

*Lauren McCrary**

*Michelle Mudarth**

Ronald Gilbert

Advisory Committee on Disabilities

Barry Fleischer, Chair

Ian Williams

Sean Williams

Diane Reeves Wojcik

Christine Walker

Alan Goldberg, Trustee

Gail Marie McCahill

Jennifer Peters

Keith Dronen

Peer Jury Program Adult Volunteers

Gerri Kahnweiler

Barry Spector

Elaine Tinberg

Joy O'Malley

Ellyn Stone

Food Pantry Volunteers

Barbara Smith

Dana Honor

**Youth Members*

Social Service Agencies

A Township is, by law, required to provide services to youth, seniors, individuals with disabilities and persons in need.

New Trier Township fulfills that function most economically through grants to established, non-profit agencies.

Among those are:

Individuals and Families in Crisis

- ▶ Children's Advocacy Center
- ▶ YWCA Evanston/North Shore
- ▶ Family Counseling Service of Glencoe
- ▶ Family Services of Winnetka-Northfield
- ▶ Family Service Center of Glenview/
Kenilworth/Northfield/Wilmette
- ▶ The Harbour
- ▶ PEER Services
- ▶ HAVEN

Developmental Disabilities Services

- ▶ Center for Enriched Living
- ▶ Glenkirk
- ▶ Special Gifts Theatre
- ▶ Clearbrook
- ▶ The Lambs, Inc.
- ▶ SHORE

Youth Drop-In Services

- ▶ Glencoe Junior High Project
- ▶ Warming House Youth Center
- ▶ Winnetka Youth Organization
- ▶ Glencoe Youth Services
- ▶ Youth Connection

Senior Services

- ▶ North Shore Senior Center
- ▶ Senior Action Service, Inc
- ▶ Meals At Home

Mental Health Services

- ▶ Josselyn Center
- ▶ WilPower

Other Human Services

- ▶ BE-HIV
- ▶ Interfaith Housing Center
of the Northern Suburbs
- ▶ Volunteer Center
- ▶ LINKS

Serving Resident's Needs

Our office staff is ready to serve the many needs of New Trier Township residents. Including:

Supervisor's & Clerk's Office

- Voter Registration
- Notary Public
- Passports
- Vehicle Stickers (Unincorporated Areas)
- Disabled Parking Placards
- Social Worker Services
 - Crisis intervention
 - Counseling
 - Referral services
- General Assistance & Emergency Aid
- Access To Care
- Food Pantry & Angel Fund
- Child Care Scholarships
- Transportation Services
 - Dial-A-Ride
 - Escorted Transportation
 - RTA Reduced Fare Cards
- Peer Jury
- Employment Referral Service
- Community Response Network
- Health Screenings

Assessor's Office

- Assistance with Exemptions and Refunds
- Property Assessment Appeals
- Detailed Assessment Information
- Sales and Building Permit Information

New Trier Township Office
739 Elm Street

Winnetka, Illinois 60093

Phone: 847-446-8202

Fax: 847-446-1743

Website: www.newtriertownship.com

Office Hours: Monday—Friday 9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.