

GREEN GARDEN TOWNSHIP

Monday, January 12th, 2026 - Meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.

Board Meeting Agenda

1. Call meeting to order with Pledge of Allegiance 
2. Opening Prayer
3. Roll Call 
4. Motion to Approve the Minutes from the 12-8-25 Board meeting, as submitted
5. Motion to Approve the Township Financial Report
6. Unfinished Business: Old Business – Discussion and Potential Action on the Following Items:
Public Comments (1-minute limit) on the agenda item only, prior to the Board voting.
 - a. Land Use Map
 - b. Solar Facilities Update: Thomas Becker Watershed Committee
 - c. Town Hall Project Update
7. New Business - Discussion and Potential Action on the Following Items:
Public Comments (1-minute limit) on the agenda item only, prior to the Board voting.
 - a. Union Cemetery
 - b. Community Service Volunteers
8. Reports
 - a. Road Commissioner's Report 
 - b. Assessor's Report
 - c. Collector's Report
 - d. Trustees' Reports
 - e. Supervisor's Report
9. Public Comments (2-minute limit) 
10. Meeting Adjourned

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF GREEN GARDEN TOWNSHIP BOARD
January 12, 2026, REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

1. Meeting called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Supervisor Christofilos to transact business that comes before the board. Supervisor Christofilos called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance. The agenda and sign in sheet are attached.

2. Opening Prayer by Trustee Wesley Shepherd

3. Roll Call by Clerk Kraft: Present were Supervisor Christofilos, Trustees Dietz, Olszewski, Shepherd, Road Commissioner Hilliard, Collector Flanagan and Clerk Kraft. Trustee Striggow and Assessor Bushong were absent.

4. Motion to Approve the Minutes from the last board meeting, as submitted. Approval of Minutes from December 2025 regular monthly meeting prepared by Clerk Kraft.

Motion:

Supervisor Christofilos asks for a motion to approve the minutes from the last board meeting as submitted. Motion made by Trustee Olszewski seconded by Trustee Dietz. No further discussion, All in favor with Aye, motion unanimously carried.

5. Motion to Approve the Township Financial report, as reviewed by the Trustees prior to the meeting start time.

Motion:

Supervisor Christofilos asks for a motion to approve the Township Financial Report. Motion made by Trustee Shepherd, seconded by Trustee Dietz. No further discussion, All in favor with Aye, motion unanimously carried.

**6. Unfinished Business: Old Business – Discussion and Potential Action on the Following Items:
Public Comments (1-minute limit) on the agenda item only, prior to the Board voting.**

a. Land Use Map Supervisor Christofilos explained the map has been voted on, expressed appreciation to the Land Use Committee, and that the map will be enlarged then laminated, and asked Trustee Dietz to point out a few things regarding the map. *Trustee Dietz said there are two pre-apps coming up, one U.S Solar wanting to put up between 80th and 88th just South of Stuenkel Road, similar to Surya. Dietz explained not wanting it in the residential area, wanting it on LaGrange and Manhattan-Monee Road. The second one is Turning Point, which was approved being off LaGrange Road and pointed out on the map where they would be.
NO further comments.

b. Solar Facilities Update: Thomas Becker Watershed Committee – Upper Forked Creek Watershed Committee Chairman Thomas Becker spoke about the 6,000-acre proposed solar facility by Earthrise spanning three townships. In the original application there were 100 properties and they found another 500 sitting dormant and another 50 released reaching from South Frankfort to the banks of the Kankakee river. The November application filed by Earthrise is incomplete with 20 issues that need to be remedied allowing time to pursue ways to reach out to the community, there are currently two petitions going on, one online and one signature petition. Earthrise has filed the application with letters of support from organizations who received money or will profit but none from us, they reached out to Will County, and they will accept letters of objection. They are encouraging everyone to write a letter and email to the County; they verified the 6,000-acre facility is being driven by a data center they want to put a mile West of Manhattan called Hillwood being the largest in Illinois on 800 acres. It is about the conversion of the largest remaining farm district in Will County into an industrial area with no regard to our homes, and our lifetime investments and asking to please send letters of objection if your upset with

what is happening. There is a sign campaign coming up to be available next month saying no solar panels on prime farmland to help spread awareness. They attended a bipartisan meeting last week and learned there have been 84 solar applications in Will County since the laws came in, with a third of them being stopped, 10 denied and 17 withdrawn. He discussed if we don't prevail at the County level they will file litigation to dismantle the Earthrise project through a pro bono public interest lawsuit to challenge them to save our rural community.

Public Comments on above matter only: *Will County Board member Dan Butler questioned what possible use for an 800-acre data center? Mr. Tom Becker responded possibly AI, 24 buildings over 7 years, there are over 220 data centers in Illinois now with no power to generate them, possibly looking for independent power sources to power them. They put in for a FOIA to get information from the City of Joliet, received 1300 documents that were black, completely redacted so they filed an appeal with the Attorney General. *Resident Jim Ross said he heard data centers use a massive amount of water, where does it come from and how does it affect us? Mr. Tom Becker said it does affect us and is a very big concern as to what happens with area wells around these data centers. Mr. Ross asked about electric bills going up in which Mr. Tom Becker responded that it could potentially increase by 2,000% by 2050 according to a study by the Illinois Manufacturing Society looking at impact of data centers. There is a new law of 1000 pages that Governor Pritzker signed promoting solar batteries, which can combust for no reason and the largest solar battery facility in California last year went up in flames with the plume of toxic materials spreading four county radius. One fire could not be put out with water; they needed to cover in concrete to put it out. *Plan Commission Chair Mark Sarkisian asked if there is a map showing proposed Earthrise sites? Mr. Tom Becker said yes and that it is on the township website and the actual footprint is much larger which they have those maps also. *Supervisor Christofilos said the board received an email from U.S. Solar referring to it as Solar Garden and immediately objected to the letter and integrity of the statement, also mentioning the township will NOT accept any type of gift from Earthrise. No further discussion.

c. Town Hall Project and Grant Update – Supervisor Christofilos updated TRIA is busy preparing the bid package for February with new SOW then begin permit process. *Trustee Olszewski is working hard on inputting three invoices the previous board submitted that were rejected for unknown reasons for reimbursement. *Supervisor Christofilos thanked Trustee Olszewski and said that Mark Sarkisian has volunteered to help oversee the project alongside him and Trustee Dietz. No further discussion.

7. New Business - Discussion and Potential Action on the Following Items:

Public Comments (1-minute limit) on the agenda item only, prior to the Board voting.

a. Union Cemetery – Supervisor Christofilos mentioned the Union Cemetery being abandoned with the previous board not wanting to bring into the township so a non for profit was organized called Friends of Union Cemetery, with Heidi Christofilos President, with three board members who have all done a great job. Now the board has a township collector with one job description being cemeteries if the township owns, manages, or takes responsibility for it. The question before the board is “is it in the best interest of union cemetery and our township to take the management of that cemetery, put it under the care and control of the township?” He discussed advantages and explained how the group came to be and asked the board for their input and asked them whether it should come under the care and control of the township or stay in the 501C3? *Trustee Olszewski commended the Friends of Union Cemetery for taking on the abandoned cemetery when the current board would not and asked to here from Heidi and the board members to see what they would like. *Trustee Shepherd asked if a budget would need to be created. Supervisor Christofilos said Friends of Union Cemetery have money for 2026, then the board would need to look at next moves if the board were to vote to be official caretakers. He said a couple things would take place if that happened, first it would fall under the oversight of the township Collector, Michael Flanagan, the statue states, “he would be responsible to appoint three board members called a Board of Managers,” like Friends of Union Cemetery, and would hope to not lose volunteers if this were the case. Supervisor Christofilos said there are four other cemeteries in the township that the managers would also stay in touch with and help if needed and to avoid another abandoned cemetery. *Collector Michael Flanagan said he is grateful for the residents that stepped up and taken care of the cemetery, he has lived next door for 21 years, he is the commissioner on the Will County historic Preservation Commission and understands the historic significance and its historic landmark. He has himself been

out helping on field days alongside residents and support from the township, encourages community partnership and the decision of liability and financial impact rests on the board to decide between the 501C3 or township. No further discussion.

b. Community Service Volunteers – Supervisor Christofilos discussed the community services on the website; looks like many things are going on but some things are not yet but hoping to focus on the Community Services in 2026 with help from the residents. The handout of programs, who is heading it up, and contact information is below.

Food Pantry, Youth Program

Wes Shepherd, Food Pantry & Youth Program Community Service Trustee

If you would like to serve as volunteer Green Garden Township Food Pantry Chairperson, be a part of food distribution. or help in Youth Programs, please contact Trustee Wes Shepherd.

Green Garden Township has partnered with Helping Hands Food Pantry, and Jackson Creek Church (Food Pantry and Youth Programs) to help Green Garden residents and surrounding community's.

Union Cemetery

Heidi Christofilos, Friends of Union Cemetery

708-653-2857 - hchristofilos@gmail.com

We are honored to have Friends of Union Cemetery Non-for Profit be the caretakers of Union Cemetery. This cemetery is where five War Veterans are buried. including one Civil War Veteran. We have Clean-up Days at Union Cemetery and appreciate any help you can give. Please contact Committee Chairperson Heidi Christofilos if you would like to volunteer on the clean-up crew or be a part of our Cemetery care team.

Will-Ride Service, Senior Services, Disabilities

Belinda Olszewski, Will-Ride, Senior Services, and Disabilities Trustee

708-204-7784 - Belinda@GreenGardenTownship.com

Residents aged 60• or those living with a disability can register and schedule rides for doctor appointments. grocery shopping. and more. through Access WillCounty.

Seniors are valued in Green Garden Township. If you would like to be part of a volunteer committee to help plan activities and care for our Seniors, please contact Trustee Belinda Olszewski.

Disabilities: We care for our residents who have the special challenge of a disability. If you would Like to be part of a volunteer committee to help plan activities and care for disabled residents. please contact Trustee Belinda Olszewski.

Home Repair Help: for low-income Seniors or those Living with a Disability who have a home repair need but cannot afford to pay. This community service is provided by Jackson Creek Church in Green Garden.

Veterans

Trustee Monrow Striggow, Veterans Community Service Trustee

708-421-9069 - Monroe@GreenGardenTownship.com

We honor our Green Garden Veterans and thank them for their service to our country. If you would like to be part of a volunteer committee to help plan activities and care for our Veterans, please contact Trustee Monroe Striggow.

Disaster Relief & Health Emergency

Trustee Ralph Dietz, Disaster Relief Community Service Trustee

708-975-7963 - Ralph@GreenGardenTownship.com

We are a community that cares for one another. We hope this service is never needed- but if it is, we want to help the residents affected by a disaster or health emergency. We are looking for caring residents ready to deploy the care and resources of Green Garden Township. We hope to train volunteers in administer First Aid, CPR, AED, and Trauma Care until professional help arrives. If you would like to be part of this volunteer committee to help residents during and after a disaster or health emergency, please contact Trustee Ralph Dietz.

General Assistance, Special Events, GGT Newsletter

Dean Christofilos, Township Supervisor

708-372-8752 - Supervisor@GreenGardenTownship.com

General Assistance: One of the main responsibilities of townships is providing General Assistance to qualified residents. General Assistance (GA) is a locally administered welfare program which provides monthly financial assistance to persons who do not have adequate income or resources to provide for their own basic needs. To apply for General Assistance, request an application be sent to you from our Township Supervisor Dean Christofilos.

Special Events: If you would like to coordinate "special events" for different activities in Green Garden please contact Supervisor Dean Christofilos.

Supervisor Christofilos explained not have a youth program but have partnered with Jackson Creek's food pantry, that Trustee Shepherd oversees. *Trustee Shepherd has been running the food pantry for four years, would like to see the days on the Green Garden Township website calendar, is a big fan of community service and getting kids involved, and welcomes anyone interested to reach out. Trustee Olszewski asked if Wes has been in contact with the High School as the students have service hours they need, Trustee Shepherd said he has students from the high schools at the food pantry and 4H program students. *Trustee Olszewski said the Will-Ride has progressed with wait times and travel distance, and how Tom Becker attends meetings with her and helps bring helpful information for those with needs. There is also the Home Repair Help for low-income seniors, partnered with Jackson Creek, to help seniors that need help with repairs in their homes. *Supervisor Christofilos expressed putting emphasis on veterans this year, Trustee Monroe oversees that and is dealing with health issues right now, Trustee Olszewski talked with Trustee Monroe and is very excited to get things prepared and ready to go when he returns. *Supervisor Christofilos discussed the new item of Disaster Relief and Health Emergency that Trustee Dietz oversees to be available for health emergencies or disaster relief, more of a care and concern mentality. Trustee Dietz had some funny lighthearted comments not having medical training. Supervisor Christofilos brought an AED machine for townhall and CPR training. *Trustee Olszewski asked about offering a class here, they discussed who could do it, costs, and how to bring resources to the township. *Supervisor Christofilos discussed the General Assistance criteria, the money in the account, the Special Events portion, and the newsletter for those not on Facebook twice a year, not in budget this year but put in for upcoming year, and is excited to see services inside the community. NO further comments.

8. Reports

a. **Road Commissioners Report** Road Commissioner Jim Hilliard: **Past/Presently:** Plowing snow/salting; repairing and maintaining plow trucks; pothole repair when possible; street light repair; shout out to Spiess Construction called up and had a crew available and came out and fixed a drain tile on Bruns Road for them, they are great partners for the township: **Future:** Sheer Road bridge, February 18th is Levy for the bridge; working on 2026 paving bids; has brochures from Will County available for heat and battery recycling for anyone interested.

b. **Assessor's Report** – Assessor Bushong was not in attendance.

c. **Collector's Report** – Collector Michael Flanagan said it's been a great 12 days, met with Dean about Union Cemetery and believes they are on the same page.

d. Trustee's Reports

* **Trustee Dietz** – Nothing to report

* **Trustee Olszewski** – Would like everyone to start thinking/planning when the renovation starts where meetings will be held since the building will not be useable for the township or HOA meetings.

* **Trustee Shepherd** – Had a list of emails and asked to go through and say which are needed to move forward with the Outlook/Microsoft migration.

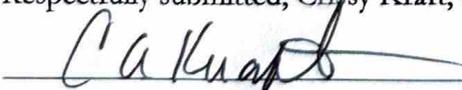
* **Trustee Striggow** – Not in attendance.

e. **Supervisor's Report** - Supervisor Christofilos discussed digitalizing financial records to streamline FOIA requests, physical records, coordinating digital migration of records, and the State coming out to guide us with the transition.

9. **Public Comments** – *Resident Jim Ross believes the cemetery looks great and the Friends of Union Cemetery have a done a phenomenal job and believes it should stay as it is and not put liability on township. *Resident Buddy Schultz asked questions at the last meeting and did not hear a reply at this meeting, about the road bond for the guy running 400-500 loads past him with no culvert, also water at the end of his driveway, and the road to the East of the golf course is breaking up, residents in Erinwood asked what is up with the road and wanted everyone to know what is going on. *Trustee Dietz commented he had just drove down 88th today and found nothing wrong, not bouncing around, asked Buddy to show him where the humps in the road are. NO further comments.

10. **Meeting adjourned** at 8:15p.m. Supervisor Christofilos asks for a motion to adjourn. Motion by Trustee Shepherd and seconded by Trustee Dietz. All in favor with Aye, motion unanimously carried. The next Board meeting to be held on Monday, February 9, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Crissy Kraft, Clerk for Green Garden Township



Approved by Board of Trustees: February 9, 2026



Green Garden Township Regular Board Meeting

7:00 p.m.

January 12, 2026

By checking the Public Comment box, you agree to abide by the Green Garden Township public comment policy on the Meeting Agenda

GUEST SIGN - IN - SHEET

Please check here if you have a Public Comment

Print Legibly - (NOT SIGNATURE) First & Last Name

- | Print Legibly - (NOT SIGNATURE) First & Last Name | Please check here if you have a Public Comment |
|---|--|
| 1. Jim Ross | |
| 2. Linda Ross | |
| 3. Mark Sarkisian | ✓ |
| 4. Bud Schoff | ✓ |
| 5. Gary Lincoln | ✓ |
| 6. Carol Lincoln | ✓ |
| 7. Jim Michalewicz | |
| 8. Michael Franigan | |
| 9. Barbara Ryzko | ✓ |
| 10. Donna Simons | |
| 11. Jeff Becker | ✓ |
| 12. John Becker | ✓ |
| 13. Don Bushong | |
| 14. KYCIE CANTONIE | |
| 15. NANCY TABWATER | |
| 16. | |
| 17. | |
| 18. | |
| 19. | |
| 20. | |

Green Garden Township Public Comment Policy

Approved 4/14/2025

Public Act 96-1473 subsection 2.06(g) states; "Any person shall be permitted an opportunity to address public officials under the rules established and recorded by the public body".

PURPOSE: This policy outlines the Green Garden Township rules pertaining to "Public Comments" at any Green Garden Township open meeting including ALL board meetings, committee meetings, planning & zoning meetings, workshop meetings or other meetings which may be required.

1. Public Comments will be allowed only at the allotted time as designated on the meeting agenda. Members of the audience should state their comment or question during public comments to be noted for the record. However, if appropriate, the Supervisor/Chairman may allow other comments or questions during the meeting. Appropriate does NOT include interruption or disruption during agenda items, during bid openings, or during board member discussion.
2. Any person wishing to address the board MUST sign in on the meeting "Sign In" sheet and on the "Request for Public Comment" form. Public comments will be presented in the order as they appear on the "Request for Public Comment" form. No person signing in under an "alias" will be recognized.
3. Each person addressing the Board will be limited to 2 minutes. Public comments on any single agenda item or topic shall be limited to 5 minutes.
4. Abusive behavior and profanity will not be allowed. ANYONE engaging in such behavior will forfeit their right to speak and may be asked to leave.
5. Continued disruption of meetings that impedes the board from conducting government business as outlined on the agenda will not be tolerated. ANYONE engaging in this behavior may be asked to leave.

Please note that "public officials" are not required to engage in debate, be made available for abusive, threatening or harassing behavior or required to provide immediate answers to questions raised by the public.