

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF GREEN GARDEN TOWNSHIP BOARD
May 11, 2026, REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

1. Meeting called to order at 7:02p.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 Pastor Dave Feddes.

3. Roll Call by Clerk Kraft: Present were Supervisor Christofilos, Trustees Dietz, Olszewski, Shepherd, Assessor Bushong, Collector Flanagan and Clerk Kraft. Trustee Striggow was absent. Road Commissioner Hilliard was absent for roll call but showed up later in the meeting.

4. Motion to Approve the Minutes from the last board meeting, as submitted. Approval of Minutes from March 2026 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 Dietz seconded by Trustee Olszewski. 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 as submitted to the board. Motion made by Trustee Olszewski, seconded by Trustee Shepherd. Trustee Olszewski had a question for Road Commissioner Hilliard but will hold until later as he will be late for the meeting. 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. Solar Facilities Update: Mr. Jeff Becker with the Watershed Committee – Jeff Becker updated on the US Solar project, noting a unanimous vote against it and urging community attendance at upcoming hearings. He credited the outcome to the people who spoke, the solar cases before theirs where no one showed up, our community did with objections and with an attorney. He credited his brother Steve, an attorney, making the board aware of the water resources not being listed on any of the parcels and the continuous and non-continuous parcels in one single application where the County is now realizing they are getting ripped off by allowing them to only pay one fee. Earthrise is 96 properties with only paying one fee with County staff spending enormous amounts of time on the projects. Earthrise goes before the Executive Committee on May 14th at 302 North Chicago Street, Joliet at 10am and Will County Board meeting is May 21st at 302 North Chicago Street, Joliet and encourages resident attendance at both

Public Comments on above matter only: *Jim Ross asked when the next US Solar meeting is, Jeff Becker said they are unsure right now, the order is messed up due to the temporary restraining order granted and hope to find our everything tomorrow; *Trustee Olszewski said Clerk Kraft just printed the May 14th agenda, item 12 is only showing Earthrise. Jeff Becker mentioned the people who spoke at the meeting did great, fabulous, and everyone should be proud; *Jim Ross said they made a clear case of the application not being complete but seemingly the

Will County Board is not accepting that. Jeff Becker said Sherry Newquist asked the State's Attorney to write up a legal memo stating whether the applications are incomplete, the problem is they do not have wetlands and floodplains on the preliminary site plans, Earthrise had some, not all and US Solar had none, which is a complete violation; ***Assessor Bushong** asked if it is Soil and Water's job to identify that, Jeff Becker said they don't actually identify that, they go through the soil composition if it's suitable or unsuitable, they have said it is unsuitable for all the steel pilings. Bushong said so you cannot necessarily count on Soil and Water, Becker responded, right, they will mention if it is unsuitable or a problem but do not go into the water resources, the applicant is the one who is supposed to do that; ***Supervisor Christofilos** asked for an update on Tom Becker, Jeff Becker said Tom is having issues with medications, they are looking into changing them, Supervisor Christofilos said let him know we miss him and we are all praying for him. No further discussion.

b. Town Hall Renovation Project Update – *Trustee Olszewski reported reconstruction starting in May to renovate all the projects on the list and put invoices into County to be paid for TRIA. ***Supervisor Christofilos** said they are still waiting on the permit that will trigger actual start date, which could be June, and will have the clerk post the scope of work on the township website. No further discussion.

c. Newsletter – *Supervisor Christofilos reported that Chris Russell, who handles the township website, offered to be front person and for \$299 would put together an e-newsletter quarterly that anyone could subscribe to and he would contact department officials to organize it as long as there were plenty of emails. Chris would then organize a bi-annual printed copy the board would be responsible for printing and mailing out. ***Jim** suggested phone numbers to get automated voicemails/text messages out with important township information or events.

Public Comments on above matter only: *Trustee Olszewski has concerns not getting everyone's emails, people checking emails, going to spams, doing an 11 x 17 one-page newsletter that could be mailed to everyone with events, pictures, etc.; ***Trustee Shepherd** mentioned re-posting on website, getting the word out should also help with acquiring emails; ***Linda Owens** does not think emails are a good idea and that actual mailings are better; ***Supervisor Christofilos** agreed and said that is why they are going to start with both mailings and e-newsletters biannually; ***Collector Michael Flanagan** asked where the mailing list came from for the post cards expressing concerns as he nor friends like 15 of them did not receive one; ***Supervisor Christofilos** said it came together quickly due to time sensitivity and came from the Plan Commission who received it from Will County and will get an updated one; **Plan Chair Mark Sarkisian** commented about 1300 households; ***Supervisor Christofilos** commented he also did not receive one in the mail, **Assessor Bushong** asked if Chris would be managing everything, **Supervisor Christofilos** said he would but it still needed to go for a vote with the board; ***Trustee Shepherd** said doesn't Jane have the best list to use, **Supervisor Christofilos** asked "Jane do you have the best list and is it free?" ***Assessor Bushong** replied "why wouldn't I, I have a database and No, depends on what you want. For addresses and so forth yes, for emails, No." 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. Town Hall Board Meeting during Renovation– *Supervisor Christofilos said Clerk Kraft took charge of the matter and found a place to meet while renovation is underway. The meetings will be held at the German Heritage Center beginning in July, \$200 dollars a month, they have WIFI we can use, tables and chairs for us, nice bathrooms, etc. No further discussion.

b. Township Phone Number: 815-270-5090 – *Supervisor Christofilos explained it's an automated system with options to reach different offices/persons, no names, only offices, and goes to perspective office voicemails. He dialed the number to let everyone hear the call/message. The cost is \$35 to \$38 a month with \$75 dollar investment for professional voice, it is a budgeted line item so no need to vote on this. No further discussion.

c. **2026-2027 Proposed Budget Discussion** - ***Supervisor Christofilos** commented this will be voted on in June, 30 days noticed has been posted and asked the board to pull out their copies, they started with the Road District budget. ***Trustee Olszewski** questioned the date, which will get corrected, the percentage, which **Commissioner Hilliard** said is under 5%. ***Supervisor Christofilos** went over the township budget, last year was 287,139, this year 310,400, +14,000 over last year, asked for 5% Levy and received it; Just under 4000 residents and just under 1500 homes in the township; Town hall grant reimbursement is a line item on revenue side to log it and for accountability; Accounting and Legal increased; IT decreased; explained the community services and newsletter lines; **Trustee Olszewski** asked about the road district loan payment of \$30,000 and including or not including in the budget; ***Supervisor Christofilos** said Jim already paid; it ***Road Commissioner Hilliard** commented that was in the 2025/2026 and the final payment of \$40,000 is for the 2026/2027 year and will discuss in further detail later. ***Trustee Shepherd** asked what was all included in the IT license and support, like would Outlook be included? ***Supervisor Christofilos** said there is \$5,000 dollars, last year the township paid for all of it, this year are proposing the assessor's office pay for their license and support for their office, hence going down from \$11,000 to \$5,000 dollars which he believes is enough. He explained the IT hardware is \$3,500 and asked Trustee Shepherd if that was enough, which Shepherd said yes. Christofilos said there was \$6,500 for the Plan Commission and to further down the road think about the New Town Hall. ***Trustee Olszewski** said if the Plan Commission does not use the \$6,500 could it be used towards the IT Hardware and equipment, Christofilos said they have the ability to change line items within 10%. They discussed what is needed and how much it could cost to get the equipment needed to live stream meetings. ***Supervisor Christofilos** went over the capital fund and park fund which are interest bearing, last year capital fund earned \$32,647.25 and park fund earned \$2,577.33. Next he went over the Assessor's line items, 2025 staff line item was \$28,100, originally \$15,500, (Assessor needed staff so the board approved \$12,600) 2026 proposed amount is \$25,000 for staff; IT license and support \$6,700, (previously paid by the township), hardware \$2,500, (additionally adding \$9,000 additional expenses), he explained the need for the line items to be on the assessor's side of the budget; telecommunication \$2,300 (previously township paid \$56 a month, XL Broadband \$117 a month); appeals and appraisals \$500; he went over the other line items with total budget at \$45,000, last year's budget was \$36,000, Supervisor Christofilos opened it up for questions; ***Trustee Olszewski** questioned the \$12,600 assessor rent from last year's budget and asked if it will be removed; Olszewski went through overage numbers from previous years; ***Supervisor Christofilos** explained the township now pays the \$12,600 rent and asked Jane to explain the need for \$28,100 for staff; ***Assessor Bushong** explained the overage numbers were due to board approval of funds coming to late with field work slowing down for the fall, they are now doing field work that should have been done in the previous fiscal year; will not have funding now for the quad year, (equitable assessments save residents money); ***Supervisor Christofilos** broke down the tentative \$25,000 assessor staff budget (\$25,000 is staying equal, only \$4,000 more over last years \$21,000), in which Bushong said she needed more than that, it's the bare minimum, and will be short, after work is complete she can ask for an increase or transfer line items, Christofilos asked Bushong to explain why she needs the money for staff; **Assessor Bushong** had copies of a memorandum she handed out (is attached below),justifying office staff funding to complete field work and maintain equitable assessments; the 5% levy is due to working their tails off; **Trustee Dietz** questions the accuracy of the tax exemption (EAV), residents taxes going up every year, not down; **Assessor Bushong** explains tax laws are not easy, the simple formula is, market value (what you can sell it for), gives an example of \$600,000, take roughly $1/3/33.33\%$ (based on State of Illinois) = 200,000, this would be about the total assessed value, then you subtract entitled exemptions, that will be your total assessed value. Now take that and multiply it by what the township dictates and asks for in a budget, along with fire district, schools, etc., that's the tax rate set by taxing bodies within your tax code The reason for the increases are because home value increase; **Trustee Dietz** questioned all taxes going down, with the exception of community health, yet taxes did not go down; **Assessor Bushong** explained the base/net tax rate, (total of all taxing bodies) asking for their budgets/levies, saying they are lower but is confusing it because of the equalizer the county assigns mid-year which is based on adjustments. It is very important for the assessor's office to fully equalize everything throughout the township yearly, if the EAV is low they slap a multiplier on us to even it out because in the State of Illinois everyone has to be equal so there is a

fairness throughout the state. When there was no assessor for years the equalizer was sky high and took a while to get the EAV up and equalization across the board correct, which is still not totally there, it takes staffing. The Quad year is all about equalization and if she cannot do her job they will get hit with an equalizer. **Trustee Dietz** asked when it was, **Assessor Bushong** said it's for the 2027 tax year, explained tax cycles, township level (between about mid-January to the beginning of June) is the only time allowed to make certain adjustments and add new construction, and quad year. This is what brings in the bulk of revenue, she explained passing budgets in June, after the quad year/tax cycle ends does not help so the money in the budget this year will cover next quad years staffing. Supervisor Christofilos and Assessor Bushong discussed the need for money, the process of hiring, growth of township, property classifications, process of changing property classifications for accurate assessments, challenges with mapping and impact on property values. **Trustee Dietz** asks about the process of re-qualifying for exemptions, Assessor Bushong explains the requirements; ***Supervisor Christofilos** gave the numbers for assessor staff expended last year, \$20,438.50, the tentative proposed is \$25,000, the assessor would prefer \$28,100; **Trustee Olszewski** said there was \$7,954.05 left over, take away to use for quad, approving 5% across the board and giving \$37,170 is exactly the 5%, extra money should not be given out; **Supervisor Christofilos** said based on what is being said does not even see a 5% increase, last year's budget was \$36,000 without the line items that were not there last year, shows it down \$3,100, taking money out of budgets is irresponsible, if you don't spend it, lose it philosophy is irresponsible thinking, lowering budget should be looked at if continuous over years; **Trustee Shepherd** understands the need for extra money, and would like to see numbers from this year to next the average amount of homes assessed each year, **Assessor Bushong** said it would be skewed as it would not show accurate assessments because one property could take hours and one could take minutes with a simple change; **Trustee Olszewski** wanted to go on record "saying we're not taking anything away from her, that \$7,000 isn't being taken away, you're still working with \$36 thousand, 5%, and then the amount." The discussed the math that is not adding up and will need to discuss further before passing the budget and figure out what the right number is for her staff to work in the best interest of the township. No further discussion.

8. Reports

- a. Road Commissioners Report** Road Commissioner Jim Hilliard: Switching over to summer, dirt work, pot holes, culverts, watch for guys on movers **Past/Presently:** aging fleet, working on that, ordering a truck, saving for 3-1/2 budgets for this, other townships forgive debts, will be about \$20,000-\$30,000 short on new truck money if township does not forgive debt, if they do it would eliminate finance charges which is beneficial. **Future:** Sheer Road bridge, no change, waiting on box culverts to be built. ***Trustee Shepherd** asked when loan is set to be paid off, Hilliard said this year, is prepared to pay the debt, possibly get another loan from the township to avoid finance charges, he hopes to build up the fleet, purchasing a new truck every five to six years; **Commissioner Hilliard** also mentioned it is planting season so will be in the fields but to please reach out with any questions on the budget.
- b. Assessor's Report** – Assessor Bushong had handouts in the back that explains farm stuff, and an exemption event list.
- c. Collector's Report** – Collector Michael Flanagan updated on the Union Cemetery, he was notified by email from the Supervisor on April 28, 2026, that "Union Cemetery is staying as a 501C3" therefore the township is no longer pursuing the transfer of the cemetery into the township. Union Cemetery will continue to be maintained by the 501C3 entity, as in the past. I am only reporting this to ensure transparency and to oppose the public record on this issue."

d. Trustee's Reports

* **Trustee Dietz** – Nothing to report

* **Trustee Olszewski** – Nothing to report

* **Trustee Shepherd** – Nothing to report

* **Trustee Striggow** – Not in attendance

e. Supervisor's Report - Nothing further to report

9. Public Comments – No public comments

10. Meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.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, June 8, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Crissy Kraft, Clerk for Green Garden Township

Crissy Kraft





Approved by Board of Trustees: *June 8, 2026*



GREEN GARDEN TOWNSHIP

Monday, May 11th, 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 4-13-26 Board meeting, as submitted
5. Motion to Approve the Township Financial Report, as submitted
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 Board voting.
 - a. Solar Facilities Update: Mr. Jeff Becker, Watershed Committee.
 - b. Town Hall Renovation Project Update
 - c. Newsletter
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. Town Hall Board Meetings during Renovation
 - b. Township Phone Number: 815-270-5090
 - c. 2026-2027 Proposed Budget Discussion
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

Green Garden Township Memorandum

To: Township Board of Trustees

From: Township Assessor

Subject: Staffing Explanation for FY 26/27

Date: May 11, 2026

Purpose

This memorandum provides the statutory and operational justification for temporary staffing increases required for the 2026 quadrennial reassessment. Illinois law mandates a full review and revaluation of all property every four years. Completing this work accurately and on time requires coordinated support from **Quad-Year Staff**, **Assessment Field Staff**, and **Office Staff**. These positions are essential to meeting statutory obligations, maintaining uniformity, and protecting residents from unnecessary tax impacts.

Statutory Requirement

Under the Illinois Property Tax Code, all property must be **viewed, inspected, and revalued once every four years** to maintain assessments at **33½% of fair cash value** and ensure **uniformity** across the tax base. The Supervisor of Assessments issues written instructions and is responsible for ensuring township compliance. Quad-year reassessment is therefore a **legal mandate**, not a discretionary operational activity.

Quad-Year Staff: Justification

Quad-year reassessment increases workload by **300–400%** compared to a standard year. Quad-Year Staff support the intensive, time-bound tasks required to complete:

- Township-wide revaluation of all parcels
- Market analysis and application of updated cost and depreciation tables
- Integration of sales ratio study data
- Preparation of assessment notices and publication materials
- Timely submission of assessment books

These tasks cannot be absorbed by baseline staffing levels without risking delays, errors, or county intervention.

Assessment Field Staff: Justification

Field work is essential to producing accurate, defensible assessments. Quad-year requirements include:

- Exterior inspections of all parcels
- Verification of property characteristics and condition
- Documentation of new construction, additions, and demolitions, measurements, photos and CAD drawings
- Collection of photographic and measurement data
- Field-level quality control to ensure uniformity

This work cannot be completed remotely or by office staff. Field staff ensure that the assessment roll reflects actual property conditions and complies with statutory requirements.

Office Staff: Justification

Quad-year reassessment also creates a significant administrative and analytical workload requiring dedicated office support:

- Processing and entering updated property data
- Applying valuation models and cost schedules, establishing comparable neighborhood reports
- Reviewing sales data, building permit and market trends
- Managing resident inquiries and exemption questions
- Coordinating notices, publications, and statutory deadlines
- Ensuring accuracy and completeness of assessment books

Office staff ensure that field data is properly validated, processed, and certified.

Risk of Understaffing ***

Recent legislative changes authorize the Supervisor of Assessments to:

- Assume control of township assessment books if work is incomplete
- Apply countywide adjustments when township-level valuation is insufficient
- Bill the township for the cost of completing the work

Understaffing therefore exposes the township to **higher costs, loss of local control, and increased appeals.**

Financial Impact on Residents ***

Adequate staffing—across all three categories—protects residents from:

- **County multipliers** that raise assessments across all properties
- **Inequitable valuations** that shift tax burden unfairly
- **Increased appeals**, which delay the tax cycle and increase administrative costs

Proper staffing is a **cost-avoidance measure** that prevents broader tax impacts on residents.

Conclusion

Quad-Year Staff, Assessment Field Staff, and Office Staff are all essential to completing the quadrennial reassessment accurately, locally, and on time. These positions represent the minimum resources required to meet statutory obligations, maintain uniformity, avoid county intervention, and protect residents from unnecessary tax increases.

Green Garden Township Regular Board Meeting

7:00 p.m.

May 11, 2026

By checking the Public Comment box, you agree to abide by the Green Garden Township public comment policy on the last page of this packet

GUEST SIGN - IN - SHEET

Please check here if you have a Public Comment

Print Legibly - (NOT SIGNATURE) First & Last Name

1. Jim Ross

2. LINDA ROSS

3. GARY LINCOLN

4. CAROL LINCOLN

5. JEFF BECKER

6. NANCY TARWATER

7. JIM MICHALSWICZ

8. MARK ZILGER

9. KYLIE CANTONTE

10. LINDA OWENS

11. LINDA WARDINSKI

12.

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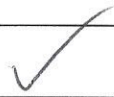
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Green Garden Township Public Comment Policy

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.