

**LAKE VILLA TOWNSHIP AND LAKE VILLA TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
DECENNIAL COMMITTEE REPORT**

I. INTRODUCTION

This report of the Lake Villa Township and Lake Villa Township Highway Department Decennial Committee on Local Government Consolidation. The committee was formed in accordance with Public Act 102-1088.

- a. Information about Lake Villa Township
 - A. We are located in Lake County. There are eighteen townships in our county.
 - B. The population of our Township is thirty nine thousand eight hundred (39,800) people, as of the 2020 census.
 - C. We have two full time employees of the Township and three full time employees of the Township Assessor's office (not including elected officials). There are also twenty four part-time and seasonal Township employees.
 - D. We have nine full time employees in our Road District (not including elected officials).
 - E. Our annual budget for 2023 for the Township and Road district is: \$4,906,450.00 and \$3,455,260.00 respectively.
 - F. Our Township's equalized assessed valuation for 2023 is \$1,045,114,735.

On October 12, 2022 the Lake Villa Township Board and the Lake Villa Township Highway Commissioner appointed the following members who have agreed to serve on the Townships Decennial Committee:

Daniel Venturi, Supervisor, Chairman
Barbara Stout, Trustee
Jerold Coia, Trustee
Paul Berker, Trustee
Joy Johnson, Trustee

James Jorgensen Highway Commissioner
Jeff Lee Resident
Jean Smuda Resident

Per 50 ILCS 70/10(b), the committee membership must include all the elected or appointed members of the township board (Supervisor and Trustees) and two residents appointed by the Supervisor. The residents can be the Assessor, Highway Commissioner, Clerk or Collector, if you have one, or other residents of the Township, but these officials are not required to be on this Committee. The Supervisor may appoint more than two residents if deemed appropriate.

B. Dates that our Committee Met (50 ILCS 70/20)

First (Organizational) Meeting: Monday, November 14, 2022,

Second Meeting: Monday, February 13, 2023

Third Meeting: Monday, July 10, 2023

The duties of the committee include, but are not limited to, the study of the governmental unit's governing statutes, ordinances, rules, procedures, powers, jurisdiction, **shared services, intergovernmental agreements, and interrelationships with other governmental units and the State.** The committee shall also collect data, research, and analysis as necessary to prepare a report for presentation to the Lake County board.

The Report shall summarize its work and findings, which shall include recommendations in respect to increased accountability and efficiency.

II. Township Government background and governing Statues

Township government is one of the oldest forms of government in Illinois. While the viability of the continued role of township government has been questioned recently, those who work with townships and receive services from them have no doubt about their importance. Townships perform three mandatory functions:

administering a general assistance program to qualifying residents, maintaining township road district highways and bridges, and appraising property values in all counties other than Cook County. Townships also are given a variety of statutory responsibilities that are somewhat lesser known but equally important. For example, they may, among other services, provide senior services, conduct youth programs, appoint fire district trustees, and maintain cemeteries; additionally, township trustees serve as the township's official "fence viewers." The various powers of townships are discussed in detail in other sections of this book. Townships have been given various powers that they may exercise depending upon the needs of their constituents and the activism of their officials. Each township has the corporate capacity to exercise the powers expressly granted to it or those necessary implied from these express grants, and no others. 60 ILCS 1/85-10. See also *Grassini v. DuPage Tp.*, 279 Ill. App. 3d 614, 665 N.E.2d 860 (3d Dist. 1996) (holding that a township may exercise only those powers conferred upon it by statute).

This limitation is called "Dillon's Rule" and affects all Illinois governments except home rule municipalities and counties. Like other non-home rule units, townships have no inherent powers but only those granted to them by the constitution or authorized by statute. *Diversified Computer Services, Inc. v. Town of York*, 104 Ill. App. 3d 852, 433 N.E.2d 726 (2d Dist. 1982). Prior to engaging in any act, therefore, a township must make sure that it possesses the authority to engage in such an act. Townships are conferred their powers through the Illinois Township Code (60 ILCS 1/1 et. seq.), the 1970 Illinois Constitution and through various other statutory and common laws. Special statutory sections govern the powers and the functions of township officers.

III. Intergovernmental Cooperation

Article VII, Section 10 of the Illinois Constitution and the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act, 5 ILCS 220/1, et. seq., permit public entities such as townships to enter into contracts with other governmental entities in order to exercise various powers. The exercise of intergovernmental cooperation permits entities such as townships to exercise powers that townships do not have that may actually be exercised by the other entities with whom the townships are contracting. The exercise of intergovernmental cooperation can allow townships to enter into many projects where funds, assets, and personnel can be shared between units of local

government.

It is clear that Illinois Law encourages and may even require local Governments including Townships to act responsibly and share resources with other Government entities.

a. Lake Villa Township

At Lake Villa Township, we believe that working together with other government entities is key to achieving our mission of providing high-quality services to our taxpayers. We will continue to seek out partnerships that allow us to provide the most efficient and effective services possible. A partial list of Government entities Lake Villa Township has worked with includes:

Village of Lake Villa

Village of Lindenhurst

Lindenhurst Park District

Lake Villa District Library

Lake Villa Fire Protection District

Antioch Township

County of Lake

Consolidated School District 41

Community High School District 117

Community High School District 127

Antioch Community Consolidated School District 34

Gavin School District 37

Fox Waterway Agency

Lake County Forest Preserve District

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Lake County Storm Water Management

Lake County Health Department

Lake County Department of Transportation

Illinois Department of Transportation

At Lake Villa Township, we strongly believe in the power of collaboration and partnership. Our commitment to working with others has enabled us to achieve great successes over the years, and we are proud to share some of our accomplishments with you. Thanks to our collaborative efforts, we have been able to complete a number of important projects that have benefited our community in countless ways.

One of our most significant collaborations involved working with our local schools. Through this partnership, we were able to offer a wide range of services for residents of all ages. This program has been a great success, and we look forward to continuing to work with our schools to provide valuable educational opportunities to our community.

Another successful partnership involved working with our neighboring townships to improve our shared roadways. By pooling our resources and working together, we were able to complete much-needed repairs and upgrades to our roads more efficiently and cost-effectively than we could have done alone. This project was a true testament to the power of collaboration, and we are proud to have been a part of it.

These are just two examples of the many successful collaborations we have been a part of at Lake Villa Township. We believe that by working together, we can achieve great things for our community, and we look forward to continuing to build strong partnerships with all those who share our vision.

Some of our partnerships and projects are the following:

Summer Concert Series

- Village of Lindenhurst
- Village of Lake Villa
- Lindenhurst Park district
- Lake Villa District Library

High Ropes Course at Peacock Camp

- Community High School District 117

Peacock Summer Camp

- Community High School District 117

Dering Park Soccer Park

- Consolidated School District 41
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Tiny's Park Football/ Baseball fields

- Lake County Forest Preserve District
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Dering Park Trail Connection System

- Consolidated School District 41
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- Lake County Forest Preserve District

Lake Villa Township West Campus youth sports facility

- Gavin School District 37

Lake Villa Fire Protection District Station #4

- Lake Villa Fire Protection District

Celebration of Summer

- Village of Lake Villa

Senior Entertainment Lunch Series

- Village of Lake Villa
- Village of Lindenhurst

Antioch Lake Villa Joint Township Center

- Antioch Township
- Community High School District 117

Lindenhurst Grass Lake Road Tunnel Project

- Lindenhurst Park District
- Village of Lindenhurst
- Lake County Forest Preserve District

Grass Lake Road Sidewalk at Deep Lake Road

- Antioch Community Consolidated School District 34
- Village of Lake Villa
- Community High School District 117

Peacock Camp Life Skills Center.

- Community High School District 117

Haunted Trail

- Lindenhurst Park District

b. Lake Villa Township Assessor's Office

The Assessor's Office has long standing working relationships with all entities of government involved in the tax cycle. Within our County, the Assessors participate in the Lake County Township Assessor's Association (LCTAA). The LCTAA promotes communication between the individual offices as well as the County Offices. The LCTAA provides training on various assessment issues to promote best practices and improvements the assessment process. The LCTAA strives to promote public education and trust in the process.

The Assessor's Offices have a long-standing relationship with the Lake County Chief County Assessor Office. The County has taken a leadership role to provide the necessary software to facility creating assessments. There is a cost benefit and a workflow benefit to both County and local Assessors sharing one common software. All parties are involved in the creation and maintenance of the software again reducing costs. Using the common software also contributes to better assessments in areas that are located in multiple Townships.

We have relationships with the Lake County Board of Review. Again, the development and use of a single countywide software platform is a cost savings and increases efficiencies. It benefits all parties, Assessors, Board of Review and the public to create a fair and equitable appeal process.

The Assessors have relationships with several other County Departments:

- The Map Department – sharing maps, the various map layers and associated data.
- The Recorders Office – providing access to recorded deeds and ownership changes.
- Tax Extension – sharing the data used to create tax levies and distribution.
- Treasurer's Office – providing tax bill data

c. Lake Villa Township Highway Department

Snow plowing shared with Antioch on various small sections of roads. Township lines dictate areas of roads that make it easier for both Lake Villa and Antioch Townships to swap plowing responsibilities. Those areas include Lake Villa plowing Antioch roads in Cedar Crest and Petite Lake Highwoods subdivisions. In turn Antioch plows Lake Villa's roads including Sunnyside Rd., Lake View Ave., and Amalfi St. This sharing saves time and gas for both townships.

- Antioch Township

We provide a salt satellite (meaning some drop off and pick up) for the Lake County Dept. of Transportation and School District 41. Lake Villa Township Highway Department provides a salt Satellite for the Lake County Dept. of Transportation and a small amount of salt to School Dist. 41's Palombi School.

This saves the County from having to drive all the way back to Libertyville if more salt is needed in our areas. This also saves on gas and provides heightened safety factors.

- Lake County Department of Transportation
- Consolidated School District 41

Cut and remove trees for School District 41. Lake Villa Township Highway Dept. has and will cut down trees and help with brush for School District 41's Palombi School. We have also cut down trees and cleared brush on Lakes High School campus for the Eagle Scouts who are students of the school. This is mostly in keeping with the established comradery between both govt. entities. We always will try to help whenever possible.

- Consolidated School District 41

Loaning of equipment such as the conveyor truck to The Village of Lake Villa. The Highway Department has loaned big equipment such as our conveyor belt and our Case Unloader (Bobcat) to the Village of Lake Villa. Subsequently the village has now purchased their own equipment realizing the benefits!

- Village of Lake Villa

Run drainage pipes that include going under Rt. 59 and subsequent properties that aid in watershed for the State of Illinois. The Highway Dept has helped The State of Illinois with watershed involving State Rt. 59. We ran a drainage pipe from the boat launch/park in West Shore Gardens (near Hillside and North Lake) under Rt. 59 to West Shore Gardens and out (near the corner of Carson and Piper) in East Shore Gardens.

- Illinois Department of Transportation

IV. Review of Laws, Township Policies, Township Rules and Procedures, Township Training Materials, and other Documents

We have reviewed the following, non-exhaustive list of laws, policies, training materials, and other documents applicable to the Township to evaluate our compliance and to determine if any of the foregoing should be amended.

- State laws applicable to Townships, including, but not limited to the Township Code (60 ILCS)
- Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120)
- Policy on public comment
- Designation of OMA officer (5 ILCS 120/1.05(a))
- All of Elected Officials have completed OMA Training (5 ILCS 120/1.05(b))
- Schedule of All Township Regular Meetings for Calendar or Fiscal Year (5 ILCS 120/2.03)
- Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140)
- Designation of FOIA officer (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a))
- FOIA Officer Training (5 ILCS 140/3.5(b))
- Computation and Retention of FOIA Requests (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a))
- Posting Other Required FOIA Information (5 ILCS 140/4(a); 5 ILCS 140/4(b))
- List of Types or Categories of FOIA Records under Township's Control (5 ILCS 140/5)
- Periodic Meetings to Review Closed Meeting Minutes (5 ILCS 120/2.06(d))
- IMRF Total Compensation Postings (5 ILCS 120/7.3)
- Designation of Whistleblower Auditing Official (50 ILCS 105/4.1)
- All of our Elected Officials have filed statement of economic interests (5 ILCS 420/4A-101; 5 ILCS 420/4A-101.5)
- Sexual harassment prevention training (775 ILCS 5/2-109(c))
- Our Intergovernmental Agreements
- Our Social Service Agreements or Contracts
- Our budget and financial documents

- State Ethics Laws, including, but not limited to the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/1-1)
- Our budget and financial documents
- Reports on government efficiency, including “Local Government Efficiency and Size in Illinois: Counting Tax Revenues, Not Governments” by Wendell Cox (2016); “Local Democracy and Townships in the Chicagoland Area,” by Wendell Cox, (January 2012).

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V. **What Have We Done Well**

The Township has maintained a balanced budget while planning for expected and unexpected improvements and has been able to freeze its Real Estate Tax levy at or below the 2014 Tax Levy Amounts.

The Township has expanded its active recreational fields to over 110 acres used for football, baseball, soccer and lacrosse. This provides hundreds of our children active sports fields to participate in high quality sports programs.

The Township has run a very popular summer youth camp, providing a wonderful summer recreational experience and summer employment for our young adults.

As the report reflects Lake Villa Township has a history of working with other Government entities. Many if not most of Lake Villa Townships accomplishments were part of a Partnership with others. This report focuses on cooperation with other government agencies. We would also acknowledge our partnerships with non-government entities.

The Township in conjunction with the Lake Villa Kiwanis Club runs a giving garden that allows us to provide fresh vegetables through our food pantry.

Our Township offers perishable food items because of a commercial refrigeration unit donated from the Lake Villa Township Lions Club.

Lake Villa Township partners with non-for-profit groups to provide youth sports. The township has over 110 acres of active recreational property including game fields and indoor activity space. These properties along with our partners provide

youth activities for our children. They include Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Baseball, Football, Soccer, Lacrosse, Cheerleading, Dance and Iceless Hockey.

Lake Villa Township shall continue to find new partnerships to improve services to our Taxpayers. We will strive to find better way to inform our co

VI. What Inefficiencies Did We Identify/What Are our Next Steps

Lake Villa Township has been transparent and open on its vision to improve services and facilities. We have updated our web presence, improved our email communication, use auto call to advise about community events and expanded our use of our Facebook page. We know that not everyone uses electronic communication and we need to continue to find new ways to communicate effectively with our residents.

VII. What Can We Do Better or More Efficiently

Lake Villa Township must find new effective ways to seek input from our resident on things we need to improve on and things we are doing well and should continue.

VIII. Studies on Governmental Efficiencies

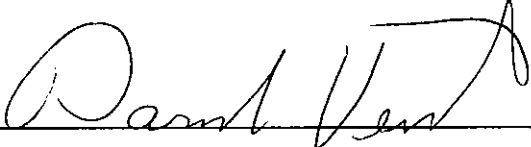
In preparing this report, we reviewed several studies on local government efficiency. These studies show that:

- The average local government in Illinois serves 1800 residents compared to the national median of 2850 individuals
- Most townships in Illinois have no bonded indebtedness. Together with road districts they are an integral element of local democracy. Township expenditures have grown at a lower rate than those of any other level of government since 1992.
- Townships have lower labor costs and employ mostly part time employees.

IX. Our committee's recommendations regarding Increased Accountability and Efficiency:

At Lake Villa Township, we value the opinions and feedback of our residents. We understand that in order to continue improving our services and programs, we need to hear from you. That's why we are committed to finding new and effective ways to seek input from our community members. We want to know what we're doing well and what we can improve on. Their input is essential in helping us make informed decisions that benefit our entire community. We encourage them to stay engaged and participate in the various opportunities we'll be offering to gather your feedback. Let your voice be heard and help us shape the future of Lake Villa Township.

Note: This Report must be filed with the Lake County Clerk no later than 18 months after your first committee meeting.

Submitted by:  _____

Chairman, Decennial Efficiency Committee of Lake Villa Township

Date: 7/10/23