

**MASON TOWNSHIP REPORT FOR COMPLIANCE WITH DECENNIAL
COMMITTEES ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY ACT
FOR TOWNSHIP AND ROAD DISTRICT (JOINT REPORT)**

Unit of government submitting this report: TOWNSHIP OF MASON

Note: Any local government that levies a tax, other than a municipality or county must file this report. For Road Districts in counties with populations of less than 400,000 the highway commissioner may form a joint committee to prepare one combined report.

Information about Mason Township:

- a. We are located in Effingham County. There are 15 townships in our county.
- b. The population of our Township is 1501, as of the 2020 census.
- c. We have zero employees of the Township (not including elected officials).
- d. We have one part-time employee in our Road District (not including elected officials).
- e. Our annual budget for 2023-2024: Township Appropriations \$217,065.00
Road District Appropriations \$171,575.00
- f. Our Township's equalized assessed valuation is 20289595

Information about Our Committee:

Committee Members:

Township Supervisor – Lisa Miller
Township Highway Commissioner – Howard Cain
Township Trustee – Lee Sims
Township Trustee – Tim Forehand
Township Trustee – Lonnie Jansen
Township Trustee – Mike McGuire
Township Resident (Supervisor Appointment) – Cathy Hille
Township Resident (Supervisor Appointment) – Frank Webster
Township Resident (Highway Comm. Appointment) – Brock Tegeler

Dates that our committee will meet:

May 9, 2023
August 8, 2023
November 14, 2023

PART ONE: MASON TOWNSHIP REPORT

Programs Offered by Mason Township:

Our Township offers the following services and programs:

- General Assistance
- Cemetery Assistance
- Assistance with the July 4th Festival in the township

Social Service Agreements:

We partner with the following not for profits to offer social services:

- Douglas Township to provide General Assistance Services

We have considered offering this service (General Assistance) by partnering with the local churches, police dept., fire dept., and the local gas station and store, in order to provide needed assistance.

We partner with the following not for profits to offer social services:

- Cemeteries in Mason Township to provide money for cemetery maintenance.

We partner with the following not for profits to offer social services:

- The Edgewood Fest to provide financial assistance. It is a community festival in the Township.

We partner with the Town of Mason by donating money for their building remodel and expansion of the town hall building that we also use for monthly meetings.

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.

- a. State laws applicable to Townships, including, but not limited to the Township Code.
- b. Illinois Open Meetings Act
- c. Policy on public comment
- d. Designation of OMA officer
- e. All Elected Officials have completed OMA Training
- f. Schedule of All Township Regular Meetings for Calendar or Fiscal Year
- g. Illinois Freedom of Information Act
- h. Designation of FOIA officer
- i. FOIA Officer Training
- j. Computation and Retention of FOIA Requests
- k. Posting Other Required FOIA Information

- l. List of Types or Categories of FOIA Records under Township's Control
- m. IMRF Total Compensation Postings
- n. All of our Elected Officials have filed statements of economic interests.
- o. Sexual harassment prevention training
- p. Our Intergovernmental Agreements
- q. Our Social Service Agreements or Contracts
- r. Our budget and financial documents
- s. State Ethics Laws, including, but not limited to the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act
- t. Reports on government efficiency, including "Local Government Efficiency."

What Has Your Township Done Well?

- a. The wages for the elected township officials for the term beginning May 15, 2017 through May 17, 2021 were frozen to enable cost savings.
- b. Created a fund to budget for cemeteries in this township to help with maintenance costs.
- c. FOIA requests have been responded to in a timely manner.
- d. Joined with Douglas Township to help with handling the General Assistance Fund for Mason Township
- e. No bonded indebtedness
- f. Purchased township property to store needed rock supplies, culverts, sand, etc.
- g. Have provided superior services and benefits while minimizing cost.

What Inefficiencies can Mason Township Identify /What Are our Next Steps?

- a. The General Assistance Fund has been inefficient because most people in the township don't qualify, and the funds are there to help people. We are getting educated on ways to use the fund to help people that are homeless or without needed funds and also, for people that are traveling through this township and needing help to travel on to their next destination.

Our committee's recommendation regarding Increased Accountability and Efficiency:

- a. To increase Accountability, Mason Township plans to partner with Douglas Township to help people in need. We will continue to learn about new ways to use the General Assistance Fund to help the people in Mason Township. There are many low-income residents in the township that don't qualify for General Assistance because they don't meet the guidelines. We try to find them other outside resources that township residents may find helpful. Examples: Food Pantries, Churches, etc. We also want to help people traveling through the township that have been stranded and don't have the funds to make it to their destination.

PART TWO: MASON ROAD DISTRICT

Mason Road District partners with, or have Intergovernmental Agreements with the following other governments:

- a. The Road District has snow plowed roads along with Union Township to better serve the residents and for cost savings.
- b. The Road District works with the Effingham County Highway Dept. for culvert purchases for cost savings and works together with them for bridge, road, and ditch maintenance to better serve the residents of this township.

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.

- a. State laws applicable to Townships, including, but not limited to the Township Code.
- b. Illinois Open Meetings Act
- c. Policy on public comment
- d. Designation of OMA officer
- e. All Elected Officials have completed OMA Training
- f. Schedule of All Township Regular Meetings for Calendar or Fiscal Year
- g. Illinois Freedom of Information Act
- h. Designation of FOIA officer
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- t. Reports on government efficiency, including "Local Government Efficiency."

What has the Road District done well?

- a. The Road Commissioner is always available to hear the concerns of Township residents.

- b. He responds quickly to fix or repair township roads, bridges, and ditches due to flooding or trees down after a storm.
- c. He is always checking the maintenance of the township roads, snow plowing, oiling roads, etc.
- d. No bonded indebtedness.
- e. The Road District has low labor costs and employs only part-time employees.
- f. The Road District has established a multi-year plan for constructing a building to house the township equipment.
- g. The Road Commissioner provides superior services while minimizing costs.

What Inefficiencies can Mason Road District Identify/What Are our next steps?

- a. An inefficiency is the lack of funds for the Road District to oil all roads in the township each year. Now, only half of the roads get oiled one year and the other half the next year.
- b. A township building to house the township trucks, grader, backhoe, and equipment to keep it out of the weather is an inefficiency.

Our committee's recommendation regarding Increased Accountability and Efficiency:

- a. Continue budgeting for funds for road maintenance. Be mindful of cost savings and low labor costs.
- b. Keep budgeting for a building to be built to house the township trucks, grader, backhoe, and equipment to keep it out of the weather. The equipment would be better maintained and kept well if stored in a building. Now everything is stored outside.

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

Submitted by:

Lisa Miller

Supervisor/ Chairman, Decennial Efficiency Committee of Mason Township

Dated:

11/14/2023