



# ILLINOIS GREEN PARTY

P.O. Box 471278 Chicago, IL 60647 312-924-1803 [info@ilgp.org](mailto:info@ilgp.org) [www.ilgp.org](http://www.ilgp.org)

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## **ILGP FACT SHEET 2007-006** **THE ANNUAL TOWNSHIP MEETING**

*Updated mid-2007*

There are 1,433 townships operating in Illinois in 85 counties. In Illinois, township government is the only form of government that provides the citizens a direct vote. This occurs during a township's annual township meeting where any registered voter within the township has the right to vote on issues before the body or electors. This is as close to a "pure democracy" as it gets. Voters actually have direct input to their government. No other form of government affords its citizens this opportunity.

Annual Township Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of April in each year after 6:00 p.m. Statute does allow Annual Townships Meetings to be held earlier than 6 p.m. (if the time is changed by the electors at a duly convened meeting). The statutes also provide considerable autonomy to local officials in selecting an appropriate place for the meeting.

The notice of Annual Township Meeting must include the time and place of the meeting and the agenda approved by the Township Board at their prior meeting. The Township Clerk must post the notice in three of the most public places in the township, at least 10 days prior to the meeting and if there is an English language newspaper published in the township, by at least one publication in that newspaper before the meeting.

The Annual Township Meeting is called to order by the Township Clerk. The Clerk is the only township officer who has an official role at the meeting. The other township officials present serve merely as electors.

The electors are charged with choosing one of their own to preside and serve as moderator of the meeting. Since an elector is defined as being a verified person registered to vote within the township no less than 28 days before the date of the meeting, the moderator shall be a registered voter of the township in attendance of the meeting. The duties and responsibilities of the moderator consist of the following: presiding over the activities of the meeting, announcing the business before the meeting, deciding all questions of order, and preserving order.

Additional agenda items may be added only by a three-fifths majority of the electors in attendance at the meeting. Typically, an agenda would include a public comments section where electors are provided an opportunity to speak. The moderator may choose to limit the time of the discussion.

In some selected areas, a municipality, or county board, may have taken on the responsibility of also acting as the Township government. In addition, township government has been abolished within the City of Chicago.

See the Township Officials of Illinois website for additional information: [www.toi.org](http://www.toi.org)

### Powers of the Electors at Annual Township Meetings

1. Take all necessary measures and give directions for the exercise of their corporate powers. (60 ILCS 1/30-25)
2. To fix the hour at which town meetings shall be held. (60 ILCS 1/30-30)
3. To spend monies for preparation of a detailed property record system. (60 ILCS 1/30-45)
4. Make orders for the purchase and sale of property. (60 ILCS 1/30-50)
5. May declare property of the township to be surplus for purposes of donating the property to a historical society or other not-for-profit corporation. (60 ILCS 1/30-53)
6. To authorize the township board of trustees to appropriate monies in excess of the sum provided in the Public Graveyards Act, for the purpose of putting any old, neglected graves and cemeteries in the township in a cleaner and more respectable condition. (60 ILCS 1/30-60)
7. Provide for the decoration and maintenance of graves of persons who at any time served in the armed forces of the United States which are within the township. (60 ILCS 1/30-65)
8. Provide space in any township building for courtroom and office use by Circuit Court. (60 ILCS 1/30-70)
9. To authorize the township board of trustees to exercise the powers conferred by the "Township Zoning Act". (60 ILCS 1/30-75). This does not apply in any county where a county zoning ordinance or resolution is in effect.
10. Offer premiums, and take such action as shall induce the planting and cultivating of trees along the highways in the town, and protect and preserve trees standing along or on highways, and purchase, plant and cultivate along the streets and highways in the township. (60 ILCS 1/30-85)
11. Make rules and regulations for ascertaining the sufficiency of all fences in the town, and determine what shall be a lawful fence within the town; except as otherwise provided by law. (60 ILCS 1/30-90)
12. Prohibit animals from running at large. (60 ILCS 1/30-95)
13. Establish and maintain pounds where deemed necessary. (60 ILCS 1/30-100)
14. Impound animals. (60 ILCS 1/30-110)
15. Construct and keep in repair public wells or other watering places, and regulate the use thereof. (60 ILCS 1/30-115)
16. Prevent the deposit of night soil, garbage or other offensive substances within the limits of the town. This section does apply to refuse disposal facilities regulated by the Illinois State Department of Public Health and the county in which the facilities are located. (60 ILCS 1/30-120)
17. To adopt ordinances regulating standing or parking of recreational vehicles on township roads within each township. (60 ILCS 1/30-125)
18. Declare inoperable motor vehicles a nuisance. (60 ILCS 1/30-130)
19. Authorize the licensing and regulation and direct the location of all places of business of purchasers, traders and dealers in junk, rags and any secondhand article, including motor vehicles, except in cities, villages and incorporated towns in such township which, by ordinance, provide for such licensing, regulation or places of location. (60 ILCS 1/30-135)
20. Regulate hawkers, peddlers, pawnbrokers, itinerant merchants and transient vendors. (60 ILCS 1/30-140)

21. Authorize the township board of trustees to provide mental health services, including services for the alcoholic, the drug addicted, and the mentally retarded, for residents of the township by disbursing existing funds if available by contracting with mental health agencies approved by the Department of Human Services, alcoholism treatment programs licensed by the Department of Public Health, and drug abuse facilities and other alcohol and drug abuse services approved by the Department of Human Services. (60 ILCS 1/30-145)
22. In counties having less than 1,000,000 inhabitants, to authorize the board of trustees to contract with one or more incorporated municipalities lying wholly or partly within the boundaries of such township, or with the county within which the township is located, to furnish police protection in the area of such township that is not within the incorporated area of any municipality having a regular police department. (60 ILCS 1/30-150)
23. Authorize contracts with county sheriff to furnish police protection in unincorporated areas. (60 ILCS 1/30-155)
24. In counties having a population of 1,000,000 or more, to authorize the board of trustees to contract with one or more municipalities in the township or with the county within which the township is located to furnish police protection in the unincorporated area of the township. The board of trustees may declare the unincorporated area of the township a special police district for tax purposes, proof of which authorizes the county clerk to extend a tax upon the special police district in the amount specified in the annual town tax levy, but not to exceed a rate of .10% of the value of taxable property as equalized or assessed by the Department of Revenue. (60 ILCS 1/30-160)
25. Authorize fire protection in unincorporated areas. (60 ILCS 1/30-165)
26. To authorize the board of trustees to contract for the furnishing of mosquito abatement services in the unincorporated areas of the township. (60 ILCS 1/30-170)
27. To authorize the supervisor to file an application for the township and all other bodies politic established by or subject to the control of the electors to participate in the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund. (60 ILCS 1/30-180)
28. Allow for voters at the Annual Town Meeting to transfer funds from one or more funds to other or different funds, or to the general road and bridge fund or any fund raised by taxation or bonds for road and bridges. (60 ILCS 1/30-185 and 1/245-5)
29. Make all such by-laws, rules and regulations deemed necessary to carry into effect the powers herein granted and may impose fines deemed proper, except when a fine or penalty is already allowed by law. No offense shall be classified in excess of a petty offense. (60 ILCS 1/30-190)
30. Apply all penalties, when collected, in such manner as may be deemed most to the interests of the township. (60 ILCS 1/30-195)
31. By a vote of the majority of electors present at a town meeting, the electors may authorize that an advisory question of public policy be placed on the ballot at the next regularly scheduled election in the township. The township board shall certify the question to the proper election officials, who shall submit the question in accordance with the general election law. (60 ILCS 1/30-205)
32. Adopt revised tax schedule for town purposes. (60 ILCS 1/235-5 and 1/235-10)
33. Increase tax rate for road purposes. (605 ILCS 5/6-504)
34. Tax for construction of bridge at joint expense of county and road district and obtain aid from county. (605 ILCS 5/6-508)
35. Request referendum to issue bonds for road purposes. (605 ILCS 5/6-510)

36. Petition for road or road improvements. (605 ILCS 5/6-601)

37. Request referendum to repeal special tax for road purposes. (605 ILCS 5/6-617)