ERIENNA TOWNSHIP & ROAD DISTRICT REPORT FOR COMPLIANCE WITH DECENNIAL COMMITTEES ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY ACT

I. Unit of government submitting this report:

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NAME OF TOWNSHIP: **ERIENNA TOWNSHIP & ROAD DISTRICT**

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. See 50 ILCS 70/10(b-5).

II. Information about our Township

A. We are located in Grundy County. There are **17** townships in our county.
B. The population of our Township is **2709**, as of the 2020 census.
C. We have **zero full time employees** of the Township (not including elected officials).
D. We have **zero full-time employees** in our Road District (not including elected officials).
E. Our annual budget ending in 2023 is: **$135,293** for the Township and **$503,750** for the Road District.
F. Our Township's equalized assessed valuation for 2023 is **$95,493,595**.

III. Information about Our Committee

A. Committee Members:

Township Supervisor **Gary Bal**

Township Highway Commissioner **Mark Mann**

Township Trustee **Jeremy Bowers**

Township Trustee **Tom Cutler**

Township Trustee **Jerry Kleinmaier**

Township Trustee **Tom Tesdal**

Township Resident (Supervisor Appointment) **Clara Bal**

Township Resident (Supervisor Appointment) **Abby Rea**

Township Resident (Highway Comm. Appointment) **Larry Rea**

Note: 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, 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
(must occur prior to June 10, 2023): **May 8, 2023**

Second Meeting: **May 20, 2024**

Third Meeting: **June 10, 2024**

Additional Meetings (List All): **None**

IV. Programs Offered by our Township.

A. Our Township offers the following services and programs:

- **i. Township**
  1. **General Assistance Program**
  2. **State Grant Sponsor and Administrator – Township has successfully awarded a $250,000 State Grant to improve the storm drainage system for Heatherfield subdivision. Installation is in progress with the Township providing required State Reports on the progress of the project.**
- **ii. Road District**
  1. **Utilization of township building and grounds for local police K-9 training.**

B. Other services/programs we could possibly provide:

- **i. Township**
  1. **Facility for local senior programs i.e. Quilt club, etc.**
  2. **Facility for community programs i.e. Boy/Girl Scots, 4H programs**
  3. **Emergency Disaster Center**
- **ii. Road District**
  1. **DEA Semi Truck Inspection Center: Township has been used in the past as a safe inspection location for agents on large semi-truck inspections suspected of carrying contraband.**

V. Social Service Agreements

A. We partner with the following not for profits to offer social services (list all):

Entity:	**Services Provided:**
1. **YMCA**	**Financial operating support**

Our residents have benefitted from these agreements in the following ways**: Supports recreation and mental health to township residents. Helps to promote the development and retention of businesses in the community.**

B. We have considered possibly offering the following social services or the following additional potential partnerships:

VI. Awards and Recognitions

Our Township and Road District has received the following awards, distinctions, and recognitions: (List all). **NONE**

VII. Intergovernmental Agreements

A. We partner with, or have Intergovernmental Agreements, with the following other Governments (List all):

Entity: **Nettle Creek Township Road District**
Services Offered: **IGA to share Township and Road District facilities, equipment, and workers.**

Entity: **Nettle Creek – Erienna Multi Township**
Services Offered: **Contracted Assessor to complete assessments for both townships. The Assessor has an office in the Erienna Township building in support of both townships. The Erienna township building offices provide record storage and support the assessor meetings with the township electors concerning assessments.**

Entity: **Morris & Seneca**
Services Offered: **Tax Increment Financing (TIF) A 12 Year commitment to these government entities is approximately 15% of township and road districts EAV. The TIF program is to promote economic development for the betterment of the local community.**

B. Our Township's efficiency has increased through intergovernmental cooperation in the following way (list cost savings, avoiding duplicated services, etc.): **Borrowing equipment from Nettle Creek Township reduces the need for duplicate equipment that has unique utility to support each township current needs. Nettle Creek has been able to utilize Erienna township building to support meetings, equipment storage. Utilizing Erienna' s temporary workforce has supported Nettle Creeks need for additional temporary workers.**

VIII. 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.

X State laws applicable to Townships, including, but not limited to the Township Code (60 ILCS)

X Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120)

X Policy on public comment

X Designation of OMA officer (5 ILCS 120/1.05(a))

X All of Elected Officials have completed OMA Training (5 ILCS 120/1.05(b))

X Schedule of All Township Regular Meetings for Calendar or Fiscal Year (5 ILCS 120/2.03)

X Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140)

X Designation of FOIA officer (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a))

X FOIA Officer Training (5 ILCS 140/3.5(b))

X Computation and Retention of FOIA Requests (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a))

X Posting Other Required FOIA Information (5 ILCS 140/4(a); 5 ILCS 140/4(b))

X List of Types or Categories of FOIA Records under Township's Control (5 ILCS 140/5)

X Periodic Meetings to Review Closed Meeting Minutes (5 ILCS 120/2.06(d))

X IMRF Total Compensation Postings (5 ILCS 120/7.3)

X Designation of Whistleblower Auditing Official (50 ILCS 105/4.1)

X All of our Elected Officials have filed statement of economic interests (5 ILCS 420/4A-101; 5 ILCS 420/4A-101.5)

X Sexual harassment prevention training (775 ILCS 5/2-109(c))

X Our Intergovernmental Agreements

X Our Social Service Agreements or Contracts

X Our budget and financial documents

X State Ethics Laws, including, but not limited to the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/1-1)

X Our budget and financial documents

X 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).

X Others (List Below or Attach):

IX. What Have We Done Well? (List any budget/levy freezes or reductions in the past decade; list new programs or services offered to residents over the past decade; list any ethics ordinances adopted; timely FOIA compliance; responsiveness to public; list any new intergovernmental agreements or social services offered; list any increase in number of township residents served, etc.)

a. **The Township and Road District have very low costs since we use only part-time workers that receive no benefits. The Township and Road District has no outstanding bonds or debt. The new township building, trucks, and equipment were purchased with saved funds to prevent debit or bonds. The township and road districts are in financially good shape and expect stable minimal to no taxation increases in the future.**

X. What Inefficiencies Did We Identify/What Are our Next Steps?

a. **Electors Audit**
    i. **This is a useless requirement and a duplication of the trustee oversight position. The electors can only paid $50 per day and require three electors from the township. The statue provides no**

details of the scope of the audit unlike a CPA audit. This is a useless and burdensome government exercise that should be eliminated.

b. Electronic Records

i. There is no state process to collect and store electronic records which would be much easier to maintain, audit, and support FOIA requests. There should be statues that support electronic records.

c. Clerk Attest

i. A burdensome and confusing requirement that is unnecessary if trustees performed their oversight role which should be to review all bank, credit card, invoices.

d. GAF administration

i. Does not adequately allow for discretionary GAF disbursements for charities and provides complex requirements for providing individual support that are burdensome to small township organizations. Providing approved administrators of the GAF program that smaller townships could utilize would be more efficient and consistent implementation.

e. Public Notifications

i. **Township rules should allow social media i.e. Township Web pages, Township Facebook page, etc. to be utilize in notifying the public of important events such as annual township meetings, monthly meetings, Special township meetings, Truth in Taxation meetings, etc. This is a more efficient means to notify the public rather than hard copy posted notifications in various locations in the township.**

XI. What Can We Do Better or More Efficiently?

XII. Studies on Governmental Efficiencies

In preparing this report, we reviewed two studies on local government efficiency (reference 1, 2.) 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.**
- **Townership 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.**
- **Larger municipal governments tend to tax, spend, and borrow more per capita. Governments that tend to tax and spend less per capita tend also to be smaller, and closer to the people.**

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

This committee recommends applying the recommendations outlined in section X of this report. Erienna Township is cost effective and efficient in meeting the needs of the township and does not recommend additional organizational changes to this township.

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

Submitted by: **Gary Bal**
Chairman, Decennial Efficiency Committee of **Erienna Township**
Date: 6/10/24

References:

1 *Local Government in Illinois: A comparison of Township Government*, Township Officials of Illinois

2 Wendell Cox, *Local Democracy and Townships in the Chicagoland Area*, Township Officials of Illinois