

Township Government: Overlooked but Always Felt

Every summer, the scorching heat meant one thing, diving into my aunt's pool! Where laughter echoed, and cousins came to become best friends. It wasn't just a place to cool off; it was where the scent of sunscreen mixed with the promise of ice-cold lemonade, and where every splash held the magic of childhood summers. Yet, I never considered the roads that carried me there, the land cradling the pool, and the emergency services there to keep us safe. Without the township government regulating those things, magical summer pool days at my aunt Sherry's house would not be possible. The township government, a force unseen, however, the rifles of positive effects are uncanny. Their work is like a current beneath still water. My Aunt Sherry is a clerk for the township of Wood River, whom I gladly interviewed to learn more about her job and the undouble importance of township governments.

My aunt Sherry is more than just the host of sun-soaked memories, but the clerk of Wood River Township. Sherry Tite's job is undoubtedly the thread that binds the government together. Through her vigorous work, she files the documents that keep the town's heartbeat steady. Whether it's filling out documents with the county and state, aiding seniors in securing their low-income license stickers, or even balancing all accounting functions for nine funds. Measly tasks, perhaps to her, have positive rippling effects throughout the community. Touching lives in ways she may never fully understand.

The roads I easily rode upon on those golden afternoons were perfectly smooth, free of potholes, and running smoothly. A silent testament to the diligence of Highway Commissioner Mark Gerigin. He is responsible for the maintenance of all roads and bridges not taken care of by other government systems. He is also in charge of maintenance and purchasing of the necessary equipment. Ensuring that each stretch of asphalt is a promise of safe passage.

Among those in attendance in the summer blast was Sandy Shaw, whose laughter carried on like a big splash. But beyond her joyful personality, she has the role of the township assessor. She assesses the value of approximately 14,00 parcels of residential and commercial properties. This is crucial for other government bodies to complete their jobs and levy taxes. She has a wide variety of daily tasks to do.

Not everyone was in attendance at Aunt Sherry's summer blast. Wood River Township has 70 workers, who work tirelessly. There are many other jobs besides those I've already mentioned, that work together to make township governments run smoothly. Like, The supervisor is responsible for presiding over township meetings and overseeing the assistant's programs. Plus, there is a board of trustees, made up of four people, responsible for establishing policies. The tax collector plays a crucial role in ensuring the township has the necessary funds to sustain their services. Every single job sticks to a set budget, which is very efficient. Though often unnoticed, these essential functions make something as simple as a carefree summer afternoon happen. Moreover, there are three main functions. First, general assistance, it provides a safety net for those in need. They run food banks, provide necessities, and emergency relief. Then, property assessment upholds fairness, by determining the value of homes and businesses so that taxes are distributed justly, ensuring that no one bears too heavy a burden. And lastly, road safety and maintenance to ensure safe travel.

Township government may go unnoticed, its impact as subtle as the shifting tides. But without it, the magic of those summer days, the laughter, the pool, the ease of the journey would simply not exist. Their seventy full-time employees are the hands that turn simple moments into something extraordinary. They make and stick to a budget and all work together to change their community. Their communities are so beautifully woven together because it is a very personal government. You can know your officials and work with them. I easily step into my Aunt

Sherrys and Sandy's offices to talk with them. Maybe in the future, the best form of government will get the appearance they deserve.