



RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP

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River Forest Township Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Monday, August 14, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP Board of Trustees was called to order on Monday, August 14, 2023 by Supervisor Carla Sloan, at 6:58 PM following the RFCCA Board of Managers meeting. This was a meeting held both in person and electronically by Zoom.

Roll Call:

- Supervisor Sloan, Trustees: Helene Connolly, Deana Herrman, Keith Strom, and Karen Taubman.
- Also present: Clerk John Becvar, Assessor Pam Kende, Mental Health Services Administrator Sarah Schwarting, Senior Outreach Coordinator Betsy Kelly, RFCC Executive Director Dick Chappell, and former Oak Park Township Manager Gavin Morgan. Website Project Manager Kathy Elliott attended via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Participation:

- Former Oak Park Township Manager Gavin Morgan provided an update on his new role as Village Administrator in Indian Head Park. Supervisor Sloan read the Proclamation of Appreciation and expressed appreciation for Gavin's service and partnership.

Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Straum to approve the minutes of the July 18, 2023 regular meeting.
 - Roll call was taken. Yeas: Supervisor Sloan, Trustees Connolly, Herrman, Strom, and Taubman. Nays: none. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Assessor - Pam Kende

- Assessor Kende stated that the Cook County Assessor's office has now mailed River Forest Township decisions regarding assessment appeals submitted during the open appeal period. Assessor Kende's office has received numerous emails and phone calls from residents and set up a Google form for residents to obtain a Board of Review appeal packet to be produced once appeals open (TBD timing). The Assessor is

utilizing the Township website, outgoing phone message greeting and an email auto-reply to make residents aware of the sign-up form.

- Assessor Kende sent a Constant Contact communication letting residents know that the 2nd installment property tax bills will be coming out late around November 1st. The campaign had 74% open rate within the first 24 hours. A similar message was included in the Village of River Forest newsletter.
- A confidentiality notice has been added to outgoing personal email communications.
- Assessor Kende shared an example where a resident with two PINs (one being a not buildable vacant lot) sent a thank you after a 70% reduction in assessment. Positive resident feedback is always appreciated.

Mental Health Services - Sarah Schwarting

- Mental Health Administrator Schwarting said all FY2024 agency contracts have been signed and received. Agency 1st quarter checks are ready for approval tonight.
- International Overdose Awareness Day is Aug 31st in Scoville Park from 3-5:30 p.m.
- Parent University is reconvening its planning meetings starting August 28th.
- The Screenagers Planning Committee met to determine a date to hold the screening of the Screenagers movie at the CRC in Oak Park. The movie will likely be open to high school and middle school parents and high school students.
- Schwarting is wrapping up planning for the first meeting of the Mental Health Committee (MHC). This year they will be conducting site visits in the fall instead of mid-winter. MHC members are working on completing their Open Meetings Act (OMA) training and several members have returned their certificates to Administrator Schwarting.
- We have sent the copy for the updated Mental Health Resource Guide to the designer. This took a significant amount of time to edit, update and add new resources. Thanks to Trustee Herrman for her input on disabilities resources. The designer, Beth Nagy, has been on vacation but will hopefully begin work this week.
- The *Progress Center for Independent Living* has a new program director and Schwarting has a meeting at the end of August to get to know the director.
- Some agencies are branching out in new programming to include Reiki training and drum circles.

General Assistance - Carla Sloan

- Supervisor Sloan reported we continue to have one (1) GA client. Sloan added the Township also has our first two (2) Emergency Assistance clients: a resident who needed help with rent assistance; another needed help with utility payments. The clients also received referrals to other services.

Youth and Family Services (YFS) - Carla Sloan and Trustee Herrman

- Trustee Herrman said the YFS Committee resumes meetings in September.
- Supervisor Sloan noted that the YFS back-to-school event was held at Oak Park Township on Friday, August 11. There was a DJ, haircuts, food, face painting and of course school supply and backpack distribution. Over 200 backpacks were distributed

and approximately 400 people were in attendance over the course of the event. River Forest Township Clerk Becvar attended along with several OPALGA+ volunteers.

Senior Outreach Coordinator - Betsy Kelly

- Senior Outreach Coordinator Kelly met with Annese Piazza, a Medicare Consultant who will be speaking at the *Coffee Monday* in October. On Wednesdays we had the benefits counselor from the Oak Park Township Office to help with Medicare and other benefit questions, but that is on hold for now due to staffing issues. Annese and her co-worker, Esther Gracham who spoke at another one of our *Coffee Mondays*, will be great resources.
- Coordinator Kelly met with *Cantata Adult Services* in Brookfield to learn about their programming including independent living, assisted living, rehab as well as a repair program and in-home care program. Their *Take 2 Program* has caregivers that go to someone's home for a short visit. In contrast, the Township program requires 4 hours at a time. The *Take 2 Program* works best when they go to a community or building where they have a few clients. The *Take 2 Program* charges per \$45/visit (vs. per hour). OPRF Township Mary Ann Ojeda and Pam Mahn are in conversations with them to see if they can work with the *Take 2 Program*.
- The *Dominican Reminiscing Project* went well and ended tonight. Everyone had a good experience; 13 older adults attended (and 5 students). We are awaiting the evaluations. Thanks to Professor Julie Bach and her students who took the lead.
- Coordinator Kelly will meet tomorrow with the new OPRF Township Senior Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Val Lester and Drew Roskos, to discuss what our focus should be in the coming year. The committee is primarily advisory.
- In terms of communications, Coordinator Kelly will distribute flyers next week with info about *Coffee Mondays* through December. She has also compiled folders for the Assessor's office to pass out to older adults. She would like to do a mailing in September in addition to the emails.
- Mahjong and Bridge are on break this week due to RFCCA construction.

Supervisor's Report:

- Supervisor Sloan announced the Township of Cook County (TOCC) Supervisors Division met on July 20 for lunch at Lemont Township. The guest speaker was Senate Minority Leader John Curran. They learned more about the new expanded GA law, how other Townships are faring with FOIA requests and their Efficiency Report Committees.
- Sloan also attended a fundraiser for State Rep Camille Lilly on August 3.
- Way Back Inn is having their fundraiser on September 29 at River Forest Country Club in Elmhurst. Illinois House Speaker Chris Welch is being honored.
- The Rotary Food Truck Rally is August 26 from 4-9PM (versus 3PM start in prior years). The Township did not participate in 2022. The Library is not attending this year. Trustee Herrman suggested we drive people to a QR code (versus having all the brochures).

Approval of Bills

- A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Herrman to approve River Forest Township operating fund bills as of August 31, 2023 in the amount of \$82,430.75.
 - Roll call was taken. Yeas: Supervisor Sloan, Trustees Connolly, Herrman, Strom, and Taubman. Nays: none. The motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

- Website Update - Project Manager Kathy Elliott
 - Project Manager Elliott met with Hutchinson and Associates for introductions and establishing where we are in the project. Along with Supervisor Sloan, they reviewed several sections of the site, discussed the addition of an accessibility widget, and discussed auditing the new site before launch to ensure no information was lost.
 - Project Manager Elliott has researched free tools to help with content management, archivals and update project management. The plan is to launch early this fall.
 - Trustee Herrman said an accessibility widget should not be required if the new site is designed for accessibility in general. Trustee Herrman also asked to confirm if we were targeting level 2 accessibility.
- Collaboration Sub-Committee - Trustee Karen Taubman
 - Trustee Taubman indicated they are meeting September 13 at the Village Hall. The RF Happenings online calendar came out of the Committee.
- Efficiency Study update - Trustee Deana Herrman
 - Supervisor Sloan reported all the key documents are in a Google document for the student who will be helping with the efficiency study. The link was sent to the Trustees and to our public committee members (Residents Barbara Hickey, Melinda Peterson, John Phelan). Trustee Herrman suggested adding more information about the agencies (along with their websites) that receive grants or work with the Township.
- Accept FY2023 Audit - Supervisor Sloan
 - The FY2023 audit is finished and was sent to everyone in July for review. The auditor filed all necessary reports with the state and county.
 - A motion was made by Trustee Straum and seconded by Trustee Herrman to accept the FY2023 Audit.
 - Roll call was taken. Yeas: Supervisor Sloan, Trustees Connolly, Herrman, Strom, and Taubman. Nays: none. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

- A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Strom for proclamation 23-01 honoring former Oak Park Township Manager Gavin Morgan.
 - The motion passed unanimously.

Announcement of the Next Regular Monthly Meeting

- The next regular meeting of the River Forest Township will be on Tuesday, September 19, 2023 at 6PM.

A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Herrman to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 PM. All were in favor and the motion was passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
John Becvar, Clerk