River Forest Mental Health Committee

Minutes September 5th, 2023 at 6:30pm - Zoom Meeting

Present: Phillip Buta, Helene Connolly, Angie Grover, Jonathan Howard, MD, Kathryn Schmahl, Kristin Sneeringer, Jessica Starck, MD

Absent: Elizabeth Davies, Melinda Peterson

Staff: Sarah Schwarting, LCSW, Mental Health Administrator

1. Sarah called the meeting to order at 6:34pm and conducted roll.
2. Public Comments:
   * We will reschedule the Live4Lali meeting
3. John moved to approve the minutes from June 6th, 2023, Kristin seconded and the motion was carried.
4. Township Report from Carla Sloan, read by Sarah:
   * Carla welcomed the committee back after the summer break.
   * River Forest Township had a tent at the Rotary Food Truck Rally in Keystone Park on August 26th. We had great turnout and had good visibility in the community.
   * Work continues on the new township website and is about 80% complete, launch planned ASAP.
   * Mah Jong continues to be a popular activity for seniors held weekly at the RFCC.  The township funds the teacher Liz Ziehl.  We are hoping the park district will re-start pickleball for seniors at the RFCC later this fall.
   * Fall Sibshops will be starting soon at Thrive Counseling Center.
   * District 90 is starting a parent support group for parents of students with IEP's (Individual Education Plans). They have asked for our input and support of the group and we are happy to participate.
5. Mental Health Administrator Report – Sarah Schwarting:
   * All agency contracts have been mailed out, signed and returned.
   * Quarter 1 checks were mailed out.
   * Two agencies had staff turnover, therefore some committee members will likely be meeting with new people this year during their site visits.
   * Sarah updated fiscal year ‘24 spreadsheets.
   * Oak Park Community Mental Health Board and River Forest Township hosted another set of behavioral health and I/DD consortiums in July.
   * Carla and Sarah held meetings with the directors of Thrive and CSS to discuss new programing ideas for the coming year. Some of our agencies are interested in adding Reiki trainings and drum circles to their programming.
   * The Township is looking into changing agency payments to direct deposits.
   * The Way Back Inn’s fundraiser is coming up on Friday September 29th.
   * The Hub sunset announcements went out.
   * Positive Youth Development screenagers for junior high parents, high school parents and high school students will likely be held at the CRC.
   * The farewell dinner for Oak Park Township Manager Gavin Morgan had River Forest Township representation. Gavin came to our August meeting to receive a proclamation in his honor.
   * At the TOCC conference at the end of June, Sarah learned how different townships operate – Hanover township provides direct social service and Lyons township can conduct needs assessments.
   * The backpack and school supply drive held by Township Youth & Family Services helped over 250 people. The related back-to-school event was well attended.
   * The Holiday Food and Gift Basket program moved out of the Township space into larger offices at the Community of Congregations, therefore Township officials and staff are working to repurpose the space.
   * Sarah has updated the handout with changes to mental health legislation which she will have to the committee by next meeting
   * Parent University had its first planning meeting on August 28th. We have a tentative date of November 15th scheduled. Discussion of possible topics has begun.
   * Content for the new mental health resource guide is with the graphic designer and we hope to have the mailing ready to go out in October.
   * Sarah met the new program director at the Progress Center for Independent Living to go over our processes.
   * Sarah talked with faculty and staff at Dominican University on August 21st telling them a bit about what River Forest Township does.
6. Addiction Recovery Team ­– Melinda Peterson: None
7. Other Updates from MHC Members: None
8. Old Business: None
9. New Business:
   * The committee will move forward with site visits for funded agencies this fall. Sarah will share assignments in the coming weeks along with deadlines, report form and historical data.
10. The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 3rd at 6:30pm at the River Forest Community Center.
11. Jessica motioned to adjourn and Jonathan seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 6:46pm.