

RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, December 14, 2021

The regular monthly meeting of the RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP Board of Trustees was called to order on Tuesday, December 14, 2021 by Supervisor Carla Sloan, at 6:05 pm. This was a meeting held both in person and electronically by Zoom.

Roll called: Supervisor Sloan, Trustees: Deana Herrman, Keith Strom, Karen Taubman, and Helen Connolly (on zoom). Also present: Clerk Vanessa Druckman, Dick Chappell, Assessor Pam Kende, Senior Outreach Coordinator Betsy Kelly and Mental Health Services Administrator Sarah Schwarting.

Public Participation: None.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Trustee Strom and seconded by Trustee Herrman to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2021 regular meeting. Roll call was taken. Yeas: Supervisor Sloan, Trustees Strom, Taubman, Connolly and Herrman. Nays: none. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Assessor

Pamela Kende

- Assessor Kende said River Forest is now open for appeals with the Cook County Board of Review. The Board of Review gave us one day's notice as to our opening date. We were opened on Monday, December 6th. The deadline for filing is Tuesday, January 4, 2022 at 5pm. Our office can assist with the appeal process by providing comparable properties and directions.
- Assessor Kende prepared a detailed PDF to give residents facts and information for filing an appeal and posted it on our township assessor website as well as submitted it to Jon Pape for the Village as he requested information regarding the appeal process.
- Assessor Kende fielded questions regarding new sale prices and their relationship to a tax bill and appeals.
- Assessor Kende mailed out all previous requests for appeal packets with comparables and instructions on how to appeal to the Board of Review online.
- Assessor Kende announced that the Cook County Treasurer has made it available to pay one's 2021's first installment tax bill early by following this link: <https://www.cookcountytreasurer.com/setsearchparameters.aspx>.
- Building permits from January - July of 2021 have been coded and submitted to the Cook County Assessor. The River Forest Township is waiting for the rest of the permits to be corrected and resubmitted to us from the River Forest Village.

- Assessor Kende processed Certificates of Exemption.
- Assessor Kende updated the Assessor calendar and webpage on the River Forest Township website with Treasurer and Board of Review information and links.

Mental Health Services/General Assistance

Sarah Schwarting

- Sarah announced that all FY2023 funding applications were emailed out on time. They are due back by January 7. Two have already been submitted.
- 50 people registered to attend a presentation on addiction and recovery featuring the film, *Gray Area*, created and produced by Oak Park Author, Kelly Kitley. The 20-minute film was followed by a Q&A with the author.
- Sarah is continuing to look through NAMI resources.
- Sarah reported that agencies are continuing to struggle with hiring.
- Agency holiday drives were a success.
- Sarah worked Gary Arnold and The Progress Center for Independent Living to host an event at the River Forest Public Library on December 7; unfortunately, no one attended. They plan to try a different event at the library and also one at the River Forest Jewel Osco.
- One Mental Health Committee candidate has submitted an application. Another is in progress.
- Sarah and Supervisor Sloan are working with D200, NAMI and the Oak Park Community Mental Health Board to continue to plan the next Parent University which will take place in the spring.
- Dr. Chapple is the head of the Oak Park Public Health department and is extremely busy with COVID matters. She has hired Sara Semelka to head up the 2022 I-Plan effort in which the River Forest Township is participating. Supervisor Sloan is meeting with Sara to brief her on the 2017 Needs Assessment/I-Plan project.
- We have met twice with the HUB team to regroup. Healthy Community Foundation has offered their fellow to be the part-time Project Manager for the HUB.
- Supervisor Sloan announced that a new General Assistance client was approved in December.
- April Dugal won caseworker of the year from the Townships of Illinois caseworkers division and Oak Park Township won Township of the Year. Carla attended the award ceremony.

Senior Outreach Coordinator

Betsy Kelly

- Betsy is attending her regular meetings and sending monthly Community Connect emails.
- Betsy said that she began a new Circle of Friends group with newcomers to the Oak Park and River Forest area. They met at Buzz Cafe last week and will continue to meet every other week.
- Supervisor Sloan and Betsy met with the Park District of River Forest to brainstorm on new senior program offerings. The group discussed adding pickleball and mahjong to the program guide. Park District is open to other ideas for senior programming as well. Supervisor Sloan explained that senior Park District Programs really need a rec person to act as manager and keep programs such as pickleball running well.
- The Dole Center, run by the Park District of Oak Park at the Dole Library, has high level crafting programs for seniors in Oak Park and River Forest. Annual membership is just \$50. It would be great to promote this through the River Forest Park District communications.
- Betsy is planning an event on “Missing Middle Housing” to take place during Celebrating Seniors Week in May.
- Betsy continues to work on migrating to Constant Contact and plans to run a draft by Supervisor Sloan next week.
- In January, Supervisor Sloan and Betsy will meet with the Dominican University Dean of Students to discuss Home Sharing.
- Betsy reconnected with the Grace Lutheran team on the Fall Prevention Event.
- Betsy announced that Coffee Mondays and Celebrating Seniors events are planned through April and updated on the website.
- Betsy will be volunteering at a Booster Clinic run by Age Options. 50 people are registered so far to get a vaccine booster.
- Dementia Friendly RF held a training at the Sheridan Senior Facility.

Youth Services

Carla Sloan and Trustee Herrman

- Trustee Herrman announced that no meeting is scheduled for December. In January, a contractors’ night is planned. It will be on zoom and all who are applying for FY2023 grants will be invited.
- Trustee Herrman announced that the Youth Services Committee needs 6 Oak Park members; this may create voting issues on Oak Park-specific grants.
- Supervisor Sloan met with Jonathan Brown, the new head of youth interventionists. There is a significant uptick in River Forest requests. He has a very strong background in trauma and youth.

Supervisor's Report

Carla Sloan

- Supervisor Sloan attended the Administrator's Forum today. They met the new Village Administrator, Brian Murphy on zoom. The River Forest Police are training new police officers and installing a speed alert sign on Thatcher and Vine heading southbound. The Park District successfully held all their holiday events and youth basketball is starting up. School Districts 90 and 200 continue to deal with COVID.

Approval of Bills

- A motion was made by Trustee Taubman and seconded by Trustee Strom to approve River Forest Township Operating Fund bills as of December 31, 2021 in the amount of \$23,080.06. Roll was called. Ayes: Trustees Herrman, Strom, Taubman, Connolly and Supervisor Sloan. Nays: None. The motion passed unanimously.
- A motion was made by Trustee Taubman and seconded by Trustee Strom to approve the Annual Town Levy for the Town of River Forest for the 2021 Tax year in the amount of \$642,860 for the Town Fund and \$9,000 for the General Assistance Fund, for a total levy of \$651,860. Roll was called. Ayes: Trustees Herrman, Strom, Taubman, Connolly and Supervisor Sloan. Nays: None. The motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

- Vanessa Druckman provided an update of the website redesign. The River Forest Township Website Redesign Survey had 13 responders. She shared an overview of the results. She also stated that Hutchinson Associates provide four home page wire frame designs and that Supervisor Sloan, Trustee Strom and she agreed to select one with two images, one fixed for branding and the other to rotate on upcoming events. Hutchinson Associates also presented different interior page wire frame options and two versions were selected to provide flexibility of presentation between departments.

New Business

- Supervisor Sloan presented Dr. Jonathan Howard as a candidate of the Mental Health Committee.
- A motion was made by Trustee Strom and seconded by Trustee Herrman to approve the appointment of Dr. Jonathan Howard to the River Forest Mental Health Committee. Roll was called. Ayes: Trustees Herrman, Strom, Connolly, Taubman and Supervisor Sloan. Nays: None. The motion passed unanimously.
- Supervisor Sloan announced that Kristin Sneeringer's application to join the Mental Health Board committee will be presented at our January meeting.

Announcement of the Next Regular Monthly Meeting

The next regular meeting of the River Forest Township will be on Tuesday, January 18, 2021 at 6:00 pm. A motion was made by Trustee Strom and seconded by Trustee Herrman to adjourn the meeting at 6:54pm. Roll call was taken. The motion was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Druckman, Clerk