

RIVER FOREST CIVIC CENTER

Review/Accomplishments of Fiscal Year 2018 – 2019

Overview

The primary responsibilities of the Facility Administrator for the River Forest Civic Center Authority (RFCCA) are to oversee the daily operations of the building and address issues which arise, research information and make recommendations for building projects, coordinate the usage of the facility for various user groups and ensure the facility is being operated in a fiscally responsible manner.

Key Developments

1. **Feasibility Study.** As reported at the monthly Civic Center Authority meetings during the past year, a Feasibility Study is currently being undertaken to assess the needs of the River Forest Community Center and other selected key stakeholders, including various governmental agencies to determine the practicality and/or cost effectiveness of possibly renovating and/or expanding the current civic center building.

Initial discussions began in November of 2017 with additional meetings being held during the spring of 2018 to gather input to draft an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) to undertake a Feasibility Study. The IGA was finalized in May 2018 and presented to the following key stakeholders in June for approval:

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| a) River Forest Civic Center Authority | e) River Forest School District 90 |
| b) River Forest Community Center | f) River Forest Township |
| c) River Forest Park District | g) Village of River Forest |
| d) River Forest Public Library | |

Since the Feasibility Study will be paid from the Madison Street Tax Increment Finance (TIF) fund that is administered by the Village, all parties agreed the Village would also be best suited to coordinate various aspects of the Feasibility Study, including publishing notices and soliciting Requests for Proposals (RFP) to select a firm or individual to undertake the study.

In October of 2018, the Village selected Gil Herman, a RF resident who previously facilitated studies as a paid consultant, to conduct the Feasibility Study. Mr. Herman met with each of the key stakeholders to gather information and assess the needs of each respective organization. After meeting with stakeholders individually, a group meeting of all stakeholders took place on January 7, 2019.

At the January 7 meeting, each of the seven (7) stakeholders who were part of the IGA, and Opportunity Knocks who is a tenant of the Community Center in the building, presented information about their current operations and future anticipated needs. After the presentations, a group discussion took place to answer questions, clarify information and determine the next steps for the Feasibility Study. Although Mr. Herman indicated he would be stepping down at the conclusion of the January 7 meeting, he would forward all information presented during the meeting to the Village for inclusion as part of the Request for Proposals (RFP) that would be advertised to complete the Feasibility Study.

In February, the Village published a Request for Proposals (RFP) to complete the Feasibility Study with a March 8, 2019 due date for submitting proposals. A committee consisting of representatives from selected key stakeholders will review the proposals and interview prospective applicants in early April.

Since the results of the Feasibility Study could potentially affect the operation of the building, capital improvement expenditures during the past year have been limited to only replacing items that have failed or are critical to the efficient operation of the building. Once the Feasibility Study is completed and a course of action has been determined, a plan for future capital improvement projects can be developed.

Information and Accomplishments

1. Creation of the Madison Street Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District. In December of 2016, the Village of River Forest finalized the creation of the Madison Street TIF District which encompasses all properties on the north side of Madison Street from Lathrop to Thatcher, including the River Forest Civic Center Authority building and residential property located in selected adjacent blocks. To date, the primary developments in the Madison Street TIF District have been the acquisition of the Lutheran Children and Family Services property located at 7610 Madison Street and a residence located at 10 Lathrop by the Village. Prior to the creation of the Madison Street TIF District, Civic Center Authority trustees raised concerns about the possibility of the Civic Center building being developed for a different use and displacing the Community Center. Village officials assured RFCCA trustees it is not the intent of the Village to change the use of the Civic Center property and if a developer were to express interest in the future, there are public hearings which must occur as part of the overall process.

2. Capital Improvement Project Committee

As stipulated in the Lease Management Agreement, a Capital Improvement Project Committee (CIPC) was created to address the needs of the Civic Center building. The Committee typically meets 1-2 times per year and is responsible for assessing the overall condition of the building and making recommendations to continue the long-term efficient operation of the building. Given the age of the building, the CIPC recognizes that preventive maintenance and repairs will need to be undertaken annually to maintain the integrity and extend the life of the building, especially since several physical plant components are close to the end of their projected useful life. Based on this, the Capital Improvement Committee approved the following projects for the fiscal year:

- 1. Replacement of Two Rooftop HVAC Units.** After an analysis, it was determined to be more cost effective to replace the HVAC unit that serves Room 202 instead of repairing the heat exchanger that had stopped working. To save on crane rental fees (~\$2000.00/day), the CIPC felt it would also be prudent to replace the HVAC unit located on the northwest side of the second floor since it was 26 years old and in need of repair. To optimize the warranties on the new units, both HVAC units were replaced in November 2018. Preventive maintenance (PM) is undertaken annually on each of the rooftop units and has helped prolong their projected life expectancy. As a result of the success with preventive maintenance, the CIPC has decided to wait until a unit stops working before replacing it.
- 2. Replacement of Existing Light Switches to Energy Efficient Switches.** Although the CIPC approved a project to replace all light switches with motion activated switches, it has been delayed due to the difficulty of finding switches that are compatible with the instant start ballasts that were installed as part of the energy efficient lighting upgrade several years ago. As information, there are ~ 125 light switches in the building consisting of both single pole and 3 –way switches. The average price of a switch is ~\$35.00 and, with installation, it is estimated the cost to replace all switches will be approximately \$6,500.00. Staff will also check to see if grants are available which could further reduce the costs of the project.
- 3. Mandated Testing of Building Systems & Components.** Due to legislation enacted by the State of Illinois, several annual and periodic tests/inspections are now required for the building. Although the fee for each test or inspection varies, annual tests/inspections are required for the 1) smoke detectors and fire alarm system components, 2) elevator, 3) sprinkler system, and 4) backflow valve to prevent the mixing of sprinkler system water with the potable water supply. A “Lead in the Water Supply” test is also required and was completed in February of 2018. Faucets in two classrooms had readings slightly higher than the acceptable level and were replaced in the summer of 2018 and passed a re-inspection. Excluding any required repairs, the cost of the various mandated annual tests/inspections is ~ \$3,500 each year.

3. Building Usage

a) River Forest Community Center Programs

As outlined in the Lease Management Agreement, the River Forest Community Center is the primary tenant in the Civic Center building and is responsible for maintaining the operations of the building. The Community Center offers a number of programs and services, including 1) a child care program licensed by the Illinois Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS), 2) a preschool program also licensed by DCFS, 3) various tot programs, 4) a variety of recreation and sports programs, 5) birthday parties, 6) select programs for seniors and 7) full and partial day summer camp programs for participants ages 3 – 12. The building is open seven days per week, typically from 7:00 am to 10:00 pm although hours of operation may vary according to scheduled activities in the building.

b) OPRFHS - Community Integrated Transitional Education (CITE) Program

1. **CITE I.** In 2008, the OPRFHS CITE I program which serves young adult students ages 18-22 with developmental disabilities, moved into building as part of a Space Sharing Agreement with the Community Center. There is daily interaction between the participants and staff of the Community Center and OPRFHS which has helped strengthen the cooperative partnership between the agencies. Numerous comments have been received about the positive impact and benefit of the interaction between Community Center and OPRFHS program participants. Additionally, CITE I participants perform a number of tasks in the building on a daily basis, including assisting in classrooms, serving lunch, filling vending machines and cleaning various areas of the building.
2. **CITE II.** In 2011, the CITE II program which serves higher functioning young adult students ages 18-22 with developmental disabilities, was moved from a separate off-site location into Room 201 on the second floor of the building. Positive feedback has also been received from staff and participants about the CITE II program although there is less interaction between students and RFCC staff on a daily basis since many CITE II students attend classes at local colleges or work outside of the building.
3. **CITE III.** In 2017 the CITE III program which also serves higher functioning young adult students ages 18-22 with developmental disabilities, was moved to the 8020 Madison Street building and is housed on the second floor of the building. Much like the CITE II program, participants are often engaged in off-site activities although several students have undergone training to assist in the RFCC front office on a daily basis.

c) River Forest School District 90

During the past year, the Community Center and RF School District 90 renewed their partnership agreement for the D90 Blended Preschool program which accommodates 3-5 year old participants as mandated by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). Blended Preschool participants attend classes at the Community Center building and, much like the partnership with OPRFHS District 200, the program has been very successful and has generated much positive feedback.

Building Usage (continued)

d) Opportunity Knocks.

Opportunity Knocks (OK) currently has a five (5) year lease with the Community Center which went into effect June 1, 2016. During the past year OK hired additional staff to meet the needs of their two businesses which were created to provide employment opportunities for some of their participants; a) Knock Out Pickles which supplies pickles to several local businesses and restaurants and b) a catering service which is available to the general public.

Opportunity Knocks (OK) is a local not for profit organization which provides programs and services for persons with developmental disabilities and celebrated its 9th anniversary in February. OK provides an after school program which has 30-35 participants and meets three times/week on a year round basis. OK also offers a full day Life Shop program which meets three times/week and has ~10-12 participants attending each day. Both programs continue to gain exposure and generate positive feedback which has enabled OK to sustain their program enrollment.

Similar to the CITE programs, there is daily interaction between the OK participants, Community Center participants and staff, and other building patrons which has resulted in substantial positive feedback. In addition to sharing resources throughout the year, Opportunity Knocks and the Community Center have also worked together on selected special events in order to increase program awareness and to strengthen the partnership between the agencies.

e) Special Events in the Building

In addition to the daily programs offered by the Community Center, CITE and Opportunity Knocks, the following events were also held in the building:

- a. **April 16 -20, 2018** – RFCC Week of the Young Child with daily events and activities
- b. **May 18 – 25, 2018** – Celebrating Seniors week with various seminars and activities
- c. **August 21, 2018** - RF Township Assessor/Cook County Assessor taxpayer outreach seminar
- d. **October 26, 2018** – RFCC Halloween party attended by ~350 people
- e. **February 8, 2019** – RFCC Daddy Daughter Dance attended by ~400 people
- f. **April, 2018 – March, 2019** – various Early Childhood Collaboration meetings and training sessions and Illinois Action for Children training seminars. The Community Center has been designated as one of the primary locations for conducting early childhood training in the Chicago area. As a result, the number of training sessions has increased substantially and multiple training sessions are typically being held in the building each month.

4. Interior Building Improvements

- a. **Installation of Room Dividers.** The benefits of installing the room dividers three years ago continue to be realized by the increased number of building usage requests that are being accommodated. Not only has the Community Center been able to offer several new programs, the River Forest Township has also been able to expand its programs for seniors, youth and other groups. Additionally, the Community Center has also accommodated building usage and meeting requests from several other community groups including the RF Police Department FOP and RF Youth Baseball & Softball.

5. Exterior Building Projects/Improvements

- a. In light of the ongoing Feasibility Study, no major exterior building projects or improvements were undertaken during the past fiscal year. Routine maintenance and minor plantings were completed during the year to keep the exterior appearance in a presentable condition.

6. Previously Initiated Projects - FY 2018-2019 Updates

a) Replacement of the Flooring in Room 202

The recommendation to replace the flooring in Room 202 was approved during the 2016 – 2017 fiscal year but has been deferred due to other projects which have taken precedence and, most recently, the Feasibility Study that is being undertaken. Room 202 is approximately 1250 square feet and has a laminate floor that is ~ 20 years old and showing significant signs of wear and tear. Since moveable wall dividers and new window treatments were installed in the room in 2016 to accommodate additional programs offered by the Community Center and RF Township, the deteriorated condition of the floor is much more noticeable. Overall, the laminate flooring has held up well and it is the recommendation to replace the existing floor with another laminate floor product in a neutral color. The cost of this project is ~ \$ 9,500.00 and includes pricing for new flooring, tearing up and removing the old floor and prep work that may be needed. As agreed when the project was initially approved, the cost of the project will be shared equally between the Community Center and the RFCCA Capital Improvement fund based on the mutual benefit to each agency.

b) Security System Upgrades

In the fall of 2016, the security system in the building was upgraded and nine new digital cameras were added, three analog cameras were replaced with digital cameras and the DVR recorder was upgraded to accommodate the additional cameras and enable the system to record both digital and analog cameras on the same system. The recommendation to upgrade the security system was based on several factors including 1) increased building usage, 2) expectations of program participants, 3) advancements in technology and 4) the number of litigious actions which have occurred in general.

In the spring of 2018, the RF Police Department performed a site inspection of the premises. While acknowledging that many security measures are already in place at the building, the Police Department also emphasized no security system is foolproof nor will it be able to prevent all crime. Although very few crimes have occurred at the building throughout the years, the Police Department suggested additional security cameras would be helpful and could act as a deterrent to crime. It is anticipated the cost of this project will be shared equally between the Community Center and the Capital Improvement Fund based on the mutual benefit to both agencies.

c) Building Signage

With the completion of the first floor building renovations and reconfiguration of the front entrance and office areas, improvements to the interior signage have been discussed with the various occupants in the building, including the Township and Assessor, Opportunity Knocks, OPRFHS, etc. Although discussions have been held about developing a coordinated signage plan throughout the building, this project has been deferred multiple times due to other priorities. Most importantly, while coordinated signage would be a welcome improvement, the primary reason this project has been deferred is that there is functional existing signage throughout the building.

7. Miscellaneous

a) Roof

Preventive maintenance has continued to be done on the roof during the past fiscal year and it is recommended that additional work be scheduled for this fiscal year to help prolong its life. Based on feedback received from the roofing contractor, the roof is still in fairly good shape for its age and its life can be effectively extended with additional preventive maintenance work, although it is inevitable the roof will eventually need to be replaced. As information, a comprehensive roof inspection was conducted in 2004 and determined the roof was in good condition and preventive maintenance would continue to prolong the life of the roof. Although the report also projected that replacement of the roof should occur in 2008, the preventive maintenance that has been undertaken throughout the years has been extremely beneficial and has effectively prolonged the life of the roof. Similar to several of the other items which have been addressed in this report, a more definitive course of action can be developed once the results of the Feasibility Study are known.

b) Replacement of HVAC Equipment. As previously addressed with the Civic Center Authority board, the components of the HVAC system in the building all vary in age. As an overview of the HVAC systems, heat on the first floor is generated by a zoned boiler system (3 units) and a rooftop chiller unit provides cooling. Both of these components work in conjunction with a large air handler that circulates forced air throughout the first floor of the building to heat and cool various areas.

The second floor is serviced by six (6) rooftop units which heat and cool various zones of the second floor as needed. With the exception of the two HVAC units that were replaced in November, 2018, the other rooftop units were installed in the late 1990's as part of an energy efficiency upgrade for the building. Since 2013, the following HVAC projects have been completed:

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| a. | Replacement of Room 202 HVAC unit | Fall, 2018 |
| b. | Replacement of the NW second floor HVAC unit | Fall, 2018 |
| c. | Replacement of Boiler #2 | Fall, 2016 |
| d. | Replacement of rooftop compressor #2 | Spring, 2014 |
| e. | Replacement of the gym HVAC control system | Spring, 2014 |
| f. | Replacement of the Circuit Setter | Fall, 2013 |
| g. | Replacement of the main hot water system pump | Fall, 2013 |
| h. | Replacement of the air handler coil pump | Fall, 2013 |
| i. | Replacement of automatic drain valve | Fall, 2013 |
| j. | Replacement of various rooftop components, relays, etc. | Fall, 2013 |

c) Replacement of Miscellaneous HVAC Parts. As addressed in the Capital Improvement budget, and given the age of the HVAC components, it is inevitable parts will need to be replaced during the year to keep the various units in proper working order. During the fiscal year, there were several service calls to replace or repair different HVAC components. The total cost for the miscellaneous repairs paid from the Capital Improvement fund was ~\$7,500.00. In addition to the amount paid from the Capital Improvement fund, the Community Center also paid ~\$8,500.00 for other HVAC repairs and maintenance items.