

RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, November 19, 2019

The regular monthly meeting of the RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP Board of Trustees was called to order on Tuesday, November 19, 2019 at 6:00 pm by Supervisor Carla Sloan, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll called: Supervisor Sloan, Trustees, Karen Taubman, Holly Economos, and Helene Connoll. Also present: Clerk Abby Schmelling, Mental Health Services/General Assistance Administrator, Avis Rudner, RFCCA Administrator, Dick Chappell, Senior Outreach Coordinator Cathaleen Roach and Assessor Pam Kende. Trustee Mark Kelty was absent.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Economos to approve the minutes of the October 15, 2019 meeting. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Participation--None

Reports

Assessor

Pamela Kende

The following was accomplished by the Assessor's office:

- Helped residents apply for their Homeowners Exemption and /or Certificates of Error that they qualify for. Tracked down old Certificates of Error for people who have forgotten that they have already received and cashed them.
- Worked with Riverside to have our triennial reassessment meeting together and bring up issues that are similar among our two Townships and specific to River Forest.
- Input all permits and sales.
- Mailed out Exemption Waiver forms to buildings that are on the rental market and receive any type of exemption.
- Attended meetings with the Cook County Township Assessors Association.
- Worked with the Village to get a list of residents who have the Senior Freeze and Disabled Exemption for the snow removal program. The Cook County Assessor cannot give out the Senior Freeze list by law; but the Disabled Exemption list is available.
- Created a list of all multi-unit buildings in River Forest for the Census Committee. Kathy continues to attend the River Forest Complete Count Committee.

Mental Health Services/General Assistance

Avis Rudner

- Avis stated that grant applications have been prepared and sent out to the agencies. Applications should be back in by early December, with funding recommendations made by the Mental Health Committee to the Trustees in February.
- The Committee had a very informative meeting in early November with Kimberly Knake, Executive Director of NAMI (National Alliance for Mental Illness) – Metro Chicago. She shared NAMI's growth and expansion efforts, including those related to the 'Livingroom' drop-in centers in Western Springs and Broadview.
- Deana Hermann is the newest applicant for the Mental Health Committee, whom we will approve under New Business. Susie Narkis has resigned but is welcome back whenever she can return.
- District #200 Mental Wellness Collaboration, of which the Township is a member, hosted a Parent University night on November 13. Parents attended a series of three classes on relevant topics such as Screens and Teenagers, Helping Your Teen to Attain Balance, Vaping, etc. Between 160-200 parents were present and enthusiastically engaged in dialogue. The speakers were generally excellent. The attendance is very encouraging as was the initiative and enthusiasm of the high school.
- The Developmental Disabilities Consortium is hosting a series of talks for special needs parents and families at OPRFHS. The next one will be held December 3 when Sherri Schneider will be talking on benefits, SSI, Medicare and Medicaid.
- We had a half day strategic planning meeting on the HUB with all of the partners. There was an effective third party facilitator who understands the HUB and has a public health background. One of the outcomes is that we likely need to hire additional resources to advance the goals of the HUB.

Youth Services

Carla Sloan

- We will be approving two new members of the Youth Services Committee under New Business, which brings the River Forest membership up to four people, with three open spots remaining.
- In regard to the Youth Services Committee, there is no meeting in December but all grant contractors have been asked to attend the January 8 meeting to present their grant opportunities.
- Red Ribbon Week, which is the week during which our schools focus on substance prevention, was a success at Fenwick and OPRF High School. PYD (Positive Youth Development) staff engaged with Fenwick students during lunch hours to hold trivia contests, which the kids loved. OPRF's HYPE students led a series of different events

each day including a photo booth, pledge signing, and teacher activities during advisory periods.

- Positive Youth Development (PYD), our substance prevention team housed at Oak Park Township but working for both townships, received a Drug Free Communities (DFC) grant of \$625,000 over five years. It covers prevention of marijuana, alcohol, vaping and other drugs. This provides sustainability to the prevention efforts which have been built over the last three to five years.

Senior Outreach Coordinator

Cathaleen Roach

- Cathaleen and Kathy Elliot from the assessor's office attended the Complete Count Census meeting on October 29 at Village Hall. Pertinent to seniors is our proposal to have computer terminals available for census registration at the River Forest Public Library and at OPRF High School (the students will be on Spring Break) in late March, with trained helpers to assist. The group meets monthly at Village Hall.
- Avis and Cathaleen visited with Kelli Mitchell at Hinsdale's Wellness House in late October. The Wellness House has a very impressive array of non-medical services available to cancer patients and their care partners, for free regardless of home address or medication. We are helping with outreach for their Oak Park Rush Hospital weekly Cancer Support Group, and proposed programming coming soon to the River Forest Medical Center by Jewel.
- Cathaleen met with the Grace Lutheran Parish Nurse for outreach, last week.
- Coffee Monday on November 4 hosted two presenters—Annese Piazza, a local River Forest resident who is available for Medicare counseling for seniors during Open Enrollment; and Julie Moller, Sustainability Commissioner for River Forest. Both speakers were well received.
- Cathaleen conducted a Memoir Writing Workshop, Sunday, November 10 at the River Forest Public Library. This was the second prong of our three pronged Memoir Writing series and eighteen attended.
- Cathaleen moderated a Panel at Village Hall on Wednesday, November 13 with River Forest Police Department Officer Ben Ransom and SEC's Senior Counsel Emlee Hilliard-Smith. Fifteen attendees learned about Safeguarding Against Fraud and other Financial Abuse. The police department was pleased and would like this to become an annual event.
- Together with Concordia University's Gerontology Department and AgeOptions, the Oak Park and River Forest Township is co-sponsoring Holiday Camp for Seniors, with registration open now for the three day event beginning December 6-8 and held at Concordia. It is similar to the weeklong camp held in August and invites seniors 60 and over for a weekend of fun, learning and engagement on the CU campus.
- Our fall programming continues with CSAYL (Celebrating Seniors All Year Long): Sunday, November 17th at the River Forest Public Library, the *Boogie Woogie Kid*

performed from the 20's, 30's and 40's, with 48 attendees. Coming up on Saturday, December 7 at 2pm at the River Forest Public Library, local jazz musician James Callen will perform holiday tunes; on December 8 at 4pm, seniors and children age 10+ can decorate holiday ornaments at Creativita in Forest Park.

- On Friday evening, December 13 at 7pm will be the Sounds Good choir concert at Pilgrim Church in Oak Park.
- Carla spoke about the Village of River Forest's new reduced cost snow removal program for seniors in need. The Township is helping the village to identify seniors who may need the service.

Supervisor's Report

Carla Sloan

- Carla attended the TOI Conference November 11 and 12. Oak Park and River Forest Township Senior Services won Township of the Year award, which was presented on the morning of the 12th.
- Gary Cuneen's PlanItGreen will present a report card at the December 10 meeting. We are being asked to sign a letter of commitment to address climate change.
- Carla attended the Sarah's Inn fundraiser, Yemba fundraiser, and the Women Leaders in Philanthropy coffee.

Approval of Bills

- Trustee Connolly made a motion to approve Operating Fund bills as of November 30, 2019 in the amount of \$67,702.65. It was seconded by Trustee Economos. Roll was called. Ayes: Trustees Taubman, Economos, Connolly and Supervisor Sloan. Nays: None. The motion passed unanimously.
- Trustee Connolly made a motion to approve General Assistance bills as of November 30, 2019 totaling \$410.96. It was seconded by Trustee Economos. Roll was called. Ayes: Trustees Taubman, Economos, Connolly and Supervisor Sloan. Nays: None. The motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

- Carla presented a draft of the 2019 Levy, which proposes an increase of 1.9%, pursuant to the CPI increase. The total 2019 Levy for the Town Fund and the GA Fund is \$625,030 for the fiscal year beginning April, 2019 and ending March 31, 2020. Carla went through the draft and discussion followed, including a new Emergency Assistance program which will come out of the General Assistance Fund. The Levy will be voted on in December.
- Carla gave another update of the FY2019 Audit which Sikich is still preparing; a draft was sent but it contained errors and was sent back. File extensions have been made.

New Business

- A motion was made by Trustee Taubman and seconded by Trustee Economos to approve new River Forest Mental Health Committee Member Deana Hermann. Avis spoke on her behalf. Deana was approved unanimously.
- A motion was made by Supervisor Sloan and seconded by Trustee Economos to approve Kyle Coltri and Kelsey Howell as new Oak Park River Forest Township Youth Services Committee members. Carla spoke on their behalf. The motion was approved unanimously.
- The proposed 2020 Meeting Dates will be brought to the Board at the December meeting and voted upon.

The next regular meeting of the River Forest Township will be on Tuesday, December 10, 2019 at 6:00 pm. Trustee Connolly made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Trustee Economos. The motion was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted, Abby Schmelling, Clerk