

RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

The regular monthly meeting of the RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP Board of Trustees was called to order on Tuesday, March 16, 2021 by Supervisor Carla Sloan, at 6:00 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance followed. This was a meeting held both in person and electronically by Zoom, per Governor Pritzker's Executive Order 2020-7.

Roll called: Supervisor Sloan, Trustees: Holly Economos, Deana Herrman and Helene Connolly, Karen Taubman. Also present: Clerk Vanessa Druckman, Assessor Pamela Kende, Mental Health Services/General Assistance Administrator Avis Rudner, RFCCA Administrator Dick Chappell, Senior Outreach Coordinator Betsy Kelly.

Public Participation: Township Trustee candidate Keith Strom, Village Trustee Bob O'Connell, Fenwick student Angelina Squeo

Public Participation:

Village Trustee Bob O'Connell spoke during public participation to ask the Township board to hold off on making decisions about the RFCCA Building feasibility study until after the April River Forest election is held. Supervisor Sloan asked that he save comments about the RFCCA Building feasibility study until the RFCCA meeting, where it is on the agenda, immediately to follow the River Forest Township meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Trustee Hermann requested a change to the submitted minutes to say, "all agree to review the 2017 plan."

A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Hermann to approve the revised minutes of the February 16, 2021 regular meeting. Roll call was taken due to the zoom format. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Assessor

Pamela Kende

- February was a busy month with exemptions. The Cook County Assessor has changed the way in which residences apply for exemptions. This was an unannounced change for a complicated, time-consuming new process. Paper forms are not sent out. All prime exemptions need to be done online or by making a specific request to the Cook County Assessor's office for paper forms.

- We have helped many seniors get either their prime Senior or prime Senior Freeze exemption. We can do this by speaking to them on the telephone while we file for them on-line.
- We have received many inquiries as to when River Forest will open for assessment appeals. The Cook County Assessor estimated that we would be open for appeals in early February. They continue to change the estimated dates. The current estimate is mid-March, but the calendar has not been posted.
- Submitted an article for the Village E-newsletter. Updated Assessor's website with press releases, new information and hyper-links.
- Attended CCTAA zoom meetings.

Mental Health Services/General Assistance

Avis Rudner

Avis has been out on leave; we are happy to see her at tonight's meeting. Carla gave Avis' report:

- Held the March Mental Health Committee meeting on 3/2 featuring guest speakers from the Progress Center for Independent Living, a new agency applying for funding this year brought to us by Trustee Hermann. Shared mission and activities of Progress Center.
- MHC members completed virtual site visits of grant applicants and submitted brief write ups. Great way to involve committee members in the funding process even during COVID. Virtual site visits worked well. Committee funding recommendations to be discussed under the New Business portion of our meeting.
- HUB update. Linda Murphy, HUB manager, does a monthly report which shows HUB is slowly and successfully building a HUB user base. Virtual raining sessions were held with Amita Health and Loyola totaling 80 participants. Participation is up by 50% for zoom trainings vs. in-person. Users, connections and referrals in February were all up by 50% vs 2020 average and January 2021. Housing is the most popular service searched. Discussion ensued.

Senior Outreach Coordinator

Betsy Kelly

- Attending regular senior meetings including the Thrive Suicide Prevention Training in February as well as Arbor West Neighbors Network meeting across different communities.
- Also had the opportunity to meet with Trustee Hermann and Trustee candidate Keith Strom.
- Community Gardening opportunity for seniors - up until the end of March, any interested seniors should go to the River Forest Depot to be awarded a plot. Discussion on location of plot ensued.
- Planning upcoming Coffee Mondays.

- Received information from the River Forest Public Library about Celebrating Seniors All Year Long spring programming.
- Reached out to Village of River Forest as they are working on a seniors survey to ensure whatever communications I send out complement theirs.
- Circle of Friends meetings led jointly with Barb Bodner of Arbor West Group continue. Have been some bumps as a few participants have dropped out. Zoom is an issue for some participants and some activities are difficult over zoom. Learning experience and best practices will be implemented for future groups.

Youth Services

Carla Sloan

- Just received the funding recommendations from the Youth Services Committee at 5:00 pm, so we won't discuss tonight. Thanks to the Youth Services Committee for all their hard work. Will discuss in April.
- The Parent University is happening on March 24 at 6:30 pm by zoom. See flier in your packet. There will be 6 topics and parents will choose 3. Speakers consist of experts in those fields. We are hoping for a strong turnout. Once again, this has been a terrific collaboration with D200 and our mental health agency partners.
- Trustee Hermann asked for an update on what we are providing to D90 for mental health and youth initiatives as it was not highlighted at last night's D90 board meeting. Carla explained that D90 is promoting Parent University, youth interventionists are increasing the kids on their caseload, and we, in partnership with D90, are trying to step up the Support 4U outreach to the kids. Trustee Hermann added that D90 is gearing up for a big social emotional learning push after spring break. Discussion ensued.

Supervisor's Report

Carla Sloan

- Attended the Communityworks advisory board meeting for the OPRF Community Foundation. Very interesting change in strategy: instead of funding Success of Youth as a Community Foundation program, we are taking the money and funding community orgs who work in youth, such as the Y, Early Childhood Collaboration etc. Also still funding PlanitGreen and the Leadership Lab. Better utilization of funds to support existing programs rather than creating new programs.

Approval of Bills

- A motion was made by Trustee Taubman and seconded by Trustee Connolly to approve Operating Fund bills as of March 30, 2021 in the amount of \$15,237.50. Roll was called. Ayes: Trustees Connolly, Economos, Herrmann, Taubman and Supervisor Sloan. Nays: None. Roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

- Internet – Abandoned idea of installing our own internet with Comcast. Determined at the last minute that it would compromise our current IT structure and require us to have our own server, firewall and switch. Will continue to share internet/wifi with RF Community Center. Moving forward with new phone system.

New Business

- Motion to Approve **FY2021 Annual Town Meeting Agenda** by Trustee Connolly. Seconded by Trustee Connolly. Roll Call was taken. Yeas: Trustees Taubman, Connolly, Economos, Hermann, and Supervisor Sloan. Neas: None. Motion was approved unanimously.
- **FY2022 Funding Recommendations for Township Senior Services**, services that we share under the Oak Park and River Forest Township umbrella. Trustee Connolly made a motion to approve \$127,892 as the 2022 funding for the Township Senior Services. Trustee Economos seconded the motion. Roll call was taken: Yeas: Trustees Connolly, Economos, Hermann, Taubmann, and Supervisor Sloan. Neas: none. The motion passed unanimously.
- **FY2022 Funding Recommendation for Youth Services** - Will vote on it during the April meeting.
- **FY2022 Funding Recommendations for Township Mental Health Services**. Most agencies requested the same amount for FY2022. Housing Forward increased by \$500. Opportunity Knocks increased by \$3,000. Way Back Inn increased by \$1,000. Process Center for Independent Living is asking for \$3,000 to increase outreach to River Forest. Overall increase is \$5,770. Trustee Connolly made a motion to approve \$170,160 as the 2022 funding for the Township Mental Health Services. Trustee Taubman seconded the motion. Roll call was taken: Yeas: Trustees Hermann, Connolly, Taubman and Supervisor Sloan. Abstentions: Trustee Economos
Neas: none
- Funding for the Holiday Food & Gift Basket and for the Senior Programming at the River Forest library to come in April.
- Announcement of Annual Town Meeting to take place on Tuesday, April 13 at 6PM in room 206. Will be a hybrid meeting also conducted on zoom. Mary O'Brien will be our moderator again. Food will be served. The monthly township meeting will occur immediately following the Annual Town Meeting.
- Trustee Connolly made a motion to adjourn. Trustee Economos seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10PM.

Announcement of the Next Regular Monthly Meeting

The next regular meeting of the River Forest Township will be on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 6:00 pm. A motion was made by Trustee Economos and seconded by Trustee Connolly to adjourn the meeting at 6:43pm. Roll call was taken. The motion was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Druckman, Clerk