

RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, April 13, 2021

The regular monthly meeting of the RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP Board of Trustees was called to order on Tuesday, April 13, 2021 by Supervisor Carla Sloan, at 7:42 pm. This was a meeting held both in person and electronically by Zoom.

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

Public Participation: Township Trustee-elect Keith Strom, OPRF Senior Isabela Flores and her mother Mrs. Maria Flores, Matt Baron, Inside Edge Communications.

Public Participation:

- TOI Scholarship - Supervisor Sloan announced that Isabela Flores is the winner of one of seven Township Officials of Illinois Scholarships. Flores addressed the attendees and remarked how inspired she was to see a government body largely led by women and doing so much good in our community.
- Manager Sloan announced that RF resident Jim Norman has applied to join the Youth Services Committee. A vote on his appointment to the committee will be held during the new business portion of this meeting.

Approval of Minutes

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

Assessor

Pamela Kende

- Helped taxpayers pay their tax bills online.
- Helped seniors with their online exemption application.
- Fielded calls regarding Cook County appeal period. We were scheduled to open in February for appeals with the Cook County Assessor. We have not yet been opened. Our opening date has yet to be determined. We are fielding calls and creating a list of residents who are requesting an appeal packet.

- Sent out a press release to local newspapers, Village e-newsletter and Township website regarding exemptions.
- Attended CCTAA meeting and permit training.
- Completed 15 hours of a continuing education class.
- Completed fiscal year Annual Report.
- Completed the set-up of a new laser printer and 2 new computers with up-to-date software to ensure we can keep up with the high demand of the services we provide.
- Installing Constant Contact Software.

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:

- The April Mental Health Committee meeting was held on April 6th. This was a fairly quick meeting as it was election night. May's meeting will feature a guest speaker: Deacon Steven Dickens, a grief support counselor who was at Loyola until recently.
- The Mental Health Committee annual dinner will be in June. MHC member Jean Meister has generously offered her yard as the location.
- Supervisor Sloan shared an update from FRED, a parent support group for parents of children and adult children with mental health issues that received funding from River Forest Township in FY2021 to create a website. MHC member Jean Meister, who runs the group and the website, shared the following information with the committee:
 - 1,061 hits by 240 individuals since February, 30% of visitors are from River Forest, many others from Oak Park and other parts of Illinois.
 - Site has referred 19 new members to FRED, all but one are from River Forest and Oak Park.
 - Most visited site areas are anxiety and school refusal, crisis help, mental health conditions and treatment, a residential treatment guide for parents, and Jean Meister's blog "The Healing Powers of Good Times."
 - All accomplished with a grant of just \$2,400. Great impact for a small donation.
- Supervisor Sloan posted the Mental Health Administrator position on npo.net and received 3 applications so far. Supervisor Sloan would like to receive at least two more applications before she starts interviewing.

Senior Outreach Coordinator

Betsy Kelly

- This month's Coffee Monday speakers were Lydia Manning and Lisa Peters-Beumer and the topic was Dementia Friendly River Forest. Betsy has finalized the planning on topics for the next few months.
- Betsy also finalized the planning of topics for Celebrating Seniors Programming.
- The River Forest Public Library will be offering yoga in person outside this summer.
- Betsy sent out the regular monthly River Forest Community Connect.
- Betsy has held 9 out of 12 Circle of Friends Meetings so far. The meetings are going well although smaller than at the onset. Using Grandpads tablets has been effective. The tablets have built in 4G connections that ease internet connectivity issues we had at the start of the program. Considering applying for a grant to purchase more. Next Circle of Friends meeting will be in person for the first time.
- Betsy reached out to MatherLifeways to learn more about their programming as well as a Doctor at University of Chicago who is doing a lot of creative work around technology and older adults.
- Betsy went with Supervisor Sloan to meet with the team at the Sheridan Senior Care Facility. We will develop a joint flyer with the Sheridan and will be giving them masks, pens, jar openers and post-its with the River Forest Township logo.
- Betsy has begun reaching out to River Forest homeowners to connect them to relevant services. Planning to reach out to local hospitals to identify isolated older adults and assist them after discharge.

Youth Services

Carla Sloan

- Supervisor Sloan announced that we will vote on the Youth Services Committee funding recommendations in the new business section of this meeting.
- Supervisor Sloan also announced that we will be voting on a new Youth Services Committee member, Jim Norman, under New Business. At that point, the River Forest seats on the Youth Services Committee will be full, which is great news, considering there were quite a few empty seats at the start of the fiscal year.
- Supervisor Sloan attended the Youth Services Committee meeting on April 7. Jim Norman came as a guest.
- The Parent University was held March 24 at 6:30 pm by zoom. There were over 100 people who attended by zoom. There were 6 topics and parents chose 3. The Speakers consisted of experts in those fields. Topics included marijuana, mindfulness, mental health and well-being, how to finish the school year strong, executive functioning skills.

Supervisor's Report

Carla Sloan

- Update from administrators' meeting:
 - River Forest Park District - Memorial Day parade is cancelled. Feasibility study underway for expanded platform tennis facility. There will be summer camps, just simpler and smaller.
 - D90 – AC going into Lincoln and Willard this summer. In-person summer school will be at Roosevelt. Outside tents at Willard and Lincoln are for lunch, since the cafeterias do not accommodate adequate social distancing.
 - D200 - Returning to in person classes in 2 cohorts. Very close to selecting a new superintendent. Construction continues and building will be closed this summer.
 - Library will be back to full in-person hours soon.
- Met with Howard Brundage to renew insurance policy. Quotes will be reviewed at the May meeting.
- Annual audit is scheduled for June 16.

Approval of Bills

- Due to FY2021 end on March 31, 2021, bills are separated into two separate approval lists.
- A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Economos to approve Operating Fund bills as of March 31, 2021 in the amount of \$113,697.92. Roll was called. Ayes: Trustees Connolly, Economos, Herrmann, Taubman and Supervisor Sloan. Nays: None. Roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously.
- A motion was made by Trustee Taubman and seconded by Trustee Economos to approve Operating Fund bills as of April 30, 2021 in the amount of \$10,165.94. Roll was called. Ayes: Trustees Connolly, Economos, Herrmann, Taubman and Supervisor Sloan. Nays: None. Roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

- Statements of Economic Interest must be filed to the Cook County Clerk by all River Forest Township and River Forest Civic Center Authority elected officials and employees by 5/1 to avoid a fine.

New Business

- Trustee Connolly made a motion to Approve James Norman for the River Forest Township Youth Services Committee. Trustee Taubman seconded the motion. Roll Call was taken. The motion passed unanimously.
- **FY2022 Funding Recommendations for Township Youth Services**, services that we share under the Oak Park and River Forest Township umbrella.

Trustee Connolly made a motion to approve \$90,000 as the FY2022 funding for the Township Youth Services. Trustee Taubman 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 Senior Programming at the River Forest Public Library Programs** - Trustee Taubman made a motion to approve \$3,400 as the FY2022 funding for the Senior Programming at the River Forest Public Library Programs. Trustee Herrman seconded the motion. Roll call was taken: Yeas: Trustees Connolly, Economos, Hermann, Taubmann, and Supervisor Sloan. Neas: none. The motion passed unanimously.
- **FY2022 Funding Recommendations for Holiday Food and Gift Basket.** Supervisor Sloan explained that we usually fund the Holiday Food and Gift Basket program for \$1,500 but as Patty Henek has just stepped down as HFGB Coordinator, we have no grant request at this time. We will include it in the May agenda in the hope that a grant proposal will be submitted by then.
- **FY2022 Funding Recommendations for the General Assistance Program.** Manager Sloan announced that she is increasing the monthly general assistance flat grant from \$350 to \$500 to be closer to the grants offered by nearby townships, and to better support the cost of living in River Forest. This decision is at the supervisor's discretion. Discussion ensued.

Announcement of the Next Regular Monthly Meeting

The next regular meeting of the River Forest Township will be on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at 6:00 pm. A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Herrman to adjourn the meeting at 8:32pm. Roll call was taken. The motion was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Druckman, Clerk