

# **RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP**

## **Regular Meeting**

**Tuesday, May 18, 2021**

The regular monthly meeting of the RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP Board of Trustees was called to order on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 by Supervisor Carla Sloan, at 6:06 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, 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, Mrs. Strom (Trustee-elect's mother).

### **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Trustee Herrman and seconded by Trustee Connolly to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2021 regular meeting. Roll call was taken. Yeas: Supervisor Sloan, Trustees Connolly, Economos, Herrman, and Taubman. Nays: none. The minutes were approved unanimously.

### **Oaths**

- Supervisor Sloan administered the Oath to Clerk Druckman.
- Clerk Druckman administered the Oath to Supervisor Sloan.
- Clerk Druckman administered the Oath to Trustee Connolly.
- Clerk Druckman administered the Oath to Trustee Taubman.
- Clerk Druckman administered the Oath to Trustee Herrman.
- Clerk Druckman administered the Oath to Trustee Strom.

### **Public Participation:**

- Recognition of Trustee Economos's work for the River Forest Township.
- TOI Scholarship - Isabella Flores received a plaque commemorating her award of the TOI Scholarship.

- FY2022 Budget Hearing
  - Estimated Expenditures:
 

■ Town Fund:	\$	698,113
■ General Assistance Fund:	\$	15,500
■ River Forest Civic Center Authority:	\$	82,000 (component unit)
■ TOTAL:	\$	785,613
  - Estimated Receipts:
 

■ Town Fund:	\$	640,600
■ General Assistance Fund:	\$	9,000
■ River Forest Civic Center Authority:	\$	61,200 (component unit)
■ TOTAL:	\$	710,800
  - Supervisor Sloan gave an overview of the draft budget for FY2022, highlighting line items and individual programs. Expenditures exceed receipts, reflecting strategic spending out of fund balance. Final budget will be voted on during the June 2021 meeting. Discussion ensued.

**Assessor**

**Pamela Kende**

As Assessor Kende was not present at the meeting, Clerk Druckman read the assessor report.

- April was a busy month for the River Forest Township Assessor Office with exemptions and appeals.
- River Forest is open for assessment appeals with the Cook County Assessor, April 20<sup>th</sup> to May 21st. The Township is creating appeal packets that are being emailed or US postal mailed to residents. The Cook County Assessor has not yet given the Township the new data for 2021. The Township is using old data as only 60 PINS have changed in the 2021 assessment year. The Township is still able to give the best comparable property to residents. The Township is continually working with downtown to update our file.
- The Township is filing exemptions. Certificates of Error are now required for 2020 exemptions.
- Assessor Kende 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.
- Assessor Kende sent out press releases to the Village e-newsletter and Township website.
- Assessor Kende attended the Cook County Tax Assessors Administrators meeting.

**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:

- Supervisor Sloan attended the May Mental Health Committee meeting on May 4th. The guest speaker was Deacon Steven Dickens, a grief support specialist. He offered a wide range of information regarding stages of grief and more important, practical ideas for working through grief and loss.
- Supervisor Sloan announced that the Mental Health Services Committee annual dinner will be on June 1. Jean Meister has generously offered her yard as the location. The committee will then break for the summer.
- Supervisor Sloan announced that emails were sent to all the funded agencies, letting them know that their funding request had been approved and that contracts will be mailed shortly after the budget is approved in June.
- Eight individuals have applied for the Mental Health Administrator position. The quality of the candidates is very high, most with a strong mental health and/or social work background. Supervisor Sloan has interviewed 6 and is narrowing the field. She plans to follow up with three.
- The HUB website is encountering a glitch. It appears that Microsoft erroneously flagged the HUB URL as having security issues and is blocking Outlook emails if the URL is anywhere in the email, even in a logo in the email signature. Resolution has been difficult and slow going. It has affected some clients but not all. Has prevented us from doing new implementations and training. The Aunt Bertha team and other IT experts are working to resolve the problem as soon as possible.

### **Senior Outreach Coordinator**

**Betsy Kelly**

- Betsy attended the **Senior Citizens Services Coordination Council** meeting during which Compassion and Care talked about end of life documents and was inspiration for a future Coffee Monday.
- Coffee Monday was held outside for the first time which was an adjustment for speakers and favorably viewed by attendees.
- A new monthly three-part yoga class started outside and 22 people participated.
- Betsy also attended **Digital/Connectivity meetings** through Make Room at the Table-Connection with Loren Williams from PCs for People and Megan Heussan from University of Chicago about their programs to continue exploring connectivity for seniors.
- A River Forest resident who is a former AFS host connected Betsy with one of his former students from Barcelona to start a **pen pal program for seniors**. Most will write via email although one woman does not have a computer, so they will mail letters. Five seniors have signed up so far but more are reaching out.

- The final **Circle of Friends** meeting of our first group was held at the Good Earth Green House where they potted plants. It was nice to be together in person. The hope is that people will stay in touch. The next Circle of Friends group will take place in the fall, after we do more outreach with hospitals, OP Township mailing and RF mailing and figure out best practices.
- The River Forest Township is discussing doing a Circle of Friends program with **Mather LifeWays** in August. The length of the program is an outstanding question. Barb Bodner and Betsy will have a discussion with Lisa Evans, program coordinator on Tuesday.
- Betsy is planning a **Home Safety/Fall Prevention Event** in the fall with Grace Lutheran through Ruth Reko. Margaret Danilovich, a physical therapist with CJE and professor of physical therapy and human movement at Northwestern is a potential speaker.
- The **Handy Person Program** is moving forward. Only one handy person will be retained until demand is assessed.
- Betsy spoke to the **River Forest Fire Department** about their work around home safety (ICE packets, home inspection, CPR classes, fire detectors set up).
- Betsy is continuing with Community Connect Mail, and River Forest Emails. Soon to transition to **Constant Contact** thanks to the help of Kathy Elliot.
- Delivered meals with OP Township.

## Youth Services

**Carla Sloan**

- Supervisor Sloan attended the YSC committee on May 12. Committee meetings will resume in the fall. The committee is full in terms of River Forest membership.
- Supervisor Sloan met with YS Director Megan Traficano and the new River Forest Library director Emily Compton-Szak to review how the Youth Interventionists can work well with the library this summer and to go over other Youth Services programs.
- Megan Traficano also reached out to the River Forest Police Department to offer the services of the Youth Interventionists in summer camp counselor training and in assisting in the parks over the summer.
- Megan and Dominique Hickman did a wonderful presentation at the Rotary Council Meeting regarding the Girls on the Rise program which Dominique runs for Black and Brown girls at Brooks and Julian. The program works with the girls to promote body awareness, good decision making and is proving to be very successful. They hope to bring the program to Roosevelt next school year. Also, we plan to take the presentation to Kiwanis in the hope of applying for a grant.

## **Supervisor's Report**

**Carla Sloan**

- Supervisor Sloan attended the Sarah's Inn educational breakfast on zoom which replaced the annual breakfast normally held at the Oak Park Country Club. The breakfast featured two excellent speakers and panel discussion.
- Supervisor Sloan attended the Administrators meeting.
- Supervisor Sloan participated in an interview with the firm engaged in the search process for a new director of the Oak Park Community Mental Health Board. Supervisor Sloan provided input as to the qualities we should seek in the new director to replace Lisa DeVivo when she retires in September.

## **Approval of Bills**

- A motion was made by Trustee Taubman and seconded by Trustee Herrman to approve Operating Fund bills as of May 31, 2021 in the amount of \$35,057.78. Roll was called. Ayes: Trustees Herrman, Taubman, Strom, and Supervisor Sloan. Absent: Trustee Connolly. Nays: None. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Unfinished Business**

- Supervisor Sloan announced that Patty Henek submitted a grant request for the Holiday Food and Gift Basket Program for \$1,500 for Thanksgiving grocery gift cards after our April meeting.  
  
Trustee Connolly made a motion to approve the \$1,500 grant for the Holiday Food and Gift Basket program. Trustee Strom seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.
- Supervisor Sloan announced that Access One is scheduled to set up the new phone system in the first half of June, when the assessor's office is not so busy.

## **New Business**

- Supervisor Sloan announced that River Forest Township is renewing most of our insurance policies; costs are only up by \$547 per year, not including Director and Officers insurance which is still in the process of being secured.

Trustee Connolly made a motion to approve a new insurance policy with Schulz Brundage Insurance for \$9,257 plus an unknown amount for Directors and Officers Insurance. Trustee Taubman seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

- Rockford Mutual Insurance premium for the Civic Center Authority Building went up \$310 to \$9,310. No vote is needed for this expense as it is fully reimbursed to the River Forest Township by the River Forest Community Center.

### **Announcement of the Next Regular Monthly Meeting**

The next regular meeting of the River Forest Township will be on Tuesday, June 15, 2021 at 6:00 pm. A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Strom to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 pm. Roll call was taken. The motion was unanimous.

Our July meeting was rescheduled for July 12, 2021. The revised 2021 meeting calendar will be posted on the River Forest Township website, at the River Forest Community Center and at the River Forest library.

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Druckman, Clerk