

RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP

Regular Meeting

Thursday, December 1, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of the RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP Board of Trustees was called to order on Thursday, December 1, 2022 by Supervisor Carla Sloan, at 6:02PM. This was a meeting held both in person and electronically by Zoom.

Roll called: Supervisor Sloan, Trustees: Deana Herrman, Helen Connolly, and Karen Taubman. Also present: Clerk Vanessa Druckman, Assessor Pam Kende, RFCC executive director Dick Chappell, Mental Health Services Administrator Sarah Schwarting, and Senior Outreach Coordinator Betsy Kelly.

Excused Absent: Trustee Strom.

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Participation: None.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Herrman to approve the minutes of the November 8, 2022 regular meeting.

Roll call was taken. Yeas: Supervisor Sloan, Trustees Connolly, Taubman, and Herrman. Nays: none. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Assessor

Pamela Kende

- Assessor Kende said 2nd Installment Property Tax Bills are due December 30, 2022. 2021 Second Installment Property Tax Bills payable in 2022 have been posted to the Cook County Treasurer's Office website. Taxpayers can view, pay and print out a copy of their property tax bill. We are assisting residents in getting corrected tax bills due to missing exemptions. The tax bills are going to be mailed at the beginning of December.
- Assessor Kende said the Board of Review 2022 Assessment Appeal period opened on November 28 and closes December 27th. She and her team are assisting residents with their appeals.
- Assessor Kende sent out a Constant Contact notification the same day that she was notified of the appeal open and close dates. Her office has been inundated with phone calls and emails. She and her staff are creating appeal packets and answering questions regarding tax bills and appeals.

- Assessor Kende said her Constant Contact notification to residents has an opening rate of 69.4%. We sent the tax bill Constant Contact notice twice due to issue with our Township.org email causing bounce backs. We have corrected this issue and did not have any bounce backs with the notice that was sent out for the opening of the Board of Review.
- Assessor Kende updated the website, Google calendar, and submitted e-newsletter
- Assessor Kende submitted permits to the Cook County Assessor.
- Assessor Kende processed all previously held 2021 Certificates of Exemption now that the Cook County is accepting them for processing.

Mental Health Services

Sarah Schwarting

- Supervisor Sloan and Sarah reported that they had a meeting among the HUB funders to determine the direction of the HUB after the coming fiscal year and are making good progress on an action plan.
- Sarah said that OPRF HS Parent University was not very well attended, and topics were a bit dry. On April 19, an in-person Parent University will be held. Supervisor Sloan stated that marketing and outreach will start much sooner, speakers will focus much more on practical tips which parents can take away, and topic titles will be more engaging and will be better publicized.
- Sarah stated that she has received all Q2 data from the agencies and has mailed all the checks.
- Sarah said that she has sent out all funding applications, and one has already been returned. The deadline for the agencies is Dec 13th, and she will have the applications to the committee for review by Dec 20th. The committee will also have their site visit assignments by Jan 4th.
- Carla and Sarah met with Jenni and Sarah at Thrive to discuss reallocation of funds which are not being used for therapy services, due in part to staffing shortages. Some possibilities include supporting the salary of a psychiatric nurse, offering more support for Sibshops and offering funding to support QPR suicide prevention program at Trinity HS. Supervisor Sloan said that Thrive reports that Sibshops have 5 kids attending. We continue to look at new ways to promote Sibshops and help families to understand the benefits of the program.
- Sarah announced that both the Behavioral Health and I/DD consortiums will meet again in January and the plan is to return to quarterly in person meetings for consortiums
- Sarah, as well as Supervisor Sloan and Betsy, attended the TOI conference where Betsy spoke about home sharing.
- Sarah said that Positive Youth Development is planning to host a marijuana prevention town hall meeting on Feb 9th.
- Sarah announced that LOSS, the support group run by Catholic Charities for those who lost loved ones to suicide, resumed at the RFCC on Nov 21st and will continue to meet

here on the 3rd Monday evening of every month. An information flyer on this group was also emailed to the consortia members.

- Sarah said that Age Options in partnership with Senior Services is hoping to adapt a program for older adult mental health called PEARLS which stands for Program to Encourage Active Rewarding Lives, and this would be an in-home mental health program to treat older adults with various mental health concerns
- Sarah stated that school districts 90 & 97 have contracted with Dr. Doug Bolton to work on creating more inclusive classrooms
- Sarah said that the Concordia wellness program for older adults has been discontinued, due to the closing of the on-campus counseling center, so she or Betsy will be contacting Dominican to see if they would like to partner with us surrounding this idea.
- Sarah announced that the IPLAN implementation meeting, which will kick off phase 6 of 6 of the IPLAN will be Thurs Dec 8th at 1pm. Supervisor Sloan reported that there is a final version which has been approved by the Oak Park Public Health Department and she will send it out to everyone.
- Sarah emailed everyone a link to the RSVP form for the PlanItGreen leaders meeting. This group is trying to encourage more collaboration and cooperation between our villages and townships and also neighboring communities.
- Sarah announced that Richard Lim, long-time Mental Health Committee member and chair, has decided to resign; a new chairperson will replace Rich.

General Assistance

Carla Sloan

- Supervisor Sloan said that we currently have one client. The second client got a job after 4 months of being on GA and no longer qualifies. A new potential client applied today.
- Supervisor Sloan stated that the Holiday Food and Gift Basket program is almost done with their 2022 work.

Senior Outreach Coordinator

Betsy Kelly

- Betsy said that her talk at the annual TOI conference in Springfield went well and that she enjoyed the support of the Township team as well as partnering with RF resident Ruth Reko and Oak Park resident and business owner Tony Roeder.
- Betsy finalized the home sharing documents and had her sister-in-law, who is an attorney, look over and edit.
- Betsy stated that she still needs to find a background check organization and needs to get home safety checklist from the Village. She will be talking at STAR next week and asked the Community of Congregations and Oak Park Temple to advertise for home sharing participants last month. She will reach out to more congregations in the area including St. Luke's.

- Betsy worked on CSAYL flyer and finalized Coffee Mondays through April. She is sending out information to Jazmin at Township Senior Services for *News and Views* next week, including the flyer for home sharing.
- Betsy is hoping to start a Silver Sneaker Program at the Township Senior Services lunch program in the new year. Either Cheryl Green from The Sheridan will run a free program, or we will have a registration/demonstration with Oak Street Health's Tocarra, requiring a minimum of 15 participants.
- Betsy reports that Mahjong is going strong with instructor Liz Ziehl on Thursdays at the RFCC. 8-12 people show up each week. Regulars and some new.
- Betsy said that LOSS was back in person on November 21st and Cathaleen Roach came in to help support the program.
- Betsy stated that she and Vanessa will meet next week to talk about a mailing for River Forest Township Seniors Services as well as home sharing to take place in 2023. She added that she is waiting to do the mailing until the website is done and hopes to include our new Mission and Vision Statement.
- Betsy is starting to advertise the CAPABLE program, our new program with Northwest Housing Partnership where a nurse and OT will go out to the home with the home repair person.
- Betsy announced that Pickleball in partnership with River Forest Park District, led by Kelly Frank, will be starting next week at RFCC. The class filled up quickly. Supervisor Sloan added that 2 time slots are for seniors, Tuesday mornings 8:15 am and Thursday afternoons at 1 pm. Kelly Frank is renting the RFCC gym for the other mornings at 8:15 am for other pickle groups. The park district is handling registration and the township bought the equipment.
- Betsy is helping to deliver meals until they can get more volunteers. She added that for individual homes it really would be easier for volunteers to do with a partner; and that it is good for her to learn more about the different buildings in River Forest where older adults reside. Supervisor Sloan added that a few carts/wagons can be purchased to make deliveries easier.
- Supervisor Sloan mentioned that Concordia is no longer doing their Wellness Program for older adults because they no longer have their Counseling Center. She asked Betsy to reach out to Dominican to see if they could offer something like this with their social work students; Betsy emailed Julie Bach.
- Betsy worked on RF Monthly Email - sent out yesterday as well as the Community Connect Mail.

Youth and Family Services

Carla Sloan and Trustee Herrman

- Trustee Herrman reported there are no Youth Services Committee meetings until January.
- Trustee Herrman stated that contractor night will take place on January 4.
- Trustee Herrman confirmed that funding applications were sent out on November 18.
- Supervisor Sloan added that Girls on the Rise continues at Roosevelt with strong numbers attending. Dominique reports that 3 sets of siblings are attending, which is presenting an interesting new dynamic for Girls on the Rise. Girls on the Rise is interviewing for additional staff, so that they can start groups at Willard and Lincoln in January.
- Sarah, Supervisor Sloan and the Youth Services team met with the D90 social workers on November 29 to present to them about Youth Services, Youth Engagement Program and Girls on the Rise. They reviewed what the Township does and how we serve our D90 families. They reviewed some key programs like scholarships, respite, support4U and Sibshops. This was helpful since there are many new social workers at D90. They emphasized that the social workers are the key link to the families: we can have wonderful programs, but if the families don't know about them, they can't participate in them.

Supervisor's Report

Carla Sloan

- Supervisor Sloan announced that since no property tax revenue has been coming in, our Township operating account at Byline Bank, after paying November and December bills, is once again nearly depleted. Tomorrow, she will once again transfer sufficient funds from our money market account at 5/3 bank over to the operating account at Byline, which should last us for 2 months. Since property tax bills are due December 30, revenue will begin trickling in in January, so we should be fine.
- Supervisor Sloan went to the TOI conference in Springfield with Sarah, where they attended Betsy's senior housing panel, which Betsy did with RF resident Ruth Reko and OP resident Tony Roeder. Carla reports that it was an excellent presentation, and she was proud to have the group representing River Forest Township. Senior volunteer Pat Koko received the Volunteer of the Year award from ITASCSC, the state senior organization. and Dominique Hickman of GOTR received Employee of the Year award from the state youth association. Supervisor Sloan said that it was very exciting to see these fine women receive awards at this level. She took photos and posted them on social media.

Approval of Bills

- A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Taubman to approve River Forest Township Operating Fund bills as of December 31, 2022 in the amount of \$50,297.60.

Roll was called. Ayes: Trustees Herrman, Connolly, Taubman, and Supervisor Sloan.
Nays: None. The motion passed unanimously.

- A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Taubman to approve River Forest Township General Assistance Fund bills as of December 31, 2022 in the amount of \$4,000.

Roll was called. Ayes: Trustees Herrman, Connolly, Taubman, and Supervisor Sloan.
Nays: None. The motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

- Vanessa Druckman provided an update of the website redesign. She stated that the website build continues, and the team is currently working on Senior Services pages. Vanessa provided photos for each Senior Services page to Hutchinson Associates. She also provided feedback to Hutchinson Associates about senior secondary pages.
- Trustee Taubman said she had no update on the Collaboration Sub-Committee.
- Supervisor Sloan has no update on the new vision statement.

New Business

- Supervisor Sloan said that more information is needed from our insurance company before next year's premium is approved, as the proposed increase due to the higher valuation of the RFCCA Building didn't have complete information. To continue coverage uninterrupted, a decision was made to make a motion with a cost ceiling.

A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Taubman to approve the new 2023 insurance premium up to \$21,000 subject to clarification of increase.

Roll was called. Ayes: Trustees Herrman, Connolly, Taubman, and Supervisor Sloan.
Nays: None. The motion passed unanimously.

- Supervisor Sloan provided an overview of the 2022 levy which will be collected in 2023 to support FY2024 that begins on April 1, 2023.

Town Fund \$676,959 (increase of 4.5% over 2021 levy)

GA \$9,000

Total: \$685,959 (increase of 4% over 2021 levy)

A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Taubman to approve the 2022 levy.

Roll was called. Ayes: Trustees Herrman, Connolly, Taubman, and Supervisor Sloan.

Nays: None. The motion passed unanimously.

- A motion was made by Trustee Connolly and seconded by Trustee Taubman to approve the 2023 meeting dates.

All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Announcement of the Next Regular Monthly Meeting

The next regular meeting of the River Forest Township will be on Tuesday, January 17, 2023 at 6 pm.

A motion was made by Trustee Taubman and seconded by Trustee Connolly to adjourn the meeting at 7:17pm. All were in favor and the motion was passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Druckman, Clerk