River Forest Mental Health Committee

Minutes January 9th, 2024 at 6:30pm - Zoom & In-Person Meeting

Present: Phillip Buta, Helene Connolly, Elizabeth Davies (via zoom), Melinda Peterson (via zoom), Kathryn Schmahl (via zoom), Jessica Starck, MD, Angie Grover

Absent: Jonathan Howard, MD, Kristin Sneeringer

Staff: Sarah Schwarting, LCSW, Mental Health Administrator

1. Melinda called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m. and conducted roll.
2. Public Comments:
   * NAMI was unable to attend this meeting as planned; we will reschedule.
3. Elizabeth moved to approve the minutes from November 7th, 2023, Phil seconded and the motion was carried.
4. Township Report from Carla Sloan, read by Helene:
   * New website - the new Township website is officially launched. Please take a look! Hopefully you will find a cleaner look and easier navigation.
   * Mental Health Resource Guide – the new Mental Health Resource Guide was mailed to all RF residents and businesses in early December. This is an update to the guide which Jean Meister helped us develop in 2015.
   * Senior mailing - a mailing will soon go out to all RF residents and businesses explaining the many senior services and programs that the Township offers. We receive feedback that seniors often are not aware of the services and programs we provide, so this will hopefully help.
   * Both mailings provide a QR code to help people sign up for Township newsletters, including our Assessor newsletter, senior newsletters and upcoming general Township newsletter.
   * The Townships of Illinois (TOI) scholarship application is available. Illinois high school seniors applying to a university or college in Illinois for full-time study are eligible to apply for this $2000 scholarship. TOI is looking for seniors with demonstrated leadership responsibilities, social consciousness and a willingness to serve the community. Applications are due March 1, 2024.
   * The Township Assessor has announced that 1st installment tax bills are due March 1. This bill is 55% of last year’s property tax total. The 2nd installment tax bill, due later in 2024, will reflect the re-assessment as well as exemptions and appeals. Please contact Assessor Pam Kende with any questions.
   * We are assisting D90 with an upcoming parent night on February 1. This evening program is for parents of students with IEP’s. Parents have expressed a desire to socialize and network with each other, and to also learn about resources such as tutoring and therapy. Parents are also interested in opportunities to socialize with each other as families, including their children.
5. Mental Health Administrator Report – Sarah Schwarting:

* Sarah attended the Townships of Illinois conference in mid-November and participated in seminars on trauma-informed townships
* Our website launched November 10th!
* Parent University was held November 15th with an attendance of approximately 100 people
* The funding applications were sent to all the agencies on November 16th, with packets returned to Sarah by December 21st. The committee is currently reviewing these.
* Quarter 2 checks were mailed and now quarter 3 data is coming in
* We are transitioning to ACH payment for all agencies.
* Sarah renewed her LCSW and is starting the process again for receiving CEUs over the next two years on important topics like cultural competency and conflict resolution
* Our resource guide was mailed to all River Forest residents during the first week of December
* We partnered with the Village and Housing Forward to get packets of cold weather supplies to homeless people frequently encountered by our police officers
* Positive youth development is working on social media content
* Carla and Sarah attended the PlanIt Green leaders’ forum in December, where one of our high school students attended the summit in Dubai and we are continuing to work on climate awareness. Our new office chairs were purchased from a company that is environmentally sustainable – Office Furniture Center in Chicago. Other news in this area is there has been released a list of climate aware therapists which I will circulate to this group, and as we continue to make changes and updates to our office we will look at sources that are environmentally friendly. We have also made a huge reduction in paper waste around our office by moving many processes to digital
* We launched our first Township holiday card
* Sarah interviewed a new potential committee member yesterday, and pending board approval she will be joining the committee in February
* Starting January 1st, NAMI’s living room centers in LaGrange and Summit went to a 24/7/365 model
* Our January behavioral health and I/DD consortiums are coming up on the 17th and 24th respectively. The April consortium might be a breakfast for all agencies to come together on one day.

1. Addiction Recovery Team ­– Melinda Peterson:
   * Melinda shared that Positive Youth Development is going through changes and that ART make take a different shape in the future.
2. Other Updates from MHC Members: None
3. Old Business:
   * QPR training is upcoming on January 13th; several MHC members and IAB members are planning to attend.
   * The IAB is seeking new members, as is PYD.
   * Sarah reminded the group that funding recommendations are due at the next meeting.
4. New Business: None
5. The next meeting will be Tuesday, February 6th at 6:30 pm at the River Forest Community Center.
6. Melinda motioned to adjourn and Phil seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 p.m.