

MORaine TOWNSHIP, LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
January 14, 2021 7:00 PM

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. remotely via Zoom teleconference.

Upon roll call the following members were present remotely: Supervisor Anne Flanigan Bassi, Trustees Pablo Alvarez, Mark Haggarty and Amy Zisook.

Also present: Clerk Gail Feiger Brown (present at the Moraine Township office); Susan Resko (Josselyn Center), and Moraine Township residents Janet Freed, Adam Kahn and Bill Laegeler (all attending remotely via Zoom teleconference).

Trustee Wolfson entered the meeting at 6:00 pm.

Public Comment

There was no comment from the public.

Agency Presentation

- **Josselyn Center, Susan Resko**

The Township was thanked for its grant and partnership, which supports comprehensive mental health services, including outpatient psychiatric services, case management for chronically mentally ill clients, and teen programs, all on a sliding scale. Since the start of the pandemic, all services have been provided remotely. Last year, Josselyn Center served 120 Moraine Township residents, which comprised 10% of their clients

Approval of Minutes

Trustee Zisook moved, seconded by Trustee Haggarty, to approve the December 10, 2020 Regular Board Meeting Minutes. Voting Aye by Roll Call Vote: Supervisor Bassi, Trustees Alvarez, Haggarty, and Zisook; voting Nay: none.

Approval of Bills

Trustee Haggarty moved, seconded by Trustee Zisook, Approval of the bills for the period December 11, 2020 – January 14, 2021 in the following amounts: \$18,729.72 General Assistance Fund, \$49,317.07 Town Fund. Voting Aye by Roll Call Vote: Supervisor Bassi, Trustees Alvarez, Haggarty, and Zisook; voting Nay: none.

Action Item

Appointment of Ethics Commission Members

Trustee Zisook moved, seconded by Trustee Alvarez, Appointment of Ethics Commission Members, Keith Brin, Chair (3-year term), Dwayne Douglas (3-year term), and Julie Starkman Gordon (2-year term). Voting Aye by Roll Call Vote: Supervisor Bassi, Trustees Alvarez, Haggarty, and Zisook; voting Nay: none.

Reports

Assessor's Report

No report

Supervisor's Report Anne Flanigan Bassi

- Trustees were given reports for Township services for October, 2019 through December, 2020. Food pantry usage increased during December.
- Trustees were given Case Worker Lupe Somerville's updated report on COVID emergency assistance to date. Moraine Township has received 115 requests for emergency assistance since mid-March, and has distributed almost \$77,000.00 of assistance to date. Applications received in November and December were up substantially over the months since the initial April/May surge.
- VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) Program procedures are being developed to operate the program remotely this year. Volunteers will prepare tax returns for taxpayers with income less than \$57,000.00, from February 2 through April 12, 2021.
- Supervisor Bassi attended the January 14 meeting of the First Bank of Highland Park Community Advisory Committee and learned that Highland Park's Chamber of Commerce had awarded the Community Partner Award to Moraine Township at their December holiday celebration.
- Condolences to Door-to-Door Van Driver Ralph Ortiz, whose mother-in-law passed away.
- Supervisor Bassi attended the January 12 intergovernmental COVID meeting to discuss how our Highland Park sister governments were dealing with COVID issues with respect to opening to the public, staffing during COVID, and other issues resulting from the virus.
- Supervisor Bassi and Trustee Haggarty remotely attended the quarterly intergovernmental meeting hosted by the City of Highland Park on January 13. This quarterly meeting is designed to share information among Highland Park governmental entities and provide updates in programs and developments by each unit of government, and coordinate communication about resident services.
- Supervisor Bassi discussed with Trustees whether the Township should adopt a formal Temporary COVID Sick Leave Policy. The Supervisor reached out to Labor Attorney Burt Reiter who indicated it wasn't required but would be advisable. Supervisor Bassi will work with Attorney Reiter to bring a policy to the Trustees for approval at the next Board Meeting.

Latino Advisory Committee Report Pablo Alvarez

No report

Food Insecurity Issues Report Amy Zisook

No report

Food Pantry Report Anne Flanigan Bassi

- Trustees were given a Food Pantry usage report. Clients are adapting to shorter distribution hours. All regular weekly volunteer shifts are currently filled and volunteers have offered to cover gaps when substitutes are needed.
- Grocery gift cards were distributed to clients in December. Trustees concurred that during the COVID crisis we will continue bi-monthly distribution of cards as long as Community Chest funds are available..

- After exploring new Lake County emergency food grant funding availability, Moraine Township learned from the County that food pantries who partner with the Northern Illinois Food Bank are not eligible for grants from this program.
- The Food Pantry serves a heterogeneous population. Clients are given healthy nutritious food that we purchase and receive from the Northern Illinois Food Bank, and that we supplement with produce, dairy and meat that we purchase using funds from community donations.
- Thanks to Trustee Wolfson for writing thank-you notes to the many donors contributing less than \$500.00; Supervisor Bassi personally thanked donors contributing over \$500.00.

A huge thanks to Bryna Gamson, a former Moraine Township Trustee who is maintaining the Excel workbook of all COVID donations since mid-March; this is a significant amount of work we could not cover with existing staff or trustees.

Human Relations Advisory Group Report (HRAG) Gail Feiger Brown

Clerk Brown remotely attended the HRAG meeting on January 5. Everyone is encouraged to log into the livestreaming Zoom Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service event, which will be held on Monday, January 18.

Cemetery Report Cindy Wolfson

Cemetery Manager Donna Novickas is researching the characteristics of exempt cemeteries for regulatory compliance; at under 2 acres in area, Mooney Cemetery qualifies.

Phyllis Santullano Holiday Drive Report Gail Feiger Brown

The Holiday Drive was a huge success, thanks to co-chair Sue Kach, Staff Linda Contreras, Lupe Somerville and Sanela Abazovic, Supervisor and Trustees, District 112 Daisy Alcaraz and Jan Kleinfeldt, HPHS Aliza Gilbert, hundreds of sponsors, and other volunteers. Close to 700 children were provided with gift cards, along with grocery gift cards for their families.

Holiday Gifts for Seniors Report Cindy Wolfson

Trustee Wolfson and staff delivered 138 holiday bags. Many residents called and sent notes of appreciation. Kudos to Trustee Wolfson and Staff Somerville for their efforts on this program during a year when seniors are more isolated than ever.

Old Business

- **Amended 2021 Regular Meeting Schedule** Anne Flanigan Bassi
A discussion was held about amending the Schedule: correcting the April 22 meeting date, changing the location of the Annual Town Meeting to TBD, and adding April 8 and April 29 Board Meetings. The Board concurred with the changes. The Amended Schedule will be voted on at the January 28 Board Meeting.

New Business

- **Resources for Clients** Mark Haggarty

A discussion was held about best ways to ensure that clients are aware of available resources. Supervisor Bassi will follow up with United Way of Lake County to obtain their flyers about 2-1-1 phone and internet help to connect with emergency help and other social services, and flyers will be stapled to food bags distributed to Pantry clients.

Executive Session

None

Adjournment

With no further business to conduct, Trustee Alvarez moved, seconded by Trustee Wolfson that the meeting be adjourned at 6:42 p.m. Voting Aye by Roll Call Vote: Supervisor Bassi, Trustees Alvarez, Haggarty, Wolfson and Zisook; voting Nay: none.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Feiger Brown, Moraine Township Clerk