

## **Youth and Family Services Committee Meeting**

**February 7, 2024**

**Meeting called to order at: 6:10 PM**

**In attendance:** Megan Traficano Youth and Family Services Director, Idalit Zavala Youth and Family Services Administrative Assistant, Colleen Norton, Genevieve Grove, Debra Taylor, Joanna Skubish, Cal Davis, Deana Herrman the RF Township Board Liaison, and Margie Trybus the OP Township Board Liaison

Members from Senior Services Committee: Pam Mahn Senior Services Director, Eric Davis the OP Township Board Liaison, Maureen Delaney, Ruth Reko, Jim Flanagan, Lydia Manning, Valerie Lester, Jean Peterman, Carolyn Foster, Andrew Roskos, Margaret Nafiseh, Sabryna Joi King-Bell

**Approval of last meeting's minutes (November):** Genevieve motioned to approve, seconded by Colleen. Passed a voice vote (All in favor), minutes approved.

**Public Comments (if any):** None

### **YFS Director's Report:**

Referrals are up for the Youth Engagement Program; we received 22 referrals in one day. Evan Michel, our new township manager, has started, and he will be joining us for a meeting to learn about our committee and what we do. GOTR will start a 10-week pilot program at Lincoln and Whittier Elementary Schools. In our Community Justice Program, we have hired a CADC who has already started a substance misuse curriculum for youth.

**SS Director's Report:** New township manager started Monday. He made a presentation explaining who he is and how excited he is to be here. We are excited for partnership with the YFSC.

### **Liaison Reports (brief summary of OP & RF Reports):**

#### **Margie Trybus OP:**

We have been assessing how the Township can assist the migrant population that has arrived in Oak Park, and we want to make sure all their concerns are addressed. We discussed the budget, and the cost of living will be capped at 3.4%. We are excited for our new manager to get started.

#### **Eric Davis (Senior Services Liaison):**

At the board meeting we put together sponsorship opportunities and appointed our new Township manager, Evan Michel. Thank you to Megan and Pam for everything you have done for the Township and for all the work you continue to do. Intergenerational meetings just like these are strongly encouraged. A Services Committee member made a comment about the money being spent on the Migrants by the Village of Oak Park and Eric and Margie addressed the comment and let the committee member know the proper procedures to voice their comments directly to the Village of Oak Park.

**Deana Herrman RF:**

River Forest is moving ahead with an efficiency report, which they will be wrapping up and submitting soon. They also have a policy handbook; trustees are currently reviewing it. Carla Sloan and the mental health coordinator attended parent support group where they shared community resources and assisted parents with children with IEPs.

**Old Business: none****New Business: RF RFP Discussion****Connections River Forest Public Library:**

Colleen just observed connections last week, they have an afterschool drop-in program for middle schoolers. The kids seem to enjoy themselves and the lead does have everything prepared for the activities of the day, it is a safe space for kids to visit. Cal agrees the library does a great job at managing the kids' afterschool, he agrees it is a safe space for them to visit. Cal states that they have a good program, and they do good things. She is asking for a very specific amount, and usually does not ask for the full amount. She typically uses the money for supplies. Megan noted that Connections has always turned their reports on time, as well as their invoicing and award letter. Colleen says the program administrator is looking to bring in authors or speakers that would engage the middle schoolers. Cal says to keep in mind that middle school in River Forest starts at 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Colleen motions to fund Connections River Forest Library for \$4,908.79 Seconded by Cal. All in favor. Motion passed.

**I-Search:**

Discussion starts with whether the program administrator is paid by the River Forest Police Department, Deana declares they are not. I-Search is looking to bring in a teacher to review the curriculum to make sure it is appropriate and that it is all reviewed for best practices. Cal asked does I-Search include the fire department, Deana says yes, the fire department, a police officer, and program administrator.

Colleen says having I-Search at Contractor night was beneficial, but she still would like to add a question for future RFPs, and particularly for the RF Police Department regarding Isearch: "why doesn't your institution support this program. Why do they not pay for their program administrator fees." Cal asked how they are with reporting; Megan says they do submit their reports on time and are very responsive. The committee wants to know which schools they are in and wants to make sure they are providing programming to RF youth. Colleen asks whether they are asking for any supply money or just for the staff fees and Megan confirms that only staff money is in the budget. Cal would like feedback from the program, and they want to emphasize that the goal is for the programs to sustain themselves and Isearch has not made the changes to fully sustain themselves even with feedback from the committee. Deana says the educator who is involved in this does really like the program and works to update the program and make it better so that is a positive. Deana wonders if D90 can help fund and not just the police department and see if it can be a funding effort from YFS Committee, D90, and the RF Police Department – especially if the educators want it then they should advocate for it.

Colleen motions to fund Isearch for \$6,000 (\$3,000 for the program advisor, and \$3,000 for curriculum advisor). Seconded by Cal. All in favor. Motion passed.

## **Intergenerational RFP Programs:**

### **Intergenerational Mural Project:**

The discussion starts with a possible budgeting error in the RFP, and both committees wonder how much the Oak Park Arts Council is funding. Margie Trybus wants to know how many youths will be involved but it seems the program would like the township to assist on figuring this out. Pam spoke with the program administrator on a mural project, only regarding whether it was possible for a mural to be created in the senior services side. The commission received the application but submitted it with no collaboration from Pam, Megan or anyone from the township. Megan was not approached about the number of youth to be involved. Margie expresses concern that there is no goal focused on intergenerational communication, it is focused more on the product (mural) than the process of having youth and older adults interacting. Valerie (SS) says the design and facilitation of the program is not clear, the entire RFP is very broad and is hesitant about funding the full amount. Ruth (SS) would like to give the program feedback and ask questions before we decide on funding amount if any. Andrew (SS) and Colleen wonder if \$15,000 is even enough to complete a well-thought-out mural. Margie asks would finding an art teacher or a muralist to assist with this be beneficial. Andrew answers that it may be difficult to find a muralist who can work with both youth and older adults. Both committees agree that is a good starting point, but the goal is not clear through this RFP. Eric Davis, trustee, wonders why we would fund the village when we can possibly fund the township to have it done on our own wall. Pam provides insight on this: any project that happens regarding public artwork has to go through the Village because it must go through the Art council. The art council oversees and commissions all the murals, artwork, etc in Oak Park. The RFP does not mention how they will get seniors recruited for the project either.

Lydia mentions that for future intergenerational RFPs, we have to be very clear on what it is we want to see and make sure that it applies to what we are asking for. Margie asks how we can build on this now; the Senior Services committee would like to return the RFP with sufficient feedback including the definition of Intergenerational programming because right now it is not. Margie says can we request them to get a liaison to connect with the art council. Andrew mentions that this mural will be permanent and there must be more clarity on how it is approved. Colleen says when we ask for proposals there has to be a line between asking for new programs and also new programs that have figured out more of the logistics because although their new, they should have specific goals, objectives, and a plan for their programming. Both committees mention that the safety concerns with the program are not addressed in the RFP, including permission slips for youth. Lydia thinks it can be a beautiful intergenerational program if the program can accommodate the concerns we are raising and demonstrate their plan for the conceptual stage.

Ruth asks whether we can facilitate a meeting with the program to have them address the concerns and questions we have. Megan says of course, we can come up with questions and reach out to the program to receive these answers or Pam and Megan could meet with them and explain the feedback if that's what the committees would prefer. Lydia from the Senior Services Committee would be willing to go and speak with the program, and Joanna and Genevieve showed interest on being the representatives from the Youth and Family Services Committee.

The committees discuss whether they are approaching the program to re-submit for this grant cycle or giving them feedback and telling them to submit for the next grant cycle. There are scaffolding concerns

as well as possible liabilities (i.e. background checks for the adults) and these may be too big for it to be fleshed out for this grant cycle. The committee agrees they are interested in this program, but it may need to go through some reworking before they are able to receive funding. They agree to let them know of the feedback, concerns, and ask them to attend contractor night prior to submitting their RFP for next year. Lydia mentions there should be stipulations for the mural, but Andrew says it does not have to be specifically a mural; it can be broadly something art based and have older adults and youth come together for a different program. Genevieve motions to send Pam, Megan, Lydia (SS), maybe Joanna (YFS) to meet with arts commission and deliver the feedback. Seconded by Cal, all in favor, motion passed. Megan and Pam will approach them and express interest as well as all the feedback discussed and prepare them to submit a proposal for next November.

**Miscellaneous Notes or info: none**

**Meeting Adjourned at: 7:36 pm    PM    Motioned by: Cal                    Seconded by: All**