

Youth Services Committee Meeting  
October 4th, 2023

**Meeting called to order at: 6:14 PM**

**In attendance:** Megan Traficano Youth and Family Services Director, Idalit Zavala Youth and Family Services Administrative Assistant, Joanna Skubish, Margie Trybus (OP Liaison) , Debra Taylor, Tracy Templin, Colleen Norton, Cal Davis.

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

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

**Director's Report:** School has started, Staff is busy running their programs in the schools. Megan commented on parent university, it is an initiative distributed to parents with children in elementary, middle and high school. Be on the lookout for more information. Megan spoke with Chris Johnson regarding the best way for the YEP team to be in the schools. They came up with a plan to have a set day for YFS staff to meet with their students. Margie wanted to know how the students are determined and how they are referred to the YEP program. Megan explained that anyone can refer a student, it may be a social worker, parent, teacher, etc. and then there is a set day and time for each student to meet with their interventionist. No update on migrants, but there is Spanish Speaking staff available on the YFS team to provide assistance and resources to any of the refugee families if needed. Megan wanted to mention that GOTR has now joined Lincoln Elementary and the reception at Lincoln has been amazing.

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

**Margie Trybus (OP):** overview of the Decennial meeting: they are in the process of looking at the efficiency of townships and Megan has a key role since she is currently co-interim township manager. An overview of the services the Township has to offer: One of the programs they discussed was the EA program, which is a program that provide assistance up to \$1200, and they also provide energy and light assistance-- April is the GA Director. There are also resident services (RTA, notary, Medical Lending closet, handicapped placards, and voter registration). CMHB has services for mental health as well as work with the homeless coalition. The YFS has the GOTR Program, YEP Program, Community Justice, Hygiene Closet, and of course the contracted programs. The SS has many different programming that helps with aging and disability services, as well as investigations for elder abuse. We were recognized for our CHORE Program which assists seniors in completing chores and other similar services and of course we have transportation, nutrition, and activities for seniors. We also have assessor services available (property tax appeals). We spoke about intergovernmental agreements and the biggest thing we are trying to do with the township is visibility. We have always heard that people do not know what we do, and so these services and programs are an overview of all the township has to offer. Homelessness is on

the rise in Oak Park, so we have staff (Megan, Pam, and Yazmin) that are part of the homeless coalition and are working with other community members to combat homelessness.

**Deana Hermann (RF):** RF Township putting together mental health resource guide. Appeals just opened in RF, so the assessor is pretty busy. They are working with their Decennial committee as well and will ask Megan and Pam to assist in discussions. Nobody has applied to the River Forest YFS Committee. They are also still working on completing their website.

### **Old Business:**

Please submit OMA Training to Idalit because there are FOIA requests going around.

### **New Business:**

RFP Discussions are starting but we will not be voting until November. We can discuss whether we want areas of focus, caps on the grant money (last year we capped it at \$10,000). Megan opens up the discussion to the committee:

Margie says \$10,000 seems very low. Cal says we capped the grant money last year because there were some programs that were getting a high amount and others were asking for very little. Joanna would like a focus area, but Colleen says we got rid of the focus areas because we were not receiving new programs applying. Instead, we opened it up and this way we would get new programs. Megan mentions that we are not creating programs, we are giving the money to programs that are reviewed and then awarded. Colleen says the programs that offer scholarships for their programs are usually liked by the committee because \$10,000 in that sense goes a long way when 50 or more kids are able to sign up for a program with the money we are giving out. Colleen says that there should be clearer questions whenever an organization has a religious background; for example, there should be a specific question where they explain how that religious background works within their program. Last year we had a program apply for the grant, but they wouldn't explain clearly how that faith would be incorporated within their program and therefore were not given the award money. Colleen asked Has there been any feedback about the \$10,000 and Megan says all the new programs have been very appreciative and there has been no pushback. Contractor night happens in January where all the programs come together and the Committee is also there.

We automatically send the RFP to anyone who is our current contract, and we also collect emails throughout the year and then we do a big social media push, we will post the RFP everywhere possible and we do outreach. This way we make it known to anyone that would like to apply for the grant. Margie asked if there's extra money leftover can we put it back into a program, Megan says typically it just goes back to the Town fund but the Board would have to vote for a different allocation of the

money. Colleen asks how much money we will be working with this year, but there is no amount set yet. Last year we budgeted for \$125,000 and we gave around \$80,000-90,000.

Margie wants clarification on the evaluation of the programs, Megan says there are two reports: one in October, and another in April. In the first report we ask them for their initial goals, and demographics and in the final report we ask how their program went, and if the goals were met. For example, we would have SLAM in the past say their goal was to increase math and science scores and at the end of the year they would report whether the scores/grades for math and science increased (which the data showed they did). PDOP does a great graph where they show each program that the scholarship went to and how many kids were served.

Colleen would like to not put a focus area on it since we are not too big and this way we get a good variety of things. Megan mentions we have a great variety of programs this year. The committee feared since we didn't use up all our money this past year, if the board will be hesitant to give us as much money but it will be ultimately based on the township manager and YFS Director coming up with the budget.

November is when the RFP will be released. Please let people know to send their contact information to Megan and Idalit and we will be adding them to the email list and contact them when the RFP is released. The committee can meet with programs prior to submitting the RFP (not Megan and Idalit) but Megan and Idalit can meet with programs afterwards. Tracy says if there is a focus area established and we have a lot of similar programs applying, they can possibly all come together and learn from each other.

Margie says we should try to highlight some of the programs that are funded right now and Megan says we have done that in the past, where we would take photos and items from programs and then we would post them on social media. Joanna says it might be nice to do that again and use it for the new cycle.

**Miscellaneous Notes or info: None**

**Meeting Adjourned at: 7:22 PM Motioned by: Colleen Seconded by: Cal**