



OAK PARK TOWNSHIP SENIOR SERVICES

130 SOUTH OAK PARK AVENUE, OAK PARK, ILLINOIS 60302

Supervisor

Clarmarie I. Keenan

Clerk

Gregory P. White

Assessor

Ali ElSaffar

Trustees

Eric E. Davis

Michelle Mbekeani-Wiley

Ade Onayemi

Margaret Trybus

Telephone

708-383-8060

Facsimile

708-383-5168

E-mail

seniors@
oakparktownship.org

Website

www.
oakparktownship.org

SENIOR SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIPS

CALL TO ORDER

The monthly meeting of the Senior Services Committee of Oak Park and River Forest Townships was held on Wednesday, January 20, 2021 and called to order by Chairperson Ruth Reko at 7:04 PM.

Present: Oak Park Committee: Pat Koko, Valerie Lester, Joy Aaronson, Drew Roskos.

Absent: Oak Park: Michelle Thomas, Ade Onayemi-Trustee Liaison.

Present: River Forest Committee: Ruth Reko, Margi Rudnik, Lydia Manning, Jean Buckley, Ann O'Connell, Micah Hibler, Jim Flanagan, and Betsy Burton Kelly – Senior Outreach Coordinator.

Absent: River Forest: Carla Sloan, Karen Taubman-Trustee Liaison.

Also Present: Pamela Mahn, Director for Senior Services of Oak Park & River Forest Townships; Yazmin Morales, Information & Assistance Specialist.

INTRODUCTIONS

Ruth Reko began introductions; Mr. Drew Roskos and Yazmin Morales are new to the meeting. All the attendees had the opportunity to say their names and the Township they represent.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jim Flanagan, Community Member/Concordia University Faculty; commented on the direction Concordia University is taking regarding the Gerontology program and the cuts they recently made. The Committee asked for a brief update on the situation. Jim asked Dr. Manning to take the lead.

Dr. Manning thanked everyone that helped to put together a letter of endorsement for the Gerontology Department at Concordia University. The department will continue with the program, but administration has decided to eliminate Dr. Manning's position, effective January 4th, 2021. No further information regarding who will be covering her duties was provided, she encouraged everyone to reach out to the Gerontology Program if the program presence is missing. Dr. Manning stated that she will continue as a Community Member, Gerontologist, and as a River Forest resident, with her commitment

for Advocacy and the Service of older adults, she will remain in her community current positions.

Pamela Mahn offered to follow up with the University asking where to direct inquiries and share the response with the group. The Committee acknowledged all the work Dr. Manning has done on behalf of older adults in Oak Park and River Forest and thanked her for her leadership.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The committee reviewed the minutes from October 21, 2020 meeting. Patricia Koko moved to approve the minutes. Joy Aaronson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

RFT LIAISON'S REPORT

Betsy Burton-Kelly presented the report:

- Thrive is having a suicide prevention training on February 18, 2021, for people that care or work with older adults.
- Pamela, Carla and Betsy met with Amanda- Sales Director and Amanda-Executive Director at the Sheridan in River Forest. Information regarding their program was shared. Might be a great partner to collaborate with, they have a great space that can be used in the future.
- Through Pamela's work with Northwest Housing Partnership the Repair Program will begin. The Village of River Forest has agreed to moving forward with the program.
- In her position as the Outreach Coordinator, Betsy has been working on how to reach out to people during this time. Betsy attended a meeting at the University of St. Louis to talk about a program, "Circle of Friends" reaching out to adults to meet once a week for 12 weeks. The focus of the program is to build relationships and foster continued relationships after the program concludes. The program may launch in early February.
- Providing clients with Covid 19 vaccine information and directing them to the Cook County Website and RF Jewel Osco for updates.

OPT LIAISON'S REPORT

Pamela Mahn presented the report- non-official report:

- The Township is currently working on a program with all staff to build culture and climate for the organization.
- The Township fiscal year begins April 1st. Work on the budget has begun and will be presented to the Board for approval.
- The Home Repair Service has been approved by the Township boards in Oak Park and River Forest. When reaching out to the Village of Oak Park, we've been informed that it has yet to be presented to the Village Board as part of the Aging in Place Commission plan.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Mahn presented a written Director's Report to the committee. Pamela highlighted the following:

- The Township has hired new staff and had some internal promotions. Three positions remain open, including a Part-time Receptionist, a Full-time Billing/ Care Coordination Specialist, and a Part-Time Food Service worker.
- End of the quarter Age Options reports have been submitted for the federally funded Programs.
- We are working on getting the priority team members vaccinated – those with current face to face contact with older adults. Care coordinators, Adult Protective Services and Money Management Program staff are designated as phase 1a, due to face to face contact. Other staff also having some direct contact would be in the next phase. The Township is not requiring the vaccine at this time, but about 65 names had been submitted for vaccination and about 50% of staff are willing to take the vaccine at this time.
- There have been many participants calls, regarding the vaccine and getting on a list, unfortunately for the Village of Oak Park informed there is no current list.
- The Sheridan meeting provided some opportunities for partnership in the future.
- A letter of Endorsement to Concordia University was put together to show community support, it will be shared with the committee.
- Foster Grandparent applications are in progress, there are currently three Foster Grand Parents interested on going through the training. Flyers will be sent to find more people interested in this program.
- More people from the Memory Café and Great Neighbors programs have been signed up for tablets from a grant received from the Community Foundation.
- Eagle Scouts currently working with the Township, to do a positive messaging project. Valerie Lester and Drew Roskos volunteered to participate in the call with the troop next week.
- The Home Repair project has been approved by the Village of River Forest, Oak Park Township and River Forest Township. We are awaiting information from the Village of Oak Park regarding when they will bring the program to the Village Board for approval.

SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES

Celebrating Seniors

Patricia Koko reported that it has been busy, as for the last 9 years they have been building a fund that would help others. Mr. R.H a member of the coalition was making a wish list with not a lot of success due to current situation, many of the Seniors of the community were referred. Fortunately, Seniors that were not added to this list were added and received a gift. In the meantime, they were signed up for the Answer Book for 2021 and an article was written regarding how this was done based on the grants provided. Final numbers for Donut Day are roughly \$3,000, some information has been shared with the organizer regarding the commitment established and how it has and will be handled moving forward, some suggestions were provided by Jim Flanagan.

Great Neighbors

Margi Rudnik has resigned from this committee and has not been involved. Pamela

reported that there has been some stagnation with the program, difficulty with participants creating one-one connections. Circle of Friends program might be a good opportunity to offer to the participants of Great Neighbors. Ruth shared a successful story and her opinion regarding the program. Circle of Friends program depends on the response, a 12-week program that hopes that the build relationship continues after the program ends.

Dementia Friendly Communities

Lydia will continue to co-convene along with Hellen Kwan. Concordia University Center for Gerontology will continue to participate as well. Programs/trainings are ready to be provided and are available at their websites. Next meeting for DFRF would be Monday January 25th at 1:30pm. Pamela reports that the meetings for DFOP have been cancelled for now, as the Village handles all ongoing Covid 19 vaccination preparations. Videos for business trainings were to be posted on their website, as they had feedback from local businesses. The township will move forward on training staff as Dementia Friends. Ruth reflected on the progress made by both Townships.

OTHER BUSINESS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Patricia Koko reminded everyone that Valerie Lester is running for OP Town Trustee and has signs available for purchase to support her campaign.
- The Arms is reaching out to local CVS to get residents vaccinated in the building.
- Patricia mentioned that she will be attending the Senior Citizens' Services Coordination Council meeting tomorrow regarding reinventing area convents in to shared living spaces for older adults. Anyone interested in attending should email Patricia for her to share the link.
- Pamela was acknowledged and congratulated for the honor she received from the Illinois Township Association of Senior Citizen Services Committees as the Senior Services Director of the Year.
- Arbor West Neighbors will be Trustee candidate forums to hear where Village and Township trustees stand on different issues affecting other adults in the community. Questions can be directed to Betsy.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Senior Committee is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 7:00pm.

ADJOURNMENT

Ruth Reko adjourned the meeting at 8:05 PM.