

SENIOR SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIPS

CALL TO ORDER

The quarterly meeting of the Senior Services Committee of Oak Park and River Forest Townships was held on Wednesday, March, 2014 and called to order at 7:06 p.m.

Present Oak Park Committee: Dr. Kenneth Blair; Barbara Coats; Patricia Koko; Mary Marling; Sandra Rowe; Dr. Lydia Manning; Ade Onayemi, Trustee Liaison

Absent Oak Park Committee:

Present River Forest Committee: James Flanagan; Dr. Katherine Walsh; Carol Cox; Mary Therese Small; Linda Ryan; Chris Hauri; Jean Buckley; Carla Sloan, River Forest Township Supervisor

Absent River Forest: None

Also Present: Desiree Scully-Simpkins, Director for Senior Services of Oak Park & River Forest Townships; Pamela Mahn, Administrative Associate for Senior Services of Oak Park & River Forest Townships.

INTRODUCTIONS

None.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the November 20, 2013 meeting. Dr. Ken Blair moved to approve the minutes. Patricia Koko seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

RFT LIAISON'S REPORT

Supervisor Sloan reported the following:

- State Representative Chris Welch has sponsored House Bill 4425 to eliminate River Forest Township. Supervisor Sloan discussed the tentative progression for the decision making process. She stated that the Township will continue to do the good work that it's doing for the residents. She discussed the recent elimination of a small, coterminous township eliminated due to wasteful spending and duplication of services. She explained that River Forest receives only 1% of the total tax bill and provides strong, effective and efficient services with a singular focus on human services. She is looking to all of the committee members to be a support base for the Township and provide potential assistance if the need should arise.

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- Supervisor Sloan and Committee member Chris Hauri are doing a workshop.
- River Forest Township and the River Forest Library are co-sponsoring coffees and computer lab classes for seniors.
- Supervisor Sloan is working on a six-month long program series called “Let’s Celebrate Seniors All Year Long”. From June through November 2014 there will be programs held either at the library or the community center in River Forest. A heart healthy cooking program will be one of the various programs offered.
- Supervisor Sloan had an interview with the Wednesday Journal regarding the River Forest Township elimination issue.

The Committee discussed various options to raise awareness of Township services and educate the public about the effective and efficient use of taxpayer dollars to provide service to seniors, youth, mentally ill, financially struggling, along with those who seek assistance understanding their property taxes.

- The River Forest Park District offered the Township advertising space in their summer guide.
- The Township resource guide “What Does Your Township Do For You” has been mailed.
- A utility bill workshop was recently held at the River Forest Community Center.
- Supervisor Sloan thanked Director Scully-Simpkins, Pamela Mahn and everyone at Oak Park Township who has provided assistance to gather information for the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests recently made to River Forest Township.

OPT LIAISON’S REPORT

Trustee Onayemi reported the following:

- The various department directors are presenting their FY 2015 budgets to the Town Board. Director Scully-Simpkins has already presented the Senior Services budget. The Town Board will vote on the budget in its’ entirety in May.
- The Town Board began their strategic planning process in the fall. Questionnaires and interviews were completed with various partners, stakeholders and leaders of various taxing bodies. Staff was also provided an opportunity for input. The Township will then be gathering all of the information and looking at ways to further educate stakeholders regarding services and finally wrapping up the process.
 - Topics covered included:
 - How people understand the mission of the Township
 - The effectiveness of the Township
 - Collaboration – continued and new
 - Township challenges – how to be proactive
 - New directions, new grants and ways to supplement funding rather than increasing tax burden

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DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director's reports were included in the committee packets mailed to members. The committee discussed the reports. Director Scully-Simpkins reported the following:

- The Township has approved Senior Services case management staff to keep cases open up to 90 days for those participants aged eighteen to fifty nine.
- The Coordinated Care Alliance (CCA) signed a contract with Blue Cross and Blue Shield on March 11. There are contracts with other Managed Care Organization (MCO's) currently in place for other service areas many of which are down state. Senior Services is committed to serving the residents of Oak Park and River Forest – we want to assess the needs of the residents and ensure their needs are being met.
- Letters have gone out to residents considered dual- eligible.
- Various case management staff have attended necessary trainings to handle the changes.
- AgeOptions has provided one time funding for delivery bags used in the Home Delivered Meals program and for chairs used in the Congregate Dining site. There may also be some funding available to assist participants with hoarding issues.

SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES

Celebrating Seniors Sub-Committee

- Celebrating Seniors Week is scheduled for May 15-22, 2014.
- There are over forty events scheduled during that week covering a wide variety of topics including musical reviews, aging gracefully and a tour of Florence.
- The yard signs for Celebrating Seniors Week are here and available at various distribution sites throughout our communities – to be listed on the website www.celebratingseniors.net.
- Over ninety residents have been nominated for the “Sixty Over Sixty – Class of 2014”.
- Ribbon Fest will be held May 8, 2014 at the Nineteenth Century Club.
- Harry Porterfield will speak at the closing luncheon.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Senior Committee will be held on Wednesday, June 18, 2014 at 7:00 pm in the Senior Services 1st floor meeting room at 130 S. Oak Park Avenue.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Flanagan adjourned the meeting at 8:08 p.m.