



Supervisor Bonnie Kahn Ognisanti called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge: The pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll call: Clerk Levy called the roll (*A quorum was present*).

Supervisor Bonnie Kahn Ognisanti	Present
Clerk Charles Levy	Present
Trustee Donald Gelfund	Present
Trustee Mark Collins	Present
Trustee Peggy Tolleson	Present
Trustee Kitty Kendrick	Present

Assessor Scott Bagnall	Present
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Staff Members:

Administrator Rick Krier	Present
Township Attorney Ross Secler	Present
Deputy Clerk Sandie Capsuto	Present
Public Relations Director Mike Isaacs	Present

Trustee Collins **moved** and Trustee Kendrick **seconded** to approve the minutes from the August 14, 2023 Board Meeting. **Motion passed by roll call. All Ayes.**

Supervisor Kahn Ognisanti introduced Andrew Jose from Green Associates. He reviewed the recommended changes to our building for renovation. He was very thorough and answered all questions. The expected date to go out for Bid is September 15, 2023 and Bid opening October 11, 2023. Briefly, here is a description of some of the proposed changes. What is now the kitchen will become an office space for people to meet with our Senior Legal Council, Tamara Kushnir Groman, and hopefully, we can bring back some services from Immigration and Legal Aide. We will have a kitchen area that will be moved to what is now the Lee Tamraz Room, and that will also become the Board Room. We are hoping to use the new kitchen area to conduct classes on nutrition. What is now the BoardRoom will become more office space with a pull down

screen to take Passport Pictures. The receptionist will have a window in which she/he can buzz people into the service area that they are requesting, as well as a public washroom. For security purposes all of the doors will be locked, and can be opened by the receptionist using a buzzer system. Mr. Jose said he expects work to begin at the end of January 2024 and be completed in April, 2024. Each section of the building will be renovated one phase at a time. The proposed plans did not include the renovation to upgrade the elevator, however, the alarm system that includes the elevator is included in the proposed cost. He estimated that an additional \$150,000.00 would cover the cost of the elevator. The total anticipated cost will be \$832,670.16. We have funds in our capital Reserve, from a previous award that will cover \$750,000.00 of this amount. Supervisor Kahn Ognisanti is working on a proposal for another grant through Representative Kevin Olickal's office to cover the additional \$150,000.00, though this is not guaranteed. We have enough money available to cover capital expenditures should the need arise. Trustee Gelfund **moved** and Supervisor Kahn Ognisanti **seconded the motion** to approve Green & Associates to proceed with finalizing, posting, and publishing, an invitation to Bid and related bid documents regarding the proposed Township Building renovation project with specifications as directed by the Township Board and in compliance with all applicable laws, with direction to the Township Clerk to conduct any required bid opening processes. **Motion passed by roll call. All Ayes.**

REPORTS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Clerk Levy: Clerk Levy reminded everyone about the 116th Annual Educational Conference taking place in Springfield on November 12-14th, 2023. He suggested anyone wishing to attend to contact Administrator Rick Krier to file the necessary paperwork. As of now Clerk Levy, Supervisor Kahn Ognisanti, Trustee Mark Collins, and Social Work Intern Jennifer Lamantia are signed up to attend.

Assessor Scott Bagnall: No Report

Trustee Tolleson: No Report

Trustee Gelfund: Trustee Gelfund read a letter of appreciation to Niles Township for contributing and participating in the National Night Out in Lincolnwood from the Lincolnwood Chief of Police, Jay Parrott. Trustee Tolleson also received a letter of appreciation from Chief Baker from the Skokie Police Department.

Trustee Gelfund reported on the success of the Backlot Bash and the Pancake Breakfast.

Trustee Kendrick: No report.

Trustee Collins: No report

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT: Supervisor Bonnie Kahn Ognisanti, along with our social workers gave a tour of the Respite Center to State Senator Laura Fine, her staff, and State Representative Jennifer Gong Gershowitz and her staff. The tour lasted two hours and afterward was followed by discussion about policy and community concerns. Supervisor Kahn Ognisanti emphasized that the homeless people we serve are not "in " our community, but rather "of " our community. Though we haven't found housing for everyone, we make sure that everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We've seen many changes over the several months (almost a year) that the Respite Center has been open. Senator Laura Fine is working with us in acquiring a grant of \$250,000.00 to cover the cost of hiring a permanent Mental Health Counselor to be present at the Respite Center on a daily basis. Many of the homeless do not have any shelter during the night, not even from places that offer overnight shelters. Along with being homeless, many suffer from mental health issues. Representative Jennifer Gong Gershowitz works with many immigrants and asylum seekers. The Respite Center can offer them services also.

Supervisor Kahn Ognisanti attended two ribbon cutting ceremonies. The one at The Douglas Center was a celebration of two new programming grants. The Douglas Center offers meaningful employment and space to people with disabilities. We have awarded them a grant where they are developing training for working on clerical skills, working in grocery stores, and food services. We currently have a number of people from The Douglas Center working at our Food Pantry. Oftentimes, people underestimate the capabilities of people having disabilities. The second ribbon cutting event took place at St. Paul's Lutheran Church. Skokie Mayor, George Van Dusen joined Supervisor Kahn Ognisanti on rededicating what was St. Paul's School, to St. Paul's Community Center which includes the Clothing Closet and The Respite Center. Senator Laura Fine's Chief of Staff is a talented theater performer. His theater group also rehearses at St. Paul's Community Center.

STAFF REPORTS:

ADMINISTRATOR: Administrator Rick Krier reported that he, Supervisor Kahn Ognisanti and Jack Macholl of Wisdom Bridge Marketing keep in touch weekly to discuss any grants that Niles Township would like to pursue.

He announced that we had to purchase 20 new grocery carts for the Food Pantry to replace the ones that disappeared. We were down to 13 carts. Tony Araque, our Food Pantry Manager and some of the staff from the Food Pantry, painted one of the wheels on each cart with fluorescent green paint, as well as painted Niles Food Pantry on the handles. The original cost of each cart was \$225.00, however, Tony was able to get them discounted to \$188.00 per cart.

Administrator Krier mentioned that he sent out to the trustees the report of the PPRT

(Personal Property Replacement Tax). The bottom line is that we will be receiving less money.

He hasn't finalized a date yet, but he is hoping to bring back a day when the DMV is at our township to update licenses, and give out The Real ID. The staff from the DMV can take 2 people every fifteen minutes, which would allow us to help about 40 people in one day. This will not be a walk in service; we will need to schedule appointments for this, once we've established the date. We also want to secure some slots for people using our Respite Center.

The Oak Tree in front of our building needs to be trimmed. We have been advised that the best time to do that would be in the winter to avoid further damage. It was recommended that we consider a fertilizer program to treat that tree. They will put a bed around it where fertilizer can be used. Though the tree is quite sick, it is believed that it can be saved.

A few weeks ago, Dupage Township came out to visit our township and in particular the Food Pantry. This week, we received visitors from Maine Township, to look at how we are utilizing and will be upgrading our security system. Administrator Krier showed them the ordinance we have in place that allows us to address FOIA requests that are presented to us in writing only. They also toured the pantry and were quite impressed.

Administrator Krier mentioned that he is thinking about attending the Annual Township Symposium hosted by METRA being held on September 28, 2023. METRA is very progressive down in Springfield. Some of the subjects to be addressed include Social Media: Legal Concepts and Best Practices, Township Finances: Maximizing Revenues and Projecting Expenditures, and Advanced Topics in Township Foundations. The guest speaker, Michael Freirichs will present on First Amendment Audits: What Are They? Who are They? How to Respond When They Show Up. This is held in conjunction with TOI and TOCC.

LEGAL ADVISOR: Attorney Ross Secler explained more about the new Anti Doxing Law that will go into effect January 1, 2024. This would include any private information such as the posting of employees' home addresses, phone numbers, or any other sensitive information being shared on social media platforms such as FaceBook, YOUTube, etc. This does not impose on anyone's First Amendment or Freedom of Speech. A representative from our Township (likely, our attorney) can contact these public formats and inform them that if this information is not taken down, or if they will not release the names of the people who posted them, that they will likely be sued for not complying with this request. If they provide us with names and contact information of people who posted, we may pursue suing them in lieu of the social media platforms.

PUBLIC RELATIONS COORDINATOR: Mike Isaacs reported that the newsletters are

out. He mentioned attending the Douglas Center Ribbon Cutting, The Pancake Breakfast, and the Backlot Bash which he took photos of and shared them on our social media platforms. Our next newsletter will be the Winter addition due to come out before the winter holidays so we can promote the fundraising for our Food Pantry Holiday Gift cards.

The Blood Drive is scheduled for September 22nd, 2023. He asked all of us to help promote this since we've not had a great turnout in the past. Supervisor Kahn Ognisanti asked that he reach out to Oakton Community College, hopefully to find more volunteer blood donors. He's still working on securing a date for the flu shot clinic.

Mr. Isaacs will represent Niles Township with a table at the Sustainability and Recycling Expo for Morton Grove taking place on September 9, 2023.

BILLS PAYABLE: Trustee Collins **moved** and Trustee Kendrick **seconded to approve the distribution of funds from August 11, 2023 through August 24, 2023 as presented:** Total Town Fund: \$41,218.87, Total General Assistance Fund: \$8,099.10 with a total of all funds: \$49,287.97. **Motion passed by roll call. All Ayes.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: No unfinished business

NEW BUSINESS: Motion to Approve: Ordinance 08-2023. AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING AND ADOPTING A VISITOR AND BUSINESS ACCESS POLICY FOR NILES TOWNSHIP. Trustee Collins **moved** and Trustee Gelfund **seconded the motion. Motion passed by roll call. All Ayes.**

Administrator Krier referred to the handout he gave regarding **NILES TOWNSHIP BUILDING ACCESS AND VISITOR POLICY.** He explained that we will likely have a half day training session on how to best implement this policy. Attorney Ross Secler explained that people will soon be required to sign in and state their purpose for their visit, in other words, they must have a specific service they are looking for, such as an appointment with the Senior Legal Council, the Assessor, or Social Work Services. For privacy reasons, we will have a separate sign in for people wishing to speak with our Social Workers. Until we have the renovations to our building in place, we will need to escort people stopping in our building to the washrooms. There were a few changes made to the original packet that was distributed to the Trustees. Trustee Collins **moved** to amend the **Motion** to include these changes and Trustee Gelfund **seconded. Motion was passed by roll call. All Ayes.**

For more detailed information, refer to the handout attached at the end of this packet. Attorney Secler added that while we as a township are as transparent as possible, we need to take into account that there are more dangers and we need to take precautions. At times, we hold open forums, however, it is not okay for someone to enter the building

solely for the purpose of recording visually and auditorily for their own gains. Recording for auditory purposes holds more ground than visually filming, due to the eavesdropping laws. There will be new signage posted around our building reflecting this once our renovations begin.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ADJOURNMENT: Trustee Collins **moved** and Trustee Kendrick **seconded** to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Next Regular Board Meeting September 11, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,


Charles Levy, Clerk