



The regular town board meeting, being held at 175 West Jefferson Street, Joliet Township government offices, Tuesday, June 8th, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. was called to order by Supervisor Angel Contreras. The following official business was transacted:

The Clerk led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. The Clerk called the roll as follows:

TRUSTEES:	Cesar Escutia	Present
	Karl Ferrell	Present
	Suzanna Ibarra	Present
	Raymond F. Slattery	Present
SUPERVISOR:	Angel Contreras	Present
CLERK:	Alicia Morales	Present
OTHER OFFICIALS:	Hwy Commissioner Vince Alessio	Present

ALSO PRESENT: Township Senior Liaison Jeff Wallace, staff members Sue Bustin and Jesse Stiff.

Approval of the Minutes:

Regular Town Minutes/May 25, 2021: Trustee Slattery moved to approve the minutes of the May 25th, 2021 Town Board Meeting Seconded by Trustee Ibarra. A roll call vote was taken.¹

Public Comment:

Mr. Garland Mays congratulated everyone on their election. He presented on behalf of the Will County Executive Office as the newly hired Community Engagement Coordinator. He stated that Will County serves everyone and wants to build a partnership with the Township and would like to implement some programs to inform everyone about what is going on. He stated it is his job to facilitate this information and to help our seniors and veterans including our kids and families as they are struggling. His goal is to meet with the Township on a regular basis and he will make sure everyone has his contact information Supervisor Contreras sated he is excited to build this partnership and expand the services to our residents.

Reports:

Patricia Venziano, General Assistance Director: Gave a synopsis of what she's done in the last couple of months and what her department does on a regular basis. Ms. Venziano stated she serves on the **Education and Support Services Committee** for the **Continuum of Care of Will, Grundy and Kendall Counties**. The purpose of the committee is to work on solutions pertaining to youth homelessness. Youth in this category is anyone 15 – 24 experiencing homelessness

¹ Roll call vote: Ayes (5) Trustees Escutia, Ferrell, Ibarra, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

that is what is unaccompanied (meaning on the streets alone). We meet monthly via Zoom due to Covid and have been working to establish a program in conjunction with Morningstar mission for a youth drop in center. They are working on establishing a program in conjunction with Morning Star Mission.

Ms. Venziano stated she and her colleague, Sue, attend meetings for **Community Service Council**. CSC It is a grouping of different service providers in the Will County area that meet on a monthly basis to share the needs of the communities and programs and resources available. So every month they have a different guest speaker who will touch on a different subject and at the end of the meeting they will share any new programs available. Since Covid they've been meeting via zoom however, they receive updates from Steve Brandy at the Will County Health Dept. Most recent update was how to sign up homebound individuals for Covid shots in their home. Please reach out to Patricia if anyone knows of seniors who need the shot.

Ms. Venziano stated that last week Sue received a phone call from **Morning Star Mission** informing us that they were out of COVID funds and asking if we still have rental assistance funds. Morning Star charges rent to people that participate in their Men's program in order to remain in the program. She is anticipating that we should soon see an influx of clients apply for assistance.

Ms. Venziano stated she received a call from the **Social Security Administration** down in Springfield last week. They were reaching out to the Township to see if we would have interest in being a site they can refer people to that are applying for SSI and have difficulty doing it over the phone or online themselves. Social Security would provide us with training to aid the clients. She expressed that we may have some interest and so she reached out to Social Security to determine if the Township will have any legal responsibility for how the questions were answered and was told that there is no legal liability for us as the clients are providing the answers to the questions.

Ms. Venziano noted that Sue and Trustee Suzanna Ibarra spent a day cleaning the **medical equipment** for our medical loan closet. The donated equipment is made available to township residents for short term use. Sue has been following up on equipment that has been out for more than 3 months to determine if it is still being used. With past covid restrictions in place residents with equipment were not in a hurry to return it even if it was not being used.

Ms. Venziano also noted that while it has been fairly quiet in the General Assistance department they have recently seen an uptick in interest in the programs. She noted that the moratorium on evictions combined with the increased unemployment benefits has definitely impacted people applying. With both programs coming to an end she believes our numbers will be increasing.

Trustee Slattery asked if the Social Security will reimburse us for any costs incurred. Ms. Venziano stated they would not. Supervisor Contreras indicated that it is very pilot at this time; however, if this becomes more official in the future we will revisit it.

Ms. Becky Gomez, Assistant Director for Joliet Township Animal Control. Becky stated Whitney McGill is the Director and is not present as she was at a doctor's appointment do to pregnancy. Whitney will not be here after next week and Becky will be giving the monthly board reports moving forward. Ms. Gomez has been with JTAC for 8.5 years and in her current position for 1.5 years. She was an Officer, then a Vet Tech, and now the Assistant Director. She stated everything is pretty steady; however, they have received a lot of calls regarding cats, ill cats, cats that need rescue, etc. Ruby, one of our Vet Techs, has been doing a great job getting them in and out. Becky noted that it was nerve wrecking as they anticipated new management; however, after meeting with Supervisor Angel Contreras several times, they talked about great things that are coming. She met with Clerk Alicia Morales and realizes they have a lot in common and is excited to work with everyone. Supervisor Contreras noted that the vehicles that the Animal Control Officers are using are not properly suited or efficient and no other Animal Control centers across

the state have those types of vehicles, we are the only ones. We are going to have to get creative because we are having weekly issues with them. Becky is doing research to determine options and will keep the Supervisor informed.

Mr. Jeff Wallace, Joliet Township Senior Liaison, passed out his hand written report to all members of the board. He stated the Moose seniors met on June 7th with 35 in attendance, prior to COVID they were averaging 45-50. He met with the Widowers and Widows on June 4th, they will meet again the 2nd Saturday of July on the 10th. Mr. Wallace also met with the President of St. Paul the Paulites and they anticipate holding their meeting on August 10th. Mr. Wallace stated St. Joe's father will not allow them to use the hall; however, once the St. Joe's church opens, they will allow the public to use the hall. Mr. Wallace secured a luncheon at Al's Steakhouse on June 23rd and requested board provides choice of meal by tomorrow June 9th.

Highway Commissioner, Vince Alessio: Stated he is short staffed by one person, they are down to five guys. They only have two working mowers and last week both broke down. They will be purchasing another back up mower and in the near future also purchase a trailer. One mower will be out of warranty in July. Trying to ensure the staff has resources and is appropriately staffed. He has made alterations in the new tentative budget to be voted on in two weeks. In his new role as Highway Commissioner he is making changes to the existing budget and the reasoning for changes is to better serve our residents and inform public and be fully transparent. Primary reason is to ensure the dollars being taxed by the road district are being of use on the road and equipment that they use to care for the roads. Once the line items are set and approved by the board, they can only be altered by small amounts which could limit operations during a tough winter, if they have problems with emergency equipment, and anything else that is unexpected he won't have room as there is only a 25,000 amount set aside for contingencies which is useful but in his opinion it's best practice to put it into the budget and be accountable for how the dollars are spent to this board. The primary reason to make adjustments is to make investments into aging equipment, to ensure safe operations so that productivity remains high. During last year's plowing one of the vehicles rear tires fell off the vehicle. This repair cost nearly \$13,000 and they did a large part of the repair themselves while they were also down by another plow truck. The staff is currently burdened with too much repair duty instead of using their time with plowing, mowing and providing other services. This new budget will maintain them on a fleet rotation so they are keeping within the warranty and maintain their value and to keep staff in road district poise, not as mechanics. His vision regarding operations is that he needs one additional staff member to be adequate service level. He will be filling the vacancy on Monday to bring him to six staff members and will be searching for another position for total of seven member staff. The demands of the road district require multiple tasks on a given day. Commissioner Alessio noted that Supervisor Contreras would like the Road District, (RD), to perform some tasks that they are well equipped to do; however, he is currently unable to help the Township due to the restrictions of equipment and staffing. Supervisor Contreras noted the RD is already out there and if they have full time employees, they can assist with grass cutting, including at the Animal Control location. Supervisor Contreras would like an intergovernmental agreement to save dollars and make operations more efficient for Township and RD. The equipment line item will give us \$110,000 from what was previously budgeted. The maintenance and road replacement budget looks extremely big. Last year the RD budgeted for a project that did not take place and so this year they are combining projects. The vast majority of township roads, after the repavement project, have been repaved within the past five years. So the RD is in a good position going into next year. Supervisor Contreras inquired if there might be other projects they can combine. Commissioner Alessio stated he will need to consult with someone so they consider so they don't neglect service to

anyone. Trustee Slattery asked if he would do the small roads in house or would they be bid out. Commissioner Alessio stated he will bid them out and keep them in the NFT dollars since that does not come out of the maintenance budget and will come out of a different budget they get from the County and is managed with the Highway Commissioner and the County. Trustee Ferrell asked if he will need to get outside sourcing for the Briggs St. bridge? Commissioner stated they don't handle that bridge as it belongs to the State. Trustee Slattery stated that Briggs St is a County road and Commissioner Alessio agreed; however, the bridge itself on I-80 is State and Federal.

Clerk Alicia Morales: Informed that she is adjusting to her role and wanted everyone to understand that the Clerk role does not just involve taking minutes. Been working with commissioner on 6/29 bid. It is very complex and involved in regards to compliance and meeting tight deadlines when coordinating projects with the Road District and the Township. Last May attended 2 webinars and will be attending 3 in June. In absence of exec assist and finance director. Clerk posted positions 8 and 66 applicants and is assisting supervisor with search process.

Supervisor Contreras noted that we will move on to approval of the receipts and expenditures. He stated that the staff member from Wermer Rogers, Ivan, is almost caught up and has been assisting very well, he's been asking questions, he's been on top of it. We didn't miss anyone's payroll. We are very fortunate to pick up where everything was left off. We have a good support team. We will streamline processes to mirror other townships.

Trustee Slattery: commented about the receipts and expenditures and noted that he is the only one with prior Township board experience. He stated that in past they received a copy of the invoices, and listing of gross and reviewed it during the board meeting. For example, if they saw an expense for training and meetings, they would look at the actual invoice to match it. During COVID, the checks were sent out and approved later. Trustee Slattery stated this is what was done in the past. He noted that trustees were able to come in before the board meeting to see the expenditures. Mr. Wallace stated trustees used to be called "auditors". Trustee Escutia agreed and noted he would like to see the different types of expenditures taking place. Trustee Ferrell noted he is the Treasurer for the Housing Authority of Joliet and it only takes about 20 minutes to review the budget and if we copy their system, no one here will complain about the process.

Supervisor Contreras stated he wants to remove any redundancies is going to bring us into the 21st century to keep up with best practices with other Township boards and if everyone is in agreement he asked to given some time to get the infrastructure built. In doing this we would have to move to having board meeting only once per month because of the amount of work involved and it's more efficient to work with a timeline once per month. He noted that trustees can come in prior to the board meeting to review the bills if they like, so this way it is in the interest of time. We are doing our due diligence and making copies of everything, but it's whatever the board prefers as he is only one vote. Other townships meet once per month. It's ok to approve after the fact and it's more efficient.

Trustee Slattery motioned that **cash receipts** be placed in proper bank accounts. Motion seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call vote was taken.²

² Roll call vote: Ayes (5) Trustees Escutia, Ferrell, Ibarra, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

Trustee Slattery motioned to certify that the **bills/expenditures** are correct, motion seconded by Trustee Ibarra. A roll call vote was taken.³

Closed Session: NONE

Adjournment: Trustee Escutia moved to adjourn the Township Board meeting, seconded by Trustee Ibarra. A roll call vote was taken.⁴ The June 8th, 2021 meeting adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Morales, Town Clerk

³ Roll Call Vote: Ayes (5) Trustees Escutia, Ferrell, Ibarra, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

⁴ Roll Call Vote: Ayes (5) Trustees Escutia, Ferrell, Ibarra, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0)