



The regular town board meeting, being held at 175 West Jefferson Street, Joliet Township government offices, Tuesday, March 29th, 2022, 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:	Tax Assessor Jim Brenczewski	Present
	Hwy Commissioner Vince Alessio	Absent

ALSO PRESENT: Township Attorney Brian Wellner, Township Finance Director Ivan Diaz.

Trustee Ibarra asked the attorney and the clerk what were the specifications as to where this meeting had to be posted because she was fielding angry calls because this was not on the official web page nor on the Face book page for 48-hour continuous view. Trustee Ibarra asked if this was a legal meeting? Clerk stated that notice of the meeting was posted in the newspaper and on the front and back doors of the township building. The internet was lost on Friday afternoon, (and again earlier on the day of the meeting), therefore, the agenda was posted to the webpage on Monday morning. The attorney stated that for the website function itself; if the public body has a full-time staff that maintains the website, then you are required to post 48 hours in advance just as you are on the door of the meeting hall, just as you are anywhere else you regularly post it. A lot of municipalities post as an additional source for people to find that information unless the municipality has a full-time staff that maintains it then they would not have to. The attorney inquired as to who maintains the website? Clerk Morales stated that a third-party vendor, NJS, manages the township's website. He noted that while you can have full-time township employees they may or may not maintain the website and a third party may maintain the website. Trustee Ibarra requested that she receive the agenda separate from her confidential board packet and suggested a closed meeting to determine if this is a legal meeting. The attorney stated he will provide legal advice to the township outside of the public body regarding other functions. It's fine to have these discussions about whether or not this meeting should be held, but in terms of exposing the township to a liability, this should not be discussed. Clerk Morales reiterated that notice was posted in the Newspaper. Trustee Ibarra stated that it's very convenient that every time that it's something that isn't great to hear, that the tape breaks or the website is down, it is very convenient, yet we are standing on transparency, honesty and integrity. Clerk Morales affirmed that we absolutely are standing on transparency honesty and integrity. Supervisor Contreras advised Trustee Ibarra she had every avenue to communicate to himself or the Clerk and she has direct access to us and any of these questions could have been addressed prior to the meeting. Trustee Ibarra stated she is the legislative branch, and she is

not an employee of the township, and this is not her purview. She asked if this is a legal meeting. Clerk Morales stated she does not manage the website. Attorney Wellner stated he could not answer this question without determining if the township has a full-time staff that maintains the website and if not, he does not believe that, that requirement is not legally required to hold the meeting. If we do, then he needs to determine if whether or not he needs to determine if it's been continuously accessible for 48 hours prior to this meeting. He stated this is outside of his purview but if there is an issue brought to his attention before the meeting, he will look into it. Trustee Ibarra asked the attorney if the meeting is continued and later find out it is not a legal meeting what happens then? The attorney stated that if this not a legal meeting, everything that is voted on will be voided. Trustee Ibarra asked who is responsible for posting it to the website? Attorney Wellner stated that he does not make the call for a legislative body, he can provide advice as legal counsel, but the public body makes the decision on behalf of the public body. He stated that the two integral pieces that needed to be figured out is if the township has a full-time staff member that maintains the website and if so, has it been continuously available for 48 hours? Clerk Morales noted again the township does not have a full-time staff that manages the website. A third-party vendor, NJS, is the company that manages the website. Trustee Ibarra requested their information so she can audit their records. Clerk Morales noted she will get the information to her. Trustee Slattery asked if it would suffice as long as the township met at least one of the requirements? The attorney again stated that all three requirements are required; however, if the township does not have a full-time staff that maintains the website the township is not required by law to do so. If the township has a full-time staff member that maintains the website, then it would be required. Supervisor stated he was going to move-on with the meeting. He stated there was no ill intent by the township or by anyone else and that everyone has a choice as to how they want to go about things. He stated a phone call would have sufficed.

Approval of the Minutes:

Regular Town Minutes: Trustee Slattery moved to approve the minutes of the March 8th, 2022, Regular Town Board Meeting, Seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call vote was taken.¹

Public Hearing BID for Grass Cutting Minutes: Trustee Escutia moved to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing BID for Grass Cutting from March 8th, 2022, Seconded by Trustee Slattery. A roll call vote was taken.²

Public Comment:

Supervisor noted the township will not engage in back and forth; however, everyone has the right to make a public comment.

- Ms. Megan Cooper stated she went on the website and did not see the agenda. She compared township with City of Joliet & questioned if this is a violation of the open meeting act. She stated that people need to see how the taxpayer dollars are being spent. She believes there is a transparency issue; however, she did acknowledge that the Township now has a Facebook page with video recording as there was never a Facebook page before but would like to see it on YouTube. She stated that the money must directly benefit the Township residents.
- Ms. Kathleen Kennedy: "Under the Approve Grants section, the township is giving Forest Park community center \$5,000. How are the Joliet township residents benefiting from this?" Supervisor stated that it's for the food pantry. Kathleen questioned, "Don't you guys have enough food pantries in Joliet to take care of people?" Supervisor stated that the Forest Park Community Center is one of the Township food pantries. Ms. Kennedy said she was unaware of this.
- Ms. Trista Graves Brown stated she wants to make sure the information is available because a lot of people don't go to the website. She suggested more outreach be done regarding the application process with ample time through the neighborhood organizations.

¹ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained.

² Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained.

NEW BUSINESS:

Supervisor Contreras asked Finance Director to provide update on the Ordinance No. 374-2022 General Town/Transfer of Appropriation. Mr. Ivan Diaz noted that the transfers are so when any line item goes over the original budgeted amount, instead of amending the budget, we have the option to move up to 10% of each line to cover. Trustee Ray Slattery motioned to approve & adopt the Ordinance No. 374-2022 General Town/Transfer of Appropriation; it was seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call vote was taken.³

Supervisor Contreras asked Finance Director to provide update on the Ordinance No. 375-2022 Animal Control/Transfer of Appropriation. Mr. Ivan Diaz noted that it was the same as the previous ordinance and that we have the option to move the line item instead of amending the budget. Trustee Cesar Escutia motioned to approve Ordinance No. 375-2022 it was seconded by Trustee Slattery. A roll call vote was taken.⁴

Supervisor Contreras noted that Ordinance No. 2022-02 (RD) Road District Transfer of Appropriation was the same situation as the previous two ordinances and Finance Director agreed. Trustee Ray Slattery motioned to approve & adopt the Ordinance No. 2022-02 Road District Transfer of Appropriation Seconded by Trustee Ibarra. A roll call vote was taken.⁵

Supervisor Contreras requested a motion to approve the posting of the Tentative General Town FY 2022 Budget Ordinance No. 376-2022. Trustee Ray Slattery motioned. Seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call vote was taken.⁶

Supervisor Contreras requested a motion to approve the posting of the Tentative Budget Road District FY 2022 Budget Ordinance No. 2022-03 (RD). Trustee Escutia motioned Attorney Wellner asked if this was just for the posting and not the approval of the budget? Supervisor Contreras stated that was correct. The motion was seconded by Trustee Slattery. A roll call vote was taken.⁷

Approval of the Grants:

Supervisor Contreras noted that before he begins this process, he stated he had conversations with all trustees, (except for Trustee Ferrell), that the township was going to form committees for FY 22-23 upcoming. The purpose of these committees are to address the issues the guests made during public comment. He did not want to interrupt them during public comment. The members of these committees are to give the board guidance on these grants. This is why the application on the website was for that fiscal year coming up. Supervisor Contreras stated he is preparing for this community engagement. He's been moving forward with all these initiatives. It's not that we're not being transparent, its that we're building towards it. All trustees can shake their heads that I did mention these committees to them, (all trustees shook their head yes), for this purpose. He stated he does not just want it to be the supervisor making the decisions to the trustees at the last minute so in good faith, he had this conversation and that's why in good faith when there is an issue, like something not being posted on the website, even though it's not someone's job, in good faith, reach out so we can address this.

The grants are for fiscal year ending 2021 and 2022. The townships fiscal year ends this month and he had to have a special board meeting to do the transfers of appropriation to end the fiscal year, every entity does this and nothing is being hidden. A simple call to his cell phone by anyone in the public so it could have been explained. Moving forward the township is going to have these committees, they're open to the public, he is going to have 5 member committees for the senior fund, the community fund, the youth fund, things to do with infrastructure, things to build in underdeveloped parts. These committees are going to have input to the board, and these were already discussed with the trustees. There is nothing to do with lack of transparency, it's about building the process and he is at work daily.

YOUTH GRANTS:

³ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

⁴ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

⁵ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

⁶ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

⁷ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

Approval for the park district's family nights. Supervisor stated that he does not have a community building, we don't have a facility other than the office space we have. Until we are able to have and maintain our own community building, we are partnering with community partners. The first one is for \$25 for Park District Family Nights. The motion was made by Trustee Slattery to approve the \$2500 for budget year 2021-2022. Supervisor Contreras stated that in good faith the link for the application was added to the website so it's more accessible to the public. That was never available. He stated his administration did that and it was never available for the grants before. This was not previously modeled before. It's not to say someone did a bad job, it's just that we are trying to do our part to make things easier. This is added permanently to the site so there is more transparency. Trustee Ibarra stated she didn't understand what this was going to do. Supervisor noted that since the Township doesn't have a facility, the township is going to be sponsoring the Family Nights at Nowell Park. The motion was seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call vote was taken.⁸

Nowell Park, Hartman and Heggie Park Easter Egg Hunt. Trustee Cesar Escutia motioned to approve it was seconded by Trustee Ibarra. A roll call vote was taken.⁹

Nowell Park Basketball League Grant; Supervisor Contreras stated the township is going to provide an afterschool basketball league for the students at JTHS that don't make the basketball team, they can join the Park District. Trustee Slattery attends Nowell Park in the morning and says their basketball courts are beautiful and he sees people using the courts and this would be great for the students. Trustee Ray Slattery motioned to approve the Nowell Park Basketball grant, seconded by Trustee Ibarra. A roll call vote was taken.¹⁰

Library Starwars Day Grant: Trustee Cesar Escutia motioned to approve the grant, seconded by Trustee Slattery. A roll call vote was taken.¹¹

Forest Park Community Center asked for a grant for a refrigerator for their food pantry. Since we only have an administrative building, and we cannot do a food pantry so we will be partnering with our community organizations. Trustee Ibarra motioned to approve the Forest Park Community grant, seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call vote was taken.¹²

Nowell Park Back to School Fair to provide supplies to the community. Trustee Slattery motioned to approve the Nowell Park Back to School grant of \$5,000, seconded by Trustee Ibarra. A roll call vote was taken.¹³

After School Bus Program, Nowell park does before and after school program for kids of all ages. Sometimes they can't serve some of these communities because the schools don't have the transportation. The schools don't have transportation for this. These \$2400 will provide access to 100 more kids throughout the entire school year. Trustee Slattery stated Nowell Park serves as a drop off point for school children. Trustee Ray Slattery motioned to approve the After School Bus grant for \$2,400, seconded by Trustee Ibarra. A roll call vote was taken.¹⁴

Step into the Light Program: Supervisor Contreras asked Mr. John Lucas the CEO of the non-for-profit of Step Into the Light program to give an overview. He stated that they provide educational and art programs to underserved youth with a specific focus on the black community or the descendants of emancipated slaves. There has been a long line of implicit bias and systematic racism when dealing with the black youth within the educational system. He shared a story about a young African American female student with a 4.0 GPA at JT West who was not given an application to U of I Champaign by her counselor because he did not think it was an appropriate school for her and that she would not get in. He started an academic program called Next Level, to provide sound advice and counsel students when their next steps after graduation. He stated that there has been no assistance from the Joliet Public School System to make sure

⁸ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

⁹ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

¹⁰ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

¹¹ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

¹² Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

¹³ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

¹⁴ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

these students reach their full potential. Supervisor Contreras stated this is another gap the township is trying to fill to make our residents and communities stronger. Trustee Ibarra motioned to approve, seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call vote was taken.¹⁵

Heritage Corridor \$5000. Supervisor Contreras noted that Heritage Corridor is one of the most underutilized resources and is one of the more official partnerships he wants the township to be involved in. They will promote what we do to the entire region. Trustee Slattery motioned to approve, seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call vote was taken.¹⁶

Spanish Community Center \$4000. Supervisor Contreras stated this is to help extend their existing grants, food pantry, childcare, etc. Trustee Escutia motioned to approve, seconded by Trustee Slattery. A roll call vote was taken.¹⁷

VETERANS GRANTS:

Supervisor Contreras noted that the park district is remodeling their stadium. They don't have a memorial for the stadium, and they need a new flagpole with a memorial. The Township will be donating the memorial and they are very excited and want to invite the entire board. Trustee Ibarra asked if we could table this until she receives additional documentation because it is a product not a service. Supervisor Contreras suggested she can vote no or abstain if she is not comfortable. Trustee Slattery asked if the Township would get recognition for this? Supervisor Contreras stated the township will get recognition. Trustee Slattery motioned to approve, seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call vote was taken.¹⁸

VFW Cantigny asked for assistance to upgrade their chairs since they have not had an upgrade in 20 years. Trustee Ibarra asked if they could get a lower price on their chairs. Supervisor Contreras stated they did their due diligence on the pricing. Trustee Escutia motioned to approve the grant for \$14,775, seconded by Trustee Slattery. A roll call vote was taken.¹⁹

VAC asked for assistance to market the van wrap and they will also include the Joliet Township name on the wrap as "donated by". Trustee Slattery asked what was a van wrap and? Supervisor Contreras stated that it similar to the one Animal Control has. Trustee Ibarra motioned to approve, seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call vote was taken.²⁰

Family and Friends \$7500 is for homeless VETS. Trustee Ibarra motioned to approve, seconded by Trustee Slattery. A roll call vote was taken.²¹

COMMUNITY GRANTS:

Safe housing program. About four or five years ago the Township gave them \$150,000 for transitional housing for people with mental illness, addiction. They still have funding from before and they have a little bit left over so we are going to invest more as there is a lot more need for housing. Trustee Slattery recalled the help was for opioids. Trustee Ibarra motioned to approve, seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call vote was taken.²²

Warehouse Workers for Justice \$5000. Supervisor Contreras stated that our General Assistance staff works with other agencies to see if they can help our residents with evictions or things we can't provide. Amy Sanchez, Legal Organizer for WWJ and works with restorative justice eviction prevention program. They are bridging the gap for those who fell behind in rent. Trustee Slattery motioned to approve, seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call vote was taken.²³

¹⁵ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

¹⁶ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

¹⁷ Roll call vote: Ayes (3) Trustees Slattery, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell and Trustee Ibarra abstained

¹⁸ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

¹⁹ Roll call vote: Ayes (3) Trustees Slattery, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell and Trustee Ibarra abstained

²⁰ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

²¹ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

²² Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

²³ Roll call vote: Ayes (3) Trustees Slattery, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell and Trustee Ibarra abstained

AGAPE \$5,000: Trustee Ibarra stated they do HIV care aid prevention, general counseling, they come in to take care of sick loved ones when no one else comes in to take care of them. Trustee Ibarra motioned to approve, seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call vote was taken.²⁴

The Art Movement \$2500: One of the Township committees is going to be in Art, and this is another form to connect with our residents and will be involved in outreach. Trustee Escutia motioned to approve, seconded by Trustee Slattery. A roll call vote was taken.²⁵

St. Peter's Lease. Supervisor Contreras stated he wants to lease the gym, classroom and kitchen for senior services, programs, more central location. Trustee Ibarra asked the attorney that she would like to see the agreement. Attorney Wellner stated that he reviewed it with Supervisor Contreras, and he suggested it be conditionally approved subject to attorney review and modification and if they don't agree to our modifications, then we're not in. Trustee Ibarra motioned to approve, seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call vote was taken.²⁶

Supervisor Contreras thanked everyone for coming and reminded everyone about the Annual Town Hall on April 12th. Trustee Ibarra asked him to explain what residents with non-profits have to do to apply for a grant. He stated the application is on the main web page now and gives all the details. This is something new the Township just put out last week. It's growing pains, no ill will.

Closed Session: None

Adjournment: Supervisor Contreras moved to adjourn the town board meeting, seconded by Trustee Ibarra. A roll call vote was taken²⁷. March 29th, 2022, meeting adjourned at 6:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Alicia Morales, Town Clerk

²⁴ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

²⁵ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

²⁶ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained

²⁷ Roll call vote: Ayes (4) Trustees Slattery, Ibarra, Escutia, & Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0). Trustee Ferrell abstained