



The regular town board meeting, being held at 175 West Jefferson Street, Joliet Township government offices, Tuesday, February 13, 2024, at 5:00 PM. was called to order by Supervisor Angel Contreras. The following official business was transacted:

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

<b>TRUSTEES:</b>	Tanya Arias	Present
	Antione J. Edwards	Present
	Cesar Escutia	Present
	Raymond F. Slattery	Present
<b>SUPERVISOR:</b>	Angel Contreras	Present
<b>CLERK:</b>	Alicia Morales	Not Present
<b>OTHER OFFICIALS:</b>	Commissioner Vince Alessio	Not Present
	Assessor James Brenzewski	Not Present

**ALSO PRESENT:**

General Assistance Director Patricia Venziano	Director of Human Resources Erica Holmes
Finance Director Ivan Diaz	Director of Transportation Jacqueline Smith
Senior Liaison Jeff Wallace	Executive Assistant Ana Campa Castillo
Deputy Clerk Estefany Bonilla	Attorney Bryan Wellner

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Town Board Minutes: Supervisor Contreras asks for a motion. Trustee Edwards motions to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2024, Town Board Meeting, Seconded by Trustee Arias. A roll call was taken. Motion Carried.<sup>1</sup>

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Step Into the Light**

John Lucas explains how Step Into the Light is a non-profit organization and how they provide academic and educational resources to underprivileged youth, the targeted focus being on the black community. The goal is to ensure the disadvantaged youth have equal access to education, the arts and mentorship, creating confidence to become productive members of society and tomorrow's leaders. An after-school program called Onyx Initiative was created within the organization to young high school black boys to assist in mentorship to help the uncertainty regarding the well-being and their academic success. Step Into the Light provides a safe space for the individuals to grow and prosper as Onyx Initiative addresses these challenges by providing positive diverse role models and having meaningful discussions on the issues affecting their overall and local black community. The program will start after school for three hours, from 3:30PM to 6:30PM every weekday, for young black males ages from fourteen to eighteen ensuring that participants receive age-appropriate support and mentorship to uplift the youth with the help of educators, community leaders and successful professionals.

<sup>1</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

### **The Hope of Joliet**

Alici McNeal arrived to represent the Hope of Joliet which is a non-profit organization geared toward youth from pre-k to eighth grade. The center provides a holistic approach that offers many programs for black and brown children. The key focal point is to discuss and teach financial literacy to the youth. Learning about finance is what strengthens a community and generates a legacy. Teaching them of the importance of financial understanding from bonds to mutual stocks at a young age to help them reach a milestone as they grow.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **REVIEW/Ordinance No. 2024-01 (RD) for Discussion on the Elmer Street Handicap Sign**

Supervisor Contreras informs the trustees how this is a courtesy review from the Road District on a handicap sign on Elmer Street which they solved and does not require a vote on from the board.

#### **APPROVE/Proclamation for February as African American History Month**

Supervisor Contreras asks for a motion to approve. Trustee Arias motions. Seconded by Trustee Slattery. Motion carried. <sup>2</sup> Trustee Edwards does the honor to read the proclamation out loud to the audience for February as African American History Month.

#### **ADOPT/Ordinance No. 395-2024 IGA Pertaining to the Joliet African American Context Study**

Supervisor Contreras explains that the City Planner and Liaison of the Historic Preservation Commission approached the township and informed them about State funding for grants to do in-depth studies for African American history as a proposed intergovernmental agreement. The mayor contacted and proposed the City of Joliet and the township to participate in the study. The study will be held out of the City of Joliet and the township will help decide who will be part of this committee to oversee the study. This qualifies as a municipality agreement as \$20,000 is set for this study. Supervisor Contreras asks for a motion to adopt. Trustee Slattery motions. Seconded by Trustee Edwards. Motion carried. <sup>3</sup>

#### **ADOPT/Ordinance No. 396-2024 St. Peter Lease Agreement**

Supervisor Contreras provides information on how the second level of the school will be leased to help with more space for the township's programs. Currently the Behavioral Health team will have priority for these spaces. Supervisor Contreras asks for a motion to adopt. Trustee Escutia motions. Seconded by Trustee Edwards. Motion carried. <sup>4</sup>

#### **APPROVE/HR Family Employment Policy**

Director of Human Resources Erica Holmes explains the new added policy for family employment. These applications will be used moving forward to eliminate nepotism in the township. For more information, please contact Ms. Holmes via e-mail or at her office number. Supervisor Contreras asks for a motion to approve. Trustee Edwards motions. Trustee Arias seconds. Motion carried. <sup>5</sup>

#### **APPROVE/Amended HR Compensation Policy**

Director of Human Resources Erica Holmes also explains the updated compensation policy for the hourly staff. This will be updated in the employee handbook for the staff. For more information, please contact Ms. Holmes via e-mail or at her office number. Supervisor Contreras asks for a motion to adopt. Trustee Edwards motions. Trustee Slattery seconds. Motion carried. <sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

<sup>3</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

<sup>4</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

<sup>5</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

<sup>6</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

### **APPROVE/2024 PACE Paratransit Local Share Agreement**

Supervisor Contreras asks for a motion to approve. Trustee Slattery motions. Trustee Arias seconds. Motion carried. <sup>7</sup>

### **APPROVE/GRANT: Community Service Council of Northern Will County**

This organization was reviewed back in November of 2023 during the regular board meeting held that month. Supervisor Contreras asks for a motion to approve. Trustee Edwards motions. Trustee Slattery seconds. Motion carried. <sup>8</sup>

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **New Reports**

##### **General Assistance Director, Patricia Venziano**

Alejandra has been passing out flyers in the community and promoting LIHEAP. Tomorrow LIHEAP will be coming to the office to take applications from 9AM to 3PM. Tax season has started, and the general assistance department has sent out seventy-five packets to residents who are interested in having their taxes prepared. The packets have been flowing back in over the course of the last two weeks totaling about twenty-nine returns that have been prepared and filed with the IRS already. Director Patricia attended a two-day workshop on homelessness that was put out by the State of Illinois and our local continuum of care. The workshop allowed for the creation of a work plan to case manage and try to house the folks that are living under the Cass Street Bridge. This is an initiative that's been brought forth by the State of Illinois and has broken up into groups where everybody will be taking a little portion of it to tackle it. Daybreak is involved as well as Grundy Medical and Trinity Services. There was further collaboration of folks from different organizations that are all working together on it. It has been busy the last few weeks and other than that it's been business as usual.

##### **Senior Liaison, Jeff Wallace**

Mr. Wallace distributed the senior service calendars for February and March of 2024. The newsletter has also been sent out by mail. Mr. Wallace has informed all seniors about the tax returns preparations at no charge as well as the Ride-Share program available for seniors. Assisted a few senior residents with Sue from General Assistance. There was a senior meeting last week discussing the medical closet. The Senior Citizen's Association meeting was discussing their new 211 number program for a time of an emergency crisis involving disasters, and pandemics. The program will also help people find food and pay for housing.

##### **Director of Human Resources, Erica Holmes**

The director of HR starts her report by explaining the hiring process on her end and how the interviews are proceeding. The part-time transportation driver is on hold as solid candidates have been selected through interviews and are waiting for the background results to come back. There is a part-time bilingual transportation driver position currently open. The violence program director position has fourteen applicants that applied. Nine have officially gone through pre-screening and will continue with the hiring process. The victim advocate is on pause as there is one on board now. There are still positions for four bilingual outreach workers and received sixty-nine applicants. They are being processed in and being interviewed as well. Ms. Holmes gives a recap on the two HR policies that were approved tonight. There will be a proposed bereavement policy as the township is growing in its programs and staff. There was an HR meeting earlier in the day to introduce Ms. Holmes to the staff and answer any questions or concerns regarding the new policies and future training meetings. The HR office

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<sup>7</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

<sup>8</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

will continue to improve the HR policies as the township increases its programs and staff to help the community, diligently manage the job openings accordingly and the well being and satisfaction of the staffed employees while contributing to the overall success of the township.

**Finance Director, Ivan Diaz**

In the month of January there was plenty of filing work to complete. Starting from the files such as the W-2s, the 1099s and miscellaneous sheets for the staff to prep their taxes with. In February there are PFR reports coming up for a meeting regarding the grant record and ensuring everything is correct. Moving into the month of March there will be meetings with all the program departments to discuss the budget.

**Director of Transportation, Jacqueline Smith**

The transportation department has been eagerly working to start transporting clients. They had meetings with Will Grundy Medical Clinic and Family Guidance Center to gather information on their priority clients for the pilot phase of our program. They are also in contact with PACE preparing the necessary documents to begin the driving training required to receive the PACE vehicles. The employees were sent to Physicians Immediate Care to complete drug screenings and DOT physicals. There were some delays with obtaining the physical and drug screen results. Because of this delay, they could not get into the PACE training on February 8th and 9th. With the help of the regional account executive and the site manager of Physicians, they received the results with the hopes of attending the next training on February 28th and 29th. Physicians acknowledged the issue, and they are working on different processes and procedures to help the department obtain results in a timely manner. Within the past two weeks, along with the help of the HR director Erica Holmes, they have conducted six potential part-time driver interviews. They are currently awaiting clearance on background checks. Once cleared, they will continue with physicals, drug screenings, and placing them into the next driver training course. PACE informed the transportation department that once the driver completes the training course, they will schedule a date and time to pick up the vehicles. The transportation department will receive a vehicle for each driver that completes the training course.

**Deputy Clerk, Estefany Bonilla**

Deputy Clerk Bonilla noted how in the clerk's office there was a vehicle bid sent out for Animal Control to purchase a van through the bidding process. After attempting to acquire a van this way there was another procurement process, called the SPC Suburban Purchasing Cooperative, and are currently working diligently with the help of the township's Attorney to ensure all is well to proceed with.

**Supervisor, Angel Contreras**

Supervisor Contreras would like to add more to what the director of transportation has been diligently working on. Ms. Smith has been working on improving the background software by ensuring the infrastructure internally is running smoothly. Supervisor Contreras explains the three portions of the components discussed with the transportation department on the Paratransit model in which other townships do with the seniors and the disabled community to help them with their transportation needs. The second component is for the transportation department to provide a pilot phase with the community-based organizations who offer a stable and safe way of transportation to their case workers. This leads to the process of screening the hired drivers to pass the final inspections and training with PACE to obtain the vehicles. Supervisor Contreras notes how all department directors' concerns are welcomed to contact him as he provides the necessary assistance and direction, may they need it, to ensure all operations run smoothly in the programs. He will be looking at the budgets as well with Ivan and the trustees next month to arrange a meeting to discuss it.

**CASH RECEIPTS:** Trustee Slattery motions to place the cash receipts into their proper accounts for the period ending January 31, 2024. Trustee Arias seconds. Motion carried.

**FUND EXPENDITURES:**

**General Town Fund for January 2024: \$407,585.59**

Trustee Slattery motioned to certify the expenditures and approve them for payment. Trustee Escutia seconds. A roll call was taken. Motion carried.<sup>9</sup>

**Capital Fund for January 2024: \$2,545.00**

Trustee Slattery motioned to certify the expenditures and approve them for payment. Trustee Arias seconds. A roll call was taken. Motion carried.<sup>10</sup>

**General Assistance Fund for January 2024: \$31,253.93**

Trustee Slattery motioned to certify the expenditures and approve them for payment. Trustee Edwards seconds. A roll call was taken. Motion carried.<sup>11</sup>

**Road and Bridge Fund for January 2024: \$301,990.28**

Trustee Slattery motioned to certify the expenditures and approve them for payment. Trustee Escutia seconds. A roll call was taken. Motion carried.<sup>12</sup>

**Animal Control Fund for January 2024: \$83,833.93**

Trustee Slattery motioned to certify the expenditures and approve them for payment. Trustee Arias seconds. A roll call was taken. Motion carried.<sup>13</sup>

**Senior Fund for January 2024: \$00.00**

No expenditures in this fund. A motion is not needed.

**CLOSED SESSION:** Supervisor Contreras asks for a motion to go into closed session at 6:22 PM. Trustee Arias motions to go into closed session for discussion of the (i) appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)). Trustee Edwards seconds. Motion carried.<sup>14</sup>

**ADJOURNMENT:** The board arrives back from the closed session at 6:31 PM. Supervisor Contreras asks for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Arias motions. Trustee Slattery seconds. Motion Carried.<sup>15</sup>

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Estefany Bonilla  
Deputy Clerk

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<sup>9</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

<sup>10</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

<sup>11</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

<sup>12</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

<sup>13</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

<sup>14</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).

<sup>15</sup> Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Contreras. Nays (0).