

DON GRAY

CAPITAL TOWNSHIP CLERK

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MINUTES

CAPITAL TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

SEPTEMBER 12, 2022

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The Capital Township Board of Trustees met in the County Board Chambers, 2nd floor County Building. Trustee Carlson led them in the Pledge of Allegiance. The following members answered to roll call: Joe Aiello, Brad Carlson, Ken Leonard, and Tammie Rockford. Bernadette Gordon came in late. Joe Roesch was present as Legal Counsel. Mark Crawford and Dave MacDonna were also present.

A motion was made by Trustee Carlson, seconded by Trustee Rockford, to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Upon a roll call vote, there were 4 Yeas - 0 Nays for approval of the minutes.

A motion was made by Trustee Leonard, seconded by Trustee Carlson, to approve payment of the Supervisor/Collector/General Assistance Administration Expenditures. Upon a roll call vote, there were 4 Yeas – 0 Nays - 1 Present. Trustee Gordon voted Present.

A motion was made by Trustee Carlson, seconded by Trustee Rockford, to approve payment of the Township Clerk/Township Assessor’s Administration Expenditures, in the amount of \$1,407.40. Upon a roll call vote, there were 5 Yeas – 0 Nays.

Supervisor Aiello went over the Budget Transfer of Appropriation amendments. A motion was made by Trustee Carlson, seconded by Trustee Leonard, for approval of the Transfer of Appropriation. Upon a roll call vote, there were 4 Yeas – 0 Nays – 1 Present. Trustee Gordon voted Present.

SUPERVISOR'S UPDATE

Supervisor Aiello stated he would be talking to them more about the budget as they go forward. The budget, for the most part, is going to be close to where it was. The only thing they may want to look at doing differently is something with the homeless initiative. Each year they put \$250,000 in there. There is going to be a strategic plan study done on the homeless situation in Springfield and Sangamon County. It is making rounds through the community. They may want to consider bumping up that amount at some point. Next month Josh Sabo from the Continuum of Care will talk about the strategic plan for the homeless. As they move closer to transitioning people from homelessness, the township will continue to do their part to help. The township also provides rental assistance for people who come out of a homeless center. Community Resources also has programs with regard to utilities and rent.

Dave MacDonna, from Community Resources, discussed the LiHeap program. Mr. MacDonna handed out a LiHeap application that started Sept. 1st. It is a Federal Grant Program passed through the State of Illinois to their office. If you are income based at 200% or less of the poverty line, you qualify for this program. You do not have to be behind on your bills to qualify. With this, they will pay at least one-month's utility payment for you. You can also apply again next year for the LiHeap program. It is not the same as rental assistance where you cannot re-apply for 24 months. In the middle of August, they send out letters/applications to their senior and disabled lists, which is about 2,500 people, to make them aware of the program. After September 1, they can turn in the application and get it processed. Last year they did over 6,500 applications, and \$6.5 million came back into Sangamon County through this program. They primarily paid CWLP, Ameren, and the propane businesses for heating in Sangamon County.

On top of this, they have an emergency furnace program. If someone calls and says they have no heat, within 48 hours they will either repair or replace the furnace. They will have to qualify on the same income basis as LiHeap. They work very closely with the Capital Township Office. Depending on their situation, some people can receive benefits from both offices. It has worked out very well. All three of the ladies in your General Assistance Office work very hard and do a great job. It makes for an easy transfer for someone who has a higher bill than what Capital Township can offer. They can then be referred to his office. They can pay up to \$1,500 for the utility bill. In the past two years, because of additional COVID money, in the summertime they would always do a UDAP, which is a Utility Disconnect Assistance Program. The two main utilities, Ameren and CWLP, will give them a spreadsheet of who is on their disconnect list. If they qualify, they will pay their entire bill, including any amount over the \$1,500. That program is over and is not coming back because the COVID money is gone. That assisted a tremendous amount of people in Sangamon County as well. If you know anyone who could use the program, please give them the application. They would just bring it to our office. The program runs through May 31, 2023.

Trustee Gordon asked how many of the 6,500 applications they received were approved. Mr. MacDonna stated there were almost 6,400 approved.

Supervisor Aiello asked what the numbers were for the Weatherization Program. Mr. MacDonna stated this program is a separate program. They will go into a home, assess it, and weatherize it. That includes putting in insulation, possibly repairing or replacing a furnace, air conditioner, hot water heater, stove, refrigerator, or whatever they can do to help reduce the amount of energy being used to keep that home heated or cooled. Last year they did 40 homes in Sangamon County. On July 1, the State of Illinois asked them to take over the program for Macon County as well. They received grant funds from the agency that was running that program in Decatur. They are adding staff and have assessed four homes already in Decatur and are getting the contractors lined up.

Supervisor Aiello asked if there is a Roofing Program available. Mr. MacDonna stated they are talking about adding to the program where they can repair roofs and add siding, but right now, they cannot do either.

Trustee Rockford asked how someone utilizes the Weatherization Program. Mr. MacDonna explained that there is a two to three year waiting period right now, but they can call their office at 217-535-3120 to get on the list. They just go down the list, and as they get to their name, they send them a letter asking if they are still interested. If so, they will send them the paperwork and get the process started.

Mr. MacDonna stated they also have the Rent and Mortgage Assistance Program as well. They also have the Senior Food Box Program, Youth Programs, and there are a couple basketball camps they assist with costs of. They have also started a Gymnastics Program for L&M Gymnastics for 3, 4 and 5 year olds who normally would not be able to get in the program because of the cost.

Trustee Gordon asked if all these programs are for low-income people, and they know about this by calling 217-535-3120. Mr. MacDonna stated that is correct. They can call or go to their website. They were at a Senior Health Fair at the Salvation Army this morning. They have also been at Comer Cox Park handing out information as well.

Supervisor Aiello asked how flexible the State of Illinois is with some of these programs. Mr. MacDonna stated it is fairly flexible. They started a Rapid Rehousing Program and it is designed for women or women with children who are in shelters to get them into permanent housing and out of the shelter. They now have 15 apartments. It is set up on a percentage basis. They are paying 100% of the rent for the first three months and then they start paying the rent the fourth month. Their percentage increases at the end of the 12-month period, so they will be paying the full rent. They want to give them time to get settled into their new place and to save money so they can get help. They will also sign them up for LiHeap to get help with utilities. This is not just for Springfield, but is for the entire county.

Trustee Rockford asked if there is a waiting list. Mr. MacDonna stated they are working directly with Helping Hands and Contact Ministries on the Rapid Rehousing Program because they have

to be in a shelter. Right now, they are spending over \$100,000 on that program. Trustee Rockford asked what they would do if there is a referral from a different shelter. Mr. MacDonna stated they do not have anything set up for that right now because they have limited funds. This is their pilot program this year. If they see this is successful then they may devote more money towards this, but it would mean they are taking money from another program.

Trustee Leonard asked if there is a service to help those who need jobs and a career. Mr. MacDonna stated there is. They work with Sarah Graham with the Workforce Investment Opportunity Agency. They do job training, have tuition for school, and will pay up to \$8,000 per semester for school. They also do on the job training where for the first six months they will pay the salary to the employer to train someone. It is an incredible program.

Supervisor Aiello stated for years there wasn't much available for women and homeless programs. For the longest time, Helping Hands tried to create a situation for men and women at the shelter, but it just did not work out. Helping Hands primarily works with men, but will direct women to other agencies. This is something to think about as they go into next year's budget. They could put dollars towards housing women and children and could manage it through a joint effort from Capital Township and Community Resources. Dave MacDonna stated it is set up to where they are acting primarily as just the funder and they are leaving case management up to the two shelters, and they are doing a great job. Supervisor Aiello stated that the social service agency case managers have developed relationships with the homeless individuals. The biggest challenge he has seen is trust. The homeless people do not trust many people and are very guarded, so it is best that they work with these agencies.

Mr. MacDonna stated the program Joe mentioned earlier with Josh Sabo from Community Resources has been working on this strategic plan for almost a year now and it is almost ready to roll out. He thinks you will find it interesting and he hopes they will hear a lot about it in the news. It will be a big help to their homeless population in Sangamon County.

Supervisor Aiello stated he meets monthly with Josh, Dave, and Sarah and they discuss a variety of issues. At some point, he will bring Sarah Graham in to speak to the group. With the Workfare Program, those who are unemployable for one reason or another, whether it is alcohol or substance abuse, have to be taught some soft skills such. Some of her programs are a little more skilled than some of ours. The township just accepted two applications for workfare employees and they are working with Bone Construction. Bone works with a variety of trades and is someone the township can work with.

Trustee Gordon asked if they are from the union or people they can put to work. Mr. MacDonna stated that is not part of their program. It is a part of Sarah Graham's program.

Trustee Gordon clarified that she was referring to when they said they have contractors who work for the Weatherization Program. Mr. MacDonna stated they are hiring contractors but are not talking to them about hiring people. They just hire them to do the work.

NEW BUSINESS

Supervisor Aiello stated he has spent time in some social service agencies lately, and they are starting to see an uptick in COVID. There is one facility that does have shelter in place right now, so be prepared to hear more about this.

The Public Health building may be interrupted by some construction. He will keep them informed to see if it has an affects their programs.

Supervisor Aiello asked Justine to work on a proposal for their General Assistance programs. How would they look if they provided services at 200% poverty as opposed to the current 150%. With rent going up, do they change the percentage of poverty or do they change the grant amount for rent. They give up to \$350 for rent now. Supervisor Aiello will put it all out there for them to review. They will continue to talk about the programs, their budget, and how to enhance their programs.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Trustee Carlson, seconded by Trustee Rockford, to adjourn the meeting to October 11, 2022 at Noon. Upon a roll call vote, there were 5 Yeas – 0 Nays.

Don Gray
Town Clerk