



Riverside Township

FALL 2017

27 Riverside Road
Riverside, IL 60546

Township Office

Phone: (708) 442-4400

Fax: (708) 447-0302

Web:

www.toi.org/riversidetownship

E-mail:

mytownhall@sbcglobal.net

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday

9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Assessor's Office

Phone: (708) 447-7700

Fax: (708) 447-6442

E-mail:

27rside@sbcglobal.net

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday

9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Supervisor

Vera A. Wilt

Clerk

Liane J. Blauw

Assessor

Frances Sitkiewicz

Trustees

Mary Rob Clarke

Michael C. Dropka

Timothy Heilenbach

Tom Lupfer

Meet The Township Officials

Supervisor Vera A. Wilt has more than 25 years of public service experience to this community, most recently having served 5 years as a Village Trustee in North Riverside, where she has lived for nearly 34 years. Vera's late husband Gary was the Supervisor of Riverside Township from 1997 until his death in 2004, and following his passing she was Township Clerk from 2004 to 2009. Vera was a NR Civil Service Commissioner for 18 years, 17 of those as chairman, and has held offices in the North Riverside Library Foundation since 2009. She also served several years as an At-Large member of the State Board of Health. Vera is a lawyer, has more than 20 years of management experience in non-profit and financial institutions, and a lifetime of volunteer and organizational leadership experience in professional, fraternal, and ethnic organizations. She shares the goals of her late husband in making the Town Hall a center of community activity, and keeping the historical building in top shape.



Assessor Frances Sitkiewicz holds a Bachelor of Science in Finance from DePaul University. She has worked in the Township Assessor's office since 2001 and has been the Assessor since 2010. Fran has resided in Riverside for 23 years, and has served as President on the boards of three different parent organizations for the schools of Central Elementary, Hauser Junior High and Riverside Brookfield High while her children were students there. Fran has also been an active and associate member of the Riverside Junior Woman's Charity and is also an active member of the Riverside Township Lions Club and St. Mary's Church. Beyond her CIAO designation, Fran continues to stay knowledgeable and informed as Vice President of the Cook County Township Assessors Association and Treasurer of the Township Officials of Cook County. With the primary goal of educating and informing the tax payer, Fran has brought the Township Assessor's Office into the digital and social media age. Activity in the Township Assessor's Office has quadrupled since she has taken office. She is committed to watching over our tax dollars by providing constituent assistance in the most cost-effective way possible.

Clerk Liane J. Blauw has been a North Riverside homeowner and resident for 19 years, and has served as Township Clerk since first elected in 2009. She was introduced to township government by Judy Baar Topinka, whom she had the privilege of working with when Topinka was Illinois' State Treasurer. Judy instilled in her the importance of local government and how to assist constituents to make not only Riverside Township, but all of Illinois a great place to live. Liane's professional career includes over 20 years of management, accounting, and credit. She has been employed for the last 10 years at Edward Don & Company in their Credit Department. Liane was saddened when Edward Don left the Village of North Riverside and relocated to the Village of Woodridge, but then again, the relocation of the long-time company has allowed new businesses to move into our Township and strengthen the community.



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Trustee Mary Rob Clarke is a lifelong resident of the Village of Riverside and is currently serving her second term as a Township Trustee. She was instrumental in starting a monthly senior program in the Township, and started a twice weekly senior exercise class. Mary Rob led the way to start a Township Speaker Series, where past topics have included: children hidden during the Holocaust, the Eastland Disaster, and the Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum Foundation, featuring the leading historian on President Abraham Lincoln. Locally, Trustee Clarke is an active member in the Riverside Presbyterian Church, a Director of the Riverside Township Lion's Club, and a member of the Riverside Chamber of Commerce and the Friends of American Writers. Nationally, she serves on the Board of the Entomological Foundation and professionally, Mary Rob works for a global environmental products and service company.

Trustee Timothy Heilenbach has been a resident and homeowner in Brookfield for the last 11 years. For the past 16 years, he has been employed by a mid-level accounting firm as a supervising senior in the compliance auditing department. Tim is also a paid-on-call Rehab Unit Crew member of the Pleasantview Fire Protection District, which services Countryside, Hodgkins, Indian Head Park, and Burr Ridge. He is also vice president of the Pleasantview Firefighters Association and was recently appointed to the Brookfield Police and Fire Commission. Tim served as the Chairman of the Public Safety Committee in the Village of Brookfield for 4 years, and for the last 3 years, he has been a member of the Riverside Township Mental Health Board, having been elected President last year. Over the years he has volunteered for the Special Olympics, Brookfield Chamber of Commerce, PeopleCare, and the Berwyn Recreation Youth Football League as a coach.



Trustee Michael C. Dropka is a lifelong resident of the Village of North Riverside, and a homeowner for 6 years. He has a B.A. degree in Political Science from North Central College, and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Michael is currently employed by the State of Illinois and has been employed for over 10 years in other various roles within state government, where he has been responsible for monitoring local government financials, community development, public policy and outreach, as well as public relations. He has also served as an elected member of the Komarek School District #94 School Board in North Riverside. Michael is the Riverside Township Republican Committeeman, and has served on several community, ethnic, and political boards. He belongs to numerous government, fraternal, and philanthropic organizations including the Illinois City / County Management Association, the Polish National Alliance, and the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elk.

Trustee Tom Lupfer has lived in Riverside for over 10 years and is a small business owner and a graduate of Northwestern University. He has won many awards, distinctions, and honors in his professional career and currently serves on the Board of Directors for his industry's trade association. Tom has served on the Riverside Economic Development Commission, with part of that time having served as its Chairman. He is the founder of the Jr. Bulldog Wrestling Club and is a dedicated coach for Riverside Parks & Recreation Department programs. His volunteer work includes service to: the Riverside Public Library, the Riverside Swim Club, the Riverside Junior Woman's Society, Blythe Park School, and the Riverside Garden Club. He also is a proud supporter to area charities like Pillars and the Boy Scouts of America. As a side philanthropic project, Tom has been a leader in bringing safe drinking water to impoverished areas in Africa.



Property Tax Exemption Savings Increase

Governor Bruce Rauner recently signed a bill into law granting homeowners in Cook County additional savings on real estate taxes by increasing the amounts of the Homeowner, Senior, and Senior Freeze Exemptions. The current Homeowner Exemption in Cook County reduces the Equalized Assessed Value of a home by \$7,000. Beginning next year, when 2017 Second Installment Tax Bills are calculated, the new Homeowner Exemption will reduce a home's Equalized Assessed Value by \$10,000. Homeowners born in, or prior to, 1952 will also be eligible to apply for the Senior Exemption, which will increase to \$8,000 from \$5,000.

The Senior Freeze Exemption also received some enhancements with this new law. When market values were decreasing several years ago, many new applicants to the Senior Freeze did not receive a benefit from this exemption because of the way it was calculated. In 2014, this was happening to 41% of all applicants; it did not seem fair and it certainly was confusing, especially for the applicant expecting to receive a reduction in their real estate taxes. The new law provides that every Senior Freeze applicant will now receive a minimum reduction of \$2,000 to the Equalized Assessed Value of their home.

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Additionally, the Senior Freeze Exemption will be available to even more senior citizens because the new law increased the Income Eligibility from \$55,000 of total household income, up to \$65,000. For qualifying senior citizens applying for the Senior Freeze Exemption on their 2017 real estate taxes, they will need to use their *2016 total household income* for their 2017 Senior Freeze Application, which will be available early next year. The Senior Freeze Exemption does not freeze the amount of real estate taxes paid, rather it only freezes the Equalized Assessed Value of the property, which will result in a different amount of savings for each taxpayer.

All exemptions and corresponding savings are always calculated and appear on each year's Second Installment Tax Bills. 2017 exemption applications will be available early next year. Homeowners who purchased their homes in 2016 will need to apply for the Homeowner Exemption in the first quarter of 2018. Homeowners born in, or prior to, 1952 will need to apply for or renew the Senior Citizen Exemption in the first quarter of 2018. For additional information regarding real estate taxes and exemptions, please contact the Riverside Township Assessor's Office at (708) 447-7700 or by e-mail at 27rside@sbcglobal.net.

Riverside Township Services & Programs

General Assistance and Emergency Assistance - Residents who have a serious financial need, and are currently not receiving other government assistance, may apply for General Assistance, a monthly flat grant which requires ongoing reporting and interviews about job searches or application status on other assistance. No more than once per year, there may be Emergency Assistance available for serious financial crises involving health and welfare. Call the office to set up an appointment with the Supervisor and see if you qualify.

Food Pantry - People in need can come in once per month to pick up two tote bags full of assorted food items. We ask no questions, but do need to verify your residency within Riverside Township. Donations of non-perishable food or money are always welcome, but we cannot accept expired items. The Food Pantry is open **Monday - Friday, from 9:00 am until 2:30 pm.**

Nurse's Closet - Durable medical equipment is available to Riverside Township residents, at no charge, for a loan period of up to 3 months. Examples include: walkers, crutches, canes, wheelchairs, bath/shower chairs, commodes, and toilet seat risers. We also accept donations of such items if they are in good condition. The Nurse's Closet is open **Monday - Friday, from 9:00 am until 2:30 pm.**

Mental Health - The Riverside Township Mental Health Board regularly reviews the mental health needs in the community, and through the Township, it funds professional service organizations accordingly. The Mental Health Board meets on the **3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Town Hall.**

Thursday Afternoon Movies - All are invited to a free movie screening with popcorn and refreshments, **every Thursday at 12:30 pm at the Town Hall.** Films that are shown range from classics to recent releases. A list of upcoming films can be found on the Township website, at the Town Hall building, or you can call the Township Office for more info.

Riverside Township Radio Players - This group presents free, old time radio plays typically on the **4th Friday of each month in the 2nd floor auditorium of the Town Hall, starting at 7:30 pm.** Upcoming shows are as follows: October 27th - *Mystery In The Air*: "The Horla", *Lights Out*: "Death Robbery", and *The Planet Man*: "Episode One"; November 17th - *Lux Radio Theater*: "Mrs. Moonlight"; December 15th - *The Whistler*: "Letter from Cynthia" and *Richard Diamond*: "A Contemporary Christmas Carol".

Free Blood Pressure Screenings - Readings are conducted from **11:00 am - 1:00 pm on the 1st Monday of each month** at the Riverside Town Hall, and from **9:00 am - 11:00 am on the 1st Wednesday of each month** at the North Riverside Village Commons.

Riverside Township Seniors - Typically on the **1st Monday of the month, at 1:00 pm at the Town Hall** there is a free speaker, program, or activity open to all Township senior citizens. The date may change to accommodate the presenter, and in November and December they hold a luncheon at the Riverside Golf Club. Call the office for details or to be put in contact with the Trustee in charge.

Senior Drop-In - Seniors can enjoy playing cards, refreshments and socializing **every Friday at the North Riverside Public Library, from 10:00 am - noon.** This free program is co-sponsored by the North Riverside Public Library and Riverside Township.

Exercise Class - Held on **Mondays and Wednesdays of each week, starting at noon in the Town Hall auditorium.** Class is free and open to all Riverside Township residents. The program is suitable for all ages and mostly senior citizens attend.



Serving since 1870

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Township Grants

Quarterly, the Township Board considers applications for grants from various non-profit organizations. The group must serve a need in the Township and the application must clearly describe the benefit to the residents, and provide clear information about their organization's operations. For more info and to download a Grant Application, one can simply visit the Township website, or pick up a copy of the application from the Township Office.



The Riverside Township Board presents a grant check to members of the Bulldog Wrestling Club.

Connect with us online!

Website: www.toi.org/riversidetownship

E-mail: mytownhall@sbcglobal.net



Township Sponsors Trip To State Fair

At 7:45 am on August 12th, thirty-six people boarded a coach bus in front of the Riverside Town Hall, bound for Springfield on a day-long trip to the State Fair. Coffee, water, and doughnuts were served on the bus ride. The weather was unusually perfect for Central Illinois in August; warm, but not hot, and with low humidity! Everyone spent the day seeing the exhibits of their choice, or enjoying the various entertainment opportunities, along with indulging in State Fair food and beverages.

The group returned that evening, with savory treats shared on the way home, and great stories to share. The Township hopes to schedule other trips in the future for Township residents.



Upcoming November Board Meeting

The Township Board will hold their next meeting on **November 21st, at 7:00 pm, in Room 4 of the Town Hall.** The agenda will include a discussion about the future of events being held in the Town Hall as rentals. The building is currently only available for community, non-profit, educational, or cultural organizations based in Riverside Township, and alcohol is prohibited. There have been inquiries about renting the Town Hall for social events such as fundraising galas, weddings, and showers. The Board will be considering the changing of building use policies to allow for such events, as well as to permit some alcohol consumption. Residents are welcome to attend all regular and special board meetings. Visitors should sign in at these meetings and there is always a place on the agenda for visitor remarks, to which the Township Board may set a time limit, per individual speaker. Regular meetings are always held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm, except in November when it is on the 3rd Tuesday, due to a statewide conference.