

NORMAL TOWNSHIP
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING
NORMAL TOWNSHIP BUILDING
304 EAST MULBERRY
September 17, 2020
8:15 AM
Meeting held virtually through Zoom

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT IN-PERSON: Supervisor Sarah Grammer

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY: Trustees Arlene Hosea, Sally Pyne, and Ray Ropp

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Dayna Schickedanz

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT VIRTUALLY: Assessor Rob Cranston and Highway Commissioner Arin Rader

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: Clerk Amy Conklin

OTHERS PRESENT: Deputy Clerk Becca Rice, Director of Operations Rick Lewis, Director of Programming Molly Camper, Communications Coordinator Sammi Scott, Member Services Manager Elicsha Sanders, and Mary Wuhrmann

Approval of August 20, 2020 minutes:

Sally Pyne made the motion to approve the August 20, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes with a correction to reflect that Ray Ropp attended the August meeting remotely. Ray Ropp seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Yea: Arlene Hosea, Sally Pyne, Ray Ropp and Sarah Grammer
Nay: None

Motion approved

Approval of Expenditures from August 21, 2020 to September 17, 2020:

Trustee Pyne asked about some budget lines that had met or exceeded 100% for the fiscal year with six months remaining. Supervisor Grammer explained that this was due to some once per year bills for insurance coming in slightly higher than anticipated. Pyne made the motion to approve the August 20, 2020 to September 16, 2020 Expenditures, and Ray Ropp seconded.

Roll Call: Yea: Arlene Hosea, Sally Pyne, Ray Ropp and Sarah Grammer
Nay: None

Motion approved

General Town: \$60,399.21
General Assistance: \$19,429.21
Road Bridge: \$4,697.23
Senior Citizen: \$32,970.58

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Sally Pyne attended the Senior Advisory Committee meeting on September 3, 2020. She was able to speak with several of the ARC members who, despite missing face to face interaction, respect the township's decision to keep the ARC closed right now due to the pandemic. She also participated in one of the ARC virtual programs and truly enjoyed the experience. She and Rick Lewis worked together to submit Sarah Grammer as a nominee for the YWCA's Women of Distinction Award, and she was happy to report that the nomination was accepted.

ASSESSOR REPORT by Rob Cranston: 2020 assessment values have been submitted to the Chief County Assessment Officer, and Normal Township has been assigned an equalization factor of 1.0054%. This will add approximately 5 million to the township's assessed value. The total increase in assessment, after value work and the equalization factor, amounts to just under 12 million dollars, which is an increase of 1.2%. Assessments were published, in the Normalite, on September 3 and the last day to appeal an assessment is October 5. As of this morning, we have received 6 appeal requests.

CLERK REPORT by Becca Rice: No report

ROAD COMMISSIONER REPORT by Arin Rader: Working on getting trucks and plows ready for winter weather. There have been some changes to the new site plans and Arin is working with the County on the setbacks. He also hopes to start on the hoop building, for salt storage, so that it will be in place for this winter.

ARC STAFF AND SENIOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE by Rick Lewis:

See attached ARC Director of Operations report by Rick Lewis. Corrections to note:

1. Ret. Colonel David Terrinoni will be sharing his POW/MIA Recognition Day message live, via Zoom, not recorded as previously reported.
2. To prepare for open enrollment, 2 SHIP counselors have been set up with web cams. This will allow them to safely conduct meetings with out compromising the counselor or the client's health.
3. Four referrals have been completed, not the six as reported. Additionally, 3 of those have been selected to receive devices, not 2 as reported.
4. 18 members have agreed to participate and receive letters as part of the State Farm Good Neighbor volunteer program. The report previously noted 15 had agreed.

Rick continues to work on securing technology to keep seniors connected throughout the pandemic and mentioned that Susan Real, from the East Central Illinois Agency on Aging, has been extremely helpful in securing technology grants for Normal Township, and he encouraged board members to send her a word of thanks.

Molly is in the process of refunding class fees for those who paid for classes that were been cancelled due to the building closure. To date, this impacts approximately 200 members, and they will be given the choice between a monetary refund or donating the class fee to the ARC.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE and SUPERVISOR REPORT: see attached report by Supervisor Grammer

PUBLIC COMMENT: ARC member Mary Wuhrmann showed everyone the pandemic-themed quilt that the ARC Quilters designed and assembled. The quilters plan to donate it to ARC to be raffled off as a fundraiser.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion and a vote on the FY 2021 grant distribution:

Sally Pyne recognized the role that Project Oz plays in advocating for teen mental health and recommended that \$6,000 of the grant money be awarded to Project Oz. This is less than the \$10,000 requested but would enable the Township to award some funds while maintaining adequate grant awards to the other applicants.

Sally Pyne made the motion that FY 2021 grant funds be allocated as:

Community Health Care Clinic = \$20,000

PeaceMeal = \$14,000

YWCA = \$12,000

Prairie State Legal Services = \$8,000

Project Oz = \$6,000

Sarah Grammer seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Yea: Arlene Hosea, Sally Pyne, Ray Ropp and Sarah Grammer

Nay: None

Motion approved

Discussion and vote on adding Election Day to the 2020 Holiday schedule:

Supervisor Grammer recommended amending the 2020 Holiday Schedule to include Election Day on November 3, 2020 due to the Governor adding it as a state holiday and Township Hall being a polling place with increased traffic in common areas. Sally asked if this declaration would apply to all employees and Sarah confirmed that it would, and that any employees, such as custodial, who would need to work the holiday would be compensated 1 ½ times their hourly rate.

Sally Pyne made the motion to adopt November 3, 2020 as a Township holiday, and Ray Ropp seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Yea: Arlene Hosea, Sally Pyne, Ray Ropp and Sarah Grammer

Nay: None

Ray Ropp left the meeting at 9:03 AM.

Discussion of ARC Green Space Project:

Grammer spoke with Kathy Bilow, the designer for the project. Kathy outlined some general concepts and gave a recommendation on how to proceed with the project. The shade and pine trees will remain in place, but the crabapple trees will have to be taken out or moved to another area of the property. Kathy did not recommend proceeding with excavation at this time as there will not be enough time to complete the work and have the seed take root before winter weather sets in. Rather, she suggested going out for bid this winter so that work can begin in the spring.

Discussion of Township Official salaries for 2021-2025 term:

Grammer informed those present that the electronic copy of previous term salary rates distributed was incorrect. She had the hardy copy ordinance that she read from to update the board on current salaries.

Sally Pyne opened discussion by expressing her opinion on trustee salaries (see attached document). Both Trustee Hosea and Grammer expressed appreciation for the thought and information that Pyne provided and concurred with her opinion that Township Trustee Salaries should be reduced to better reflect the time commitment and better align with other local board salaries.

Grammer voiced her opinion that she felt a reduction to the Supervisor's salary would be appropriate as outlined in her memo in the board packet. She recommended keeping the salary more in line with other social service positions in the area and freeing up some of the personnel budget to help with annual increases for support staff. Discussion concluded with a review of the salary recommendations for the remaining officials, and the following salary schedule for the next term was recommended:

Supervisor - \$80,000 for 2021 with a \$1,000/year increases for years 2022-2025

Road District Treasurer - \$1,000/yr.

Highway Commissioner - \$52,260.72 with annual 2% increase for years 2022-2025

Township Clerk - \$7,000/yr.

Township Trustee - \$2496/yr.

Township Assessor - \$100,491.36 (effective January 1, 2022) with annual 2% increase for remaining 3 years of term

It was noted that two trustees were not present for this discussion. No action will be taken on this issue until the October 15, 2020 meeting. Grammer will have the Township Attorney draft an ordinance for consideration.

Suggested Items for Next Agenda:

- Begin discussion on the annual tax levy
- Consider holiday schedule for 2021
- Discuss changing monthly Board meeting times

The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 am

**ARC Director of Operations Report
September 17, 2020**

1. September is National Senior Center Month. Sammi has been encouraging members to celebrate by donating to the Build the ARC campaign. State Farm is partnering with ARC to invite members to receive a letter from their volunteers as part of their Good Neighbor program. We will also acknowledge POW/MIA Recognition Day on September 18 with displaying the flag and a taped message with retired Colonel and ARC member David Terrinoni.
2. ARC member Terry Brown (woman) has been selected to join the SHIP counselor team. Terry is a recent State Farm retiree with an IT background and extensive involvement in the community. She will participate in nine days of online training; pair with a veteran SHIP counselor for mentoring; attend monthly Zoom meetings; and observe Open Enrollment as part of her six-month orientation. A profile of her will be in the October newsletter introducing her to the community.
3. SHIP is preparing for Open Enrollment beginning October through December. We are expecting the pandemic to have a significant impact on managing open enrollment and the group has been directed to prioritize how to safely meet with clients without endangering each other's health and safety. Meetings that can be held on Zoom is the first priority; having clients drop off their documents for the counselor to review and make recommendations is another; in-personal meetings in large ventilated spaces is the other. A Medicare Part D presentation on Zoom is scheduled for September 24
4. Member Services Reps and ARC managers continue the Telephone Reassurance calls to members as part of the Sunshine Program. Six referrals have been completed recommending digital devices for members needing connectivity through the Illinois Department on Aging. Two members were selected during the week of September 8 to receive devices. Members who don't have wi-fi will also receive a cell phone to use as a hot spot for connectivity for one year.
5. State Farm has reached out to ARC to assist us with letter writing as part of their Good Neighbor volunteer programming. Volunteers will be writing letters to ARC members who choose to participate. More than 15 members have agreed to participate and receive letters.
6. The ARC quilting group is creating a "Pandemic Quilt" to be raffled off for the Living Memorial Fund in December. Each square will consist of a color block with white circles. They are inviting ARC staff to select fabric and indicate the number of people in their household that sheltered together during the pandemic. The small blocks will be sewn around a larger square depicting a corona virus design. Once the quilt is complete we hope to display and raffle.
7. New one-time digital programs offered in September:
 - a. Zoom for beginners returned on September 2nd and 10th from 10-11am to continue teaching members to feel comfortable using Zoom and attend our programming. This was a free class and sponsored by the Sunshine Grant.

- b. ARC's first memoir writing class meets on Thursdays for 6 weeks starting on September 3rd. Instructor Irene Taylor has her doctorate in Creative Writing from ISU. This is free class that is sponsored by the Sunshine Grant.
 - c. The Vein Specialists presented on venous disease on Friday, September 11th at 11 AM. The Vein Specialists are an ongoing sponsor for ARC.
 - d. Our ARC Senior Scholar presentation for September was Wednesday, September 16th. The presenter was Laura Berk, professor of psychology emerita at ISU and the founder of the Illinois Art Station. The presentation focused on the Illinois Art Station.
 - e. Carol Boerckel will be teaching two watercolor classes in September. Abstract with your initials was offered on September 10th. Autumn Reflections in Watercolor will be offered on September 22nd from 10 AM-12noon. Both of these classes are sponsored by the Sunshine Grant.
 - f. The week of September 21-25 is fall prevention week. Matt Swaney, Fire Inspector from the Normal Fire Department will present on preventing fire and falls on Friday, September 25th at 9:30 AM.
8. New additions to the ongoing digital programming for September:
- a. Women's grief support group will meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday from 12-1:30pm. The group is led by Lisa Flanagan, Carle Hospice Bereavement Coordinator.
 - b. Men's grief support group will meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday from 12-1:30pm. The group is led by Lisa Flanagan.
 - c. One on one durable power of attorney will meet on September 15th and 17th from 9-11pm. These will be one on one hour appointments to complete your durable power of attorney for healthcare documents with a representative from Compassion and Choices McLean County
 - d. ARC Tech Club is back! They meet on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 12noon. The group keeps each other up to date on new technology.
 - e. ARC has a foodie group! They will meet on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 10-11:30am. This month we are asking members to make something with ingredients that come from a garden. We will share recipes and have a cooking demonstration.

NORMAL TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Prepared by Sarah Grammer

September 17, 2020

1. **Assistance Report:** In August, 42 assistance appointments were scheduled for 42 residents. The township disbursed \$10,429.51 in General Assistance funds to 34 clients. Note that a state moratorium on evictions has been extended until September 19, 2020. Utility disconnection notices have been sent from Cornbelt and Nicor, so we will have Emergency Assistance cases in September. We are referring clients who do not qualify for township assistance to our partner MCCA for LIHEAP and COVID-19 relief.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE SEPT 2019 - AUG 2020

2019	GA	AMOUNT	EA	AMOUNT
SEP	45	\$12,781.39	33	\$18,927.43
OCT	42	\$12,485.00	31	\$16,223.59
NOV	38	\$11,552.00	18	\$9,404.40
DEC	42	\$12,768.00	18	\$12,913.14
20-Jan	51	\$15,269.29	12	\$8,654.44
20-Feb	48	\$14,756.94	5	\$2,330.98
20-Mar	40	\$12,067.86	3	\$1,465.29
20-Apr	40	\$11,856.00	0	0
20-May	38	\$11,856.00	0	0
20-Jun	37	\$11,544.00	0	0
20-Jul	39	\$12,031.94	0	0
20-Aug	42	\$10,429.51	0	0
TOTAL	502	\$149,397.93	120	\$69,919.27

GENERAL ASSISTANCE AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE SEPT 2018 - AUG 2019

2018	GA	AMOUNT	EA	AMOUNT
SEP	52	\$12,500.03	23	\$12,817.28
OCT	50	\$12,000.00	37	\$21,325.56
NOV	51	\$12,527.99	16	\$8,323.27
DEC	49	\$12,250.00	10	\$7,356.62
19-Jan	47	\$11,750.00	13	\$10,352.42
19-Feb	46	\$11,368.34	9	\$6,431.39
19-Mar	47	\$11,750.00	6	\$4,033.17
19-Apr	41	\$12,464.00	10	\$4,502.42
19-May	47	\$14,288.00	16	\$8,793.43
19-Jun	40	\$11,938.02	17	\$7,636.51
19-Jul	51	\$15,369.60	25	\$13,581.64
19-Aug	43	\$12,717.80	24	\$13,683.23
TOTAL	564	\$150,923.78	206	\$118,836.94

2. **ARC Solar:** The Solar For All Project at ARC has been funded. The \$600,000 system will be installed with no upfront cost to the township and will provide at least 65% of the electric needed to operate the facility, saving the township approximately \$24,934 in its first year, \$521,324 cumulatively over 15 years. The panels come with a 25-year warranty and life expectancy of 30-35 years. The Township will own the array outright at the beginning of year seven. StraightUp Solar of Bloomington is expected to begin installation in the first quarter of 2021.
3. **CURE Grant through DCEO:** Normal Township has been awarded a \$17,000 CURE Grant to offset COVID-19 related expenses.
4. **Bloomington Township Grant:** Supervisor Deb Skillrud has confirmed Normal Township will receive another \$40,000 grant for ARC this fall.

Salary setting for township trustees:

When I was first elected to a county board position was very surprised to learn that elected officials were paid for public service. I have resolved that personal conflict by using the stipend to support and attend various organizations and causes using these funds while in office and representing the township.

To completely eliminate the stipend might detour others from running for elected office and I am certainly a proponent of citizens getting involved in their communities through public service. However, I believe we are in a position at this time to make some necessary and frugal adjustments to the position of Normal township trustee.

We have the option to pay our trustees a yearly salary or per diem per meeting. After closer examination, switching to the per diem method would cause additional calculation every month for the staff. Therefore, I believe leaving it as a salary per year makes the most sense.

After comparing “workload” and salaries paid to other local part-time elected officials I found the \$5,000 per year township salary to be VERY generous. It appears to have been increased every four years with little regard to comparison of other positions or current conditions and budget. It’s time, in my opinion, to “re-set.”

Therefore, given that trustees basically attend a one or two hour meeting per month, and considering our unusual circumstances this budget year caused by the pandemic, I propose that the Normal township trustee salary be cut in half starting next year and for the next four years. This would calculate to \$2496.00 per year—or basically, \$208.00 per month. This amount is still certainly in line with other local elected officials’ compensation. Additionally, it would return to the township budget approximately \$40,000 over the next four years to be used for things like creative ARC programming, grants for organizations that benefit township citizens, building and grounds maintenance and enhancements.

I look forward to hearing others’ opinions and thoughts on this issue, and am, as always, open to others’ considerations.