

**NORMAL TOWNSHIP
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2022 AT 8:15 AM
304 E MULBERRY, NORMAL, IL**

The meeting was held at the Normal Township Hall, with the option to join remotely via Zoom.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was opened at 8:15 a.m. by Township Supervisor, Sarah Grammer.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Supervisor Grammer started the meeting with a statement acknowledging ancestral land of indigenous groups who currently live or have lived in the Normal Township area.

3. Roll Call

Supervisor Sarah Grammer	Present
Trustee Art Rodriguez	Present
Trustee Arlene Hosea	Present
Trustee Sally Pyne	Present (Via Zoom)
Trustee Floyd Aper	Present

Additional Township Elected Officials Present

Pat Turner:	Clerk
Rob Cranston:	Assessor
Arin Rader:	Road Commissioner

ARC Staff Also Present:

Jess Ray: (New) ARC Director of Operations
Molly Camper: Director of Programming (Via Zoom)
Sammi Scott: ARC Communications Director (Via Zoom)
Elicsha Sanders: Director of Member Services (Via Zoom)

4. Pledge of Allegiance

5. Approval of Minutes

A. Approval of the January 20, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve January 20, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion: Art Rodriguez

Second: Arlene Hosea

Aye: Sarah Grammer, Art Rodriguez, Arlene Hosea, Sally Pyne, Floyd Aper

Nay: None

6. Approval of Expenditures from January 21, 2022 – February 17, 2022

Motion to approve expenditures as presented below;

General Town Fund	\$100,725.37
General Assistance	\$ 19,577.72
Senior Citizen Fund	\$ 38,308.99
Road & Bridge Fund	\$ 7,705.61

Supervisor Grammer explained that the number of weeks in the month's cycle can account for variations in some expenditures from month to month. Sometimes board meetings are 5 weeks apart and other times only four weeks apart. She also answered questions regarding the difference in the type of help that the Township provides for rent assistance and that which other organizations may provide for COVID related rental needs. Grammer reported that the community is seeing increased rental rates recently. After further response to questions regarding expenditures, the board voted unanimously to approved them.

Motion to Approve Bills & Expenditures from January 21, 2021 – February 17, 2022

Motion: Arlene Hosea

Second: Floyd Aper

Aye: Floyd Aper, Sally Pyne, Arlene Hosea, Art Rodriguez, Sarah Grammer,

Nay: None

7. Reports

A. Community Engagement

Floyd Aper attended a meeting with the Economic Development Council where he learned information about upcoming plans for the Twin Cities. He also attended a professional development meeting in Springfield regarding current practices in human resources.

Art Rodriguez worked with the NAACP & Moms Against Gun Violence as there have been two recent murders in Bloomington. He shared with the board about efforts underway to promote the adoption of Ethan's Law which is focuses on gun locks as a way of promoting gun safety. Art was able to distribute gun locks from the V.A. resources. He is also looking to increase access to the V.A. for people of color. He expressed interest in doing an event that would encourage veteran attendance at the ARC. Art further shared info on a proposed non-partisan House Bill for home modification for people with disabilities.

Sally Pyne is taking advantage of a film series "Before the Flood" and "There's Something in the Water" that deals with environmental issues and global warming as the Township had been approached regarding options for a possible cooling center. Sally has also been

following stats on local COVID-19 positivity rates and is encouraged to report that there has been a decrease in the rates.

Arlene Hosea shared regarding the recent reception for Rick Lewis that she and other Board Members attended. Rick recently retired from his position as Director of Operations at the ARC.

Sarah Grammer was invited to speak at an NAACP event regarding what Townships do. She is preparing for that event that will be held via Zoom and plans to share about Township Government in general as well as specific information about Normal Township.

B. Assessor: No Report

C. Clerk: No Report

D. Highway Commissioner: Commissioner Rader shared that the Spring weight limits went into force as of this past Monday. County sheriffs are patrolling the roads. April 15th is the date to pull spring weight limits but may be earlier depending on weather. Rader also reported that the plans for the new building are about 95% complete.

E. ARC Staff and Senior Advisory Committee:

ARC Director of Operations, Jess Ray was welcomed to his first official board meeting. He shared that he is learning a lot and expressed appreciation to former Director Rick Lewis and to Supervisor Grammer on their help in making the transition. He complimented the ARC staff and is excited to be working with such a great team. He pointed out that there have been 3 days of weather-related closures since he started and expressed appreciation to Arin Rader and Preston for their work especially in the extreme weather.

Ray shared that he is happy to be meeting the ARC tenants and ARC members. He is getting questions about masks because of upcoming changes to the mask mandate and will look to gain information from the Senior Centers of Illinois Association to learn possible strategies. Jess also complimented the SHIP volunteers who are currently doing open enrollment.

Elicsha Sanders, Director of Member Services at the ARC shared that there has been a steady increase in membership. Current stats show 2,500 members. Sarah Grammer pointed out that some people coming in to work with VITA Tax volunteers have joined the ARC and praised the partnership.

Sammi Scott, ARC Communications Director reported that the ARC Living Memorial Fund meeting was held last Thursday. One person has been added to their board and they are continuing the search for additional board members. They also were able to find an engraver for the leaves on the giving tree but continue working on a way to affix the acknowledgment bricks to the wall for display.

F. **Supervisor:** Supervisor Grammer reported that the Township is getting more calls than usual for assistance. She explained that Town of Normal CBDG funds that provided COVID relief programs during the last year and a half of the pandemic are out. It had allowed for Township to dedicate more on eligible non-covid related applications while referring those with COVID related needs. She also reiterated that Township funds are only dispersed in cases where the funds given will help the applicant stay in their dwelling. If the need is greater than the maximum amount or will not cover the cost needed for the tenant to stay in their house, funds are not dispersed. She will keep an eye on trends for next month. Sarah also shared a notice from the TOI regarding the upcoming 40th Annual Lobby Day in Springfield on Wednesday April 6th.

8. Public Comment: Mary Wurhmann who attended via Zoom commented that the retirement event held for Rick Lewis was very well done.

9. New Business

A. Discussion of 2023 Normal Township Budgets

The Board reviewed and discussed a side-by-side comparison of the Normal Township budget for FY2022 and proposal draft for FY2023. Discussion started with the General Town Fund. Supervisor Grammer explained that the proposed budget reflects best estimates as numbers for March are not yet available. She also expressed that we are likely to start off in April with a healthier fund balance than in the previous year due to lower than expected roof repair costs. Grammer responded to questions regarding budget rationale and received input as the group went line by line through the documents. The same was done for the Assessor's Budget, (given earlier to board by Rob Cranston), General Assistance Budget and Senior Citizen's Fund. Supervisor Grammer encouraged board members to continue to study the material presented and to bring input to the following month's meeting. The board will vote its intentions on the budgets at the March 17, 2022 meeting allowing for the 30 days needed prior to its adoption at the April meeting.

B. Discussion of 2023 Road District Budgets

The Board reviewed and discussed a side-by-side comparison of the 2022 Road District Budget and the proposal draft for FY2023. Commissioner Rader explained that the main change between the two is in capital outlays. He also explained that no motor fuel tax project is planned for FY 2023 as it is usually done every two years. Additional discussion ensued with Commissioner Rader explaining budget rationale and receiving input. Board Members were again encouraged to continue to review the material and weigh-in with the goal being to vote its intentions at the March 17, 2022 meeting allowing for the required thirty-day notice prior to the April meeting.

A motion was put forth to hold a five-minute recess due to the length of the meeting and amount of business still to be conducted.

Motion: Floyd Aper

Second: Arlene Hosea

Voice vote showed unanimous approval. The meeting paused for recess at 9:55am

Meeting resumed at 10:00 am by Supervisor Grammer.

C. Discussion of Township Policies and Procedures

The Board continued its review of Township policies with focus on the “Social Media”, “Remote Attendance” and “Whistle Blower Protection” policies. Trustee Floyd Aper helped to draft policies that Supervisor Grammer was able to present to the Township’s attorney for review and feedback. Many questions persisted regarding the role and designation of the “auditing official” for the Whistle-Blower Protection policy, leading to the decision to table the matter in order to check further with the Township Attorney.

Motion to table discussion of Whistle Blower Policy

Motion: Floyd Aper

Second: Arlene Hosea

Aye: Floyd Aper, Sally Pyne, Arlene Hosea, Art Rodriguez, Sarah Grammer

Nay: None

A motion was put forth to approve a “Remote Attendance Policy” for board meetings.

Motion: Floyd Aper

Second: Arlene Hosea

The board discussed the in-person requirement for board meetings and the exceptions that would allow remote attendance. Floyd Aper put forth a motion to adopt the Remote Attendance Policy with changes reflecting the elimination of “employment purposes” as set forth in 4b and a modification of section 9, not allowing remote attendance for closed sessions.

Motion: Floyd Aper

Second: Sally Pyne

Aye: Sally Pyne, Arlene Hosea, Sarah Grammer, Floyd Aper

Nay: Art Rodriguez

Motion Carried 4/5

The Board also decided to table the discussion on the Township’s “Social Media” policy to the March Meeting due to severe weather conditions and the time required to adequately address the topic.

D. Discussion of ARC Operations

With the mask mandate scheduled to drop state-wide as of March 1, 2022, Director Jess Ray noted that there are many considerations to take into account regarding impacts on the ARC. Regarding Township/non-ARC related guidelines, Sarah stated that the staff felt comfortable working in a “mask optional” environment. Sarah noted that everyone should be reminded not to attend when symptomatic.

Motion: Normal Township “Mask Policy” effective March 1 -Masks encouraged but not required. Those with COVID-19 symptoms are encouraged to stay home.

Motion: Floyd Aper

Second: Arlene Hosea

Aye: Arlene Hosea, Art Rodriguez, Sarah Grammer, Sally Pyne, Floyd Aper

Nay: None

Sarah Grammer shared the ARC staff’s request to postpone any decision on re-instating Fridays at the ARC until there is time to see how attendance is impacted with the removal of the state mask requirement. March’s data will be collected and a decision can be made based on that at the March or April Meeting.

E. Appointment to the ARC Senior Advisory Board

The Senior Advisory Board is a 9-member board with two openings in April. The board discussed possible options for filling those openings.

Motion: to approve re-appointment of Deb Shaw to Senior Advisory Board and to appoint as a new member, Jana Edge.

Motion: Art Rodriguez

Second: Floyd Aper

Aye: Sarah Grammer, Art Rodriguez, Arlene Hosea, Sally Pyne, Floyd Aper

Nay: None

F. Approval of Meeting dates for FY 2023

The meeting dates for the Township Board regular meetings are proposed to continue to be held each third Thursday at 8:15 am. The board voted unanimously to approve meeting dates for FY 2023.

Motion: Arlene Hosea

Second: Floyd Aper

Voice vote showed unanimous approval.

Meeting adjourned at: 11:10 a.m.

Next Regular Normal Township Board Meeting: Thurs, March 17, 2022 8:15am

Next Senior Advisory Committee Meeting: Thurs, March 3, 2022 – 9:30 am