

Normal Township Meeting

Board Minutes

Tuesday, July 21, 2026

5 PM

Normal Township, 304 East Mulberry Street, Normal, Illinois 61761

1. Supervisor Able called the meeting to order at 5 PM.
2. Trustee Starr read a Land Acknowledgment.
3. Supervisor Able led the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. The Recording Secretary, Jenni Grigsby-Rogal, conducted the roll call:

Supervisor Krystle Able	Present
Trustee Dylan Hile-Broad	Present
Trustee Jodi Slothower	Present
Trustee Tanner Starr	Present
Trustee Natasha Syed	Absent

Others Present:

Arin Rader, Township Highway Commissioner

Kent Depew, Township Assessor

Tori Lomelino, Case Manager

Elicssha Sanders, ARC Executive Director

Chrissy Fernandez, Human Resources

Beth Theobald, Development Director

Joshua Taylor, ARC Assistant to the Executive Director

Jenni Grigsby-Rogal, Youth Committee Member

Several community members were in attendance, with ten signed up to speak during public comment: Laura Bailey, Leslie Hitchens, Diane Benjamin, Michael Fulfor, Sylvia Richardson, Roosevelt Keys, Carrie Ann Courten, Vaughn Nevius, Barb Dallinger, and Lisa Jane Kroutu.

5. Public Comment

Laura Bailey, site supervisor at ARC Peace Meal for over 17 years and member of the Senior Advisory Board, shared that she has never sensed such turmoil, anger, and confusion at the ARC as she has recently with all the changes. She mentioned that more communication with the Senior Advisory Board could have helped avoid some of these feelings. She emphasized that we all want the ARC to be successful, and involving the Senior Advisory Board more could help with that.

Leslie Hitchens stressed agreement with Laura Bailey's comments and expressed gratitude for the work on the pavilion. She said it seems that many members are upset or confused due to lack of communication. She also mentioned that QR codes for surveys are not something she and many other members are familiar with.

Diane Benjaminin explained that she is videotaping the meeting to share online since the township no longer does so. She expressed that she thinks laws have been broken due to how many special meetings have been held before 6 pm.

Michael A. Fulfor played an audio recording with various comments about how special the ARC is for older people. There are many great programs for older people, like drumming, tai chi, and so much more. He wants people to give the ARC a chance and said it is a friendly place. He shared that he is a member of the senior board and enjoys the ARC.

Sylvia Richardson shared that she used to be on the senior advisory board and questioned, "What is the role of the senior advisory board?" She noted that the vending machines are new, but no one asked whether they were wanted. They are taking up space where we could be gathering. She noted that change is hard and communication is important. She expressed a lack of understanding about why so many people are not on the same page. She thinks it's a great place for seniors but would like to see camaraderie and peace within the organization.

Roosevelt Keys shared how he loves going to the ARC to meet people. There are many activities like bingo and movies. People are trying to do new things, and change is good sometimes. The fee is only being raised by \$10, and he is happy to keep going to the ARC.

Carrie Anna Courtan has been a member for 2 ½ years, and her husband is also a member. She thanked the board for its attention to the ARC and shared that she's been seeing many positive changes. She took the survey and feels she has been heard. She also explained that we need to remember that not everyone is privy to all information, especially regarding human resources. She acknowledged how positive the extension of hours on Fridays has been and how \$40 a year is the best deal in town. She thanked the board for its support of the ARC and hopes the board continues to prioritize it.

Vaughn Nevius shared how he has been a member of the ARC for a long time, and he appreciates how staff attends to problems right away when he brings things up. He is glad he joined ARC and appreciates the board's support.

Barb Dallinger, Sunshine Coordinator, shared how her office is in the ARC, but she is not a staff member. She noted that excellent people have been hired, they have been flexible and have done well with balancing thoughts of "this is how we always have done it" vs. new approaches and ideas. She also shared that it would take some time for members to mourn departed staff, Molly and Sammie. The members

are also used to Elicssha being available all the time, so Josh is a good and needed gatekeeper during this time of change.

Lisa Jane Kroutu shared how she is new to the ARC and loves being a member. She is saving lots of money, and Elicssha has been wonderful and welcoming. She thanked Elicssha and staff.

6. Trustee Hile-Broad moved to approve the Consent Agenda, which included:
 - a. Approval of Minutes from the July 8th Special Meeting
 - b. Approval of Bill Payments:
 - i. General Town
 - ii. General Assistance
 - iii. Senior Center
 - iv. Road and Bridge

Second: Trustee Starr

The motion passed with a unanimous 4-0 vote.

7. Reports
 - a. Highway Commissioner Rader shared that he is in discussions with Midwest Transit to order another handicapped-accessible van for the ARC. He expects it will be 8-10 weeks before delivery. Payment will be due upon delivery. There is a project to seal coat 4 miles of road that is set to begin on Friday, and he has been repairing several road shoulders.
 - b. Assessor Depew shared that his office is busy entering 2026 values to turn into the county. He expects they may have the township multiplier before the August meeting. A guess is that it may be around 5%. They will then get into a busy time with appeals. He also noted how the Town of Normal voted to move forward with the development project at Uptown Normal, which is supposed to include some apartments.
 - c. HR Manager Fernandez shared that the total workforce headcount is 40, with 15 full-time and 25 part-time. Four employees have been onboarded, while three have transitioned out. She is working to establish a regular OSHA training schedule through TOIRMA. She will be attending the CIHR Conference at ISU on 7/31/26.
 - d. ARC Manager Elicssa thanked Kristen for helping to make onboarding new people almost seamless. She explained how they are cross-training the entire team, which will benefit all. Beth added that many people and businesses are interested in partnering with the ARC. Jewel-Osco has committed to supporting 3 events. Josh shared that members have been welcoming and thanked everyone for support. Supervisor Able brought up the success Beth has contributed already with the birdhouse sponsorship from Target. She noted this

is the first time in township history that funds are being brought in that are not from taxpayers or members. Further, she added how much money is being saved on the Ameren bill, and there have been thousands in savings from not needing to have Kelly Construction visit often like in the past to fix roof leaks. Also, Blake was able to fix the carpet cleaner, and new carpet tiles were found, so we have those on hand when replacements are needed. A staff meeting was held last weekend with lunch provided by Krystle and Elicsha.

- e. Case Manager Tori Lomelino shared that the General Assistance spending is at 15% of budget and there has been no huge change since last month. She is participating in the McLean Community Quality Council and attending a Continuum of Care Conference this week.
- f. Supervisors Report
 - i. GA Committee

Supervisor Able shared how the federal budget has still not passed, and there is much concern about cuts to LIHEAP and how such a dramatic change to assistance will affect the township assistance budgets. Also, Illinois Senate Bill 3565 awaits the Governor's signature. In addition to how the township already provides financial aid to people eligible for general assistance, the legislation will allow the township to determine its own application to serve the needs of more people.

- ii. Youth Committee

The youth committee work is underway with sub-committees meeting this week to begin research both within our community and throughout the state to learn about youth committees and programming in other townships. Supervisor Able added that she wanted to be clear that there will be no youth programming taking place at ARC unless it is an event like Grandparents Day. There are clear objectives for the ARC, and those do not include youth programming.

ARC Leadership Staff submitted reports for July 2026 in addition to the meeting comments above.

- 8. Old Business
 - a. Township Conference Registration needs to be submitted before August 7th for the discounted rate. The conference is November 9, 10 & 11th in Springfield.
- 9. New Business

a. Update to Vacation Policy

Trustee Hile-Broad moved to approve the vacation policy.

Second: Trustee Starr

The policy recommendation changes the vacation policy from a front-loaded vacation policy to an accrual-based vacation policy, effective April 1, 2027. Discussion included the suggestion to not penalize long-time employees with forfeiture of vacation time and to allow them to retain their earned time for use beyond April 1, 2027, for this first year of transition to the new policy.

Trustee Starr moved to amend the vacation policy to allow employees to carry over their vacation time beyond the April 1, 2027, date for use during this first year of the new policy.

Second: Trustee Hile-Broad

The amendment was adopted with a unanimous 4-0 voice vote.

Trustee Hile-Broad moved to approve the vacation policy as amended.

Second: Trustee Starr

The vacation policy was approved as amended with a unanimous 4-0 roll call vote.

Supervisor Able Yes

Trustee Hile-Broad Yes

Trustee Slothower Yes

Trustee Starr Yes

b. WEEK commercial contract. Week News is beginning a new program called “Aging Untold” to air Monday through Friday at 3 p.m. They are offering a media package of 4 commercials per week for only \$100 per week. The contract is for one year, yet it may be canceled at any time with a 30-day notice. There was much discussion on this opportunity. It may increase awareness of ARC and, as a result, increase membership. There has never been an advertisement like this done before. We will be able to tell from membership application questions if there has been a positive outcome from the advertisements. Trustee Slothower expressed concern about committing so much of the budget to this effort, especially with new staff coming in to focus on this area. WEEK will make the ad for \$500 if the township doesn’t arrange for a different way to make the ad. Due to the ability to cancel the contract with a 30-day notice, Trustee Starr and Trustee Hile-Broad thought this was a low-risk opportunity.

Trustee Hile-Broad moved to approve the WEEK contract.

Second: Trustee Starr

The motion passed with a 3-1 roll call vote.

Supervisor Able	YES
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Trustee Hile-Broad	YES
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Trustee Starr	YES
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Trustee Slothower	NO
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10. Board Good & Welfare: Supervisor Able mentioned that a couple of dying trees around the building will be removed soon by EMBARK. Also, the grounds are being worked on at ARC in preparation for the U of I landscape proposal.

11. Trustee Starr moved to adjourn the meeting. Second: Trustee Hile-Broad. The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 PM.

Jenni Grigsby-Rogal, Recording Secretary 7/21/26. Submitted 7/26/2026