



APPROVED Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Joliet Township
Joliet Township Regular Board Meeting
175 W. Jefferson St., Joliet, IL 60432
Tuesday, November 19th, 2024 / 5:00 P.M.

The regular town board meeting, being held at 175 West Jefferson Street, Joliet Township government offices, Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 5:00 P.M. was called to order by Supervisor Alicia Morales. The following official business was transacted:

The Clerk led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. The Clerk called the roll as follows:

TRUSTEES:	Tanya Arias	Not Present
	Antione J. Edwards	Present
	Cesar Escutia	Present
	Raymond F. Slattery	Present
SUPERVISOR:	Alicia Morales	Present
CLERK:	Estefany Bonilla	Present
OTHER OFFICIALS:	Commissioner Vince Alessio	Present
	Assessor James Brenzewski	Present

ALSO PRESENT:

Transportation Coordinator Skyler Reed	Violence Prevention Council Coordinator Leshae Hudson
General Assistance Director Patricia Venziano	Behavioral Health Team
Animal Control Assistant Director Rebecca Gomez	Finance Director Ivan Diaz
Director of Human Resources Erica Holmes	Senior Liaison Jeff Wallace

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Town Board Minutes: Trustee Escutia motions to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2024, Town Board Meeting, Seconded by Trustee Slattery. A roll call was taken. Motion Carried.¹

Closed Session Joliet Township Board Minutes: Trustee Slattery motions to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2024, Closed Session Joliet Township Board Meeting, Seconded by Trustee Edwards. A roll call was taken. Motion Carried.²

Road District's 2024-25 Salt Bid Minutes: Trustee Edwards motions to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2024, Road District's 2024-25 Salt Bid, Seconded by Trustee Escutia. A roll call was taken. Motion Carried.³

OLD BUSINESS:

TOIRMA Loss Control Policy

Attorney Bryan Wellner verified that everything is correct on the TOIRMA Loss Control Policy. No Motion needed.

NEW BUSINESS:

APPROVE/Proclamation for November as Native American Heritage Month

Trustee Escutia does the honor to read the Proclamation for November as Native American Heritage Month to the audience. Supervisor Morales asks for a motion to approve. Trustee Escutia motions. Seconded by Trustee Slattery. Motion carried.⁴

¹ Roll call vote: Ayes (4). Trustees Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

² Roll call vote: Ayes (4). Trustees Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

³ Roll call vote: Ayes (4). Trustees Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

⁴ Roll call vote: Ayes (4). Trustees Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

REVIEW/Proposed Town Levy for Posting – Ordinance No. 403-2024

Finance Director Ivan Diaz states the Proposed Town Levy for Posting – Ordinance No. 403-2024 is two million, nine hundred thousand which is a 3.5% increase from the previous year. This fund covers the General Town, Animal Control and the Senior Levy. The Town Levy is well below the 5% Truth in Taxation limit. Supervisor Morales asked the Trustees if they had any questions on the Proposed Town Levy for Posting – Ordinance No. 403-2024. No Motion needed.

REVIEW/Proposed Road District Levy for Posting – Ordinance No. 2024-04 (RD)

Finance Director Ivan Diaz states the Proposed Road District Levy for Posting – Ordinance No. 2024-04 (RD) is two million, which is only 0.5% increase from last year. The Town Levy is well below the 5% Truth in Taxation limit. Supervisor Morales asked the Trustees if they had any questions on the Proposed Road District Levy for Posting – Ordinance No. 2024-04 (RD). No Motion needed.

APPROVE/Annual Contract Renewal/Blue Cross Blue Shield Health Insurance

Supervisor Morales asks for a motion to approve the Annual Contract Renewal/Blue Cross Blue Shield Health Insurance. Trustee Slattery motions. Seconded by Trustee Escutia. Motion carried.⁵

ADOPT/Compensation Ordinance No. 404-2024

Supervisor Morales asks for a motion to adopt Compensation Ordinance No. 404-2024. Trustee Edwards motions. Seconded by Trustee Escutia. Motion carried.⁶

PUBLIC COMMENT: Two Joliet residents, Janet Soto and Linda Kokalj, each spoke about an ongoing issue involving a neighbor who has been pumping water onto their properties. Ms. Soto stated that she had previously addressed this issue at the September 2024 board meeting. Ms. Soto asked for an update from the Highway Commissioner, stating that the situation has worsened, and the neighborhood had lost trees due to the excess water. Ms. Soto expressed frustration that her calls have not been returned. Supervisor Morales assured Ms. Soto and Ms. Kokalj that she will work with the Highway Commissioner’s office to find a resolution. Yenny Muñoz-Swaninger, the president for the senior group called Club Social Latino, spoke to present certificates of appreciation to two volunteer members being Socorro Medina and Cherie Belom. Ms. Medina helped the group coordinate locations, while Ms. Belom provides Zumba instruction and works to integrate the group with the larger community. The Club Social Latino is for seniors over the age of 51 and promotes social engagement, physical activity, and networking. Ms. Muñoz-Swaninger described the group as primarily serving Spanish-speaking seniors but welcomes anyone. Will County board member Janet Diaz spoke to inform that Will County will be partnering with Joliet Township to conduct a study on local water aquifers. She mentioned that the County Board is scheduled to vote on the partnership this Thursday and expects the measure to pass unanimously. Ms. Diaz states that 34 homes in the Township are experiencing problems with their wells, with at least one home having run completely dry. Ms. Diaz explains that some of the residents are also experiencing problems with their sewer systems, although the sources don’t provide any further details on the nature of these issues. Ms. Diaz reports that Supervisor Morales and herself had attended a previous meeting with some of the mentioned homeowners a couple of months before for the purpose of listening to the residents’ concerns about their water and sewer problems.

REPORTS:

Finance Director, Ivan Diaz

In addition to discussing the proposed Town Levy and Road District Levy, Finance Director Diaz provided a brief update on the status of the Township’s annual audit. He reports that the audit is in its final stages and will be completed before the extension due date on Tuesday, November 26, 2024.

⁵ Roll call vote: Ayes (4). Trustees Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

⁶ Roll call vote: Ayes (4). Trustees Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

Behavioral Health Team

Karissa Fleming, from the CVI Behavioral Health Team, announced that Haydee Rosales-Martinez is officially a Licensed Professional Counselor after passing her licensure exam. The team has been busy with a growing caseload and community outreach, including presentations at a local church and the Spanish Community Center. The Spanish Community Center presentation led to a new referral, highlighting the team's success in engaging with the Spanish-speaking community. Both therapists have seen their caseloads grow, with Ms. Fleming currently at nineteen clients and Ms. Rosales-Martinez at sixteen. The team was also excited to participate in the City of Joliet Active Threat & Mental Wellness 2024 Conference, where Ms. Rosales-Martinez gave a presentation on mental health, trauma, substance use, and firearm use, emphasizing the importance of engagement with at-risk youth.

Animal Control Assistant Director, Rebecca Gomez

The Animal Control department is seeking to increase adoptions over the holiday season. Animal Control is considering waiving or reducing adoption fees and inviting the community to share a Thanksgiving moment with the animals. Animal Control hopes that by sharing the event on social media, they will raise awareness and increase adoptions. St. Pat's neighborhood hosted a successful donation drive to support the shelter animals on October 19, 2024. The donation drive provided much-needed supplies, including food for cats and dogs. Animal Control is working to increase their budget through a partnership with the Spay Illinois to apply for a \$30,000 grant, Rachel Ray "Save them All Grant" through Best Friends, which will be used to provide affordable veterinary care for up to 212 pets in our area. This grant will cover a range of vital services, including dental cleanings, spays and neuters, TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) for feral cats, foreign body surgeries, and lifesaving pyometra surgeries. The Animal Control Assistant Director went on to discuss plans to expand the use of Home Base, a comprehensive scheduling and timekeeping system, to all township departments. Animal Control had been using Home Base for almost a decade, and the Animal Control Assistant Director expressed confidence that expanding its use to other departments would streamline operations and improve organization throughout the Township.

Violence Prevention Council Coordinator, Leshae Hudson

The Violence Prevention Council Coordinator Hudson reported that she had recently participated in active shooter training with law enforcement agencies in Joliet and Will County. She attended a seminar at Joliet Junior College (JJC) to learn about identifying potential shooters, as well as strategies for interacting with people who are experiencing a mental health crisis. The Violence Prevention Council Coordinator planned to attend a monthly training hosted by the New Lenox Safe Community Council. The Violence Prevention Council Coordinator Hudson announced that her office is working with the Illinois Department of Human Services to develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to promote collaboration between hospitals and law enforcement agencies throughout the state. The MOU will provide guidance for responding to mental health crises, and The Violence Prevention Council Coordinator is taking the lead on drafting the language. The Violence Prevention Council Coordinator Hudson is working with the Racial Equity Impact Assessment League (REIAL) to organize a toy drive for children living at the SOS Children's Villages in Lockport. This organization provides housing and support services for children in foster care. Many of the children living at SOS Children's Villages, along with their foster parents and staff members, have been victims of gun violence. The Violence Prevention Council Coordinator is taking the lead on gathering donations of toys for the 58 children currently living at the SOS Children's Villages. Ms. Hudson noted that the Salvation Army will be hosting a celebration for the children in December and providing gifts and refreshments.

General Assistance Director, Patricia Venziano

The General Assistance Director Venziano described her recent community outreach efforts, which included attending events such as Bootfest at the YMCA, Take Back the Night, and a Community Partners event at Joliet Central High School. The General Assistance Director reported that her office is collaborating with the Will County Health Department to offer services to the community. LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) is back for the season on December 18, 2024, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The General Assistance Director encouraged the public to participate in the Township's annual Toys for Tots drive.

Director of Human Resources, Erica Holmes

The Director of Human Resources stated that the Township's first-ever employee benefits fair had been a success. Representatives from Midland State Bank, Aflac, Blue Cross Blue Shield, TMA (the Township's workers' compensation insurance provider), and New York Life were on hand to answer employees' questions about their benefits.

Assessor, James Brenczewski

The Assessor stated that his office was continuing its review of property assessments to ensure that similar properties within the same neighborhood have equitable assessed values. This process involves going through property files and visiting homes to make adjustments as needed. The Assessor reported that his office had been fielding many questions from residents regarding eligibility for property tax exemptions, particularly the senior exemption and senior freeze programs. These programs can significantly reduce the property taxes owed by eligible seniors, so it makes sense that residents would be interested in learning more about them.

Highway Commissioner, Vincent Alessio

The Highway Commissioner stated that they are prepared for the coming winter, noting that road salt deliveries had commenced, and that the Road District should have an adequate supply on hand. The Road District is preparing for the winter with their snow trucks to spread the treated salt.

Senior Liaison, Jeff Wallace

The Senior Liaison regularly attended meetings held by the senior groups to share information about the Township's senior programs, including Ride-Share, the temporary disability handicapped placards, and transportation services. The Senior Liaison stated that the recent Veterans Luncheon at the Moose Lodge was well-received by the seniors who attended.

Transportation Coordinator, Skyler Reed

The Transportation Department completed 574 trips in October of 2024. Transportation The Joliet Township Government Transportation Department had a busy and successful October, completing 574 trips and achieving full staffing with one full-time driver and eight part-time drivers. The department is actively engaged in community outreach, evidenced by a recent presentation at the MAPP BH/SU Task Force meeting (Mobilizing for Action Through Planning and Partnerships) to inform local organizations about the transportation services offered by the township. The Transportation Department provided a senior trip to the Morton Arboretum in Lisle, which was well-received by participants and drivers. Looking ahead, the department is optimistic about potential new partnerships with the Will County Sheriff's Office and Joliet Public School District 86.

Clerk, Estefany Bonilla

Clerk Bonilla stated that Skyline Salt Solutions had been awarded the contract for Road District's treated salt. The company has returned the signed award letter and has been filed in the Clerk's office. Clerk Bonilla has been working with the senior groups as their senior applications were approved and the senior grants were disbursed to them. Clerk Bonilla provided an update on preparations for the caucus of the Democratic Party, which is scheduled for December 3rd at 6 p.m. at the Painter's Hall, located at 100 Republic Avenue.

Supervisor, Alicia Morales

Supervisor Morales highlighted a partnership with the Highway Commissioner and the City Center partnership for the Light Up the Holidays festival parade. Supervisor Morales encouraged board members, their families, and friends to attend the event, showcasing the Township's commitment to community involvement. The Supervisor reported that the Forest Park building was close to ready until their move-in date was delayed due to the discovery of black mold. Supervisor Morales stated that a thorough inspection was scheduled to assess the extent of the mold and determine the next steps in the renovation process. Supervisor Morales shared her experience attending the Township Officials of

Illinois Conference in Springfield, highlighting the value of the educational sessions she attended, particularly those related to budgeting and auditing. Supervisor Morales emphasized her commitment to utilizing the knowledge gained at the conference to effectively manage Township finances. Supervisor Morales reported that the Township co-sponsored the Active Threat and Mental Wellness Conference with the City of Joliet Fire Department, where the Township's CVI program gave a presentation. The Supervisor expressed pride in the Township's leadership in addressing mental health and gun violence, underscoring the importance of preventative measures and community partnerships. Supervisor Morales informed the board that the Township's CVI grant funding was up for renewal, and staff were diligently gathering data and preparing the necessary documentation for submission.

CASH RECEIPTS: Trustee Slattery motions to place the cash receipts into their proper accounts for the period ending October 31, 2024. Trustee Escutia seconds. Motion carried.⁷

FUND EXPENDITURES:

General Town Fund for October 2024: \$433,820.95

Trustee Slattery motioned to certify the expenditures and approve them for payment. Trustee Escutia seconds. A roll call was taken. Motion carried.⁸

Capital Fund for October 2024: \$00.00

No expenditures in this fund. A motion is not needed

General Assistance Fund for October 2024: \$25,494.69

Trustee Slattery motioned to certify the expenditures and approve them for payment. Trustee Escutia seconds. A roll call was taken. Motion carried.⁹

Road and Bridge Fund for October 2024: \$55,947.24

Trustee Slattery motioned to certify the expenditures and approve them for payment. Trustee Escutia seconds. A roll call was taken. Motion carried.¹⁰

Animal Control Fund for October 2024: \$78,920.76

Trustee Slattery motioned to certify the expenditures and approve them for payment. Trustee Escutia seconds. A roll call was taken. Motion carried.¹¹

Senior Fund for October 2024: \$105,250.00

Trustee Slattery motioned to certify the expenditures and approve them for payment. Trustee Escutia seconds. A roll call was taken. Motion carried.¹²

ADJOURNMENT: Supervisor Morales asks for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Escutia motions. Trustee Slattery seconds. Motion carried.¹³

The meeting adjourned at 6:19 PM.

Respectfully submitted,


Estefany Bonilla
Town Clerk

⁷ Roll call vote: Ayes (4). Trustees Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

⁸ Roll call vote: Ayes (4). Trustees Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

⁹ Roll call vote: Ayes (4). Trustees Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

¹⁰ Roll call vote: Ayes (4). Trustees Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

¹¹ Roll call vote: Ayes (4). Trustees Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

¹² Roll call vote: Ayes (4). Trustees Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

¹³ Roll call vote: Ayes (4). Trustees Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).