



APPROVED Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Joliet Township
Joliet Township Regular Board Meeting
175 W. Jefferson St., Joliet, IL 60432
Tuesday, December 10th, 2024 / 5:00 P.M.

The regular town board meeting, being held at 175 West Jefferson Street, Joliet Township government offices, Tuesday, December 10, 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 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 Brenczewski Not Present

ALSO PRESENT:

- Transportation Coordinator Skyler Reed
- General Assistance Department Suzanne Bustin
- Director of Human Resources Erica Holmes
- Finance Director Ivan Diaz
- Community Violence Intervention Director Keshia Ellis
- Violence Prevention Council Coordinator Leshae Hudson
- Behavioral Health Team
- Senior Liaison Jeff Wallace

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Held for Miss Caley Maradei Alessio.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Town Board Minutes: Trustee Escutia motions to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2024, Town Board Meeting, Seconded by Trustee Edwards. A roll call was taken. Motion Carried.¹

PUBLIC COMMENT: Sandra Aguirre, Precinct Committeewoman of Precinct 13 and District 86 Board Member, inquired for a direction on who to call or to which department Ms. Aguirre can reach to request further information on the caucus event. Supervisor Morales informed Ms. Aguirre that all requests are to be directed to the Clerk’s office or the Supervisor’s office. Janet Diaz also stated that she is also aware of the water issues and would like to discuss further on the topic with the Supervisor. Supervisor Morales informed Ms. Diaz that she is working with the Will County Chief of Staff and the Will County Land department to find solutions to the water issues.

NEW BUSINESS:

ADOPT/Proposed Town Levy – Ordinance No. 403-2024

Supervisor Morales asks for a motion to adopt Proposed Town Levy – Ordinance No. 403-2024. Trustee Slattery motions. Seconded by Trustee Escutia. Motion carried.²

¹ Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).
² Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

ADOPT/Proposed Road District Levy – Ordinance No. 2024-04 (RD)

Supervisor Morales asks for a motion to adopt Proposed Road District Levy – Ordinance No. 2024-04 (RD). Trustee Escutia motions. Seconded by Trustee Arias. Motion carried.³

APPROVAL/PACE Contract Renewal

Supervisor Morales asks for a motion to approve the PACE Contract Renewal. Trustee Edwards motions. Seconded by Trustee Arias. Motion carried.⁴

REVIEW/TOIRMA Building Evaluation Insurance

Supervisor Morales asked the Trustees to review the TOIRMA Building Evaluation Insurance provided for the Forest Park Community Center and the community center next to the Mitchell Center. No Motion needed.

APPROVAL/2024 Handbook Joliet Township Government

Supervisor Morales asks for a motion to approve the 2024 Handbook Joliet Township Government. Trustee Arias motions. Seconded by Trustee Escutia. Motion carried.⁵

REPORTS:

Behavioral Health Team

Haydee Martinez-Rosales, LPC with CVI Behavioral Health team, continues to make great progress with clients by using Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT). This includes teaching relaxation techniques and working on cognitive coping skills, which are leading to noticeable positive changes in clients' behaviors and symptoms. Ms. Martinez-Rosales noted a growing waitlist of eleven clients in total with five of them being Spanish speakers. This highlights the need for a third therapist on the CVI Behavioral Health Team.

Community Violence Intervention Director, Keshia Ellis

The Community Violence Intervention Director Ms. Ellis provided an update on assisting the family affected by the I-80 shooting incident. The CVI program has committed resources due to the impact of the violence in the community by assisting in funeral services and the VOCA process for repayment through the State of Illinois. The CVI program hosted a pop-up event to serve meals to the community and served over 45 people at the 180 building. The CVI staff also hosted a Halloween party to provide a safe and fun environment for families in the community, especially those in the South End where there isn't a dedicated place for families to safely celebrate. CVI's Community Engagement Coordinator participated in a first-generation college celebration and resource fair to connect with affected youth and establish that 12 students were found to be directly affected by the gun violence. CVI is partnering with the Boys and Girls Club to bring the Team Reach program to at-risk youth, offering activities like basketball, boxing, and fine arts. The CVI Director will be partnering with a General Assistance caseworker to provide a Spanish-language presentation on trauma awareness

Violence Prevention Council Coordinator, Leshae Hudson

The Violence Prevention Council Coordinator Ms. Hudson announced that the Joliet Township government and the Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIAL) received a second empowerment award since September of 2024. A member of REIAL, Sam's Club, will be donating items for the Outreach team to use at pop-up events, such as food and water. The VPCC contacted the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) to create a template for sharing

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

with law enforcement and hospitals to improve collaboration. The VPCC organized a meeting with IDHS, the Office of Violence Prevention, and seven other Violence Prevention Council Coordinators to create language and connections with the Illinois State Police for regional collaboration.

General Assistance Department, Suzanne Bustin

Suzanne Bustin from the General Assistance Department shared updates on their recent activities. The GA Director has been out of the office on sick leave and the team has been managing GA operations, providing community assistance and resources as needed. Upcoming events include the Will County Center for Community Concerns offering utility assistance with Nicor and ComEd on Wednesday, December 18, 2024, from 9 AM to 3 PM in the boardroom. Alejandra Zamudio has been promoting this event for a month through flyers and social media. Additionally, the VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program will start in mid-February in collaboration with Will County Center for Community Concerns. Tax packets will be available for residents at the end of January, with the program running through mid-April. It offers free tax preparation for seniors regardless of income and for anyone earning less than \$65,000. The Toys for Tots initiative have been highly successful, with five donation boxes filled with toys contributed by local organizations, employees, and community members. The GA noted the donations from Edward Jones, Joliet Public Library, the yearly sorority who have come for the last three years, Joliet township employees, and Trustee Tanya Arias. Special thanks were extended to all contributors for supporting this cause for the children. Alejandra and the GA Director attended the Well-Woman Health Fair hosted by the Will County Health Department and the Joliet Chapter-National Hook of Black Woman, where they highlighted community services. The GA Director attended her first TOI convention and found it to be a valuable experience. The GA Director has also been working on the State Health Insurance Program (SHIP), though calls have decreased since open enrollment ended on Thursday, December 7, 2024.

Senior Liaison, Jeff Wallace

The Senior Services Liaison Mr. Wallace attended a group meeting with Widow & Widowers at Second Baptist in November of 2024. There he discovered a flyer about a "Matter of Balance" program, designed to help seniors manage falls and increase activity levels, which ran from December 13th, 2024, through the end of January from 10AM to 2PM at no cost. The Senior Services Liaison facilitated connections between residents and senior groups after the newsletter was distributed. The Senior Services Liaison helped with a donation of CPAP machines, coordinating with Sue from General Assistance and arranging for them to be given to Chuck Corer at the Will Grundy Medical Clinic. The Senior Liaison also announced that he attended the St. Joseph Seniors and St. Ray's Seniors Christmas luncheons where Supervisor Morales spoke about how she became a supervisor after being the town clerk, and how the township created new jobs and programs through grants without raising taxes. Clerk Bonilla was in attendance as well and gave a brief introductory speech as a Joliet resident and discussed the schools she attended before being appointed town clerk. Mr. Wallace expresses his gratitude to Joliet Township for supporting the senior groups.

Transportation Coordinator, Skyler Reed

The Transportation Department successfully completed 542 trips for the month of November 2024. On a Saturday the Transportation Department assisted Family Guidance clients, ensuring their access to appointments for the Thanksgiving Holiday. Will County Sheriff's Office and the Transportation Department executed a pilot-phase MOU, which plans to formalize into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) at the start of the new year. Joliet Public School District 86 and the Transportation Department met with a representative and are currently awaiting a response regarding potential collaboration. Fighting Chance and the Transportation Department held discussions to explore how the Transportation team can support their mission. The Transportation Department responded to an inquiry from the city regarding shuttle services for residents to a local event. Although the turnout was lower than expected due to the weather, Priscilla Cordero expressed appreciation for the Transportation team and for their support. Ms. Cordero also shared enthusiasm for collaborating on the Holiday event next season, noting that with more advertising and better

weather, shuttle services could significantly benefit the community. The transportation team also assisted Holsten Human Capital Development in transportation for their holiday turkey giveaways. The Transportation department currently served 32 Joliet Township residents with weekly food deliveries and on Wednesday, November 20, 2024, provided 11 participants with an extra box for Thanksgiving.

Finance Director, Ivan Diaz

Finance Director Diaz informed the Board members that the township received a \$115,000 credit for a past water leak and presented the audit book with information to the Board members regarding the Township's audit that was extended up until November, which was uploaded to the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) for grants once the audit was received. There were four possible opinions that the auditor could have given: a disclaimer of opinion (meaning they would not give an opinion), an adverse opinion (meaning there were a lot of issues with the audit), a qualified opinion (meaning there were some issues), or an unqualified opinion, which was the opinion the township received. The Township received an unqualified opinion on its audit, which is the best possible outcome. An unqualified opinion indicates that the financial statements are presented fairly and accurately in accordance with the applicable accounting standards. The audit was a single audit, which is required when federal funds are involved in grants and involves a more procedural approach that focuses on how those funds are utilized. The audit provides an opinion on the Township's financial statement, checking for accuracy and completeness. The Township received a clean audit report with no significant issues, indicating sound financial management and compliance with relevant regulations.

Director of Human Resources, Erica Holmes

The Director of Human Resources, Ms. Holmes announced that Joliet Township held its first annual benefits fair in November of 2024 to allow employees to meet with vendors and ask questions about their benefits before the open enrollment period. The only vendor not in attendance was IMRF, but HR is working to coordinate with them. The open enrollment period is currently underway, and employees with questions are directed to email or call HR at extension 313. Employees are specifically asked not to contact the Transportation Department with HR questions. Over 17 new Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and policies have been implemented to improve clarity and consistency for employees, supporting a structured and supportive work environment. HR systems are being automated to streamline processes such as onboarding, timekeeping, and benefits administration. This is aimed at reducing manual efforts and improving efficiency. An employee engagement survey was distributed, and employees were asked to complete it by the 16th of December of 2024. The survey is intended to help HR understand how employees feel, so that she can better address their needs and improve engagement. The employee audit has been completed, and I-9 forms need to be updated. The 2024 employee handbook has been finalized and was included in the board packet, reflecting updates for new policies and compliance with state mandates.

Highway Commissioner, Vincent Alessio

The Highway Commissioner reported on several key areas, including a budget amendment needed for the Road District due to the Sugar Creek project exceeding its budget. The department spent nearly \$2.5 million on roads and bridges this year, while the levy is just under \$1.9 million. The Highway Commissioner expressed gratitude for the moment of silence for his sister who passed away this December of 2024. He also discussed two residents' requests for a road vacation, which will be addressed at a public hearing on December 30th. The road vacation involved was assessed at \$8,000 for both lands, and the Highway Commissioner is open to public feedback on whether to sell the land. The Road District had a minor issue with a truck, which has been resolved and is prepared for winter as they salted once. The Highway Commissioner was notified of a resident pumping wastewater into a ditch and notified the County to assist in the investigation. The Will County Land Use agreed with the Highway Commissioner's assertion and will be working together to solve the issue.

Clerk, Estefany Bonilla

Clerk Bonilla's report included updates on various administrative tasks and ongoing projects. Clerk Bonilla has been responding to FOIA requests and preparing for a public hearing on Monday, December 30th, 2024, regarding a road vacation on a portion of Joliet Street East of 2123-2133 South Chicago Street. The Clerk also worked with the Finance Director to finalize the tax levy, which was adopted at this Regular Board meeting. The Township's audit is completed and has been filed with the Will County Clerk's office.

Supervisor, Alicia Morales

Supervisor Morales announced the Township holiday party that is scheduled for December 20th, 2024, from 1PM to 4PM in the boardroom. The Township newsletter was mailed out last week, and the Supervisor thanked the staff involved in its creation. The Township submitted the CVI grant renewal application and are now awaiting a response. Supervisor Morales thanked the higher administration team for all their dedicated work on this grant. Supervisor Morales has been working with the County staff regarding water issues that are impacting the unincorporated areas of the township. She stated the Township does not have jurisdiction over water, but they will seek solutions. Supervisor Morales gave an update on the Forest Park Community Center, noting that the staff is still using desks in the hallways because they are waiting for mold testing results, and then renovations will begin in 2025. Supervisor Morales acknowledged the recent caucus on December 3rd, 2024, and noted that the current staff will assist in a smooth transition to the new administration. The Supervisor emphasized the commitment to serving the residents and that the work is not for themselves, but for the residents. Supervisor Morales mentioned that the directors are working on performance evaluations for their staff. The Supervisor discussed the importance of call backs to residents and mentioned that her staff try their best to get back to people via phone, email or message. Supervisor Morales stated that the current administration will continue to work until about mid-May.

CASH RECEIPTS: Trustee Slattery motions to place the cash receipts into their proper accounts for the period ending November 30, 2024. Trustee Escutia seconds. Motion carried.⁶

FUND EXPENDITURES:

General Town Fund for November 2024: \$415,623.02

Trustee Slattery motioned to certify the expenditures and approve them for payment.
Trustee Edwards seconds. A roll call was taken. Motion carried.⁷

Capital Fund for November 2024: \$00.00

No expenditures in this fund. A motion is not needed.

General Assistance Fund for November 2024: \$24,979.35

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

Road and Bridge Fund for November 2024: \$92,358.81

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

Animal Control Fund for November 2024: \$93,368.38

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

⁶ Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

⁷ Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

⁸ Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

⁹ Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

¹⁰ Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).

Senior Fund for November 2024: \$4,010.00

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

ADJOURNMENT: Supervisor Morales asks for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Escutia motions. Trustee Slattery seconds. Motion carried.¹²

The meeting adjourned at 6:13 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Estefany Bonilla
Town Clerk

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¹² Roll call vote: Ayes (5). Trustees Arias, Edwards, Escutia, Slattery and Supervisor Morales. Nays (0).