

General Meeting Minutes

October 12, 2017

Jim DiDonato called the meeting to order at 8:38 AM at the Round Lake Area Public Library.

Reading and Approval of the Minutes from September 12, 2017. Georgeann made the first motion and Pete made a second. All were in favor.

Reports from Executive Committees

President

- Members are encouraged to complete the membership survey.
- The Chili Supper is on October 16th. The purpose of the event is to fundraise for the Community Empowerment Grants and the efforts of the Exchange Club. Volunteers and sponsors for the event are still needed.
- There will be a Christmas Breakfast during our regular December 14th meeting.
- The Audit was recently completed.
- The budget is prepared and ready for a vote by the Executive Board.
- Jim has been visiting and speaking with members about BEST.

Vice President

- Wendy has created goals for the next year that will be presented to BEST shortly.
- Wendy has been working closely with the Chili Supper Committee.

Treasurer

- Treasurer's report: Beginning balance was \$19,020.09 and the total revenue was \$3,400.01. Total Expenditures were \$84.50 and the ending balance was \$22,335.60.
- BEST recently set up with electronic payments with square. Any payments for BEST can now be made online or through the website.

Secretary – No report.

Reports from Standing Committees

By-Laws – Georgeann expressed her thanks for all the work of the previous committee.

Membership – Sandra absent. She has been working with community members to secure membership dues.

Public Awareness – Paula absent. We are continuing to work on marketing and the Facebook page. Kathy has been working on website and Deanna has been doing email blasts.

Special Projects - The BEST Executive Committee granted three grants to:

- John T. Magee Middle School - Heroes Program, \$500
- Round Lake Area Garden Club - Seed Swap, \$500
- Village Elementary School - Lightbox, \$500

Reports from Special Committees

Chili Supper - Kathy absent. Jim reported that planning for the supper is going well. Another call for volunteers was made.

Kindergarten Readiness Committee – All scholarships slots for the preschool program have been filled. The committee is arranging a time for BEST to visit the program. The Shriver Center will be conducting a

community assessment on early education needs in Round Lake on October 21st. Next meeting October 17th at 1:30 PM at the Avon Township Center. Individuals are encouraged to participate in the committee.

Transportation – Georgeann reported that there was not update from LCCCTSC on the market analysis. The next meeting of LCCTSC is next Wednesday at 9:30 AM at the Division of Transportation. Georgeann will be meeting with Go Green Illinois, a local group focused on ride sharing.

Calendar Committee – Jim has updated the style, fonts, and backgrounds to make the calendar more aesthetically pleasing. He is working to integrate the calendar with our website.

Dementia Friendly Committee – Kathy absent. Members of the committee reported that the committee is recruiting additional members for the committee. Additionally, they are working to set up trainings with businesses on best practices in interacting with individuals with dementia. The Village of Round Lake Park held a training for the local municipalities recently. Round Lake Beach also sponsored a training for all first responders in our community.

A member of BEST indicated that general members of the community may be interested in receiving the training in addition to staff members at local businesses. The committee will take this to the next meeting.

Jim gave his thanks to the Executive Board members and Committee Chairs for their work with BEST.

New Business

Speaker - Linda Lucassen, Mayor of Round Lake Park

Tell us a bit about yourself, professional experience, and how you became Mayor.

In 1997 Linda was asked to run for Village Clerk. She was elected with no experience previously in politics. She quickly learned that being a clerk was much more than a secretary. In 2011 she became a village trustee so she could have a larger voice in the work of the village. In 2013 she became the Mayor. She wants to make a difference in her community any way she can.

What do you see as your role in economic development.

The village partners with a lot of mayors in the Round Lake Area. The village is limited in their ability to bring in more resources not have the land. Residents primarily work outside the community..

What is the socio/economic makeup of the village?

Residents are primarily blue collars workers employed in administration, cleaning and maintenance. The median income for the community is \$41,000. Median home values are slightly lower than state average. 47% of community members identify as Latino.

How is the village funded: property taxes, grants, fees for services...?

Property taxes are 19.1%, higher than the state average. The village needs more revenue from local business to increase property values. They want more home owners in our community.

What projects has the village recently completed?

- They have revamped the main street area by putting up lighting and cleaning up the community.
- They started a rental program three years ago to ensure that tenants are living in good clean conditions. Landlords must have their properties inspected but can receive exemptions after two years of good inspections. They must also abide by the crime free rule. Training and education on rules and regulations is available for landlords.

- Recently passed an ordinance on demolishing buildings and landlords are required to register vacant properties.
- They partner with the police department, school district, park district, libraries, and other municipalities and encourage others to partner with them as well.

How does the Village of Round Lake Park interact with the other villages, townships, Lake County and the State of Illinois?

They share resources with other municipalities to reduce taxpayer dollars expended on equipment and services.

What differentiates Round Lake Park from other communities in the greater Round Lake Area?

It is a small community that is always willing to lend a helping hand and has shown itself to be resilient. The Mayor emphasized that the local government is always available for residents. They are currently looking for a trustee with a heart for their community.

How did the economic downturn of 2008-2009 impact the village?

The village had to reduce staff hours, operations, and purchasing for a few years in order to keep individuals employed and still meet the needs of residents without letting go of staff. They operated like this for many years.

The Mayor's efforts to reduce spending and inefficiency has led to Round Lake Park having an A+ Bond rating for the first time.

What are some issues the village is currently facing?

They are working on rebranding the village through a new website and signage throughout the community to help bring in new businesses.

How has the community recovered from the July flood?

Many residents are still not in their homes. Everyone in the municipality pitched in to help during the initial recovery. The Village found that it was hard to communicate to residents during the flood. They have followed up with individuals as new resources have become available.

What upcoming events would you like to share with us?

Shop with a Cop, Halloween and Christmas Home Decorating Contest, Summer Festival.

Is there anything BEST or our members can do for Round Lake Park residents?

Continue to keep the Village aware of the activities of BEST and its membership that may benefit their residents.

Jim encouraged everyone to bring a friend to our next meeting.

Various announcements were made from members.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of BEST will be November 9, 2017.