

**State of Illinois
County of Cook
Township of Northfield
Northfield Township Human Services Commission
Open Meeting Minutes
11/16/2024**

The following Commission members were in attendance:

Andriana Apostu
Elena Bezman
Gayle Nelson
John Schuman
Olga Rudiak
Ruth Jacobs
Sarah Muhl
Sarah Ogle
Susan Kelly
Sylvia Kelly

No participants joined via Google Meet

Also in attendance:

Shiva Mohsenzadeh, Northfield Township Supervisor
Caryn Flieger, Northfield Township Clerk
Roxanne Dunn, Communications & Community Outreach Coordinator
Julie Moon, Administrative Assistant

Meeting commenced at 9:05 am.

I. Introductions:

The meeting began with introductions to help introduce new Commission members and those who had not met in person during the last meeting. Roxanne Dunn, Supervisor Mohsenzadeh, Caryn Flieger also introduced themselves. Sarah Ogle is chairing the committee this year. Olga Rudiak, John Schuman, Adriana Apostu and Sarah Muhl are new to the committee.

II. Overview of the HSF process for FY 2024- 2025:

Healthcare, senior services, mental health are some of the grants we have funded in the past. Applications were due the middle of October. We requested all supplemental documents (financials) by the middle of November. Forty-six (46) agencies applied this year and requested \$874,075.00 in funding. We have \$650,000 available to distribute.

- Commission members should let Roxy know if they have a conflict with any of the agencies who applied (such as volunteered with them in the past, know people who work there or have interest in getting them money).
- Roxy will send commission members the agencies' applications by Friday, November 22nd. She will try not to give the commissioners the same agencies they received in the past.
- Commissioners should review the application and compare it with rubric.
- We will meet on Feb. 1st to discuss each agency. Commissioners will have until Feb. 1st to evaluate the agencies.
- During the February meeting, we will discuss the dollar amounts requested, what each agency wants to spend the money on and how the agencies align with the rubric.
- Roxy would like to get the recommendations to the Township board for their February 13 meeting so we have time to send the checks by the end of the fiscal year (March 31, 2025). Once we receive approval from Township board, we will send agreements to each agency. Once we received the executed agreement, we will send the check. They have to send a report once a year to show how they are spending money.

- People who have small asks can still apply. We should still consider their request as long as they meet Township initiatives and support people in the township.
- Each new commissioner is required to do the open meetings act training in order to be a commissioner. Caryn will check to make sure the training doesn't have to be completed every year.

III. **Approve minutes of the January 27, 2024 Human Services Commission Meeting:**

Commissioner Susan Kelly moved to approve the meeting minutes from the Commission's Jan. 27, 2024 open meeting. Commissioner Ruth Jacobs seconded the motion. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes. They will approve minutes from this meeting at the February 1 meeting.

IV. **Elect new Commission Vice chair for FY 2024-25 to become Chair in FY 2025-26:**

Whoever is elected vice chair, will become chair for the 2025- 2026 year. The chair assists with scheduling the meeting times, answering questions and leading meetings. The vice chair can also help with facilitating the meetings. Commissioner Bezman volunteered to chair next year. Commissioner Ogle moved to approve and Commissioner Susan Kelly seconded the motion.

V. **Discuss Township, new application and use of rubric:**

Supervisor Mohsenzadeh spoke about the Township and thanked the commissioners for volunteering their time.

- Northfield Township will be celebrating the 175th anniversary in 2025. The Township levies a small portion of the property taxes and provides general assistance to those in need. They also maintain roads and bridges for the unincorporated areas.
- The Township provides grants to agencies who support the community. The agencies are there to help our residents to avoid full blown crises. Agencies have specific roles in community, but people in the Township may have services at multiple agencies.
- The Township may also provide special project funding for agencies when an unexpected need occurs after the funding phase ends.
- Last year was difficult because there was a bigger ask than what board had approved for funding. This year should be easier because we came up with clearer criteria and the ask is smaller. Each commissioner needs to prioritize the most important services for the township. They should think of themselves as taxpayer advocates, not agency advocates. We want to support the agencies who support Township residents. The commissioners will ask questions such as how many Township residents are served and how many hours have they spent per resident? Not all agencies are located in the Township, but they can still receive funding if they provide services to Township residents. The Township priorities include mental health, people with disabilities and helping to reduce poverty in the township.
- It is most important that agencies meet the criteria in the rubric. If they are not meeting this, it will show in the numbers. The priorities are bolded in the rubric and they don't meet these criteria, it might not be worth the agency's time to apply. Commissioners should tell the agencies how much money we have to give and that priorities are based on the needs in the Township at this time. We don't want to put agencies in buckets and only give a certain percentage to each category because multiple agencies might fit. It will all depend upon the rubric. It is alright for the commissioners to share the rubric with the agencies up front so they know what we are looking for. We also revamped the application and tried to make it clear what are the priorities and how much money is available.
- For each question, there are 3 options on the rubric for points- either 0 (not aligned with priorities), 10 (partially aligned) or 20 (clearly explained). If the agency's answer doesn't align with the Township's priorities, then rate it a 0. If the agency doesn't explain how they do it, then rate it a 10. If they make a clear argument, then rate it a 20.
- Question 2, 4, 7,8 and 11 are just general questions are not rated on the rubric.
- Question 9- Commissioners should ask if they are tapping different revenue sources. We want the agencies to diversify their funding.
- Question 10 – Indicating partnerships with other local agencies shows they are willing to collaborate. The Township may also have relationships with some of these groups so it is helpful for us to understand the landscape.
- Roxy will send the commissioners the agencies' rubric results before the February 1st meeting we so should be able to make decisions easier at this meeting. We want the rubric to be useful in the decision making and help narrow down ones that just don't make sense to fund. The Township board will also have access to the rubric. We will learn from

this year and provide feedback on the rubric. The commissioners may still end up having to still clarify why they gave certain scores in certain instances. Village of Glenview only uses numbers and if they don't meet a certain number then they won't fund the agency. We aren't going to that extreme this year.

- We will not be asking for as many financial attachments. We don't need the salary, but we will ask for financials, budget and audit letter (the letter should tell you that agency is financially sound). We just want to make sure that agency will not go under once we give them money. Caryn will send wording to look for if the agency is financially sound and also things to look for if they don't have a traditional audit.
- The commissioners will only do phone interviews this year. They can be zoom or google meet. This will help keep the agencies at arm's length instead of meeting in person. It will also make it a fair playing field if an agency has no facility or no paid staff. If there is no response from an agency, that is red flag. Please let Roxy or Caryn know. The calls should be a maximum of 30 minutes. If the agency can't call or zoom, you can meet at a neutral place like coffee shop. Each commissioner's job is not to know if they are doing a good job, but to evaluate the application and determine how they are helping residents in the Township. Please make sure NOT to tell the agency they will be funded. It is the Township board who makes the final decision.
- Commissioners should give their recommendations, written report and rubric to Roxy by January 20, 2025. Roxy will share with the entire team by January 24, 2025.
- Reach out to Roxy, Shiva or Caryn with any questions.
- Commissioner Kelly motioned to approve the rubric and Commissioner Bezman seconded the motion. All approved.

VI. Date set date for second meeting of the Human Services Review Commission: **Feb 1, 2025 meeting 9- 11**

VII. **Matters to be presented by the public:** No public present

VIII. **Old business:** None

IX. **New business:** None

X. **Important dates:**

Next meeting February 1, 2025 from 9-11am

Documents due to Coordinator Dunn by end of business on January 20, 2025

Upcoming Northfield Township Board Meetings: February 13, 2025 and March 12, 2025

XI. **Commissioner Ogle motioned to adjourn and Commissioner Rudiak seconded the motion**

Meeting adjourned at 10:58 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Moon
Administrative Assistant
Northfield Township