

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

APRIL 9, 2019

Good evening. My name is Laura Morask and I am your Maine Township Supervisor. I am pleased to welcome you to the 169th Annual Town Meeting. I would like to highlight some of the accomplishments and achievements from this past year. Although there were some trying times, I am proud of all that we accomplished and of the quality of programs and services that our dedicated staff works diligently to provide as well as the dedication and commitment of our town board.

At the helm, our Administrator and Department Heads have led all of our departments with confidence and a united vision to provide high quality programs and services with a focus on using taxpayer dollars wisely.

I would like to acknowledge my administrative team, without whom all other services and staff could not operate. First off, my assistant, Doriene Prorak, who provides not only for myself and fellow board members, but goes above and beyond the call of duty to assist our residents. Doriene never hesitates to take on projects and always steps in to support the rest of her administrative team. **Doriene, please rise.**

Next is our Administrator, Dayna Berman. Dayna is responsible for the day to day operations of the township and supervises programs, departments heads and all administrative support staff. She creates the TF and GA budget, levy and other financials, forecasting our revenues and expenditures with emphasis on fiscal responsibility. Dayna also sits on several committees, such as our Agency Funding Hearings, Garage Sale and Reilly Bialczak Scholarship Fund Committee. Most recently, during a transition period in one of our departments, Dayna offered her assistance to aid in managing the staff and did a great job helping to keep the environment consistent and harmonious. One of Dayna's biggest achievements this year was overseeing a complete rewrite of our personal policy manual to include the most up to date Laws, policies and procedures. Our PPM had not been updated in over ten years so this was a huge undertaking. **Dayna, please rise.**

Our Administrative Assistant Victoria Rizzo has continued to streamline and enhance our procurement process and has made it a priority to ensure that our staff has the correct equipment they require to service our residents as efficiently as possible and handles and project or research assignment that comes her way. **Vikki, please rise**

Denise Jajko, our bookkeeper, and her assistant, Dorothy Moran handle the township finances and keep accounts in order. They keep the financial records, handle payroll, filings and much more. **Denise and Dorothy, please rise**

Tracy Cummings, our receptionist, answers the phones and greets our front desk visitors with her smiling face and friendly disposition. I am very proud that when our residents call Town Hall, they are greeted by an actual person!

There's a new enforcement officer in town and his name is **Nader Ghazeleh**. Nader has taken to his role as Code Enforcement officer with enthusiasm, energy and a renewed commitment to helping clean up our streets by helping everyone adhere to the ordinances.

Our maintenance department, under the leadership of foreman **Michael Samaan**, has transformed town hall and created new efficiencies and procedures. In Mike short reign as boss, he figured out an ingenious low-cost solution to a mold issue diagnosed late last year - revamping our gutters to alleviate water flow, contracted with remediation company to get us fixed, and is on verge of overseeing two of our capital fund projects in next month. With his staff, Jessica Fox and Stephen Basista, the building is well managed and much needed repairs are taking place.

Will all of those employees in our admin support team please rise?

Assessor's Office: Our Assessor's office continues to administer the rules and regulations of the office and the statutes of the Cook County Assessor. The office assisted over 15,062 residents which included the processing of Homeowner's, Senior, Senior Freeze, Disabled Persons' and Disabled Veterans' Exemptions. A total of 1,969 appeals were processed for 2018 to both the Cook County Assessor and the Cook County Board of Review. We continue holding Outreach seminars for both the Assessor and Board of Review. This year we processed 5,846 building

permits which were submitted to the Cook County Assessor's office to ensure tax revenue is captured and placed onto the rolls. This is a 19% percent increase over previous years. We assisted 387 residents in completing 799 applications for Certificate of Error paperwork allowing for a refund for missed exemptions in the total amount of \$653,000. This is approximately a 5% percent increase over last-year. This money was returned to Maine Township residents. 141 Name Address Change applications were completed for residents to ensure their name appears correctly on their property tax bill. We continue to assist senior citizens with the completion of the Senior Citizen Real Estate Tax Deferral Program offered through the Cook County Treasurer. New this year, Assessor Krey hosted a very successful Property After Death Workshop where 120 residents learned how to save thousand of dollars on transferring their home without a will or a trust. **Introduce Assessor Dept.**

Our Clerk's office processed 11 voter registrations, 11,347 Cook County Vehicle stickers, 37 Handicapped Parking Cards, 139 Hunting and Fishing licenses, 340 RTA passes and 3,123 Passport applications. They processed 1,502 MaineLines Tickets, 2,140 Republic Refuse/Yard waste tags, and 188 Notary Public requests. Chief Deputy Clerk Wiesia Tytko handled 58 unique FOIA requests within the shortest amount of time possible. She also took on additional responsibilities, and handled all internal and external document requests, all while servicing an increased number of residents while reducing their budgeted and actual expenses. **Introduce Clerk's Dept.**

MaineStay. MaineStay's psychiatry program, offered in partnership with The Josselyn Center, has allowed Maine Township to help fill the void left by the closing of Maine Center in 2015 in the most cost-effective manner possible by leveraging the time and talents of existing employees. In April 2018, their psychiatric services expanded to include children and adolescents, which helped provide greater access to intervention and treatment for local youth in need. MaineStay's Future Leaders Peer Mentoring program expanded to three locations in 2018 and now serves students at Lincoln Middle School in District 64 and South Elementary School in District 62. These two new partnership opportunities have allowed MaineStay to triple its impact and reach more youth in need without spending any additional funds. Through MaineStay's restorative justice initiatives, 1,358 hours of community service have been completed. Their community education and professional development events have reached 865 attendees. They provided 10,168 contact hours to residents which included counseling, psychiatric services, clinical groups, on-going programs for at-risk youths, community education seminars and professional development workshops. Mainstay's email contact list has grown in ten years from 247 people to over 3,700 people. **Introduce MaineStay Dept.**

The MaineStreamers continue providing township residents with innovative recreational and social programs, educational and informative lectures, computer classes, fitness classes, outings, and fun-filled memorable events for seniors 55 years of age and older. In 2018, we welcomed 373 new members. Throughout the year, we had 2,374 reservations for our 45day trips, featuring: theatres, baseball outings, boat rides, walking tours, museums and two overnight trips to Galena and the Osthoff Resort in Wisconsin. We hosted 6 luncheons, a Holiday party and a New Year's Eve party for a combined 1,100 reservations as well as a few special events such as a Cinco de Mayo Party, a private theater performance at the Oil Lamp Theatre and "Put the Nuns in Charge", a religious comedy show which over 200 members enjoyed. The MaineStreamers continue to host two of their most popular annual events in Maine Township. The first is the 90 Plus Birthday Celebration, which 136 residents who reached the golden age of 90 or older celebrated together at Chateau Ritz. Our annual "Swing Into Spring" Expo at the Golf Mill Shopping Center continues to be one of the premiere events and one of the largest community events connecting Seniors of all ages with services companies create to fill a need. We have over 75 vendors and over 1,200 Township residents. The MaineStreamers continue welcoming new members and adding programs enhancing senior lives in the community. So famous that an Australian Twitter blogger featured us in a post lauding the 90 + party which was followed by more than 1200 followers. **Introduce MaineStreamers Dept.**

Maine Township Recovery Connection is one of our proudest achievements. They continue to grow with weekly meeting attendance a total of 2,141 this year. This needed service addresses recovering alcoholic and drug addicts looking for a safe and drug free way to get socialize. To this end, created Friday night pre-meeting yoga with 469 attendees, the first dual diagnosis program where we partnered with CBH shouldering cost with 165 attendees. Created Saturday CrossFit program attracting 430; a health body helps recovery. Created partnership with Maryville, and partnered with Gateway and Maine East to create Sober Volleyball with 371 participants. A new program this year was Sober Bowling with 61 attendees. They maintain an extensive phone and email list which grew by 24% to

a total of 368. Besides the Friday evening meetings, they have sponsored different events and have procured a total of 19 jobs for unemployed participants. Director Marty Cook wrote an article on maintaining sobriety over the holidays which was featured on the front page of the Daily Herald and he and Nick Kanehl were featured guests on WBEZ Radio's morning program. **Introduce MTRC**

The General Assistance Department assisted 5,104 Township residents as they interviewed and/or applied for the many programs General Assistance administers. They were able to provide assistance which included Senior, Disabled and Veterans advocacy along with the state mandated General Assistance program. They also assisted residents who qualified for state and federal programs such as LIHEAP, Benefit Access, and special referrals to the Social Security Administration for possible disabled individuals. Our popular Coast2Coast Pharmaceutical Assistance Program continues saving our residents on prescription prices. Over the last year, they filled 4,397 prescriptions saving residents over 69% and a total dollar net savings amount of \$238,720.00. The Township received \$4,029.00 in royalty payments. This is a win-win program for all. **Introduce GA Dept.**

The Maine Township Food Pantry assisted 2,359 families this past fiscal year, an increase of 279 residents or families. Thanks to the generosity of the community, and the local Jewel we were able to again provide turkeys and hams for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. The Director, Carol Langan, again partnered with Mariano's and the Park Ridge Police Department called "Stuff a Squad" collecting food for our needy residents. She partnered with the Vine Street Barbeque Committee and received a very generous donation of \$8,000.00. In October, Carol participated in the Annual Crop Walk and in December, she participated with Oakton Community College in the annual "Empty Bowls" Program. **Introduce Carol Langan.**

Code Enforcement: Our new Code Enforcement Officer, Nader Ghazaleh, who started May 9, 2019, gave out 529 warnings for vehicle violations, property maintenance violations, garbage issues and parking violations. A total of 145 tickets were eventually issued. Total revenue received was \$14,225.00 (a large portion from a corporate fine we gave out to a company-one of many ways we fight for our residents) This is an important step in keeping the unincorporated area clean and debris free. Nader attends all Neighborhood Watch as a Community liaison and does daily tours of areas to remove unsightly garbage. He works hand-in-hand with Republic, the Highway Dept., the Township Attorney and the community.

OEM: OEM is in process of being restructured and as with everything, we are taking a keen eye to looking at needs assessments and figuring out the best way forward. Our previous Director retired. We have an Acting Director who got our volunteers back up and running. We restarted the radio station, another of my favorite things as we can disseminate needed emergency info in a timely fashion. At TOPR, OEM taught CPR and life saving skills to hundreds of residents.

While speaking of staff. We have some special recognitions!

This evening we would like to give special recognition to the following staff for their years of service and dedication to Maine Township.

10 Years (Pin) - Dawne Hayman, 15 Years (Pin) -Victoria Rizzo & Michael Samaan, 20 Years (Pin and Certificate) - Kathy Sabbini

I would now to like share some highlights from our year in review.

In April, the MaineStreamers hosted another successful Senior Expo featuring entertainment, health screenings and information. MaineStay's Agency Day was also a huge success.

Our MaineStay department expanded the Psychiatric services to include children and adolescents.

Our board worked diligently to hire legal counsel, adopted policies to reduce legal costs and enhance transparency and voted to lower portion of property tax levy. The township adopted a very streamlined budget with realized cost savings from the previous year, and established a Capital Fund Resolution to make some much needed improvements to the building and Township so that we can better serve our residents.

In April, MaineStay hosted its very popular agency day. MaineStreamers hosted the largest Senior Expo ever and in May, we celebrated our 90 + seniors with a luncheon in honor of Older Americans Month.

We offered a free document shredding event in June as a safe way to dispose of old documents.

Our MaineStay camp encouraged fun and provided a supportive and structured environment where children can improve their social skills while being exposed to new activities, they may not otherwise be able to experience.

In July, we were a major participant in the annual and popular Taste of Park Ridge where we hosted the Senior Bingo and the Senior movie at the Pickwick. OEM demonstrated lifesaving techniques to a capacity crowd and handled traffic control while we also sponsored the very popular Beer tent on Friday night.

In August, we partnered with the Golf Maine Park District to host National Night Out, and a wonderful night had been planned by the committee under the leadership of Clerk Gialamas. Unfortunately, the event had to be cancelled due to inclement weather but we were still able to host the poster contest. As always, the submissions were inspiring and enjoyed for months following in the town hall lobby.

September and October saw agency funding hearings where social service agencies apply for funding. The board did an excellent job and we were able to fund 25 agencies that were very worthy meeting strict objective criteria.

We host Student government day where high schoolers learned about government through hands on program where they reenact the agency funding process. They learn how government and nonprofits work together to benefit the community. This is my favorite program. These kids, the future of our township and our country are simply amazing. They sit up here as board members listening to "Agencies" presenting their case. They really take this seriously and incredibly reached almost identical numbers to the board!

In September, a fire that devastated the nearby Landings condo complex. Our team made a huge effort to support our residents during this trying time, from taking calls, distributing food, working as a donation collection site, and assisting with temporary housing.

Maine Township took a precaution against attempts to reestablish the sweetened beverage tax with a referendum on the November ballot.

We held another successful garage sale in September to benefit our Food Pantry and Summer Camp Program.

In October, we were honored as "Partner of the Decade" by the Center of Concern for our support of their agency. We also sponsored an electronics and document destruction event in Park Ridge.

The community stepped up to the plate and following our call for donations to the food pantry held multiple food drives to stock our shelves. The response was overwhelming and greatly appreciated.

In November, the township won statewide honors at the TOI Springfield Conference for Best Township Program, Director, and an award for one of our dedicated Volunteers.

Maine Township also responded to US government shutdown with measures to assist those affected such as keeping food supplies stocked.

Retirements

We said good bye to several staff members this past year.

Marsha Warnick retired on November 30th, after 37 years of service

Dave Gnutek retired on April 17th, after 17 years of service

Dagmar Rutzen retired on December 3rd, after 6 years of service

They are all enjoying a much-deserved retirement.

Promotions:

Mike Samaan was promoted to maintenance foreman from interim maintenance foreman

CLOSING PARAGRAPH

We have completed another successful year helping our residents in the best way possible. Ironically, same week that another shortsighted bill wended it's way through legislature using a cookie cutter approach to potential elimination of Townships, we are having the meeting that shows you that we really are the government closest to people. NO red tape. You call a phone and a person answers! You have a problem with garbage and Doriene or I get Mike and Nader to pick it up or make a long-term solution with our garbage provider. You need an expedited passport? No trip to city, gas, Seniors. You come here and our staff does it for you. At this meeting you are the electors! You vote. Do you do that at State legislature?

Are you having a family crisis or emergency like laid off or health issue-or Government shut down? Our food pantry will give you food. Are you trying to navigate your way through maze of Medicare Part D or Disability? Our General Assistant Senior advocates can with a phone call and appointment get you answers. Or figure out if you qualify for other assistance. We find an answer for you. I thank you all for coming and thank my tremendous staff and I for one am proud to be part of a Township and hope that we have shown a bit how Townships help our residents.