



**Minutes
Village of Arlington Heights
Youth Commission
Arlington Heights Memorial Library
500 N. Dunton Ave, Cardinal Room
September 19, 2024
6:00 PM**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Son called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. Everyone introduced themselves.

II. ROLL CALL

Present

Alice Son, Chair

Jennifer Borrell

Matt Healy

Afroz Hafeez

Cheryl Moore

Colin Smith

Sydney Galla

Michael Bauer

Christopher Hong

Ava McQuade

Also Present

James McCalister, Liaison

Kimberly Witt, Administrative Assistant

Absent

Lucy Jochaniewicz

Riley Phillips

Taryn Gombar

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Minutes from August 15, 2024

A motion was made by Commissioner Hong to approve the corrected minutes of the August 15, 2024 meeting, seconded by Commissioner McQuade and approved by unanimous consent.

IV. REPORTS

A. Library

Chair Son mentioned that September has flown by, and she can't believe it's already the 19th—time is moving way too fast! They have been visiting schools all across district 214 so be sure to stop by during lunchtime for Tinker Days. If they haven't been to your school yet, don't worry, they will be there soon.

Chair Son also mentioned that for high schoolers who might be interested, the library is currently offering practice exams for the ACT and SAT. These sessions, which typically take place on weekends—either Saturdays or Sundays—are designed to give students valuable test prep. Since these exams can take a while, the weekend format is intended to give students enough time without disrupting their weekday schedules. For more details, students are encouraged to check the library's calendar.

B. Park District

Commissioner Healy reported that summer has officially come to a close, with the rec pool having been shut down just two days ago. With the end of summer, things are winding down outdoors and shifting back inside. There aren't any major events happening right now, just some smaller special events here and there. Commissioner Healy mentioned that it's only been two weeks since the start of fall programming, so things are just beginning to ramp up.

C. Police Department

No report.

D. Schools

Commissioner Moore reported that things are moving along smoothly. It seems that, nationwide, everyone has come to terms with the fact that we're three years out from COVID, and we're all starting from the same place. There's no need to rush or feel behind—it's clear that we're at the point where everyone just needs to start where they are and move forward. The kids are happy to be back, and teachers are in workshops, doing what they can to adjust. Overall, everything seems to be moving forward without major issues, including the buses, which are running smoothly with kids getting to and from school.

E. Members at Large

Commissioner Hong from Buffalo Grove High School reported that things are relatively quiet at the moment, with the ongoing construction and redevelopment outside being the main activity. However, next week is homecoming, which is an exciting event. In addition, there will also be a pep rally adding to the excitement.

Commissioner Bauer of Rolling Meadows High School reported that homecoming will be held outdoors. While there's still about a month to go until homecoming, everyone has settled back into the school routine. The football team has already played three games, winning two of them, so there's optimism that the team might have a strong season this year, especially with Robbie Gould as a coach.

Commissioner McQuade from Hersey High School reported that things have been going pretty well. In District 14, there are funds allocated to different schools, and this year Hersey was supposed to receive some of that money. The plan was to use it for a new track and roof, but so far, there hasn't been any sign of those updates. Instead, the school has received stickers, with the principal putting decals all over the building. For example, privacy stickers have been added to the windows of the weight room, which used to attract a lot of curious students walking by.

Looking ahead, Homecoming week is set for October 5th, and preparations are underway with several events planned. Spirit days will take place, and there's also the big game for CLS students, which includes an all-school assembly and pep rally. During this event, tickets are raffled off to sit near the basketball court, and it's always a fun and energetic experience. The event has even been featured in the news, and money raised is donated to causes like Gerry's Cafe, which was the recipient last year.

Additionally, this week marks the start of Hispanic Heritage Month. Hersey has been celebrating with quotes shared during announcements, as well as activities during lunch each day. There have also been themed dress-up days, including PJ Day and a "teacher-student swap" where teachers dressed like students and students dressed like teachers. After school, students could participate in events like a volleyball tournament or even make slime. It's been a fun and engaging week that's really helped everyone reflect on and celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month.

Commissioner Galla from Prospect High School reported that they recently held their homecoming, which had a Vegas theme and was a lot of fun. The week included an assembly where distinguished alumni returned to speak to the students. There was also the football game and the powder toss event. Additionally, a fire drill took place yesterday, and it went smoothly without any issues.

Commissioner Smith from Viator High School reported that homecoming is scheduled for next weekend. Their football team is currently 3-0, making for an exciting start to the season.

Commissioner Borrel reported that she is a member of the League of Women Voters, and they are organizing mock elections. She has sent out emails to several schools, though many are not participating this year. In the past, the mock elections were held virtually, but this year they are planning to hold them in person, complete with voting booths.

Commissioner Hafeez mentioned that if anyone is interested in walking for the American Heart Association, the event is happening this weekend. There are several locations and teams to choose from, and participants can join without having to fundraise. A few of the locations off the top of his head include one at Soldier Field tomorrow, another at the fairgrounds in Wheaton on Saturday, and a third in Aurora. It's a great reminder to take steps for heart health.

With September just around the corner, it's also Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and there will be plenty of walks for that as well. It's a good idea to keep a calendar of these events to stay involved and support important causes.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Fall/Winter Project

Chair Son and the Commission members discussed various volunteering opportunities, particularly those that could be brought to schools. Here are the key ideas they explored:

Bringing Events to Schools:

- Partnering with organizations to provide information and organize drives directly at schools.
- Hosting a competition between schools to see which can donate the most items.
- A Halloween costume-themed 1-day donation drive to encourage participation.

Volunteer Ideas:

1. Forest Preserves
 - Organizing litter clean-up events or setting up welcome tables with refreshments to encourage teens to go into the woods and help with the cleanup.
2. Park District
 - Beautification programs, with schools competing in these initiatives.
3. 5K Walk/Run – “Love Your Brain”:
 - Held at Prospect High School, with volunteers needed to help run the event. This event would raise awareness about Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).
4. Senior Living Centers:
 - Socializing with seniors, assisting them with technology, or hosting events like game nights or art nights.
 - Collecting oral histories from seniors.
5. Lobby Day:
 - Writing letters or focusing on causes for school groups that students are passionate about.

Donation Drive & Packing Opportunities:

- Good Neighbors Network: Collecting supplies for first-generation college students and food/meal programs for young people.
- Feed My Starving Children: Volunteering at their Schaumburg location.
- Lemons of Love: Packing care packages for cancer patients.
- The Night Ministry: Gathering supplies for teens experiencing homelessness.
- Journeys: Exploring a potential partnership to help homeless teens.
- Volunteering could also include writing letters to businesses to request donations.

The Commission put to a vote whether to proceed with the proposed donation drive, which could be structured either as a packing opportunity in collaboration with an established organization, or as a more traditional event-style initiative where the Commission would take on the responsibility of organizing and hosting the event directly.

The Commission voted, with 6 votes in favor of the donation drive and 4 for the event-style approach. As a result, the donation drive has been approved.

Chair Son mentioned that the next steps would be for the group to reach out to the identified organizations. Additionally, Chair Son will email the Commissioners to potentially rank the organizations. She also suggested that the group could research other organizations and consider reaching out to them as well. Furthermore, it would be helpful if members could volunteer their time to contact these organizations and determine who might be interested in collaborating.

B. 2024 Voting Awareness Project

Chair Son tabled this agenda item as she does not have many updates from the library's side. She mentioned that the Commission had expressed interest in providing a resource in the form of a flyer with a QR code to distribute at schools. If the library is able to create that flyer, Chair Son will share it with the Commissioners, who can then assist in distributing it.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Snow Shoveling Referral Program

Chair Son provided an overview of the snow shoveling referral program for the new Commissioners. The Youth Commission collaborates with the Senior Citizens' Commission and the Commission for Citizens with Disabilities to develop the snow shoveling referral program. Through this program, seniors can sign up to have their driveways and walkways shoveled, while teens can register to do the shoveling. It is a paid job for teens to shovel snow, but the program primarily functions as a referral service. Everyone signs up on a list, and staff at the Senior Center provide seniors with a copy of that list.

Chair Son presented the flyer that was created several years ago and asked for the Commissioners' input on whether they wanted to update it. The Commissioners decided not to make any changes to the flyer. The challenge is that there are more seniors seeking services than available teen shovelers, so the Youth Commission will need to actively promote the program to recruit more teens. The Village of Arlington Heights will assist in promoting the program through social media.

Chair Son suggested that the program might need an FAQ for teens, addressing questions such as how to discuss payment rates and other common concerns they may have. There was also a suggestion to incorporate the FAQ into the Google Form sign-up. There was also discussion about expanding both the snow shoveling and lawn mowing programs to include a leaf raking program.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Announcements / Correspondence

None.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner McQuade, seconded by Commissioner Galla, moved to adjourn at 7:20 p.m. all concurred and the motion carried unanimously.