

Village of McFarland
VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE
June 4, 2020

Call to Order:

Chairman Rupert called the June 4, 2020 meeting of the Volunteer Committee to order at 6:00pm in the Community Room of the McFarland Municipal Center.

Members Present: Village Board Trustee Justin Rupert(chair), Village Board President Brad Czebotar, citizen member Ken Brost, citizen member Jen Tryzna, citizen member Jim Mogden, citizen member Rachel Fisher-Kay.

Members Absent: None

Staff present: Senior Outreach Director, Lori Andersen, Outreach Case Manager, Katie Gletty-Syoen, Matt Schuenke, Village Administrator

Guests: None

1. **Approval of Minutes.** Review and possible approval of the Minutes of the March 6, 2020 Volunteer Committee Meeting.

- a. Motion by Brost, seconded by Mogden, carried 6-0

2. **Business**

- a. Volunteer Spotlight. Gletty-Syoen reported that for the spring issue of the McFarland Outlook, Mary Rux was chosen for the Volunteer Spotlight for sewing masks for poll workers at the April 7th election and staff members of the Administration Department. This decision was made in consultation with Lori Andersen, to address volunteer support for COVID-19 specific challenges that our community was facing. An interview and photo was completed for Jim Heaton, who had been identified as the Volunteer Spotlight recipient, and he will be featured in the Fall 2020 issue that is forthcoming.
 - b. Cancellation of McFarland Community Service Day. Czebotar spoke about the decision to cancel the McFarland Community Service Day in April, due to COVID-19 and concerns about safety for volunteers and community members. Gletty-Syoen cancelled orders for posters and banners prior to printing, with no charges accrued. Donation of 2-\$25 gift carts from Kwik Trip were received and will be held for use for the rescheduled event. Ice cream tokens were not picked up from McFarland House Café or McFarland Culvers. No supplies were purchased. McFarland State Bank did not send in a donation, as planning was in process for them to fund the community shredding event that would have happened on Community Service Day, which Jennifer Tryzna helping to organize. McFarland State Bank was notified that the event was cancelled, and we will touch base with them regarding rescheduled date. Ken Brost suggested that rather than rescheduling for a fall community service day event, we should take the year off, and plan to resume the event in 2021 to maintain the tradition of planning around Earth Day. He noted that perhaps by the spring, there will be more clarity regarding COVID-19, which will help to guide our planning of the event.

Justin Rupert agreed that taking this year off instead of rescheduling the event would be prudent. Jim Mogden addressed concerns about the tight timeline for promoting an event for the fall with so much uncertainty about the feasibility of hosting such an event with the unknown trajectory of the health crisis.

- c. Online Options for Volunteering during COVID-19. Gletty-Syoen shared an idea for using the Sign Up Genius portal to match individuals or members from the same household to specific volunteer tasks within the parks system. In speaking with Sayer Larson, Superintendent of Parks, there are a number of tasks within parks that would be appropriate for volunteers, and the assistance would be greatly appreciated. Suggestion of offering up to 10 options at one time for sign up, and creating a process so that volunteers will fill out Volunteer Waivers remotely and then receive instruction and supplies from Sayer onsite. Czebotar questioned how the opportunities would be promoted to the community. Gletty-Syoen suggested that the Sign Up Genius would be shared via social media and the village website with a collaboration with the Communications and Technology Department. Brad suggested that having volunteers work with the dog park renovations may be a possibility. Matt Schuenke clarified that the current work being done was larger soil moving, etc, but volunteers may be able to help in the future when the fences need to be placed. Brost suggested that by promoting this new volunteering platform, we can also promote other upcoming community service events, such as a fall sustainability fair, or our spring community service day. Mogden suggested some clarity differentiating between the single day events of the past, with this new platform. Gletty-Syoen explained that it would be more of a rolling volunteer sign up, which would be updated as new projects needed attention in the parks, versus a single day event. If this proves to be a successful approach, perhaps we could continue to implement this in future years in addition to our spring McFarland Community Service Day. Tryza and Fisher-Kay spoke up to voice their approval of this idea. Fisher-Kay mentioned that this will be a good option for families who maybe cannot attend a single day event, yet they want to contribute volunteer hours in the community. Committee decided to use the logo that was created for the 2020 McFarland Community Service Day for all volunteering opportunities to have a cohesive and recognizable image representing the volunteer program.
- d. Potential Fall Sustainability Fair. A potential fall event (second annual) had been suggested previously. Discussion about whether it would be prudent to move forward with planning with so many unknowns about the pandemic and how that would potentially impact the ability to host an event. Gletty-Syoen mentioned possibility of turning it into more of a digital/virtual event, however that would alter the tone of the event, which had been intended to be more hands-on and family-friendly, which may be difficult to bring across in the same way virtually. Suggestion of having an outdoor event for social

distancing. Andersen mentioned the challenge of planning an outdoor event, as it is very weather dependent. Tryzna suggested we hold off on a decision, as time is needed to provide more guidance regarding event planning amidst a pandemic. Brost suggested we use our event theme last year as a template for this fall. Gletty-Syoen suggested that we could use the Sign Up Genius for volunteers to sign up for routes to place more decals in a socially distanced way. Tryzna agreed that this would be a good back up plan as an alternative to an in-person fair-type event. Czebotar suggested that we brainstorm a preliminary list of potential vendors or workshop presenters to discuss at the next meeting. Rather than calling organizations, Gletty-Syoen will do research online to see what kinds of programs are available and would be appropriate for such an event in the future. Andersen asked about the potential for the new ad-hoc Sustainability Committee to work on a Sustainability Fair. Schuenke offered information about the scope of the new committee, which has some specific plans for this year. But perhaps they would be able to help with a future event. Gletty-Syoen will reach out to see if individuals on that committee might be interested in participating with future planning.

- e. Report on Volunteer Recruitment for Senior Outreach amidst COVID-19: Lori Andersen discussed recruitment efforts by Gletty-Syoen during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the Senior Outreach Department lost many volunteers due to limitations on volunteer age via Dane County and a sharp increase in meal consumers. Gletty-Syoen has recruited and oriented approximately 25 volunteers to fill the void. Stephanie Miller of Communications and Technology Department had Volunteer Badges and Lanyards made to designate volunteers from the department. Andersen noted appreciation towards Transit Solutions, which is an organization that has stepped forward to assist with transporting volunteers on Meals on Wheels routes. A number of new volunteers were from Village Departments, such as the library, and Senior Outreach Department was very grateful for the assistance.

3. Schedule Next Meeting Date

- a. Set meeting for Thursday, July 2nd at 6pm.

4. Adjournment

- a. Motion by Ken Brost, seconded by Brad Czebotar, and carried by 6-0 by acclamation to adjourn the meeting at 6:40pm

**Respectfully submitted,
Katie Gletty-Syoen, staff member**