

LWV OPRF League of Women Voters 2023 Observer Report

**Village of Oak Park President and Board of Trustees - Emergency Meeting
November 2, 2023 - 1hr 13 minutes**

Village Approves Resolution Declaring Emergency Disaster to Seek Support for Asylum Seekers Residing in Oak Park

Agenda Items

- The Board approved a resolution declaring an Emergency Disaster in order to provide aid and support to asylum seekers residing in the Village of Oak Park (RES 23-326).
- Declaring an Emergency Disaster connects Oak Park with State and Federal Resources, puts previously agreed on systems in place, and allows for reallocation of staff without slowing down for Board approval.

Discussion

- The Village called this emergency meeting in reaction to an influx of asylum seekers coming into Oak Park the evening of October 31st. After colder temperatures and severe weather on Tuesday, volunteers working to provide temporary shelter began bringing refugees to Village Hall. Later that evening, around 50 people were brought from Chicago's 15th District police station in the hopes to bring them out of the weather.
- The lobby of the police station was already at capacity. Through coordinated efforts they placed at least 150 people at Good Shepherd church.
- Community organizers were able to find more sites for housing, accounting for about 50 more people; an estimated 200 persons in the Oak Park area as of November 2nd.
- The Board had met the previous Monday, October 30th, and passed a motion to establish a Village Emergency Task Force and Fund for asylum seekers (MOT 23-105). This included 150,000 in Village emergency funds, matched by 150,000 in funds from the Mayor's Caucus.
- The Village has activated emergency operations in order to provide food and address immediate health needs of asylum seekers in Oak Park.

Further Information

The Village has put together a website for citizens looking for more information on assisting asylum seekers:

<https://www.oak-park.us/our-community/community-relations/assisting-asylum-seekers>

Those interested in volunteering can sign up for Oak Park's Community Response Team (CERT):

<https://webforms.oak-park.us/Forms/CERTVolunteer>

Observer - Amber L Elmer