

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
REGULAR VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
Monday, February 13, 2023**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on Monday, February 13, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue – River Forest, IL.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: President Adduci, Trustees Gillis, Vazquez, Johnson, Brennan, O'Connell, Bachner, Village Clerk Keller

Absent: None

Also Present: Interim Village Administrator Matt Walsh, Fire Chief Thomas Gaertner, Fire Marshal Kevin Wiley, Police Chief James O'Shea, Deputy Police Chief James Greenwood, Finance Director Rosemary McAdams, Assistant Finance Director Keke Boyer, Director of Public Works and Development Services Jeff Loster, Superintendent of Public Works Brian Skoczek, Village Attorney Lance Malina, Deputy Clerk Luke Masella, HR Manager Trish Ivansek

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Adduci led the pledge of allegiance.

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Dr. Giuseppina Nucifora of 1415 Clinton Pl. gave public comment regarding the barricades placed in the northeast portion of the village. Dr. Nucifora stated that she has been significantly and negatively impacted by the half cul-de-sac on Clinton, and the complete cul-de-sac on Bonnie Brae.

Dr. Nucifora read sections of a traffic report the Village had completed that analyzed potential traffic issues in that portion of town. She pointed out sections of the report that indicated no traffic mitigation measures were needed.

Dr. Nucifora asked the Board why the findings of the traffic study were seemingly ignored? Additionally, Dr. Nucifora asked the Board what qualifications they have in traffic engineering?

Dr. Nucifora also asked why certain blocks were seemingly left out of all notifications while others were not?

President Adduci gave thanks to Dr. Nucifora for sharing her comment and asked Catherine Byrne of 1411 Clinton Pl to share her public comment.

Ms. Byrne stated that she has been a resident for over 25 years and has never had any issues with accessing or leaving her area of the Village.

Ms. Byrne reported that around a month ago she was coming home and Clinton had been blocked off without any warning. She reported that she did not receive any information regarding these changes at all, even though the process had been occurring since October of 2021.

Ms. Byrne noted that in the report, none of the recommendations made by the report were the actions taken by the Village.

Ms. Byrne also wondered what costs the Village was incurring through the Police patrols in the area enforcing the new traffic rules.

Ms. Byrne asked what steps she could take to make her opinion heard in a proper forum and what steps she can take to be involved in further decision making.

President Adduci invited Debbie Borman to the podium who resides at 14 Lathrop in the Madison TIF District.

Ms. Borman came to the evening to speak on the Madison TIF district on behalf of the neighborhood organization, "Lathrop, Ashland, Franklin Neighbors."

Ms. Borman reported that there is a Labor Dispute with the Madison Street demolition site and that Scabby the Rat will be at the site.

Ms. Borman asked if the labor dispute will impact the demolition timeline?

Additionally, Ms. Borman reported that there were issues with a Village document that explained the Village purchasing policies.

Ms. Borman reported that she and members of the neighborhood association are worried about parking issues that may develop due to the demolition of the site.

Finally, she asked if there was any confirmation on how the historic stained glass windows and perforated brick screen will be handled?

President Adduci stated that Interim Villager Administrator Walsh will connect with Ms. Borman regarding the comments she made.

President Adduci invited Robert Armalas of 1501 Bonnie Brae to the podium to give public comment. Mr. Armalas clarified his earlier comments that were referenced in a previous public comment.

Mr. Armalas spoke in support of the traffic measures the Village had installed.

He reported that the streets are quieter, and he would like if Lemoyne and Greenfield could both end up being completely shut off.

President Adduci invited Dr. Darshana Novick and Robert Novick to the podium for public comment.

Dr. Novick stated that she is the owner of Novick Orthodontics at 7351 West North Avenue. Dr. Novick reported that she too had not been informed regarding any of the changes made. She stated that the new installations are making traveling to and from her office difficult for herself and her patients.

Robert Novick commented that the alleys are now flooded with pedestrian and car traffic. He also reiterated that he too was not informed.

President Adduci invited Jonathon Panton of 1137 Park Ave to the podium to give public comment.

Mr. Panton made remarks commenting on issues the new traffic installations are causing. He reported that the barricades hurt River Forest businesses by driving away costumers while also making Village alleys dangerous due to increased traffic.

President Adduci invited Marika Panton of 1137 Park to the podium to give public comment.

Ms. Panton reported that there has been a large increase of traffic on Division Street now that North Avenue has been closed off.

Additionally, she stated that the barricades will become a larger issue during the upcoming months when local school sports activities pick up in the surrounding six schools.

Ms. Panton suggested the Village investigate speed bumps and other alternatives for slowing traffic. Ms. Panton asked about a four-way stop being removed.

President Adduci invited Stephanie Petersmarck up to the podium to give public comment.

Ms. Petersmarck stated she lives at Greenfield and Clinton. She reported that there are still consistent issues with speeders on Greenfield and that she herself is inconvenienced by the new traffic measures. Ms. Petersmarck also asked about stop signs and why was one removed.

Ms. Petersmarck asked the Board why are stop signs not being utilized more in the

Northeast area of town? She also asked the Board what was the goal of this project?

Ms. Petersmarck asked where and when would be the most appropriate place for her to voice her opinions.

Phyllis Rubin, of 411 Ashland Ave., reported on activity at the Lake and Lathrop site. She noted that there appeared to be work being done on the foundation.

Ms. Rubin asked the Board when the developer will come before the Board and answer questions?

President Adduci addressed members of the public who had attended the meeting to make comments on the traffic measures. She thanked them for voicing their opinions and explained how the decision to implement the traffic measures was made. Ms. Adduci noted that the traffic issues have been in discussion since October of 2021 and that these issues are posted on our website and newsletters.

President Adduci stressed the importance of residents signing up for notifications on the website and keeping up to date on the newsletter and other media. She asked Director Loster to explain the process further.

Director Loster explained that any action regarding removing the barricades would require action by the Village Board. He further explained that on the website, there is a page devoted to the implemented traffic measures. This page includes an email address where residents could reach out and give their input regarding the traffic measures.

Additionally, Director Loster reported that on Thursday, the weekly newsletter will be issued, and the newsletter will include a link for Village wide traffic study.

Director Loster also directed residents who would like to voice their concerns to the next Traffic & Safety Meeting on March 15th.

A discussion ensued between Village President Adduci and residents about how the traffic study was utilized in the decision-making process for the traffic measures. Ms. Adduci offered to make available the traffic commission & village board meeting minutes where these issues were discussed.

Trustee Brennan reported that some of conversations surrounding the traffic study occurred on the 24th of January Village Board meeting.

Trustee Gillis reiterated the traffic measures implemented were discussed in detail at multiple Traffic and Safety Committee meetings. Ms. Gillis also noted that resident comments are considered with their recommendations.

Trustee O'Connell explained that the evidence from the Village wide traffic study

could have an impact on these traffic measures.

Trustee Vazquez reiterated the importance of completing the survey and attending the March 15th meeting.

A resident asked how much the potential future permanent traffic measures would cost?

Interim Village Administrator Walsh reported the Village has budgeted \$165,000.

President Adduci recommended residents drive east on North Ave to view how similar permanent barricades have been implemented in Oak Park.

4. ELECTED OFFICIAL COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Elected Official Comments

Trustee Bachner began her comments with a land acknowledgment. Trustee Bachner then wished everyone a happy Black History Month. Trustee Bachner congratulated the Trinity High school robotics team who won an award in a regional competition.

Trustee Gillis reported she attended the WCMC breakfast and stated it was nice to work together with other villages towards common goals. She also reminded everyone the Green Town Climate & Equity Conference will be on June 22nd, 2023. Finally, she wished everyone a happy Black History Month.

Trustee Vazquez reported that there will be an Oak Park River Forest High School Board candidate forum at Dominican University on February 16th at 7pm.

Clerk Keller had nothing to add to the record.

Trustee Brennan asked if the foundation work has been completed at Lake and Lathrop?

Interim Village Administrator Walsh reported that the foundation work has not been completed. Mr. Walsh also noted that there is an update on the Village website.

Trustee Brennan asked staff to continue to invite the developer at Lake & Lathrop to Village Board meetings. Finally, she noted that the One Earth Film Festival starts on March 3rd and ends on March 12th.

Trustee Johnson acknowledged Black History Month and welcomed Interim Village Administrator Matt Walsh for his first meeting in the Administrator position.

Trustee O'Connell had nothing to add to the record.

President Adduci made comments regarding attending the WCMC conference she attended with Trustee Gillis and others. President Adduci noted the Black History Month Proclamation on the agenda that evening and wished everyone a Happy Black History Month.

b. Announcements

1. Swearing in of Deputy Police Chief James Greenwood

Police Chief O'Shea gave a brief speech about James Greenwood and his service to the Village of River Forest before the swearing in process.

Clerk Keller swore in Deputy Chief Greenwood.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – January 23, 2023
- b. January Monthly Finance Report
- c. Accounts Payable - January 2023 - \$1,775,912.10.
- d. Department Reports
- e. Administration Department Report
- f. Black History Month – Proclamation

MOTION by Trustee O'Connell to approve consent agenda items A-F. Second by Trustee Gillis.

Roll call:

Ayes: Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Johnson, O'Connell, Bachner

Absent: NONE

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

6. CONSENT ITEMS FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION

7. RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Purchase of a Dodge Durango for the Fire Department from Dodge-Chrysler-Jeep of Highland, Inc not to exceed the price of \$50,373.81

MOTION by Trustee Johnson to approve the purchase of a Dodge Durango for the Fire Department from Dodge-Chrysler-Jeep of Highland, Inc not to exceed the price of \$50,373.81. Second by Trustee Bachner

Roll call:

Ayes: Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Johnson, O'Connell, Bachner

Absent: NONE

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

- b. Authorize an agreement with Branniff Communications Inc. for the replacement of outdoor warning siren equipment not to exceed the price of \$35,193.00

MOTION by Trustee Vazquez to authorize an agreement with Branniff Communications Inc. for the replacement of outdoor warning siren equipment not to exceed the price of \$35,193.00. Second By Trustee Johnson

Director Loster explained the agreement and why the improvements are needed. The original units were purchased in 2010 and there have been many issues since then. The only vendor who services the system is in Milwaukee, making it problematic. He also addressed why staff have chosen to partner with a new vendor.

Trustee O'Connell asked if there will be any supply chain issues with the equipment for the warning siren?

Director Loster stated there will not be.

Clerk Keller asked for the name of the previous vendor that the Village had been working with.

Chief Gaertner stated the previous vendor was American Signaling.

Trustee Bachner asked if the warning siren sound will be the same as the previous siren sound.

Director Loster confirmed the sound will stay the same.

Roll call:

Ayes: Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Johnson, O'Connell, Bachner

Absent: NONE

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

c. Enter an agreement with Monroe Truck Equipment & Trans Chicago Truck Group for the purchase of two (2) tandem-axle dump truck bodies and corresponding chassis for a cost not to exceed \$451,628.00.

MOTION by Trustee Brennan to approve a resolution waiving the public bidding process to enter an agreement with Monroe Truck Equipment & Trans Chicago Truck Group for the purchase of two (2) tandem-axle dump truck bodies and corresponding chassis for a cost not to exceed \$451,628.00. Second by Trustee Johnson.

Director Loster explained that two of the current Public Works dump trucks are in need of replacement and are well beyond their useful life. Director Loster noted the Village has had difficulty finding a vendor for trucks due to current supply chain issues. He explained that that these two companies have supplied equipment to the Village in the past.

Director Loster reported that this agreement is the vendor essentially adding the Village to a wait list that could take as long as 12-18 months for delivery. He also noted that Public Works staff are committed to researching alternative vendors in the meantime.

Trustee Bachner had questions regarding the warranty for the vehicles.

Director Loster explained that the warranty does not come from the vendor themselves, rather from the original manufactures of the products such as Freightliner.

Roll call:

Ayes: Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Johnson, O'Connell, Bachner

Absent: NONE

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

d. Resolution authorizing the Village to participate in an application for a Raise Discretionary Funds Grant with the Village of Oak Park for the Harlem Avenue Multimodal Bridge Replacement Project.

MOTION by Trustee Vazquez to adopt a resolution authorizing the Village to participate in an application for a Raise Discretionary Funds Grant with the Village of Oak Park for the Harlem Avenue Multimodal Bridge Replacement Project. Second by Trustee O'Connell.

Director Loster explained the previous history regarding the project to replace the railroad bridge at Harlem and how the project has come back onto the agenda. This resolution is simply allowing the Village to pursue funding for this effort.

Trustee O'Connell asked who owns the bridge?

Director Loster did not know as the ownership is not well defined.

Trustee O'Connell asked if railroads have been agreeable partners in the past?

Director Loster stated they have not.

President Adduci mentioned that with the potential State and Federal funding, the railroads may seriously address the project.

Trustee Bachner asked if the Village has to pay 25% of the agreement due to the fact that one corner of the bridge is in the Village?

Director Loster confirmed that is the reason why.

Clerk Keller asked who owns the other bridges in the Village and is responsible for maintenance?

Director Loster stated a combination of Union Pacific and Canadian National Railway.

Village Attorney Lance Malina explained where the railroad's legal liability stands and that they have federal protections that supersede local/state laws.

Trustee Vazquez recognized the relationships Village staff and elected officials have with surrounding entities that helped lay the foundation for this project.

Roll call:

Ayes: Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Johnson, O'Connell, Bachner

Absent: NONE

Nays: None

Motion Passes

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn by Trustee Vazquez. Second by Trustee Brennan.

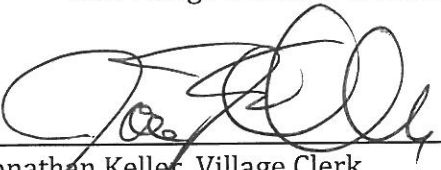
Roll call:

Ayes: Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Johnson, O'Connell, Bachner

Absent: NONE

Nays: None

The Village Board of Trustees Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.


Jonathan Keller, Village Clerk