

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
REGULAR VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES  
Monday, February 27, 2023**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on Monday, February 27, 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, O'Connell(Virtually) , Bachner, Village Clerk Keller

Absent: Brennan

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

**MOTION** by Trustee Vazquez to allow Trustee O'Connell to participate in the Board meeting virtually. Second by Trustee Bachner.

Roll call:

Ayes: Gillis, Vazquez, Johnson, Bachner

Absent: Trustee Brennan

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President Adduci led the pledge of allegiance.

**3. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

President Adduci invited Debbie Borman who resides on Lathrop Avenue up to the podium to give public comment regarding the Madison Street TIF District.

Ms. Borman noted that she was speaking on behalf of the Lathrop, Ashland, Franklin Neighbors Group. She raised concerns regarding the demolition project occurring on Madison Street. Ms. Borman was particularly concerned with the handling of the newfound asbestos materials on the property. She noted that a previous asbestos abatement report completed in 2017 stated that additional hidden asbestos was

likely to be found on the property.

Ms. Borman asked for clarification on the plans that the village is putting in place to handle and contain the newfound asbestos. She wanted to understand how security, weather events, and the possibility of physically covering the development site may impact the asbestos.

Finally, Ms. Borman asked for answers for the following questions and requests:

- The names of the individuals and firms that are advising the Village on the asbestos containment practices.
- A request for additional 3<sup>rd</sup> party oversight of the asbestos work.
- A request for the inspection documents from the IEPA or the Cook County Health Department.
- If a physical copy of the 2017 asbestos report is being kept on site as recommended in said report?

President Adduci thanked Ms. Borman for giving public comment and reminded members of the public that the Village does have an ordinance that public comments must be kept under five (5) minutes.

President Adduci invited Anette Madden up to the podium to give public comment regarding the Madison Street project. Ms. Madden provided a report on the Madison Street development properties since 2018. Ms. Madden noted she has had concerns regarding the following: upkeep, property maintenance, blight, and hazardous materials.

She reported that in July of 2022 she requested a copy of the environmental studies that had been completed on the properties in 2017. Ms. Madden stated that a report was not available for 10 Lathrop of 11 Ashland at that time but in November of 2022, she was notified that an inspection had been completed and abatement would begin later that month.

Ms. Madden reported during her own research on asbestos removal, it became clear to her that asbestos removal was an extremely dangerous job that requires extensive levels of oversight and safety protocols. Ms. Madden reported that from her house she viewed workers not following the required safety practices when removing the asbestos from the property. She noted that she has video and photo proof of this happening.

Ms. Madden noted that she reported these practices to Interim Village Manager Matt Walsh. She also noted, and showed photo evidence, of what appeared to be a taped garbage bag hanging out of a window being used as an exhaust system. She stated that this did not appear to be a proper or safe practice.

Ms. Madden reported that she never received any report that proper asbestos

abatement had been completed. Additionally, she reported being told that demolition would begin in February of 2022 and subsequently reported on the actions of the crew during the demolition.

Ms. Madden noted that herself and others inquired multiple times about why the demolition had been stopped. It was not until weeks later that Ms. Madden reported being told that it was due to workers locating additional asbestos materials.

Ms. Madden displayed a photograph of the property in its current state. She noted the multiple asbestos materials that were exposed to the elements.

Ms. Madden additionally reported not being satisfied with a recent stakeholder meeting with the Village planning consultant.

President Adduci invited Renée Duba up to the podium to give public comment regarding the Madison Street project and reminded the public to attempt to keep their comments under five minutes.

Renée Duba reported how the dangerous effects of asbestos have impacted her life. Particularly, she pointed out there are multi-generational impacts to families of people exposed to asbestos and the workers themselves. Ms. Duba used her own family as an example of these impacts and reported that her father died from mesothelioma due to his contacts with asbestos in his career as a plumber. She explained the various ways that her father's asbestos related death impacted her life even after his passing.

President Adduci invited Kathy Curcos up to the podium to give public comment regarding the Madison Street project.

Ms. Curcos voiced her concerns regarding the Madison Street development and the safety practices of the workers. Ms. Curcos also explained how asbestos exposure has impacted her life by causing the death of her father and a friend. She reminded staff and elected officials that it is their responsibility to make sure this project and others like it are executed in a safe and proper manner.

President Adduci invited Dr. Jaime Escobar up to the podium to give public comment regarding the traffic installations placed in the northeastern portion of the Village.

Dr. Escobar reported that he has lived in the village since 1971 and that he had not received any notification from the Village regarding the implementation of the traffic features. He also noted that he views the traffic installations as an inconvenience to himself and the neighbors. Dr. Escobar reported that he would suggest and request that the traffic installations be removed, and other ideas be considered.

President Adduci invited Dr. Constantine Politis up to the podium to give public comment regarding the traffic installations placed in the northeastern portion of the

Village.

Dr. Politis addressed the committee and gave his concerns regarding the traffic installations placed in northeastern portion of town. He reported that the traffic changes have negatively impacted his business and increased traffic safety issues. Dr. Politis quoted directly from the Village issued traffic study that stated that negative issues would arise from these installations. He also posed a question if the Village had thoroughly inspected the traffic study before implementing it? Finally, Dr. Politis requested the Village reconsider the traffic installations. Mr. Politis distributed copies of a petition to the Village Board.

President Adduci invited Dr. Giuseppina Nucifora up to the podium to give public comment regarding the traffic installations placed in the northeastern portion of the Village. Dr. Nucifora gave thanks to President Adduci and Director Loster for helping her access information regarding the traffic installations.

Dr. Nucifora expressed concerns on the certainty of the evidence presented in favor of the installations. She presented evidence that was contrary to the evidence used in support of the traffic installations.

Additionally, Dr. Nucifora asked the Board to give their reasoning on why these traffic installations were used as opposed to other measures. Dr. Nucifora asked how these installations benefited all the residents of the Village. Finally, Dr. Nucifora asked the Village to explain how such large decisions could be made that left out large segments of the impacted population?

President Adduci invited Ed Kemper up to the podium to give public comment regarding the traffic installations placed in the northeastern portion of the Village.

Mr. Kemper stated that he shares many of the same feelings as others who have spoke tonight regarding the traffic installations. Additionally, he wondered what the environmental impact of the barriers are due to additional fuel use. Finally, Mr. Kemper noted that he is particularly worried on the impacts to the businesses.

President Adduci invited Catherine Byrne up to the podium to give public comment regarding the traffic installations placed in the northeastern portion of the Village.

Ms. Byrne stated that she shares many of the concerns as other residents who spoke. Ms. Byrne reported that her biggest concern is that the Village spent a large amount of money on a traffic study and did not accept the recommendations set forth in the report. Additionally, she questioned whether following the report would put the Village in jeopardy in case an accident occurred in the area.

Ms. Byrne also reported that she was worried about how such a project could be implemented with a large amount of the area's population not hearing about it.

President Adduci invited Stephanie Petersmarck up to the podium to give public comment regarding the traffic installations placed in the northeastern portion of the Village.

Ms. Petersmarck reported that she shares many of the same concerns as others who spoke that evening. She noted that speeding continues on Greenfield Street and that she has seen instances of drivers ignoring the barriers.

President Adduci invited Dave Parker up to the podium to give public comment regarding the traffic installations placed in the northeastern portion of the Village.

Mr. Parker reported that the implemented traffic installations do not appear to even address the main goals of the study. He also reported issues of drivers ignoring the traffic installations and other instances of himself and his family being put in danger by drivers ignoring the law. He asked that the Village reconsider these installations.

President Adduci invited Pete Economos up to the podium to give public comment regarding the traffic installations placed in the northeastern portion of the Village.

Mr. Economos also reported the same concerns as many other residents who had spoke before. He hoped the Village would consider the remarks given by the residents and find a compromise.

President Adduci directed members of the public to attend the March 15<sup>th</sup> Traffic and Safety Commission meeting.

A member of the audience asked what would be the next steps after attending the meeting.

President Adduci explained the possible avenues the discourse around the traffic installations could take.

A member of the public asked where the Traffic and Safety meeting where will take place.

Interim Village Administrator Walsh confirmed the meeting will occur in the community room and that a Zoom option will be available.

#### **4. ELECTED OFFICIAL COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Trustee Johnson thanked the residence for showing up and sharing. He also directed the residents to the March 15<sup>th</sup> meeting. Trustee Johnson reminded everyone that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Group will start meeting again soon. Trustee Johnson reported that that he spoke at Professionals Day at Oak Park River Forest High school.

Clerk Keller gave remarks on the traffic situation and urged residents to get involved so they can be a part of these decisions before it reaches the current point.

Trustee Vazquez gave thanks to those who gave their comments that evening. He reminded residents to continue to pay attention to the Village supplied notifications and media regarding happenings throughout town. Trustee Vazquez directed residents to attend the Traffic and Safety Commission meeting and complete the Village wide traffic survey. Finally, Trustee Vazquez reminded residents on the upcoming due date for electronic recycling.

Trustee Gillis reminded residents about the electronic recycling program.

Trustee Bachner began her remarks with a land acknowledgment. She reported she attended a Place for All Club event at Oak Park River Forest High school. She also reported attending an event with Northwestern University students. Trustee Bachner asked staff to highlight the steering wheel lock program the Village Police Department has underway.

Interim Village Administrator Matt Walsh explained the program and how residents can participate.

Trustee Bachner asked if staff has been in contact with Kia Corporation.

Police Chief O'Shea reported that staff is working to get in contact with Kia.

Trustee Bachner gave remarks on the traffic installations situation in the northeastern portion of town.

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

President Adduci confirmed with Ms. Madden that staff will provide a response regarding the Madison Street comments.

Additionally, President Adduci congratulated Interim Village Administrator Walsh on getting engaged over the weekend.

President Adduci reported that she attended two events in Springfield, the governor's budget address and a press release for the Illinois Municipal League. She gave remarks on the highlights of the two events.

a. Recognition of Jan Novak Dressel – Proclamation

President Adduci congratulated Jan Novak Dressel on winning the Heart of Our Villages Award and presented the official proclamation.

Ms. Dressel invited her grandchildren up with her and read portions of the proclamation. Additionally, Ms. Dressel gave personal remarks on her career and then gave a short presentation on some historical artifacts she brought with her.

b. State of the Village Presentation

President Adduci gave the State of the Village Presentation. The presentation provided updates on Village accomplishments and popular topics. Some of the topics covered in the presentation were: Cross-Community Climate Collaborative (C4), ad hoc committees, notable grants received, the Village Board's priorities, the new ethics ordinance, intergovernmental cooperation, and the favorable financial state of the Village.

**5. CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes – February 13, 2023
- b. Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – February 13, 2023
- c. Fire Department Annual Report
- d. Administration Department Report
- e. Approval of a Payment in the Amount of \$24,273.08 to Springbrook Holding Company LLC for annual maintenance for the period from May 1, 2023, to April 30, 2024
- f. Approval of a Purchase Agreement with Quadbridge for a Datto Backup Appliance and annual license cost for a total cost not to exceed \$32,672.16
- g. Appointment of Trish Ivansek as Primary Delegate for IRMA - Resolution

**MOTION** by Trustee Bachner to approve consent agenda items A-G. Second by Trustee Johnson.

Roll call:

Ayes: Gillis, Vazquez, Johnson, Bachner

Absent: Trustee Brennan, O'Connell

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

**6. CONSENT ITEMS FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION**

**7. RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES**

**8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

None.



**10. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Vazquez made personal remarks thanking President Adduci for her integral work for the Village and municipalities as a whole.

**MOTION** to adjourn by Trustee Bachner. Second by Trustee Gillis

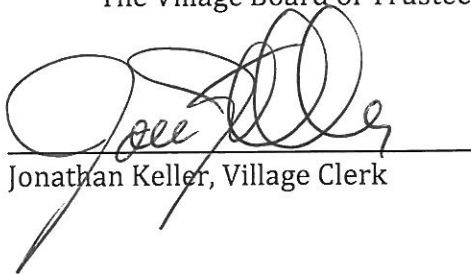
Roll call:

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

Absent: Brennan

Nays: None

The Village Board of Trustees Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.



Jonathan Keller, Village Clerk