

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
March 24, 2025**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on March 24, 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 7:02 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: President Adduci, Trustees Johnson(7:05pm), Gillis, Brennan, Bachner, Vazquez, O'Connell, and Village Clerk Keller

Absent:

Also Present: Village Attorney Lance Malina, Village Administrator Matt Walsh, Assistant Village Administrator Jessica Spencer, Police Chief James O'Shea, Fire Chief Tom Gaertner, Deputy Police Chief James Greenwood, Director of Public Works and Engineering Jack Bielak, Finance Director Rosemary McAdams, Police Commander Michael Swierczynski, and Deputy Fire Chief David Bochenek

MOTION by Trustee Bachner to allow Trustee Vazquez and Trustee O'Connell to participate via Zoom due to travel. Seconded by Trustee Brennan.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustee Gillis, Bachner, Brennan and Johnson

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Adduci led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

4. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

a. B20 Biodiesel Club Recognition – Presentation

Bailey S. Arnold, Director of Healthy Air Solutions, presented the Village with an award in recognition of its use of biodiesel.

5. ELECTED OFFICIAL COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee Bachner gave a land acknowledgement.

Trustee Gillis reminded everyone to vote in the upcoming election and encouraged participation in the Village's election sign recycling drop-off. She also mentioned the upcoming Memorial Day parade and emphasized the need for volunteers.

Village Clerk Keller had no comments.

Trustee Brennan had no comments.

Trustee Johnson had no comments.

Trustee Vazquez expressed gratitude to Police Chief James O'Shea for his service to the Village and congratulated James Greenwood on his appointment.

Trustee O'Connell highlighted the upcoming Fire Department Blood Drive and praised the quality of the Fire Department's Annual Report included in the packet. He also thanked the Public Works Department for their efforts around town and inquired about the start date for yard waste pickup.

Director Bielak confirmed that yard waste pickup begins on April 1st.

President Adduci reported on a recent event at Village Hall, where she had the opportunity to speak with the Willard School's Brownie Club. She also attended the Oak Park River Forest Historical Society Gala, where a River Forest resident was recognized with an award. President Adduci then extended her gratitude to Tom Dwyer and Associates for hosting Village staff with food on St. Patrick's Day. She concluded by reiterating Trustee Gillis' remarks regarding the Memorial Day parade and encouraged residents to stay informed for additional updates.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – March 10th, 2025
- b. Administration Department Report
- c. Grant Application – ComEd Green Region Openlands Grant – Chicago Avenue Bioswales Restoration Project – Resolution
- d. Award of Contract – 2025 Sewer Lining Project – Innovative Underground, LLC – \$122,429.50
- e. Fire Department 2024 Annual Report

Trustee Brennan requested Consent Agenda Item C be removed for separate consideration.

President Adduci also noted being impressed with the Fire Department's report.

MOTION by Trustee Johnson to approve Consent Agenda Items A, B, D and E. Seconded by Trustee Bachner.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

7. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION

- c. Grant Application – ComEd Green Region Openlands Grant – Chicago Avenue Bioswales Restoration Project – Resolution

MOTION by Trustee Gillis to approve Consent Agenda Item 6.C Grant Application – ComEd Green Region Openlands Grant – Chicago Avenue Bioswales Restoration Project – Resolution. Seconded by Trustee Johnson.

Trustee Brennan asked why the Village needs to replant items in the rain swales.

Director Bielak noted that the Village is undertaking a one-time cleanup and minor construction effort to improve water runoff flow into the swales.

Motion Passes.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

8. RECCOMENDATIONS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

a. Boards and Commissions Appointments

- i. Board of Fire and Police Commissioners – Frowene Rodgers – Term Expiring April 30th, 2026 (Jacobs Vacancy)

Trustee Bachner asked that the Board views the proposed appointments background information earlier in the appointment process.

MOTION by Trustee Johnson to approve Frowene Rodgers to the Village's Board of Fire and Police Commissioners. Seconded by Trustee Bachner.

President Adduci highlighted Ms. Rodgers' resume and explained why she believes Ms. Rodgers would be a valuable asset to the Commission.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

- ii. Police Pension Board – Terry Griffin – Term Expiring April 30th, 2027(Bray Vacancy)

MOTION by Trustee Vazquez to approve and accept President Adduci's recommendation to appoint Terry Griffin to the Police Pension Board. Seconded by Trustee O'Connell.

President Adduci emphasized several of Ms. Griffin's qualifications for the position.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

Ms. Griffin provided an overview of her professional background and expressed her enthusiasm about serving on the Commission.

b. Economic Development Commission

i. Consideration of the TIF Small Business Grant Program for Approval

MOTION by Trustee Gillis to approve the creation of a Small Business Improvement Grant Program to assist small business owners or property owners located within the Madison Street or North Avenue TIF districts. Seconded by Trustee Johnson.

Trustee O'Connell asked for clarification on whether parking lot improvements would be included. He expressed that he believed parking lots should not be part of the list of potential improvements.

Assistant Village Administrator Jessica Spencer provided clarification on parking lots and noted that the Economic Development Commission felt that parking lots would help approve curb appeal.

Trustee Bachner expressed their support for keeping parking lot improvements on the list.

Trustee O'Connell reiterated his belief that including parking lots would undermine the purpose of the program.

President Adduci stated her support for including parking lots on the list.

Trustee O'Connell asked Assistant Village Administrator Spencer to monitor the number of parking lot applications received during the first year.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

10. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Appointment of Police Chief James Greenwood effective May 1st, 2025

MOTION by Trustee Brennan to approve President Adduci's Appointment of James Greenwood as Chief of Police effective May 1, 2025 for a term concurrent with the Village President ending in May 2029. Seconded by Trustee Bachner.

President Adduci reminded everyone that Police Chief James O'Shea will remain on the force until his retirement at the end of April. She praised him for fostering strong succession planning within the department, which has made appointments like this possible. Additionally, she provided background on Deputy Chief Greenwood's long career with the Village.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

Deputy Chief Greenwood briefly thanked the Village Board and others for the opportunity to serve as Police Chief.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. Executive Session pursuant to 5ILCS 120/2(c)(6) to discuss: The setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the public body

MOTION by Trustee Gillis to enter into Executive Session pursuant to 5ILCS 120/2(c)(6) to discuss: the setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the public body and the Village Board will adjourn after executive session and will not return to open session. Seconded by Trustee Brennan.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn by Trustee Bachner. Seconded by Trustee Johnson.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Vazquez, Brennan, Gillis, Johnson, Bachner, and President Adduci

Nays: None

Absent: Trustee O'Connell

Motion Passes.

The Village Board of Trustees Meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.



Jonathan Keller, Village Clerk

Date: 4/14/25