

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
SPECIAL COMMUNITY OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES
Monday, April 10, 2023**

A special Committee of the Whole meeting was held on Monday, April 10, 2023, at 6:00 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 6:04 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: President Adduci, Trustees Bachner, Brennan, Gillis, Johnson, Vazquez, O'Connell
Absent: Village Clerk Keller.
Also, Present: Interim Village Administrator Matt Walsh, Management Analyst/Deputy Clerk Luke Masella, Fire Chief Thomas Gaertner, Police Chief James O'Shea, Finance Director Rosemary McAdams, Director of Public Works and Development Services Jeff Loster, Village Attorney Lance Malina. Public Works Analyst Seth Jansen, Public Works Superintendent Brian Skoczek, Assistant Finance Director Keke Boyer.

2. CITIZEN COMMENT

Sheila Radford-Hill gave public comment regarding the history and importance of the Juneteenth Holiday and asked the Village to consider helping fund the local Juneteenth flag raising event.

Trustee Brennan made remarks about how the River Forest Juneteenth flag raising ceremony originated.

President Adduci asked Interim Village Administrator Walsh to work with Trustee Brennan on a potential donation to the flag raising event from the Village.

3. DISCUSSION: FY 2024 VILLAGE OPERATING BUDGET

Interim Village Administrator Walsh gave opening remarks on the budget document. He gave thanks to many of the staff members who helped create the document.

Mr. Walsh noted that the new budget document sent out that week has been updated after staff found minor scrivener's errors.

Finance Director Rosemary McAdams stated that the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget received the GFOA Distinguished Budget Award, and the Fiscal Year 2024 document as presented is designed to continue receiving this prestigious award.

She remarked that the goals & accomplishments in the budget are tied directly to the Village Board's goals and focused on the Village's three guiding principles: Ensure that the Village provides a safe and welcoming community for its residents, business owners, and institutional

partners, enhance property values through strengthening quality of life, and implement strategies to stabilize property taxes.

Director McAdams reported that the section titled “Budget Message” starting on page 8 is a thorough overview of the budget document.

General Fund - Revenues

Director McAdams reported that the General Fund is balanced for Fiscal Year 2024.

Director McAdams predicted an increase in revenues of 6.11% and a 6.92% increase of recurring expenditures. She reported that some of the larger non-recurring expenditures will be financed with General Fund reserves.

Director McAdams highlighted a 4% increase in property tax revenue based on the new tax levy.

She also highlighted the non-home rule sales tax revenue being higher than last fiscal year due to the passage of the Leveling the Playing Field Law and the 6.5% increase of the CPI.

Director McAdams noted that staff chose to keep the Revenue predictions conservative due to the uncertainty surrounding the economy currently.

General Fund - Expenditures

Director McAdams reported that the Village is still currently in negotiations with the Local 150 Union and that their contract expired in April of 2022. She also noted that the Fire Union contract expires in April of 2024.

She also noted that the Fraternal Order of Police Contract is expiring soon, but that she believes the Village is nearing an agreement with the union for that contract.

Ms. McAdams stated that the budget includes a 3% adjustment for all nonunion positions.

She reported that a new position of Deputy Chief in the Fire Department was created. She noted that the Assistant Too the Village Administrator Position had been removed along with a Part Time Community Service Officer in the Police Department.

General Fund - Benefits

Ms. McAdams reported that the pension contributions have been reduced this year due to an error that the actuaries found last fiscal year.

Ms. McAdams stated that the Village continues to beat industry trends relating to health insurance.

General Fund - Contractual

Ms. McAdams reported that contractual expenses increased by 9.5% compared to FY 2023. She

highlighted that the Village contribution to Westcom is up by 21%.

Director McAdams also reported increases in Liability insurance and GEMT costs. However, Ms. McAdams noted that the GEMT costs correlate with the increase in ambulance fee revenues as highlighted earlier in the presentation.

Ms. McAdams highlighted the Zoll One Leasing Program in the Fire Department.

Trustee O'Connell asked why the Village stays in Westcom dispatch considering the increasing costs.

Interim Village Administrator Walsh explained what actions the Village and Westcom are taking to attempt to lower costs.

A discussion ensued regarding the Westcom Dispatch between President Adduci, Trustee O'Connell, and Mr. Walsh.

Trustee Bachner asked what services the Part Time Community Services Officer performed and how will the Village now complete those duties.

Director McAdams reported that their main duties were parking and traffic control during the previous years when Police staffing was low.

Trustee Brennan asked if the Village could not increase compost rates out of principle as a community that prioritizes sustainability.

A discussion ensued regarding compost rates and the composting program.

Public Works Analyst Seth Jansen reported that the composting program has added 75 users since last year.

General Fund- Commodities

Ms. McAdams highlighted the costs related to the implementation of police body cameras.

Ms. McAdams noted that the Police Department is searching for grant opportunities to lower the cost of the body cameras.

General Fund- Capital Outlay

Director McAdams noted that these specific funds have been allocated to any potential costs that emerge from recent Village traffic studies.

General Fund - 3 Year Projection

Ms. McAdams noted that as previously mentioned, \$731,361.00 of non-recurring expenditures

will be funded with reserves. She also reported that there will be a projected deficit of \$305,224.00 in FY 2025 and \$405,060.00 in FY 2026.

General Fund- Administration, Finance, Boards & Commissions

Interim Village Administrator Walsh highlighted the continued goal to support advisory Board and Commissions, specifically with a line item that is devoted to supporting community events like the Juneteenth flag raising ceremony.

General Fund - Police

Mr. Walsh highlighted the new Police Department agreement with the Thrive Counseling Center for community mental health services.

General Fund - Fire

Mr. Walsh highlighted a Fire Department FY 2024 Goal to update the department rules and regulations as they have not been updated in decades.

General Fund - Public Works & Development Services

Mr. Walsh highlighted the Storm Water Master Plan and the Village Wide Traffic Survey as two major items the Public Works Department will address in FY 2024.

Water/Sewer Fund

Ms. McAdams noted that the Water & Sewer Fund is the only proprietary fund the Village uses and that revenues are expected to exceed expenses in FY 2024.

Director McAdams pointed out funds that are specifically for Stormwater Master Plan improvements. She also noted a 3% increase overall to water and sewer rates to cover higher operating & capital costs and an increase in the water rate from Chicago.

Pension Funds

Finance Director McAdams reported on the history of the Village pension funds being consolidated and the hope that due to this, there will be an increase in pension fund returns.

Motor Fuel Tax

Ms. McAdams stated that this fund is funded through State allotments and in FY 2024 some resurfacing projects will be funded through Rebuild Funds.

Capital Equipment Replacement Fund

Director McAdams stated that a budget amendment on the agenda that evening will be related to

this particular fund. Ms. McAdams reminded everyone about the difficulty of obtaining capital equipment in today's market.

Capital Improvement Fund

Finance Director McAdams highlighted a transfer out from this fund that will be used for a debt service payment for the Green Alley project.

Interim Village Administrator Walsh highlighted some of the capital improvement projects around the Village.

Trustee Brennan asked if staff has been in contact with COMED about electric vehicle charging stations.

Mr. Jansen confirmed yes.

President Adduci noted that the Village is partnering with some surrounding communities to apply together for those funds.

Future Years - General Fund

Finance Director McAdams expects pension fund contributions to level out and stabilize in the coming years. She also stressed that 91% of our general fund expenditures are devoted to Village services for residents.

Director McAdams gave thanks to the staff for helping her create the document.

Trustee O'Connell encouraged residents to read the Budget Message portion of the document for a summary of the entire document.

President Adduci gave thanks to staff.

4. AJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Trustee Vazquez, seconded by Trustee Bachner. The Village Board of Trustees Special Committee of the Whole Meeting concluded at 7:07 p.m.

Roll call:

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

Absent: Village Clerk Keller

Nays: None

Motion Passes.



Jonathan Keller, Village Clerk