

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES  
April 13, 2026**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 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, Brennan, Gillis, O’Connell(Virtual), Keskitalo, Vazquez, and Village Clerk Castellano

Absent: Trustee Bachner

Also Present: Village Attorney Lance Malina, Village Administrator Matt Walsh, Assistant Village Administrator Jessica Spencer, Fire Chief Tom Gaertner, Director of Public Works and Engineering Jack Bielak, Police Chief James Greenwood, Deputy Police Chief Michael Swierczynski, Police Commander Martin Grill, Finance Director Rosemary McAdams, HR Manager Trish Ivansek, and Assistant to the Director of Public Works Seth Jansen.

**MOTION** by Trustee Vazquez to allow Trustee O’Connell to participate in the meeting virtually due to employment reasons. Seconded by Trustee Gillis.

**Roll call:**

Ayes: Trustees Vazquez, Gillis, Brennan and Keskitalo

Absent: Bachner

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President Adduci led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Homer Bizzle highlighted several upcoming events for the charity America Cares Too, which he represents. He also provided updates on additional programs and other activities related to the organization.

#### **4. PUBLIC HEARING – FISCAL YEAR 2027 OPERATING BUDGET**

##### **a. Presentation of FY 2027 Operating Budget**

Village Administrator Matt Walsh and Finance Director Rosemary McAdams presented the Fiscal Year 2027 operating budget and fielded questions from members of the Board.

Trustee Brennan noted a possible scrivener's error in the budget regarding the use of "personal services" versus "personnel services."

President Adduci requested clarification on the fees and costs related to the Village's waste contract, and Administrator Walsh provided an explanation.

Trustee Vazquez requested clarification regarding the three-year projection of the General Fund. Director McAdams stated that the 2027 projection is balanced, while the subsequent two years reflect projected deficits.

Trustee Keskitalo asked how inflation is accounted for in the projections, and Director McAdams provided an explanation of the assumptions used.

Trustee O'Connell asked whether the Village is considering installing EV charging stations in the Town Center shopping area. Administrator Walsh stated that there are no plans to do so at this time.

Trustee Vazquez asked how long the three-month delay has occurred for a particular revenue source. Director McAdams noted that the delay has existed for at least 20 years and provided an explanation of its cause.

Trustee Gillis asked whether the Village has an estimate of the average annual revenue received from grants. Director McAdams noted that the amount is variable due to the impact of larger projects.

President Adduci thanked staff for their work on the budget, noted the limited actions available to the Village regarding its finances, and encouraged staff to continue pursuing outside funding sources, such as grants, to help increase revenues. She added that whenever the Village is able to realize savings and return those benefits to residents, such as through the 50/50 lead replacement program, it should do so. She also stated that the number one concern raised by residents is traffic and safety and encouraged staff to continue advancing projects and initiatives aimed at mitigating these concerns.

b. Public Hearing – FY 2027 Village Operating Budget

Administrator Walsh opened the Public Hearing and there were no public comments regarding the budget.

**MOTION** by Trustee Gillis to close the Public Hearing. Seconded by Trustee Keskitalo

**Roll call:**

Ayes: Trustees O’Connell, Vazquez, Gillis, Brennan and Keskitalo

Absent: Trustee Bachner

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

**5.ELECTED OFFICIAL COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Trustee Gillis noted that April 18 is the Earth Day Thatcher Woods cleanup hosted by the Park District and encouraged residents to sign up. She also recognized a resident for their volunteer work with the River Forest Bike Exchange and thanked the various groups and organizations that make the event possible. She further encouraged the Village to consider establishing a yearly award to recognize residents who make a positive impact on the community.

Trustee Vazquez thanked staff for their work on the budget and acknowledged the awards the Village has received related to its budgeting efforts. He also congratulated the Village on being named a finalist for the All-American City Award.

Administrator Walsh noted that the winner of the All-America City Award will be announced at the June event.

Trustee Vazquez reminded residents of the dangers of scams and highlighted a recent text message scam he received impersonating the court system.

Village Clerk Castellano congratulated and thanked staff for their work on the budget.

Trustee Brennan began her comments with a land acknowledgment and highlighted a Village partnership with Ecoship that helps recycle packaging materials and tennis shoes.

Trustee Vazquez asked how long the collection box will be available, and Trustee Brennan stated it will be available for one month.

Trustee Keskitalo thanked staff for their work on the budget and agreed with the idea of a citizen impact award suggested by Trustee Gillis. She also thanked the Police Department for its involvement with the bike exchange event and congratulated the winners of the District 90 Young Authors event.

Trustee O'Connell congratulated and thanked staff for their work on the budget.

President Adduci noted that, along with Trustee Keskitalo, she met with local representatives to discuss the Early Childhood Collaboration program.

## **6. CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Proclamation in Recognition of Earth Day 2026
- b. Accounts Payable – March 2026 – \$1,933,981.17
- c. Financial Report – March 2026
- d. Approval of Resolution for Construction on State Highways
- e. Accessible Parking Space Request – 8041 Lake Street Apartment 2
- f. Award of Contract – 2026 Permeable Paver Maintenance – Old World Brick Paving – \$60,000.00
- g. Administration Department Report
- h. Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026

Trustee Brennan asked that item G be pulled for separate consideration.

**MOTION** by Trustee Keskitalo to approve consent agenda items A through F and H. Seconded by Trustee Vazquez.

**Roll call:**

Ayes: Trustees O'Connell, Vazquez, Gillis, Brennan and Keskitalo

Absent: Bachner

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

**7. CONSENT ITEMS FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION**

g. Administration Department Report

**MOTION** by Trustee Vazquez to approve consent agenda item g. Seconded by Trustee Gillis.

Trustee Brennan requested clarification regarding a payment to Prescott Group. Village Administrator Walsh explained the services provided by Prescott Group to the Village.

Trustee Brennan inquired whether the firm assists with grant writing or with securing funds from the state after grants have been awarded.

Administrator Walsh clarified that Prescott Group assists the Village in obtaining awarded funds from the state.

**Roll call:**

Ayes: Trustees O'Connell, Vazquez, Gillis, Brennan and Keskitalo

Absent: Bachner

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

**8. RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND**

## COMMITTEES

None.

## 9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

## 10. NEW BUSINESS

### a. Right-of-Way Encroachment Agreement Process Update

Village Administrator Matt Walsh provided background information on the agenda item.

Trustee O'Connell expressed support for potential changes and inquired how landscaping and fences located within the right of way would be addressed.

Director Bielak explained the current right of way encroachment process.

Trustee Vazquez asked whether the proposed code would include a mechanism allowing residents or neighboring property owners to appeal decisions to the Village Board.

Trustee Keskitalo concurred with Trustee Vazquez.

Director Bielak stated that an appeals process could be incorporated and noted that similar processes exist in other sections of the Village Code.

Village Administrator Walsh confirmed that an appeals process could be implemented.

Trustee Gillis asked for confirmation that no items may be placed in the right of way without Village approval.

Director Bielak stated that items should not be placed in the parkway without approval.

Trustee Brennan noted that plants are commonly placed in the parkway.

Director Bielak acknowledged this and stated that the Village retains the right to remove such plantings as necessary to perform work within the right of way.

**11. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** to adjourn by Trustee Vazquez, Seconded by Trustee Keskitalo.

**Roll call:**


Ayes: Trustees O'Connell, Vazquez, Gillis, Brennan and Keskitalo

Absent: Bachner

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

The Village Board of Trustees Meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

  
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Rosa Castellano, Village Clerk

Date: 04/27/26