

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
May 11th, 2026**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on May 11th, 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, Trustees Gillis(Virtual), O’Connell, Bachner, Keskitalo, Vazquez, and Village Clerk Castellano

Absent: Trustee Brennan

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, Deputy Clerk Luke Masella, and Assistant to the Director of Public Works Seth Jansen.

MOTION by Trustee Vazquez to allow Trustee Gillis to participate remotely due to employment obligations and a family emergency. Seconded by Trustee Keskitalo.

Roll call:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Brennan

Motion Passes.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Adduci led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3.SPECIAL PRESENTATION

- a. Presentation of Gold-Level Water Ambassador Award – Illinois Section American Water Works Association (ISAWWA)

Heather Schmidt of the American Water Works Association Illinois Section made remarks and presented an award to the Village's Public Works staff and the Village Board. Director Bielak thanked Village staff for their work in the Water Department and the Village Board for providing the resources necessary to support their work.

4.CITIZEN COMMENTS

Audrey Ecksten and Molly Terry made public comment regarding climate change and encouraged the Village Board to consider measures such as additional recycling bins throughout the Village and a tax on plastic bag use at local stores.

President Adduci thanked the residents for speaking before the Village Board and acknowledged that it is not always easy to do so. She noted that the Village Board is passionate about climate change and directed staff to investigate the residents' requests for possible implementation. She also encouraged the residents to consider becoming involved with the One Earth Film Festival.

Trustee Bachner noted being in support of a plastic bag tax.

President Adduci stated that she believed the Village could not take that action because it is not a home rule community.

Trustee O'Connell suggested the residents reach out to the Park District as well.

5.ELECTED OFFICIAL COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee O'Connell thanked the Police Department for its response to a threat made toward the Village schools the previous week. He also reminded everyone of the upcoming Memorial Day Parade.

Trustee Keskitalo began her comments with a land acknowledgment. She then provided background information regarding the threat made toward the schools. Trustee Keskitalo also highlighted Teacher Appreciation Week and thanked local teachers for their work. She recognized the upcoming June 1 Pride Walk at River Forest Village Hall and the Juneteenth Flag Raising event at the River Forest Library. She concluded by asking Village Administrator Walsh to provide an update on the status of the Madison Street development process.

Village Administrator Matt Walsh stated that the Village is awaiting the submission of the application from the applicant and highlighted the steps that will follow once the application is received.

President Adduci stated that residents should look out for an upcoming newsletter with further details.

Clerk Castellano thanked the Police Department for its response to the school threats and also thanked the Public Works Department for its recent work addressing flooding in the Village due to heavy rains.

Trustee Vazquez highlighted Celebrating Seniors Week and recognized the programs held during the week and the residents participating in those programs. He also thanked the River Forest Fire and Police Departments for their upcoming Annual Senior Seminar at Sunrise Home in River Forest. He then echoed Trustee O'Connell's comments regarding the parade.

Trustee Gillis noted that her colleagues had covered many of her comments and highlighted the events following the Memorial Day parade and encouraged attendance.

Trustee Bachner also thanked the Public Safety Departments and Public Works and highlighted the June 1 Pride event. She then congratulated a member of the audience on their Bat Mitzvah.

President Adduci requested that Police Chief Greenwood elaborate on what occurred with the threat made to the school.

Police Chief Greenwood provided background information on the threat and highlighted the swift actions taken by the school and the Village and responded to questions from members of the Board.

President Adduci noted a meeting with representatives of Union Pacific to discuss their merger with Norfolk Southern. President Adduci emphasized the importance of addressing train idling as an ongoing concern. She also noted that, among other topics, the representatives mentioned a possible underpass at the First Avenue crossing. She then highlighted her recent attendance in Springfield for an Illinois Municipal League meeting.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Recognition of Pride Month and Flag Raising – Resolution
- b. Recognition of Juneteenth and Flag Raising – Resolution
- c. Recognition of National Police Week – Proclamation
- d. Recognition of National Public Works Week – Proclamation
- e. Purchase Approval – Avigilon 200GB NVR6 Street/Village Hall Camera Server Replacement – \$80,000.00
- f. Purchase Approval – Two 2026 Dodge Durango Police Vehicles & Upfitting – Thomas Dodge – not to Exceed \$134,180.00
- g. Purchase Approval – Police Department Men's Locker Room Renovation – Bradford Systems – \$86,160.00
- h. Purchase Approval – LUCAS CPR Device – Stryker Medical Equipment – \$21,645.00
- i. Purchase Approval – Valve Turner – Wachs Utility Products – \$45,749.00
- j. Purchase Approval – Asphalt Kettle – Brown Equipment Company – \$50,211.20
- k. Purchase Approval – April 2026 Fuel Purchase – \$22,239.46
- l. Award of Contract – Franklin Avenue Watermain Replacement – Mauro Sewer Construction, Inc. – \$1,553,766.36
- m. Invoice Approval – Software Services – Springbrook – \$49,527.32
- n. Accounts Payable – April 2026 – \$2,033,596.17
- o. Administration Department Report
- p. Monthly Department Reports
- q. Amendment to Right-of-Way Encroachment Permit Approval Process – Ordinance
- r. Authorization of an Amendment to Water and Sewer Rates – Ordinance

- s. Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – April 27th, 2026
- t. Village Board of Trustees Executive Session Meeting Minutes – April 27th, 2026

MOTION by Trustee O’Connell to approve consent agenda items A through T. Seconded by Trustee Bachner.

Roll call:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Brennan

Motion Passes.

7. CONSENT ITEMS FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION

None.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

- a. Sustainability Commission Recommendation
 - i. Extension of Municipal Aggregation Program – MC Squared Energy Services, LLC

MOTION by Trustee O’Connell to approve the extension of the Municipal Aggregation Program. Seconded by Trustee Bachner.

Assistant to the Director of Public Works Seth Jansen provided background information on this agenda item and responded to questions from the Village Board.

Members of the Board requested confirmation that the agreement represented a 24 month contract extension.

Mr. Jansen confirmed that it did.

President Adduci stated that she had no concerns with the extension, noting that

the provider has delivered good service.

Mr. Jansen also explained the process and timing for distributing notices to residents.

President Adduci requested clarification regarding his reference to roll offs.

Mr. Jansen explained that roll-offs are primarily associated with customer opt outs or situations in which MC Squared elects to serve a particular account.

Roll call:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Brennan

Motion Passes.

- b. Economic Development Commission Appointments and Reappointments
 - i. Ori Gottlieb – Appointment – Term Ending 4/30/29
 - ii. Adam Wilde – Appointment – Term Ending 4/30/28
 - iii. Melissa Mallinson – Appointment as Chamber of Commerce Ex Officio Member – Term Ending 4/30/30
- c. Development Review Board Appointments and Reappointments
 - i. Maryanne Fishman – Reappointment – Term Ending 4/30/28
 - ii. Mary Shoemaker – Reappointment – Term Ending 4/30/28
 - iii. Mike Gibbs (Plan Commissioner) – Appointment – Term Ending 4/30/28
- d. Plan Commission Reappointments
 - i. David Crosby – Reappointment as Chair and Member – Term Ending 4/30/30
- e. Zoning Board of Appeals Appointments and Reappointments
 - i. Mark Poulin – Appointment – Term Ending 4/30/31
 - ii. Corina Davis – Reappointment – Term Ending 4/30/31
- f. Local Ethics Commission Appointments
 - i. Greg Ignoffo – Reappointment as Chair and Member – Term Ending 4/30/28
- g. Traffic and Safety Commission Appointments and Reappointments

- i. Douglas Rees – Reappointment as Chair and Member – Term Ending 4/30/30
- ii. Arun Jayaraman – Reappointment – Term Ending 4/30/30
- iii. David Karrow – Reappointment – Term Ending 4/30/30
- iv. Patt Chase – Reappointment – Term Ending 4/30/30
- h. Sustainability Commission Appointments and Reappointments
 - i. Ty Beckmann – Appointment – Term Ending 4/30/27
 - ii. Jeff Schaider – Appointment – Term Ending 4/30/27
- i. Fire Pension Board Appointments and Reappointments
 - i. Rosemary McAdams – Reappointment – Term Ending 4/30/29
 - ii. Adam Howe – Reappointment – Term Ending 4/30/29
- j. Police Pension Board Reappointments
 - i. Michael Swierczynski – Reappointment – Term Ending 4/30/28
- k. Board of Fire and Police Commissioners Appointments and Reappointments
 - i. Nathan Mellman – Appointment as Chair – Term Ending 4/30/28
 - ii. Kevin Horan – Appointment – Term Ending 4/30/29
 - iii. Frowene Rodgers – Reappointment – Term Ending 4/30/29

MOTION by Trustee O’Connell to approve the Village President’s proposed appointments and reappointments to the Village’s Boards and Commissions. Seconded by Trustee Vazquez.

President Adduci noted that she had contacted each of the residents under consideration and provided an overview of her approach and rationale for the appointments and reappointments.

Trustee Keskitalo thanked President Adduci for including applicants’ statements of interest and resumes as part of the appointment materials.

President Adduci noted that the inclusion of those materials was requested by the Village Board, thanked members for the suggestion, and expressed enthusiasm for the proposed appointments.

Roll call:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Brennan

Motion Passes.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

10. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Plat of Consolidation & Minor Planned Development Amendment – River Forest Animal Hospital

MOTION by Trustee Vazquez to approve the plat of consolidation and authorize the Village Administrator to process the request for a minor amendment for 7513 - 7515 Lake Street. Seconded by Trustee O’Connell.

Assistant Village Administrator Jessica Spencer provided background information on this agenda item.

Trustee Keskitalo noted a possible scrivener's error in the memorandum accompanying the agenda item.

Assistant Village Administrator Spencer provided additional information regarding how the addresses associated with the application would be handled.

President Adduci thanked the applicants for their willingness to serve the Village and for their commitment to the community.

Roll call:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Brennan

Motion Passes.

- b. Discussion and Approval of Concept and Construction Plan for Heritage Square (Lake Street & Park Avenue)

MOTION by Trustee Bachner to Direct the Village Administrator and Staff to construct Heritage Square as proposed. Seconded by Trustee O'Connell.

President Adduci reminded staff to use the appropriate recycling bins, consistent with comments raised during public comment.

Village Administrator Walsh provided background information on this agenda item.

Trustee Keskitalo asked whether the proposed fencing would be similar to fencing used elsewhere in the Village.

Administrator Walsh stated that the project would utilize the Village's standard prairie style fencing that has been installed at other locations throughout town.

Trustee Bachner noted that the proposed construction start date could conflict with the Village's Pride event.

Administrator Walsh thanked her for the observation and stated that the schedule would be adjusted to ensure construction activities would not impact the event.

Trustee Bachner then asked where Village staff would park during construction.

Administrator Walsh explained that a portion of the apron would remain available for parking and clarified which portions of the area are Village owned and which are privately owned.

Trustee Bachner asked whether the proposed water fountain would include a water bottle filling station and inquired about the appearance of the new recycling bins, referencing bins used in the City of Chicago that resemble mailboxes.

Administrator Walsh stated that he would need to follow up with additional information regarding the recycling bin design.

President Adduci noted that the bins may be similar to those used by the Park District and explained how the design helps prevent animals from accessing the contents.

Trustee O'Connell requested additional information regarding the proposed lighting.

Administrator Walsh provided details on the lighting planned for the park.

Trustee Keskitalo asked whether the proposed park hours would be consistent with those of other parks in the Village.

Administrator Walsh confirmed that they would.

Trustee Bachner suggested installing signage on the property outlining park rules and regulations.

Trustee Gillis asked about plans for maintaining the property.

Public Works Director Jack Bielak provided an overview of the anticipated maintenance plan.

Roll call:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Brennan

Motion Passes.

Trustee O'Connell requested an update regarding the Village's leaf blower regulations.

Director Bielak provided an overview of the regulations and discussed the Village's enforcement approach.

President Adduci suggested that warning letters and violation notices be provided in both Spanish and English.

Director Bielak stated that they would be.

Trustee Bachner asked whether homeowners would also be notified when a warning was issued.

Director Bielak stated that both the homeowner and the landscaping contractor would be notified.

Trustee Bachner asked where Cook County utilizes leaf blowers within the Village.

Director Bielak stated that leaf blowers are used on County owned properties and within the Forest Preserves.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

12. ADJOURNMENT

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

Roll call:

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

Absent: Brennan

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

The Village Board of Trustees Meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.



Rosa Castellano, Village Clerk

Date: _____

04/22/26