

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
REGULAR VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
Monday, August 10, 2020**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on Monday, August 10, 2020 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 7:10 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: President Adduci, Trustees Bachner, Brennan, Cargie, Henek, O’Connell, Vazquez, Village Clerk Kathleen Brand-White

Absent: None

Also Present: Village Administrator Eric Palm, Assistant Village Administrator Lisa Scheiner, Assistant to the Village Administrator Jonathan Pape, Management Analyst Sara Phyfer, Police Chief James O’Shea, Finance Director Rosemary McAdams, Fire Chief Kurt Bohlmann, Public Works Director John Anderson, Village Attorney Greg Smith

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Adduci led the pledge of allegiance.

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

4. ELECTED OFFICIAL COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee O’Connell acknowledged the families of the victims of the car accident over the weekend, as well as the impact on the first responders. He also thanked residents for serving on the community’s boards and commissions, noting the cooperation is a sign of the Village coming together.

Trustee Henek expressed hope that the damage from the storm was minimal and also noted the various meetings happening tonight. She stated that while it is good there is a lot going on, it is unfortunate that residents are not able to participate in all the meetings. She reported that due to the pandemic, LemonAid would be virtual this year and all donations would go to the OPRF Community Foundation’s COVID relief fund, which will disburse to other organizations. She stated details will be forthcoming.

Trustee Brennan stated she was not at home due to the power outage from the storm and noted the tree damage throughout the community. She also congratulated Officer Ransom on the birth of his daughter.

Village Clerk Brand-White expressed her condolences to the loved ones and families of those who passed away in the car crash over the weekend and thanked those involved with responding.

Trustee Vazquez echoed the comments already made. He reported that the Age Friendly Communities Collaborative through the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus applied to the Retirement Research Foundation's grant for shared gerontology fellowships. He expressed hope that it would be successful.

Trustee Cargie reported the Deer Management Committee has received over 1,300 responses to its questionnaire and stated their next meeting is August 25. He noted the questionnaire closes August 31.

Trustee Bachner read a statement to acknowledge that this land was once inhabited by indigenous people and stated that River Forest continues to be a place that people from diverse backgrounds live and gather. She stated the Census end date is currently September 30 and stated River Forest is approximately 80% complete. She encouraged everyone to be counted. Trustee Bachner reported the Complete Count Committee will do a face mask drive with Census branding and targeting multi-family housing. She expressed hope for everyone's safety regarding the storm and also acknowledged all involved with the car accident over the weekend. She also acknowledged the civil unrest over the weekend and applauded everyone in the community who wants to do better and be better around issues of people of color. She stated Maywood is looking for a late September or October community signing event. She also thanked residents for their ideas to connect with Maywood.

President Adduci thanked Trustee Bachner for her leadership on the Census and the Twin Village Covenant. She echoed the statements about the fatal car accident and assured everyone that the Police Department is investigating. She stated an E-Newsletter would be going out regarding the civil unrest and storm damage, and she assured residents that safety is the first priority. She encouraged everyone to remain calm and reiterated that the Village will continue communicating important information. Regarding the storm damage, President Adduci stated Public Works is collecting branches in the streets and a storm update will be communicated. Regarding policing, she requested a special board meeting to discuss policing practices and social justice issues with the Department, including to report on how their policies are being updated. She also reported that the Illinois Municipal League's annual conference has been canceled, noting this is unfortunate because it offers best practices to municipalities.

- a. Resolution Honoring Elaine Kirk and Providing an Honorary Street Sign Designation of the 600 Block of Keystone as "Elaine 'Blondie' Kirk Way" – Resolution

Trustee Vazquez, made a motion, seconded by Trustee Henek, to approve a Resolution honoring Elaine Kirk and providing an Honorary Street Sign Designation of the 600 Block of Keystone as "Elaine 'Blondie' Kirk Way"

President Adduci read the resolution aloud.

Trustee Henek stated it was a pleasure to get to know Mrs. Kirk in her DRB capacity.

Dr. Kent Kirk received the sign on behalf of Mrs. Kirk and thanked President Adduci and the Village Board for thinking of his mother and honoring her in this way.

Mrs. Kirk also thanked the Board and expressed her gratitude.

President Adduci thanked Mrs. Kirk for everything she does for the community.

Roll call:

Ayes: President Adduci, Trustees Bachner, Brennan, Cargie, Henek, O'Connell, Vazquez

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

b. Proclaiming August 2020 as "National Women's Suffrage Month" In Celebration, Recognition and Honor of The 100th Anniversary of the Ratification of the 19th Amendment To the United States Constitution – Proclamation

Trustee Brennan read the proclamation aloud.

Mary Ann Porucznik thanked Trustee Brennan for reading and noted how far women have come as seen by the composition of the Board. She also noted the dynamic contributions women of River Forest and Oak Park have made to voting rights. Ms. Porucznik also remarked on the work done to honor an Oak Park resident's home as a site on the National Votes for Women Trail.

Trustee Bachner congratulated the Women's League and everyone involved for National Suffrage Month celebrations. She noted that while the amendment was ratified in 1919, it was not until nearly 50 years later that women of color got the right to vote. She remembered the women who fought for this right.

c. Resolution Recognizing 30-Year Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act – Resolution

Trustee O'Connell made a motion, seconded by Trustee Vazquez, to approve a Resolution Recognizing the 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Trustee Henek read the resolution aloud.

Roll call:

Ayes: President Adduci, Trustees Bachner, Brennan, Cargie, Henek, O'Connell, Vazquez

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – July 13, 2020
- b. Approval of Change Order #1 for the 2020 Sewer Lining Project for \$35,337.00 – Resolution
- c. Approval of Payment for Emergency Repairs to Water Main on Park Avenue in the amount of \$37,719.52
- d. Right-of-Way Encroachment Waiver and Agreement for an Irrigation System Located at 747 Ashland Avenue
- e. Performance Measurement Report
- f. Monthly Department Reports
- g. Accounts Payable – July 2020 – \$1,604,347.26
- h. Financial Report – July 2020
- i. Village Administrator’s Report

Trustee O’Connell, made a motion, seconded by Trustee Vazquez, to approve the Consent Agenda items A-I.

In response to a question from Trustee Henek, Director Anderson explained the water main repair work.

Trustee Henek suggested a potential protocol for inspecting water hydrants to prevent this from happening, and Director Anderson stated it is a rare event and each hydrant would have to be physically taken apart to determine if a similar issue exists.

In response to a question from Trustee Bachner, Director Anderson stated hydrants cost approximately \$10-15,000 after installation. It was noted that all hydrants are flushed annually.

Trustee Henek suggested letting residents know when hydrant flushing occurs so they know to expect it.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Bachner, Brennan, Cargie, Henek, O’Connell, Vazquez

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

6. CONSENT ITEMS FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION

None.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

a. Sustainability Commission Initiatives Update

Sustainability Commission Chairperson Lisa Gillis [presented](#) on the Commission's objectives, members, and 2020 achievements and initiatives. She reviewed their focuses and strategies, which include renewable energy, green transportation, protecting water sources and reducing water consumption, reducing waste and diverting from landfills, green ecosystems, educating the community, and measuring impacts. She also reviewed the success of the Parkways for Pollinators program and announced the new tree trail program, spearheaded by Ellie Raidt, the student commissioner, which will launch in the fall.

In response to a question from President Adduci, Chairperson Gillis reviewed the Healthy Lawn Healthy Family program.

Trustee Brennan commended the Commission's work. In response to her question about Parkways for Pollinators, Chairperson Gillis confirmed the Commission is holding 5 gardens for institutions and noted that they will have planted 55 gardens by the end of the year. She also stated they will look for grants to continue the program.

President Adduci noted residents' appreciation of compost delivery earlier this year and asked the Commission to look into continuing this.

Trustee Henek asked to ensure this fits in with Staff's schedules and duties.

Chairperson Gillis also reviewed the SolSmart program and indicated the Commission's intention to obtain the silver status, as well as continuing to encourage the community to reduce single-use plastics. She discussed utilizing social media as a tool to promote initiatives and reviewed measuring the impact of green energy aggregation through key performance indicators.

President Adduci expressed her enthusiasm for the key performance indicators and thanked Chairperson Gillis and the Commission for their work. She also encouraged the Commission to look for grants to continue the Parkways for Pollinators program.

In response to a question from Trustee O'Connell about student commissioners, Chairperson Gillis explained the process for applications and stated they will determine how many to accept depending on how many apply.

Trustee Brennan commented that she is happy to see that the Commission is actively responding to questions about the green aggregation program on social media. Chairperson Gillis stated they will be getting out another post with the FAQs. There was a brief discussion about how to clarify and communicate the program to residents.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

9. NEW BUSINESS

a. Discussion: Stormwater Infrastructure

President Adduci stated with the discussions about alley flooding, flooding on Keystone, and the success of the Northside Stormwater Management Project (NSMP), she would like to put together a comprehensive stormwater infrastructure and management plan for the Village.

Administrator Palm briefly reviewed the history of projects, stating studies in the 80s lead to adding relief sewers to the system and that the Village created a program for residents to subsidize the cost of basement protection systems. He also noted the success of Phase 1 of the NSMP and alley improvement projects. However, he noted the Village continues to see a lot of flooding during heavy rain events and explained that strategies include stricter regulation of projects increasing impervious surface and sewer separation. He stated Staff's recommendation is to put together a comprehensive strategy and stormwater master plan to deal with both the infrastructure and other areas to mitigate flooding.

Director Anderson reviewed the memo in the packet. He stated extreme rain events are more frequent and the sewer system is antiquated and mostly combined. He noted the success of the NSMP, which separates stormwater and diverts it to the Des Plaines River and utility of relief sewers. He explained that the Public Works Department regularly cleans and televises sewers, but that there is only so much water the system can handle at a time. A stormwater master plan, he noted would include a detailed hydraulic model to determine which areas to prioritize, as well as recommendations to regulations, fees, and grant programs to help address stormwater impacts. He stated the next step would be to conduct an RFP and that a master plan typically takes about 12 months.

In response to Trustee Cargie's concern about spending money to determine the problems, Administrator Palm explained the plan would identify the problems and also show what the infrastructure looks like, create a strategy to fix and address the problems, and estimate the costs to implement solutions.

Trustee Henek concurred with Trustee Cargie and stated she is unclear of the scope of work. She asked whether there was a way to create the plan without outside help to prioritize problems they already know need to be addressed.

Trustee Vazquez suggested there could be a cost-savings in an approach of looking at the Village overall instead of piecemeal.

Administrator Palm stated the system is inadequate and undersized and that there is currently no long-term strategy in terms of creating what the infrastructure is going to look like, and that an outside firm is needed to formulate that strategy.

Trustee Vazquez asked for clarification regarding the \$140,000-180,000 estimate, and Administrator Palm stated that is the cost to create the plan and that implementation of recommended projects would be in the millions. In response to follow up questions,

Administrator Palm stated there could be phased costs, that recommendations would address specific issues, and that Staff would put the RFP together.

In response to Trustee O'Connell's questions about anecdotal information and the Village's responsibility regarding flooding activity on private property, Administrator Palm stated Staff has increasingly received concerns from residents about backyard flooding and that a master plan would take the entire scope of issues and address them. He described the example of residents wanting a new alley, noting that it is significantly cheaper to resurface an alley than to reconstruct it with pavers and concrete curbs, which would channel stormwater away from residential properties.

Trustee O'Connell recalled the parking study and stated his support moving forward with a master plan.

In response to a question from Trustee Bachner, Administrator Palm stated the plan would be a high level approach, and that the design and implementation would be another process.

Trustee Bachner expressed concern about areas where flooding is occurring but residents may not have been contacting the Village and asked whether there should be a system in place for them to notify Staff. Administrator Palm stated the Village does want to know about it and offered examples of what could be causing basement flooding.

President Adduci expressed her support for this project, stating the Village owes it to the community to look at the issue as a whole, including the sewer infrastructure itself and what residents can do on their own properties.

Administrator Palm emphasized needing a long-term plan to address stormwater and stated the current system would not be designed the same way if starting from new.

Trustee Henek concurred about evaluating and managing the sewer infrastructure and asked how other issues, such as topography and residential projects, would be addressed in this plan. She also asked about timing, noting she did not want issues homeowners are currently experiencing to go unaddressed while the plan is being created.

President Adduci stated work scheduled under the Capital Improvement Plan would continue during this process.

Administrator Palm discussed the process of alley improvements and how the Village has historically addressed private property issues. He and Village Engineer Loster emphasized that a master plan would address all issues that exist and that identifying all issues and solutions is a large undertaking. Mr. Loster compared this to the parking study and the Safe Walking Routes to School study.

In response to a question from Trustee Henek about flooding issues residents experience and what elements this study would address, Mr. Loster stated the plan can be tailored to the needs of the Village. He stated yard flooding could be included and explained an example from

Downers Grove about requirements for construction in areas treated like floodplains. He stated it is difficult to start addressing these issues without looking at everything contributing to the problem.

Trustee Brennan suggested reaching out to the Center for Neighborhood Technology regarding a rain ready plan they had presented to the Sustainability Commission in the past. She agreed that a comprehensive plan is necessary and that she would like the Village to look at the amount of impermeable surface a resident is allowed to have on their property.

Administrator Palm stated Mr. Loster has already started looking into the process of a grant through the Center, which could help mitigate the yard flooding component. He also clarified that the RFP would be a couple months but the process of developing the plan could take one year. He confirmed that the plan would evaluate the utility of stormwater ordinances.

President Adduci recalled the stormwater ordinances discussion and stated the Board was worried about imposing restrictions on residents despite having an inadequate sewer system. She reiterated the need for a comprehensive plan, including the potential for ordinances for residential properties to mitigate flooding and to see what the infrastructure looks like across the community.

Trustee Henek asked whether the discussion about flooding at Keystone and Division would be incorporated into this plan or would go separately and how Phase 2 of the NSMP would be evaluated within the master plan.

Administrator Palm stated the sewer separation is the correct path forward for NSMP Phase 2 and that the \$8M project just needs funding. Referencing the master plan, he stated it would be evaluated only on its overall prioritization level from the consultant. Regarding Keystone flooding, he stated Staff is evaluating what the consultants have recommended and will return to the Board to get their direction with proceeding with the project. He stated all improvements made tie in together as far as relief for residents.

President Adduci directed Staff to move into the process of going out competitive bid, and she and Trustee Henek requested Staff bring the RFP back to the Board for input prior to starting.

b. Update: Village Response to COVID-19

President Adduci noted this was on the agenda because of the resurgence in positive cases through the summer, though emphasized the 2% positivity rate. She stated the Village has met with the other taxing bodies to address the continued concerns.

Assistant Village Administrator Scheiner reported on the Village's campaign to address the continued need to live safely during the pandemic. She stated Staff has begun communicating materials from the state's All In Illinois campaign, and is in the process of working with two residents for a more tailored message. She noted President Adduci and Staff met virtually with the other taxing bodies to commit to communicating this message in a unified voice. Ms. Scheiner stated that in addition to the yard signs that the Village installed in the parks, the

Park District will be putting up banners on their properties. She highlighted the intergovernmental cooperation to redouble efforts to help prevent going backwards.

President Adduci stated that everyone is rowing in the same direction, noting that people are worried about the parks and the Park Board understands.

Helen Kwan summarized the Senior Citizen Task Force, explaining how the program was formed and communicated to seniors and volunteers. She stated all 125 volunteers were subject to background checks and were assigned to various shopping tasks for seniors, of which over 200 were completed. She noted turnaround time was typically 1-4 hours. Additionally, she explained that the Task Force assisted in forming the Victory Mask Brigade by coordinating volunteer mask-makers and delivering to those in need of masks, including outside the community.

President Adduci noted her appreciation for all the coordination and work she has does.

Trustee Henek thanked Ms. Kwan for the update and asked additional questions.

In response to Trustee Henek's question about how many seniors have taken part in the program, Ms. Kwan stated there were over 230 activities. In a follow up question, Trustee Henek requested the number of unique users. In response to her question about what kind of assistance was provided outside of shopping, Ms. Kwan stated they have recently begun delivering library materials and that masks were made and distributed. Trustee Henek asked how many of the 125 volunteers were used, and Ms. Kwan stated almost all of them and that some were used multiple times if they had developed relationships with the seniors. In response to Trustee Henek's question about expenses, Ms. Kwan stated she initially had one person to help set up the program and that there had been minimal expenses, noting many craft supplies had been donated. In response to Trustee Henek's question about a figure on salaries and expenses, Administrator Palm stated he could provide that at a later date.

Trustee O'Connell expressed his thanks and stated he knows some of his neighbors have established relationships with the volunteers. President Adduci noted the Village has received amazing compliments to Ms. Kwan and her team. Ms. Kwan also commended the volunteers and stated she will be sending them a follow up letter.

Trustee Bachner noted that the interaction with seniors is beneficial for them and suggested connecting volunteers with seniors on a more ongoing basis. Ms. Kwan stated she has an idea of which seniors would benefit from that and would work to identify volunteers.

Trustee Vazquez thanked Ms. Kwan for her work and her involvement with age-friendly issues.

President Adduci noted that every Friday, Staff meets virtually with her, Trustee Brennan, and Ms. Kwan to continue to address and respond to COVID-19.

c. Update: Art/Murals in River Forest

Administrator Palm stated Barrington Lopez is a resident who is looking to coordinate murals in commercial corridors on private buildings throughout town as a means of providing public art as a destination piece for the Village. One possible placement, Administrator Palm noted, would be the walls underneath the Canadian National viaduct on Lake Street. He stated Mr. Lopez presented the idea to the Economic Development Commission for their input and will be providing Staff with a checklist that Chicago uses for public art projects.

Mr. Lopez explained how public art is enjoyable and good for the community and local businesses, particularly at a time when everyone feels hyper-sheltered. He noted the art window ends in October-November and would begin again in April.

Trustee Henek commended Mr. Lopez and stated she loves the viaduct idea. She asked whether Jewel was still being considered. She remarked that Liz Holt of the OPRF Chamber is very supportive of murals, noting it is good for business corridors.

Mr. Lopez noted he spoke with Ms. Holt and they discussed how to engage stakeholders. He stated he has a call with a Jewel representative on Wednesday and that they have expressed support of the idea, but that they may like to see an effort elsewhere in the community first.

Trustee Bachner also expressed support for this idea, noting the importance and beauty of public art. President Adduci clarified that this viaduct is on Lake Street by Keystone Park.

Administrator Palm reported that the Village continues to work with Liita Forsyth on the public art on the Union Pacific bridges on Central, noting that the Little Bits Workshop does a nice job and it is a good educational opportunity for its students. He also discussed the decorative lighthouse in front of Lake and Monroe, noting that it was commissioned by resident Lisa Birmingham. He stated the Village is working with the Park District to put another one by the bocce courts. He added that they add nice touches and provide visual art in the community.

In clarifying a question from Trustee Henek, President Adduci confirmed the lighthouses are purchased as a donation to The Chicago Lighthouse (foundation). Trustee Henek also asked to communicate the art to residents so they know where they came from.

d. Update: Building Permit Software

Assistant Village Administrator Scheiner noted that while Staff is mindful of the Village's finances during the pandemic, one project moving forward is the purchase and implementation of the land and license software. She reported on the status of this project, noting that an RFP was issued for the software and Staff conducted product demos. She stated Staff is completing its due diligence and anticipates bringing forward a software recommendation at the September meeting. Ms. Scheiner noted the lesson learned from COVID-19 is to bring processes online to enhance and streamline the workflow. She remarked that the current software is no longer being supported and does not have updates. Ms.

Scheiner added that Staff is mindful of the costs and explained the customer service benefits of new software. She also noted it will be significantly under what was budgeted in the CIP.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Village Attorney Smith announced that because the Board would be going into Executive Session on a different Zoom line, there would be no further discussion or action after Executive Session and that the Board would adjourn immediately after.

Trustee O’Connell made a motion, seconded by Trustee Bachner, to go into executive session to discuss pending litigation at 10:10pm.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Bachner, Brennan, Cargie, Henek, O’Connell, Vazquez

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

The Village Board returned to regular session at 10:30 p.m. with the following members present: President Adduci, Trustees Brennan, Cargie, Henek, O’Connell, Vazquez, Village Clerk Brand-White.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Cargie made a motion, seconded by Trustee Henek, to adjourn the regular Village Board of Trustees Meeting at 10:30p.m.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Bachner, Brennan, Cargie, Henek, O’Connell, Vazquez

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

Kathleen Brand-White, Village Clerk