

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
September 14th, 2026**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on September 14th, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the Fox Auditorium at Trinity High School, 7574 Division St, River Forest, IL 60305.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: President Adduci, Trustees Brennan, Bachner, Gillis, O'Connell, Keskitalo, Vazquez, and Village Clerk Castellano

Absent: None

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, Finance Director Rosemary McAdams, Police Commander Martin Grill, HR Manager Trish Ivansek, and Deputy Clerk Luke Masella.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Adduci led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

- a. Police Commendations – Sergeant Michael Fries, Detective Denisse Zermeno, Officer Alejandra Juarez and Officer Xavier Saldana

Police Chief Jim Greenwood provided background information on this agenda item and presented the awards.

4. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. A Resolution Opposing the Proposed O'Hare Flyer

MOTION by Trustee O'Connell, seconded by Trustee Vazquez, to approve a Resolution Opposing the Proposed O'Hare Flyer

President Adduci provided background information on the agenda item and addressed comments made in the media by Mr. Lundy and others.

Mark Weissburg provided public comment in opposition to the proposed O'Hare Flyer and highlighted concerns regarding sound, traffic, grade crossings, and potential impacts on wildlife.

Chris Buzachero provided public comment in opposition to the proposed O'Hare Flyer and suggested actions the Village could take in opposition to the proposed train.

Erik Houston spoke in support of the proposed O'Hare Flyer and cited reasons for his support of the project.

Renu Shah spoke in opposition to the proposed O'Hare Flyer and raised a number of concerns, including the number of daily trains. She also highlighted a local group being formed in opposition to the proposed trains.

Sirimon Reutrakul provided public comment in opposition to the proposed O'Hare Flyer and highlighted a number of concerns regarding the potential environmental impacts of the train.

Cary McLean thanked the Police Department for its work and spoke in opposition to the proposed O'Hare Flyer. She highlighted the project's large scale and potential impacts across multiple municipalities, encouraged residents to join a local volunteer group opposing the project, raised concerns regarding the resolution's wording, and raised financial concerns related to the possible acquisition of the Civic Center.

Tom Cloud provided public comment in opposition to the proposed O'Hare Flyer. He highlighted a local group organizing against the proposed train,

encouraged residents to get involved, and raised concerns regarding the project's potential impacts on the Village, other communities along the route, and Cook County.

Sarah McIntosh shared her perspective as a property owner whose property directly abuts the proposed project area. She asked about the next steps, anticipated timeline, and potential consultants or firms that may be retained by the Village.

Marlene McVisk thanked the Village for its actions to date and voiced her opposition to the proposed train. She also provided her perspective on the proposed O'Hare Flyer based on her experience as a longtime homeowner.

Margie Cekander raised concerns regarding potential issues related to the proposed transfer of the civic center building to the Village. She questioned the validity of the vote and raised concerns regarding the potential costs associated with improvements to the building.

Ron Steele spoke against the proposed O'Hare Flyer and raised concerns regarding the project. He encouraged cooperation between the Village and various community and activity groups, highlighted that the property has not yet been sold, and encouraged Illinois Senate President Don Harmon to take action. He also raised safety concerns regarding the proposed project.

Steve Metro raised concerns regarding the proposed O'Hare Flyer and referenced accidents involving existing bridges. He also raised concerns regarding the proposed financial structure of the project and asked that no public funds be used to support it.

Greg Abcarian thanked the residents in attendance and spoke against the proposed O'Hare Flyer. He highlighted safety concerns regarding the proposed train and raised concerns regarding the financial aspects of the project.

Brian David thanked the Board and residents for attending and raised concerns regarding the proposed rail project. He questioned the need for the proposed train and asked whether the necessary impact studies had been completed, including studies regarding potential financial impacts on neighboring residents, wildlife, properties, and other areas.

Debbie Borman congratulated the River Forest Police Department and asked those in attendance to respect individuals providing public comment. She then raised concerns regarding an email from the Village President related to the proposed Madison Street project and a fund intended to support residents who may be impacted by the project.

Tracy Hollenbach spoke against the proposed O'Hare Flyer and raised concerns regarding potential impacts on neighboring properties, including potential impacts from freight trains. The speaker also raised concerns regarding the potential hours of operation along the existing tracks.

Thomas Lamm thanked the Board for adopting its resolution and questioned why the matter had not been brought forward earlier. He also raised concerns regarding portions of the proposed resolution and what he characterized as a lack of identified next steps. Mr. Lamm highlighted concerns regarding communication between the Village, its various entities, and residents. He also suggested that the Village restart the Finance Committee to assist with management of Village finances.

Charlie Riggs spoke against the proposed O'Hare Flyer and shared his experiences growing up near freight train operations in the Village.

Mary Lidd spoke against the proposed O'Hare Flyer and highlighted safety concerns regarding the proposed train. She questioned the need for the project given existing infrastructure providing access to and from O'Hare Airport.

Bill Heineke commented on the proposed O'Hare Flyer, noting that the railroad tracks already exist. He also highlighted the potential costs associated with opposing the project.

Carolyn [last name unclear] of the 1100 Block of Thatcher Avenue spoke against the proposed O'Hare Flyer and shared her experience growing up near railroad tracks. She raised concerns regarding public health, equity, environmental impacts, and safety, and stated that she believed additional information was needed regarding the potential impacts of the proposed project.

Rocco [last name unclear] of the Block of Park Avenue spoke regarding the proposed O'Hare Flyer and asked the Village to take additional action and provide more information regarding the project. He raised numerous concerns

regarding safety.

Amy Paris shared her perspective as someone who grew up in a neighborhood near existing railroad tracks and raised concerns regarding the financial aspects of the proposed O'Hare Flyer.

Trustee Keskitalo highlighted her personal experiences living near railroad tracks and her professional experience related to the project. She raised concerns regarding noise pollution and the lack of information provided to the Village Board. She requested an independent noise and vibration analysis selected by the Village, as well as a property-by-property assessment of properties near the proposed project to demonstrate the proximity of homes to the railroad tracks. She also requested that any contact to date with the Village Board or Village staff regarding the project be summarized and shared with the Village Board. She stated her support for the proposed resolution.

Trustee O'Connell thanked residents for their suggestions and comments and highlighted the importance of sending information through physical mail in addition to email. He asked staff to prepare a contact list of elected officials, including Cook County Commissioners, to whom residents could send letters. He also requested that staff prepare a budget outlining potential consultants and estimated costs for Board review and that proposed consultants be brought back before the Board for consideration. He stated his support for the proposed resolution.

Trustee Vazquez stated his support for the proposed resolution and thanked residents for their feedback. He asked the Village to work with existing residents' organizations surrounding the proposed project. He also noted that the Village should be transparent regarding expenditures related to its response to the proposed project. He requested that the Village should schedule as many meetings as necessary and begin those meetings as early as possible and not wait for the next board meeting.

Trustee Bachner raised concerns regarding the apparent lack of coordination with Trustee Keskitalo prior to the matter being brought forward and noted that her experience should have been utilized. She requested that Trustee Keskitalo be involved in all aspects of the Village's response, along with the community. She also raised concerns regarding a lack of clarity surrounding discussions that had already occurred and requested greater transparency. She raised concerns

regarding terminology used in the proposed resolution and requested greater clarity regarding definitions related to the project. She asked whether President Adduci was subject to a nondisclosure agreement and raised concerns regarding the Village's actions in light of actions taken by neighboring communities. She thanked residents for their comments and stated that she hoped the Board would remain engaged.

President Adduci stated that she had not signed a nondisclosure agreement and provided additional information regarding the meetings that had occurred.

Trustee Brennan clarified when she first became aware of the matter and raised concerns regarding the lack of transparency and information provided to the Village Board. She requested that the Village create an FAQ page and continue providing factual information so residents have access to consistent information. She also requested a timeline outlining meetings and discussions that had occurred regarding the proposed project and raised concerns regarding terminology used in the proposed resolution.

Trustee Keskitalo provided additional perspective regarding the terminology used in the proposed resolution based on her professional experience and background.

Trustee Brennan requested additional revisions to the proposed resolution, including references to wildlife, environmental impacts, scans and studies, sound, and grade separation. She also raised concerns regarding staff's spending authority and requested additional background information before funds were spent on studies or consultants.

Trustee Gillis suggested a revision to the proposed resolution based on Trustee Brennan's comments.

Trustee Brennan thanked residents with differing views for attending and articulating their opinions.

Trustee Gillis thanked those in attendance and encouraged everyone to work together toward a common goal. She noted that disagreements may occur but emphasized the importance of the Village remaining unified in its response to the proposed project. She asked whether an early warning system could be established to notify the Village of large transportation projects in the future.

Trustee O'Connell noted that the Northern Illinois Transportation Authority may be a potential resource.

President Adduci highlighted state agencies that may be involved in the project and could be utilized by the Village, including IDOT.

Trustee Brennan requested that factual information regarding the requests made by residents be compiled and made available.

Village Administrator Walsh provided background information regarding his meetings with the proposed developer.

Trustee Keskitalo requested meeting recaps, including information regarding meetings referenced by Administrator Walsh.

Trustee Brennan requested that those meetings be added to the project timeline.

Administrator Walsh provided additional information regarding the documents the Village has received and those it does not have related to the proposed project.

Trustee Brennan reiterated her concerns regarding the lack of information provided to the Board.

Trustee Keskitalo reiterated her request for factual information regarding the proposed project.

Trustee Bachner reminded the Board that the potential impacts extend beyond the properties immediately adjacent to the proposed project.

Trustee Keskitalo agreed with Trustee Bachner and highlighted her experience living near a train line.

President Adduci thanked those in attendance and noted that Village staff would need resources to address the matter. She requested that the Village provide Administrator Walsh with the authority to seek potential consultants.

Trustee Brennan reiterated her concerns regarding staff spending authority and

requested that staff not take financial action related to consultants or studies without prior Board approval.

Village Attorney Malina provided possible revisions to the proposed resolution in response to Trustee Brennan's comments.

Trustee O'Connell asked whether Trustee Brennan was comfortable moving forward with the proposed resolution.

The Village Board and Village Attorney Malina agreed to move forward with the proposed changes suggested by Trustee Brennan and the other Trustees.

President Adduci requested that Great Western Railroad be specifically named and included in the proposed resolution.

Trustee O'Connell agreed to revise the motion, and Trustee Vazquez agreed to amend his second.

Trustee O'Connell requested that the modified version of the resolution be posted online.

Roll call:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Passes.

The Village Board recessed for five minutes.

6. ELECTED OFFICIALS' COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee Bachner had no comments.

Trustee Gillis highlighted an upcoming free concert at Dominican University.

Trustee Vazquez had no comments.

Trustee Brennan began her comments with a land acknowledgment and thanked

residents for attending the meeting. She highlighted this year's LemonAid event and noted that donations are still open. She then raised concerns about an email from President Adduci. She requested further explanation of portions of the email.

President Adduci provided clarification regarding her email. She noted that the entire Village Board would need to vote in executive session to release the audio recording.

Trustee Brennan requested that the Board discuss the possible reintroduction of the Finance Committee at a future meeting.

President Adduci stated that the Village would reevaluate the matter and could provide additional background information.

Trustee Keskitalo wished her Jewish neighbors a happy new year. She thanked the Police Department and the officers recognized during the meeting for their work. She then asked for an update regarding the Jasculca Terman contract.

Administrator Walsh provided information regarding the contract with Jasculca Terman.

Trustee Keskitalo asked for an update regarding parking enforcement around the Madison Street development.

Administrator Walsh provided an update and noted that discussions are ongoing.

Trustee O'Connell congratulated the Kiwanis Club on a recent event and encouraged residents to sign up for Community Connect. He also asked that additional information be distributed and that more residents be added to the Village newsletter system.

President Adduci thanked the residents who attended the meeting. Considering the discussions regarding the Finance Committee, she reminded the Trustees of the Village's use of ad hoc committees in years prior, and the amount of work required of staff and elected officials to support them. She then noted that she had met with the new District 90 Superintendent and other local representatives regarding local childcare services. She also congratulated those involved with LemonAid.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Proclamation in Recognition of Constitution Day
- b. Authorization to Donate Lost, Mislaid, and Abandoned Property – Bikes
- c. Authorization to Donate Lost, Mislaid, and Abandoned Property – Clothing
- d. Award of Contract – 2026 Washington Boulevard Corridor Phase II Detailed Engineering – Primera Engineers, Ltd – \$167,002.00
- e. Award of Contract – FY 2027 Tree Trimming – Fernandez Tree Service, Inc – \$83,725.00
- f. Intergovernmental Agreement Amendment #1 – Des Plaines River Trail – \$85,000
- g. ITEP Financial Commitment Resolution: Washington Blvd.
- h. ITEP Financial Commitment Resolution: North Ave.
- i. ITEP Financial Commitment Resolution: Des Plaines River Trail
- j. Accounts Payable – August 2026 – \$2,504,218.34.
- k. August 2026 Financial Report
- l. Monthly Department Reports
- m. Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – August 17th, 2026
- n. Plat of Consolidation – 125 Park Avenue

Trustee O'Connell requested that Item E be pulled for separation consideration.

MOTION by Trustee O'Connell, seconded by Trustee Brennan, to approve Consent Agenda Items A-D and F-N.

Roll call:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Passes.

8. CONSENT ITEMS FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION

- e. Award of Contract – FY 2027 Tree Trimming – Fernandez Tree Service, Inc – \$83,725.00

MOTION by Trustee Vazquez, seconded by Trustee Keskitalo, to approve a

Consent Agenda Item E.

Trustee O'Connell raised concerns regarding increasing bid costs and requested that Public Works Director Jack Bielak be given appropriate authority to spend additional funds on the item.

Roll call:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Administrator Walsh clarified the total amount associated with the item.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

a. Zoning Board of Appeals

i. Request for Zoning Variations – 632 Bonnie Brae

MOTION by Trustee Vazquez, seconded by Trustee Gillis, to approve an Ordinance granting the requested setback and lot coverage variations at 632 Bonnie Brae Place, subject to the condition that the shed currently attached to the garage be removed.

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

Roll call:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Passes.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

11. NEW BUSINESS

a. Katreina Koprowski Appointment – Finance Director

MOTION by Trustee Bachner, seconded by Trustee Vazquez, to appoint Katreina Koprowski as Finance Director, effective November 26, 2026, and appoint her to both the Police Pension Board and Firefighters' Pension Board, and to adopt a Resolution appointing her as the IMRF Authorized Agent.

Ms. Koprowski provided background information regarding her professional experience and expressed her enthusiasm about working with the Village.

Roll call:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Passes.

b. Planned Unit Development (PUD) Introduction – Bonnie Brae Townhome (1101 Bonnie Brae)

Assistant Village Administrator Spencer provided background information regarding the agenda item.

The applicant introduced the proposed development and answered questions from members of the Village Board.

Administrator Walsh reminded everyone that this was an introductory discussion regarding the agenda item.

Trustee Brennan asked for clarification regarding what would happen to some of the trees on the property.

The applicant's architect, John Schiess, provided an explanation of the proposed plan for the trees.

Trustee O'Connell asked for clarification regarding portions of the site plan.

Mr. Schiess provided an explanation of the site plan, the arrangement of the proposed townhomes, and the proposed parking and building amenities.

Trustee Bachner asked whether the units would be rental or owner-occupied.

Mr. Schiess stated that the units would be owner-occupied.

President Adduci asked whether they had done any market analysis for this type of product.

An additional representative of the proposed development provided information regarding the market for the proposed townhomes.

Trustee Brennan asked for clarification regarding the property owner and the applicant.

Mr. Schiess provided an explanation of the property ownership and the parties involved.

Trustee Brennan asked why portions of the development information were redacted.

Assistant Village Administrator noted that the redactions were due to privacy concerns.

Trustee Bachner asked about the possible price of the units.

Mr. Schiess provided an estimate for the proposed units.

President Adduci asked a question regarding buyer input in the process.

A representative of the proposed development responded to the question.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

13. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn by Trustee Bachner, seconded by Trustee Vazquez.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

The Village Board of Trustees Meeting adjourned at 10:17 p.m.



Rosa Castellano, Village Clerk

Date: 09-28-26