

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
REGULAR VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES  
Monday, January 27, 2020**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on Monday, January 27, 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 7:05 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: President Adduci, Trustees Bachner, Brennan, Cargie, Henek, O’Connell, Vazquez

Absent: None

Also Present: Village Clerk Kathleen Brand-White, 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, Police Commander James Greenwood, 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**

John Dzuryak, 315 Forest. Mr. Dzuryak encouraged the Board to consider Westmont’s program for discounted garbage bills for seniors. He also expressed concern about snowblower use by contractors outside of the permissible hours.

Chris Hillcoat, 1428 Franklin. Mr. Hillcoat stated he was applauding the Board for their decision on establishing a Deer Management Committee. He stated he enjoys being greeted by a number of deer on an ongoing basis. He encouraged the Board to approve the resolution and noted this is an important issue.

Mary Vanker, 1234 Monroe. Ms. Vanker expressed concern that the language in the Deer Management Committee resolution limited the Committee and delayed it from taking action until fall. She requested the resolution be modified so the Committee could approach the Board at any step along the way and be authorized to make its own proposals. She also shared an email from Dr. Ingrid Liu, a resident, who had a River Forest patient who contracted Lyme disease on the east coast. She also stated that Dr. Liu had been in contact with the Cook County Department of Public Health, who told her the only hotspot for Lyme disease within the County is in the Forest Preservers property in Palos Heights.

Askold Kozbur, 1235 Monroe. Mr. Kozbur reaffirmed his previous comments and noted he is in favor of the Deer Management Committee. While he noted the seriousness of Lyme diseases, Mr. Kozbur expressed concern that the risk had been exaggerated. He urged that data from the Cook County Health Department and Centers for Disease control be referenced over anecdotal data.

#### **4. ELECTED OFFICIAL COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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 discussed the 2020 Census, noting that it helps establish fair market rents, enforce fair housing practices, and helps with the planning of health and educational services for people with disabilities. She reminded everyone that sidewalks are homeowners' responsibility and asked that everyone shovel them for their neighbors.

Administrator Palm noted that code enforcement warnings have been issued to property owners not in compliance.

Trustee Brennan announced that the holiday lights recycling program is now closed but that any other cords and lights could be saved for this year's Recycling Extravaganza. She noted she is looking forward to the report from Elgin Recycling on the total deflected from landfills.

In reponse to a question from Trustee Henek, Administrator Palm stated there are approximately 15 homes signed up for the senior snow program.

Trustee Henek reported that she attended the Plan Commission meeting regarding the Affordable Housing Plan. In an effort to allow for reflection, she suggested the Plan be presented and discussed at one meeting and voted on at a later meeting.

Trustees Bachner and Brennan concurred.

Trustee O'Connell suggested the Plan be discussed at a Committee of the Whole meeting.

President Adduci reported that she and Trustee O'Connell met with the Forest Preserves and stated she will discuss that more when they get to that item.

#### **5. CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Regular Village Board Meeting Minutes – December 9, 2019
- b. Waiver of Formal Bid and Award of Purchase (Due to Competitive Quotes) for a Mobark 2131 Brush Chipper from Alexander Equipment for \$87,431.00
- c. Authorize Proceeding with a Text Amendment to the Village's Zoning Code Regarding Massage Therapy Establishment
- d. Village Administrator's Report

Trustee Cargie made a motion, seconded by Trustee Vazquez to approve the Consent Agenda items A - D.

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. Traffic and Safety Commission – Amend Title 9 of the Village Code Regarding a No Parking Restriction on the North Side of Central Avenue Between Franklin Avenue and Ashland Avenue – Ordinance

Trustee Vazquez made a motion, seconded by Trustee Brennan to approve an Ordinance Amending Section 9-3-12 of the Village Code to install a No Parking Zone of 20 feet on both sides of the Central Avenue driveway for the Greathouse Condominium Complex located at 407-415 Franklin Avenue.

Village Engineer Loster explained the request and stated the owners were having issues exiting their parking lot due to how close vehicles are parked on either side of the driveway. He noted parking is allowed on the north side of Central in that area.

In response to a question from Trustee Cargie, Engineer Loster stated there could be a loss of one or two parking spots. He further stated one item being analyzed in the Commuter Parking Study is whether to switch parking to the south side of Central since there would be no gap in parking from driveways. He explained that while the Traffic and Safety Commission and KLOA did not have issues with that, Staff was concerned about the impact to emergency vehicles.

In response to a follow up question from Trustee Cargie, Chief Bohlmann stated it is more a concern for the Police Department. Engineer Loster stated hopefully the Study results will show the need or lack of need for parking in that area.

In response to a question from Trustee O'Connell, Engineer Loster clarified the current parking restrictions along Central and stated this ordinance would result in the loss of one parking spot.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None  
Motion Passes.

## **8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a. Creation of a Deer Management Ad Hoc Committee to Investigate and Provide a Written Report and Recommendations to the President and Board of Trustees Regarding Deer Management – Resolution

Trustee Brennan made a motion, seconded by Trustee Henek, to approve a Resolution Establishing a Deer Management Ad Hoc Committee to Investigate and Provide a Written Report and Recommendations to the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of River Forest Regarding Deer Management.

Carl Vogel, Forest Preserves. Mr. Vogel stated he is the Director of Communications for the Forest Preserves. He affirmed the Forest Preserves' commitment to work with the Village on this issue as the Village creates the new ad-hoc committee. He discussed their mission and limited budget and noted the effects of deer overpopulation. He explained the prioritization of their ecological restoration work and clarified that deer are the responsibility of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. He stated that as the Committee further explores options, the Forest Preserves is happy to continue to provide information about the program that can help determine if an IGA is the option the Village would like to pursue.

In response to a question from President Adduci, Mr. Vogel confirmed the Forest Preserves is willing to answer questions and provide information as needed to the Committee.

President Adduci reviewed the meeting she and Trustee O'Connell had with Forest Preserves Superintendent Arnold Randall and Cook County Commissioner Pete Silvestri, stated they discussed the information needed to get a permit and what the process looks like.

Trustee O'Connell stated the Forest Preserves does not own the deer but that the State of Illinois does. In describing the process, he explained the professionals from the Forest Preserves and the United States Department of Agriculture evaluate property to see where there is absence of growth where it should be. He stated they reviewed their deer management programs, noting that River Forest was not a priority until the Village brought it to light. When people have asked them questions, he stated, the Forest Preserves was taking information from things they have done in other parts of the County.

President Adduci stated one question the Village is still trying to get answered is what information is available on Thatcher Woods.

Trustee Henek stated the Forest Preserves' letters reference the resources that have already been allocated to Thatcher Woods, noting that the third element of restoration includes deer. She asked what their plan or timeframe would have been to address the deer issue had the Village not approached them?

Mr. Vogel stated he could not answer that question but that management is done carefully on a site by site basis. He commented that the different stages have different tools and there is no one size fits all process, and that he could not say for sure that a culling program would have been the next step.

Trustee Henek provided an update to the Board on what she has reviewed to get things going on the deer task force. She stated she wanted to reiterate the importance of the step the Village is taking, and she shared information from the Cornell University Deer Advisor website. She explained the concept of community based deer management, and the common challenges around deer management, including lack of agreement on the problem and desire to rush to decisions. She stated it is very clear that experts in other communities who have experienced the same thing recognize that this is an emotional and serious issue. She remarked that she personally takes this very seriously in terms of the health and safety of the residents, but that she wanted to make sure the Village gets this right and evaluates this issue in the best manner it can, which is why she is supporting the task force. She summarized some of the other steps she has taken, including contacting the Humane Society, who is willing to be a resource, as well as a phone call with Trustee Cargie and Tim Preuss from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Trustee Henek stated Mr. Preuss was willing to assist, as his time allows, with the survey and task force and that they were in agreement about the approach and target dates. Trustee Henek also suggested the timeline for moving forward: February 18 as the application deadline, February 24 as the meeting where the members would be appointed, and first Committee meeting on February 26. She affirmed the survey would be created between March and April.

The Village Board discussed and reached a consensus to have not more than 11 members on the Committee plus two trustees to serve as co-chairs.

Trustee O'Connell expressed concern about the difficulty of gathering data related to Lyme disease and public health. There was discussion the Resolution covered that in terms of being tasked with researching ways to manage/reduce deer conflicts, and that the Committee would have to come up with ways to approach and address it. The Village Board also discussed and reached a consensus to accept the tasks the Committee would be charged with.

Trustee Henek cautioned that the education piece would have to be clear that a program like culling could reduce the risk of Lyme disease but not negate the need to be mindful when going into the woods.

The Board discussed the level of Staff assistance, noting that Staff would need to take minutes and record the meetings. The Board also discussed that the Committee would be subject to the Open Meetings Act.

The Board reached a consensus to not explicitly include interim reports in the Resolution but that they would be welcome. Administrator Palm noted non-routine expenditures would come back before the Board for approval.

President Adduci stated she is 110% behind the deer management task force, and that this will build an education and outreach program so that residents can learn how to coexist with deer in the community. She stated that is one way to address the elected officials' responsibility of the health and safety of the community and that the task force will accomplish that. She urged the Board to also consider other actions along the way to improve the health and safety of the community. President Adduci stated she believes the residents who have spoken about the impact of Lyme disease on their families, and that she acknowledges the comments about hyping up the issue but that the Board has not done that. She further stated that while there is not much they can do to decrease deer ticks, they can prevent them from increasing through awareness and education. In the end, she remarked, what matters most is the residents. She stated she also believed the dispatch data and that one deer accident is too many. President Adduci stated she believed the task force would help in educating residents about what the Village can do to decrease the amount of dead deer and hoped for a decrease of 50%. This goal, she explained, would help the Village save money due to the cost of collecting dead deer. She stated she is hopeful the task force will zero-in on meaningful measurement and actions that will continue to make River Forest a healthier and safer community. She wished the task force well.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

b. Review and Approval of the Application for the Ad Hoc Committee on Deer Management

Trustee Brennan made a motion, seconded by Trustee Henek, to approve the Application, with modifications, for the Ad Hoc Committee on Deer Management.

Trustee Henek stated the application form was adapted from the Imagine D200 application form and that she eliminated irrelevant questions. She stated these questions will help people approach the task with an open mind and for the right reasons.

The Board briefly discussed the application form and changed mailing address to residential, and owning vs renting home to living in a single-family or multi-family home.

In response to a concern from Trustee O'Connell about question 6, the Board came to a consensus that the response to the question would be telling in showing how open-minded the applicant is.

Trustee Henek stated they would add the application due date and note the first meeting date, and that the form would be available electronically. Trustees Cargie and Vazquez suggested having paper copies of the application at the library and community center.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Bachner, Brennan, Cargie, Henek, O'Connell, Vazquez  
Absent: None  
Nays: None  
Motion Passes.

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**10. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Cargie made a motion, seconded by Trustee Vazquez to adjourn the regular Village Board of Trustees Meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Bachner, Brennan, Cargie, Henek, O'Connell, Vazquez  
Absent: None  
Nays: None  
Motion Passes.

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Kathleen Brand-White, Village Clerk