

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
REGULAR VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES  
Monday, October 14, 2019**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on Monday, October 14, 2019 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 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, Fire Chief Kurt Bohlmann, Finance Director Rosemary McAdams, Assistant Finance Director Keke Boyer, 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 Henek reported that she attended the League of Women Voters cannabis town hall meeting. She indicated that the panel of varying perspectives was valuable and stated that Senator Kimberly Lightford provided insight on how the legislation was crafted. Also in attendance, she noted, was the Oak Park Chief of Police and River Forest Police Officer Ben Ransom, who shared his experience as a resource officer. She encouraged continuing education on this topic in schools regardless of how the Village moves forward.

Trustee Brennan noted that she attended the groundbreaking ceremony at the Sheridan, the senior living facility being constructed at Chicago and Harlem. She stated the event was well-attended and showed the collaboration and positive relationship between the Village and the developers. Additionally, Trustee Brennan stated she recently assisted Sustainability Commissioner Lisa Gillis in installing a parkway for pollinator garden. She reminded everyone that the gardens are funded through grants from ComEd and PlanItGreen, and that the gardens are offered free of cost to residents for every block that decides to have a green block party.

Trustee Vazquez wished everyone a Happy Columbus Day and Indigenous People's Day.

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 provided an update on the most recent Census meeting, noting that the group divided in to subcommittees around education, government, faith, and other community-based organizations. She stated they will be targeting what their messaging needs to be in any given month to ensure everyone is counted. Trustee Bachner offered two Census facts: helps planning for school projects and developing adult education programs. She briefly noted her happy experience at the Fall Fun Fest at Roosevelt Middle School. Additionally, she expressed her condolences for the death of Mrs. Creely, a teacher at Roosevelt.

President Adduci reported that she and Administrator Palm had another meeting with Metra and Senator Lightford, and she expressed that she is pleased with the end result of the landscaping and access issues. She thanked Metra and Senator Lightford for stepping up and taking care of this concern. She also reported that she, Sustainability Chair Julie Moller, and Administrator Palm met with George Strom, the Village's waste hauler. Their goal is to educate more about what is and what is not recyclable as well as what will be recycled in the future. Along with Administrator Palm, President Adduci stated they met with Elmhurst Hospital executives about their interest in the Village. She expressed she is happy that businesses are looking at River Forest as a community where they would like to have a development. Additionally, she thanked the Police Department for their breast cancer awareness activities, noting that the purple ribbons around town symbolize domestic violence awareness.

## **5. CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Regular Village Board Meeting Minutes – September 23, 2019
- b. Right-of-Way Encroachment Waiver and Agreement for an Irrigation System Located at 1425 Keystone
- c. Right-of-Way Encroachment Waiver and Agreement for a Heated Sidewalk Located at 1521 Forest
- d. Right-of-Way Encroachment Waiver and Agreement for an Irrigation System Located at 627 Forest
- e. Award of Contract and Bid to H&H Electric for the Lake and Thatcher Traffic Signal Project for  
\$164,390.60
- f. Monthly Department Reports
- g. Monthly Performance Measurement Reports
- h. Village Administrator's Report

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

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

## **6. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION**

None.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES**

- a. Zoning Board of Appeals – Request for a Fence Variation at 842 Harlem Avenue – Ordinance

Trustee Vazquez made a motion, seconded by Trustee O'Connell, to postpone consideration of the requested variation at 842 Harlem Avenue to October 28, 2019.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

## **8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a. Amend Title 9 of the Village Code – “No Left Turn” on eastbound Madison at Keystone – Ordinance

Trustee Bachner made a motion, seconded by Trustee Brennan to approve an Ordinance to Amend Title 9 of the Village Code to prohibit left-turns for eastbound traffic on Madison Street at its intersection with Keystone Avenue, Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:00am to 9:00am and 4:00pm to 6:00pm.

Administrator Palm summarized the request, stating that Staff evaluated this matter at the request of the Village Board. Staff determined that the no left turn restriction made the most sense in terms of a possible uptick in traffic during rush hour, also noting that this option would be consistent with other signs in the Village, making enforcement easier. He reported that Staff discussed more permanent options, such as speed bumps, but determined they were not appropriate at this time. He cautioned that moving forward, Staff will monitor traffic issues in that corridor but that this could have an adverse effect on the other streets.

Trustee Cargie expressed concern about the unintended consequences of continuing this practice of approving one-off traffic-related issues. He stated that in deference to the committee system, this matter should be remanded to the Traffic and Safety Commission.

Trustee O'Connell stated he agreed with Trustee Cargie. He expressed concern about how much traffic Thatcher can hold during rush hour and that it gets filtered elsewhere. He stated they needed more information.

In response to a question from Trustee Cargie, Administrator Palm stated that proposals have come back for the comprehensive parking study but that he would have to review the implementation plan in the Comprehensive Plan to confirm whether it includes a traffic study. He advised the Board to consider the cost of traffic engineers.

In response to a comment from Trustee Cargie, President Adduci stated the Traffic and Safety Commission did not recommend the no left turn sign. She did not agree that this matter should return to Traffic and Safety because the Village Board did not accept their initial recommendation of increasing police presence.

Trustee Brennan reported that she monitored the traffic at this intersection and did not conclude that there was a traffic problem. She expressed concern about the impact this restriction might have on local businesses.

President Adduci stated the residents' belief is that there is a high level of traffic during this period of time. She suggested the Board could remand this back to Traffic and Safety to take a more holistic approach.

Trustee O'Connell stated that anyone who lives off a major east/west roadway would see a lot of traffic during this time.

In response to a comment from Trustee Cargie about creating a traffic plan for the Madison corridor, Trustee Bachner asked about the impact of TIF developments. She suggested that would be the time to do a traffic plan.

President Adduci recommended that over time, they could implement a broader strategy, but that this is in response to a resident concern who took that concern to Traffic and Safety.

Trustee Bachner stated that the residents are complaining about intensity of traffic and that this is a potential safety issue. She noted that police will be able to enforce the restriction.

Trustee Henek stated she appreciated the concern that making this change would push the traffic elsewhere, but that they would not know its effect until the change is put in place. She stated this is a low cost way to test what will happen to the traffic flow and pattern. Further, she noted the Traffic and Safety Commission's dual concern about increased traffic perception and speed of motorists. She suggested that police presence would help with the speeding issue but that they needed a combination of solutions to address the concerns. She stated it was worth trying this before spending thousands on a traffic engineering plan.

In response to a question from Trustee Brennan, Chief O'Shea stated the Department stationed a decoy car at this location on several occasions and has had a sign up for a few days. He concurred with her observations, and noted that Staff did not see the need for more

permanent solutions. He further noted that officers have not reported accidents in the area; however, they have seen new back-ups occurring on Madison since Forest Park completed their bump outs.

Trustee Vazquez stated he was inclined to approve the no left turn. He commented that he was not opposed to doing a study but that it would take longer, further noting the cost of a sign is much less than commissioning a study.

Trustee Cargie reiterated his concern about unintended consequences and shifting the burden of traffic or parking issues to other residents.

Roll call:

Ayes: President Adduci, Trustees Bachner, Henek, Vazquez

Absent: None

Nays: Trustees Brennan, Cargie, O'Connell

Motion Passes.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Authorizing the Execution of a First Amendment to the Second Amended and Restated Redevelopment Agreement for Lake Street and Lathrop Avenue – Ordinance

Trustee O'Connell made a motion, seconded by Trustee Brennan to approve an Ordinance authorizing the execution of the first amendment to the second amended and restated development agreement for Lake Street and Lathrop Avenue.

Attorney Smith summarized the amendment to the agreement, highlighting the table that has the current and new deadlines. He explained that part of the developer's delay involved a tenant that refused to leave willingly. He noted that the need to move one date back has a cascading effect on the other dates.

Trustee Henek requested that the developer provide a project update.

Mark McKinney, Sedgewick Development stated the plans are evolving and the next step is soil boring. He noted they have five contracts currently and more in the pipeline.

In response to a question from Trustee Henek, Mr. McKinney stated they are in the process of securing financing for the bridge loan, which is contingent on the approval of the amendment to the RDA. He elaborated that they need to complete an appraisal and that the next critical path is getting drawings in for review.

In response to a question from Trustee Henek about the state of the site, Mr. McKinney stated that it may be idle for a couple of weeks.

Trustee Cargie expressed frustration about the number of extensions the developer has requested and stated he would not agree to any further after this one.

Trustee Bachner agreed with Trustee Cargie, and she asked whether the Village is prepared to pull back on this development if deadlines are missed again.

President Adduci stated the previous agreement was structured to include claw-back language.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: Trustee Henek

Abstain: Trustee Vazquez

Motion Passes.

b. Acceptance of the FY2019 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

Trustee Brennan made a motion, seconded by Trustee Vazquez to accept the Village's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the Fiscal Year Ended April 30, 2019.

Kimberly Marshall from the Village's independent auditing firm BKD LLP discussed the [Comprehensive Annual Financial Report](#) for 2019. She described the documents before the Board, including the government-wide financial statements for the Village.

Administrator Palm clarified that the value attributed to post-employment benefits other than pensions must be reflected in the government-wide financial statements per the Governmental Accounting Standards Board. He stated Staff is not overly concerned about this number because the liability would not have to be paid out, but assured that Staff will continue to monitor it.

Ms. Marshall also discussed and described the post-audit communication letter before the Board.

Administrator Palm thanked Finance Director McAdams and Assistant Finance Director Boyer for their work putting the report together.

President Adduci stated she is pleased with the financial health of the community.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

c. Discussion: Traffic Control at the Intersection of Park and Thomas

Administrator Palm explained that this was a resident-driven request related to the stop signs

that were switched at this intersection as a result of the Safe Walking Routes to School Plan.

President Adduci stated a resident questioned why the stop signs had been moved to the Park side of the intersection, and Trustee O'Connell commented that some police officers suggested to him that it was not the right placement because Park is how they get to the north side of town.

Police Chief O'Shea and Fire Chief Bolhmann confirmed they did not see that the stop sign placement would burden their departments.

The Board reached a consensus to leave the stop sign as is and reconsider after a year of being in place.

- d. McDonald's Restaurant Request for Minor Amendment to their Planned Development for Electronic Outdoor Menu Boards

President Adduci explained to the McDonald's representatives that the Board would like them to meet with their neighbors. She stated this item was being pulled from the agenda and would be addressed when administration and residents are ready.

- e. Update: Senior Snow Removal Program

Administrator Palm updated the Village Board on the senior snow removal program. He explained that it is a similar approach to the sewer backflow prevention grant that is offered to seniors. He stated the method to qualify is the senior freeze property tax exemption program, however he noted it will not be limited to that and will be extended to residents with disabilities as well.

In response to a question from Trustee O'Connell about funding the program, Administrator Palm stated Staff is aware of approximately 12 seniors who would currently qualify and that it only covers the public sidewalk and front walkway to homes.

Trustee Bachner suggested changing the name of the program to make sure that people with disabilities are aware they have access to the program as well.

In response to a question from Trustee Vazquez, Administrator Palm stated the Village does not have an estimate of the number of residents with disabilities.

In response to a question from Trustee Cargie about adding driveways to the program, Administrator Palm advised to start the program on a small scale.

President Adduci stated many municipalities already offer this service, and she likened it to a helping hand rather than a hand-out.

## **10. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Trustee Cargie made a motion, seconded by Trustee O'Connell to go into executive session to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the Village; the purchase or lease of real property for the use of the Village, including whether a particular parcel should be acquired; the setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the Village; litigation involving the Village that is pending.

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 8:44 p.m. with the following members present: President Adduci, Trustees Bachner, Brennan, Cargie, Henek, O'Connell, Vazquez, Village Clerk Brand-White.

Administrator Palm updated the Board on police staffing and explained the difficulty in finding candidates for these positions. He stated Staff is seeking a consensus from the Board to ask the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners to hire up to three officers, which is over the authorized staffing allotment.

In response to questions from the Board, Administrator Palm stated the candidates are selected from an eligibility list that is specific to River Forest, and those on the eligibility list are waiting for the next steps.

In response to a question from Trustee Henek about the possibility of being overstaffed, Staff explained there are some officers who are eligible to retire and this would also provide coverage for injuries or officers taking leave for their families.

The Board reached a consensus and authorized the hiring of up to three police officers.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee O'Connell made a motion, seconded by Trustee Brennan, to adjourn the regular Village Board of Trustees Meeting at 8:48 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