

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
October 27th, 2025**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on October 27th 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 Brennan(Zoom), Gillis, Bachner, Keskitalo, Vazquez, O’Connell, and Village Clerk Castellano

Absent: None

Also Present: Village Attorney Lance Malina, Village Administrator Matt Walsh, Assistant Village Administrator Jessica Spencer, Deputy Fire Chief Dave Bochenek, Director of Public Works and Engineering Jack Bielak, Deputy Police Chief Michael Swierczynski, Assistant Finance Director KeKe Boyer, Assistant to the Director of Public Works Seth Jansen and Deputy Clerk Luke Masella

MOTION by Trustee Vazquez to permit Trustee Brennan to participate virtually in tonight’s meeting due to personal illness. Seconded by Trustee Bachner.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None.

Nays: None

Motion Passes

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Adduci led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

President Adduci explained that because both public comments related to the tree preservation updates, the Board would respond to them during its consideration of agenda item 7.a.1.

4. ELECTED OFFICIAL COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee O'Connell reported that he attended the West Central Municipal Conference meeting along with other members of the Village Board and staff. He also reminded everyone about the upcoming Washington Boulevard Corridor meeting and the upcoming Economic Development Commission meeting.

Trustee Keskitalo noted that the Washington Boulevard meeting will take place in Washington Square Park. She also reminded everyone that Halloween is this upcoming Friday and encouraged residents to consider donating to local charities or providing snacks as well.

Trustee Brennan shared remarks regarding recent federal immigration enforcement activities taking place in the Village and nearby communities.

Clerk Castellano had nothing to add to the record.

Trustee Vazquez wished everyone a happy Halloween.

Trustee Gillis reminded everyone about the upcoming Fire Department Blood Drive on November 13. She also encouraged residents to assist the Village in identifying their water service lines in order to determine which lead service lines will need to be replaced in the future.

Trustee Bachner began her comments with a land acknowledgment. She then reminded everyone to be inclusive during trick or treating and to treat others with kindness. She also thanked Trustee Brennan for her remarks regarding federal immigration enforcement actions and encouraged residents to get involved with community organizations working on these issues.

President Adduci wished everyone a happy and safe Halloween.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Village Board of Trustees Executive Session Meeting Minutes – October 13th, 2025
- b. Administration Department Report
- c. Purchase Approval – Public Works Sewer Truck Repair – Wigit's Truck Center, Inc – \$21,445.68

MOTION by Trustee Keskitalo to approve consent agenda items A through C. Seconded by Trustee Gillis.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

6. CONSENT ITEMS FOR SPEARATE CONSIDERATION

None.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

- a. Zoning Board of Appeals
 - i. Proposed Text Amendments – Update to Section 10-24 Regarding Tree Preservation – Ordinance

MOTION by Trustee Gillis to approve an Ordinance updating Chapter 24, Landscape Requirements, of Section 10, Zoning, of the Village of River Forest Village Codes. Seconded by Trustee Bachner.

President Adduci invited those wishing to speak on this topic to make public comment now.

Dan McGee provided public comment on the proposed changes, expressing concerns about certain portions and asking staff several questions about them.

Assistant to the Director of Public Works Seth Jansen responded to the concerns raised by Mr. McGee and fielded questions from the Board.

Dan McGee asked whether he would be permitted to remove a specific tree on his property under the proposed changes.

Mr. Jansen responded that he would and provided additional explanation of the process.

Trustee Gillis then asked what would happen if an applicant did not meet the requirements for approval of a zoning variation under the proposed changes.

Mr. Jansen explained that in that situation, the applicant would be required to plant a suitable new tree.

Trustee Bachner asked if the tree placement is by diameter or just by tree.

Mr. Jansen explained that the determination is made on a by tree basis and clarified how the Sustainability Commission reached that conclusion. He then reiterated that the tree replacement requirement would only apply if a resident removed a tree as part of a zoning variation request. He also noted that these new proposed changes are minimal compared to the regulations that comparable communities have in place.

President Adduci requested that staff research ways to make these regulations clearer and less confusing.

Administrator Walsh noted that staff could create a pamphlet or similar informational resource for residents to review when they apply for or research building application materials.

Mr. Jansen noted that he has already worked with the Village building department to ensure residents will be informed of these proposed regulations if they are implemented.

Trustee Brennan suggested that an additional whereas clause be added to the ordinance to help clarify the changes.

Attorney Malina noted that this could be done but reminded everyone that Whereas clauses do not appear in the code itself.

President Adduci stated that she felt a pamphlet or some form of educational material should be created for residents regarding the proposed changes.

Trustee Bachner requested that the language in the ordinance be made gender neutral.

The second speaker in the audience indicated that they would no longer participate in public comment.

Village Attorney Malina read the updated version of the amended whereas clause in the ordinance aloud.

The Village Board and Village Attorney Malina talked about the potential impact of these proposed changes on hypothetical zoning scenarios.

Trustees Gillis and Bachner amended their motion to include the proposed language from Village Attorney Malina.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Trustee Keskitalo voted yes with the understanding that the Village will provide additional information on these changes to residents when they apply for building department related projects.

Motion Passes.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

9. NEW BUSINESS

None.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Trustee Vazquez to enter into Executive Session pursuant to pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(6) to discuss the setting of a price for the sale or lease of property owned by the public body and the Village Board will adjourn after executive session and will not return to open session. Seconded by Trustee O’Connell.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustee O’Connell, Gillis, Bachner, Vazquez and Keskitalo
Absent: None.
Nays: None

Motion Passes and the Village Board entered executive session at 7:36pm.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn by Trustee Vazquez, Seconded by Trustee O’Connell.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustee Vazquez, Gillis, Bachner, Brennan, O’Connell, and Keskitalo
Absent: None
Nays: None

The Village Board of Trustees Meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.



Rosa Castellano, Village Clerk

Date: 11/17/25