

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MEETING MINUTES
June 19, 2017**

A Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on Monday, June 19, 2017 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 Cargie, Conti (arrived at 7:15), Vazquez, Corsini, Henek, and Gibbs

Absent: None

Also Present: Village Clerk Kathleen Brand-White, Village Administrator Eric Palm, Village Attorney Greg Smith

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

President Adduci explained the process that will be utilized for the meeting and noted that the Village Board will not take any official action at the meeting.

Mark Carroll, 1045 Park Avenue, discussed his experience as a River Forest resident and stated that he supported a welcoming resolution. He asked that the Village Board vote in favor of a welcoming resolution.

Mony Ruiz-Velasco, Executive Director of the West Suburban Action Project, a social justice advocacy and legal organization that serves people who live in the western suburbs, including River Forest. She said he is also an immigrant rights attorney. She discussed enforcement actions taken against undocumented immigrants and the impact these actions have on immigrants. She stated the Illinois Trust Act has been passed by the Illinois House and Senate and awaits the Governor's signature. She discussed how it would apply to River Forest law enforcement efforts. She provided a copy of a letter to the editor that she co-authored with Senator Harmon and Representative Welch regarding the need for a welcoming resolution. She asked that the Village Board vote in favor of a welcoming resolution.

Stacey Williams, 1105 Franklin, said she is a member of the School District 90 Board of Education. She stated her support for a welcoming resolution. She said the School District passed their own resolution on June 6, 2017, and discussed the reasons for the Board of Education's support. She encouraged the Village Board to vote in favor of a welcoming resolution.

Adir Glick, Rabbi at West Suburban Temple Har Zion, stated that he and other local faith leaders gathered and met last month to discuss the resolution and the issues of faith, unity and community. He stated they support the resolution and urged the Board to support it.

Father Tom McDermott, Dominican Friar and Pastor at St. Vincent's Church, stated his reasons for supporting a welcoming resolution.

Terry Norton, 714 Forest, said he is a Deacon at St. Luke. He said the parish's Peace and Justice Committee discussed the matter and voted unanimously in favor of a welcoming resolution. He discussed their reasons for supporting the resolution or comparable legal protections and encouraged River Forest to follow that lead.

Donna Carroll, President of Dominican University, discussed the nature of the issue before the Board and stated that Dominican is one of the first University's in the country to welcome and financially support students regardless of their documentation and immigration status. She stated the University's Board of Trustees approved a sanctuary campus resolution early this year. She requested that the Village Board support the welcoming resolution.

Carol Gall, Executive Director of Sarah's Inn, a comprehensive domestic violence agency that serves the River Forest area, discussed issues of domestic violence and the reluctance of immigrants to report it. She discussed the federal laws in place to protect victims of domestic violence. She encouraged the Village Board to support the welcoming resolution.

Trustee Cargie inquired if the drop in reports of domestic violence and rape in California is similar to patterns in Illinois. Ms. Gall responded that they are trying to gather more data but that there has been a similar trend in Illinois. She described victims' concerns about coming forward.

Lupe Jiminez, 915 Franklin, discussed her experience as a child of immigrants and concerns regarding anti-immigration rhetoric and the effect it has had on the business community including drastic losses. She said she supports the welcoming resolution and encouraged the Village Board to support it.

Amalia Rioja, a River Forest resident, stated she spent the bulk of her legal career in state government working for Governor Quinn and the State Comptroller. She discussed her support for the welcoming resolution.

Christine Khaledan, stated she and her husband Harzad are River Forest residents. She discussed her husband's experience as an immigrant from Iran and the separation from his father that he experienced. She discussed the reasons she supports a welcoming resolution.

John Weinheimer said he grew up in River Forest, and he supports a welcoming resolution. He discussed his experience working with the homeless population and stated that he likens the welcoming resolution to the McGruff safe houses he knew as a child. He encouraged the Village Board to support a welcoming resolution.

Ms. Murray, 138 Park, stated she supports a welcoming resolution.

Renee Norton stated she is strongly in favor of a welcoming resolution.

Tom Hinterberger, a River Forest resident, stated he strongly supports a welcoming resolution and his reasons for doing so.

Father Brendan Curran, a Dominican University Friar, stated he supports a welcoming resolution.

Rabbi Victor Mirelman, 915 Park Avenue, said he is an advocate of the resolution. He discussed his experience as an immigrant and his ancestor's experience hiding during the war years. He stated the reasons he supports the welcoming resolution.

Allisson McConnell, 726 William Street, said she is the Chairman of the Board of Heartland Alliance, an anti-poverty and human rights organization that serves people in various areas including the western suburbs. It is also the parent organization of the National Immigrant Justice Center, which provides legal services to immigrants and asylum seekers and unaccompanied immigrant children. She stated that Heartland has supported welcoming resolutions like this across the United States. She stated the reasons that she supports a welcoming resolution in River Forest.

Margot Toppen, 806 Clinton Place, stated she her husband Trevor are here as representatives of a steering group that got this initiative started. She said they created an online petition and have gathered over 600 signatures in support of a welcoming resolution in River Forest. She stated that the number of signatures and attendance at the meeting indicates support for the resolution.

Trevor Toppen, 806 Clinton Place, stated that 549 of the people who signed the petition identified themselves as River Forest residents, 72 people identified themselves as working in River Forest, 25 people identified themselves as going to school in River Forest and 11 people did not identify their affiliation. He encouraged the Village Board to pass a welcoming resolution. Ms. Toppen presented the petition to the Village Board of Trustees.

Maurine Hinterberger said she is proud to live in River Forest and is proud of the community's support of the petition and welcoming resolution.

3. DISCUSSION REGARDING A WELCOMING RESOLUTION ADDRESSING IMMIGRATION MATTERS IN THE VILLAGE

President Adduci stated the Village Board of Trustees received a packet of information approximately 72 hours ago including a letter from the Village Attorney providing an analysis of sanctuary city ordinances and a welcoming resolution from other communities. It compared the differences between their options. She invited questions and comments from the Village Board of Trustees.

Trustee Cargie thanked everyone for coming and stated that he indicated his support for a welcoming resolution during the recent election campaign. He stated that he still supports it and found the arguments in favor of the matter compelling and well-structured. He said he favors the welcoming resolution passed by Forest Park but suggested adding language regarding ICE detention orders. He stated that if there is probable cause and a court order the Village should comply but if it is just a request from a federal agency that someone be held without legal authority he is opposed to that.

President Adduci clarified that the Village Board is considering a Resolution, not an Ordinance.

Trustee Gibbs thanked everyone who spoke at the meeting and complimented Mr. Weinheimer on the comments he made. He said the Committee of the Whole meeting is an opportunity for the

Village Board to discuss the matter without taking a vote. He stated that even though there is no vote there has been significant progress on this topic. Trustee Gibbs stated that the Forest Park resolution is a good starting point for River Forest.

Trustee Vazquez stated that he prefers the Oak Park model and does not believe the Forest Park resolution goes far enough. He thanked everyone for their comments. He does not think local resources should be used for federal immigration purposes. He said that he is not suggesting that the Village violate current state or federal laws and that he has the utmost respect for law enforcement.

President Adduci noted a paragraph in the Forest Park resolution that may address his comments and asked if he desired something stronger. Trustee Vazquez stated that he would like something stronger that makes it clear that police officers and other employees are not going to inquire about immigration status when delivering services. He said that Village employees are not doing this currently and does not know why it would not be documented.

Trustee Henek thanked the people who have contacted the Village Board regarding this issue. She stated that she would start by supporting something similar to the Forest Park resolution but asked Trustee Vazquez to specify what is missing as she thinks some of it is addressed in the sample.

Trustee Vazquez stated the language in the Forest Park resolution is very general and clarity is needed to understand what is meant by the language. He stated that he is willing to write something and has provided the Village Attorney with information about the language he is seeking.

Trustee Corsini stated that the Village Board appreciates the residents' participation in the process. She stated the Village Board must balance humanitarian needs and wants with legal issues and restrictions which can sometimes make it difficult to give people what they want. She said she worked with the School District 90 inclusiveness advisory board and stated that the Forest Park resolution would be a good starting place. Trustee Corsini said she would prefer that it be broader to note the standards for equity, courtesy and respect that Village employees would be held to while delivering Village services to all.

President Adduci noted a section in the Forest Park resolution that may address her comments and asked if she would like something similar.

Trustee Corsini asked the Village Attorney if the classes of residents listed in the Forest Park resolution are legally protected and whether the resolution creates new protected classes. Village Attorney Smith said state and federal laws such as the U.S. Civil Rights Act and the Illinois Human Rights Act create protected classes. He said that the Forest Park resolution draws a broad scope but Section 6 says it does not create or form the basis for any cause of action or liability against the Village. He said that employees may be held to a standard and can be disciplined for violating it but the resolution does not confer rights to bring a lawsuit against the Village. Village Attorney Smith said that defined terms can be utilized to clarify the meaning of the language in sections 3 and 4 of the Forest Park resolution.

Trustee Cargie stated the he does not think the resolution should be diluted to the point that the message is lost. He stated the purpose is to reassure those who are currently at risk. Trustee Corsini replied that she is not suggested it be diluted but that the language in the resolution could be made more consistent.

Trustee Conti said that this is a national issue that has come down to a local issue, which is rare. She said the resolution can put in writing that the Village is already doing what the residents have requested. Village staff members do not ask someone's immigration status and a resolution will provide confidence that the policy will continue. She said River Forest is a welcoming community whether or not it is written. She said resolutions will not correct a broken immigration system but the Village can implore the federal government to make changes.

President Adduci thanked everyone who spoke at the meeting and stated that she welcomes resident input and would continue to seek it. She stated that she would like to reaffirm what Trustee Conti said and also provide direction to Village employees. She said that she hopes she does not have to cast a tie-breaking vote to approve a Resolution because that means the community is divided. President Adduci said that she and the Village Board will work hard to craft a resolution they can all support. She said she hears consensus that the Forest Park resolution is a good starting point but modifications may be needed. She asked that a draft resolution be brought back to the Village Board on July 10th for a first reading. She said they will continue to make changes as needed and conduct second and third readings if necessary. President Adduci said the Village Board may take a final vote in August or September due to the Village Board's summer meeting schedule.

A member of the audience asked about the process to bring this matter for a final vote. Trustee Cargie said there may be some language changes. Trustee Gibbs stated that July 10 is their next meeting and the Village President is calling for a draft to be presented at that meeting. In response to a follow-up question regarding possible compromises to the language in the resolution, President Adduci stated that she does not yet know what the language is because it has not been drafted. The Village Board members need to see the language to determine whether or not they can support it. She said the next Village Board meetings are July 10 and August 24 and that they would call a special Committee of the Whole meeting if necessary.

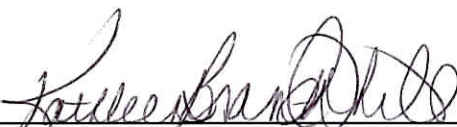
4. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Gibbs made a motion seconded by Trustee Corsini, to adjourn the Committee of the Whole Meeting at 8:29p.m.

Roll call:

Ayes:	Trustees Cargie, Vazquez, Conti, Henek, Gibbs, and Corsini
Absent:	None
Nays:	None

Motion Passes.


Kathleen Brand-White, Village Clerk