

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
February 13, 2017**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on Monday, February 13, 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 Colwell-Steinke, Conti, Corsini, Cargie, Dwyer, and Gibbs

Absent: None

Also Present: Village Clerk Sharon Halperin, Village Administrator Eric Palm, Assistant Village Administrator Lisa Scheiner, Police Chief Greg Weiss, Fire Chief Jim Eggert, Finance Director Joan Rock, Public Works Director John Anderson, Management Analyst Jonathan Pape, Village Attorney Greg Smith

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Adduci led the pledge of allegiance.

3. CITIZENS COMMENTS

4. ELECTED OFFICIALS COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Recognition of Eagle Scout, David Snyder

President Adduci recognized David Snyder for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

Trustee Gibbs stated that the Board members received a flyer for a groundbreaking ceremony for the Union Pacific West Third Main Track Project. He said he hopes this will reduce trains idling while parked on the tracks in River Forest.

Trustee Cargie wished President Adduci a happy birthday.

Trustee Corsini requested that the Village Administrator explain the third main line project. Village Administrator Palm indicated that between Chicago and Elburn there are two sections where it goes from three tracks to two tracks. He noted that train idling has improved over time but still exists, and said that trains must stage in areas in River Forest and idle due to other traffic on the tracks. He stated Union Pacific will add a small section west of the Des Plaines River through Maywood and parts of Melrose Park and a larger section in the western suburbs that, when completed, will create a direct route. He added that Union Pacific will not commit to a complete elimination of train idling but the additional track should reduce it. Trustee Corsini commented that Village Administrator Palm and residents have worked diligently to reduce idling over the years and noted the freight trains are an eyesore. Village Administrator Palm explained that the challenge to the Village is that the railroads operate under their own federal jurisdiction so local rules and regulations do not necessarily apply. He stated that Union Pacific has generally cooperated with the Village. He noted

that the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) does not get involved unless an at-grade crossing is at issue.

Trustee Corsini and Trustee Gibbs discussed the lack of handicapped accessible facilities at the River Forest Metra Station. Village Administrator Palm stated that the platform is the responsibility of Metra and improvement of the River Forest platform is in Metra's budget but subject to state funding. Trustee Corsini commented about the poor condition of the underground walkway. Village Administrator Palm added that another issue is the retaining walls which the Village is working with them to correct. Trustee Gibbs noted that the steps on both sides were recently repaired. President Adduci discussed the Village's role in keeping on top of this and the efforts the Village continues to make.

President Adduci discussed the issue of the vapor form of alcohol that was recently covered by Channel 9. She noted River Forest was mentioned in the coverage and Village Administrator Palm was interviewed. She stated that Provision in Section 8.5 of municipal code prohibits this use. Village Administrator Palm stated that, with the suggestion of Village Attorney Smith, the Village updated the Code to conform with the Illinois law in regard to this issue.

Village Administrator Palm announced that the Village received an award from the American Public Works Association for the Northside Stormwater Management Project. President Adduci congratulated staff for this accomplishment.

President Adduci announced that a special e-news email was sent out regarding the triannual property reassessment and the appeal process available to residents. She encouraged residents to visit the River Forest Community Center's website for more information.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Regular Village Board Meeting Minutes – January 23, 2017
- b. Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes – January 23, 2017
- c. Waive Formal Bidding and Approve Purchase of a Freightliner Chassis from Truck Country of Wisconsin, Indiana for \$81,938.22 and the Dump Body, Plow and Hydraulics from Monroe Truck Equipment for \$52,384
- d. Amend Title 8 of the Village Code – Collection and Enforcement of Judgments – Ordinance
- e. Amend Title 11 of the Village Code – Collection of Debts Owed to Village at Time of Property Transfer – Ordinance
- f. Monthly Department Reports
- g. Monthly Performance Measurement Report
- h. Village Administrator's Report

Trustee Dwyer made a motion, seconded by Trustee Gibbs, to approve the Consent Agenda.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Gibbs, Corsini, Dwyer, Colwell-Steinke, Conti, and Cargie

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

- a. Traffic and Safety – Amend Title 9 of the Village Code – Resident Only Parking on 1000 block of Jackson Avenue – Ordinance

Trustee Cargie made a motion, seconded by Trustee Conti, to approve an Ordinance amending Title 9 of the Village Code establishing Resident Parking Only on the 1000 block of Jackson Avenue.

Village Administrator Palm reviewed the public notification process regarding the matter. He reported that notices went to all the residents on the 1000 block of Monroe Avenue. Trustee Corsini inquired whether there were any residents residing on that block at the meeting. One resident identified himself as a resident of the 1000 block of Monroe.

Trustee Cargie stated that he was at this location at noon and found that cars were parked on both sides of the street at the southern end of the block and there were hardly any cars parked on the northern third of the block. He said the argument that people are making in regard to employees of the Christopher Center parking there and walking to the Center seems logical to him. He noted that before the block he lives on became resident parking only, it was difficult to find on-street parking.

Ross Fasano of 1009 Jackson, a long-time Village resident, stated that parking wasn't an issue until about three to four years ago. He said parking has become congested at Concordia. He indicated that he and his neighbors have witnessed accidents and near accidents involving children. Mr. Fasano stated that they had asked the Traffic and Safety Committee to install "no parking here to corner" signs. He said this was done and it helped relieve the dangerous congestion at the corner. He discussed the increased congestion that has resulted in blocked intersections, difficulty for garbage trucks to pick up trash, and the inability of delivery trucks to deliver packages. Mr. Fasano indicated that every resident of the block except for one signed the petition. He said Concordia staff tells students to park on Jackson because their parking lot cannot accommodate all the cars. He stated the residents of this block are concerned about the current parking situation as well as in the future when the new dorms are built.

In response to a question from Trustee Corsini, Mr. Fasano stated that residents have talked to Concordia staff that has not been responsive and he has also talked to the police but the cars are not illegally parked. He reiterated his concerns and added that the parked cars are making it difficult for residents to back out of their driveways.

Trustee Corsini questioned whether the residents understand that this means guests will not be able to park on the street. Mr. Fasano stated they must have understood it when they signed the petition.

In response to a question from President Adduci, Public Works Director Anderson stated that the vote from the Commission was unanimous.

In response to a question from Trustee Gibbs, Trustee Cargie said there is resident only parking on the 900 block William Street from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

In response to a question from Trustee Steinke, Trustee Corsini stated there is not resident only parking on the 900 block of Jackson. In response to a follow up questions from Trustee Steinke, Trustee Gibbs stated the 1000 block of Monroe is resident only parking. Mr. Fasano stated there are some parking restrictions 900 block of Monroe.

Trustee Gibbs stated when Concordia redid the athletic field and stadium they came to an agreement with the Village that the parking would be heavily restricted. He stated that he is concerned that the Village has allowed so many restrictions that the problem just moves to another part of the neighborhood. He suggested that the Village discuss this with Concordia University before adding additional restrictions.

Trustee Cargie noted that there were cars on Jackson but the Christopher Center lot off Augusta was empty. He questioned why that lot was empty.

Trustee Gibbs stated a parking restriction limiting the number of hours parked from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. would not disrupt visitors but would eliminate cars from parking there all day. He called into question whether another restriction would resolve Concordia parking overflow and suggested that the problem will just move to another block.

President Adduci concurred with Trustee Gibbs but was concerned that Concordia may not resolve the issue. In response to a question from President Adduci, Trustee Corsini stated the parking restrictions are disparate. She noted that non-resident cars parked on Monroe had parking tickets. She stated from her observations the parking is bunching up at Augusta and Jackson. Mr. Fasano estimated that there must be meetings going on Tuesdays and Thursdays because traffic is bumper to bumper all the way down the street on those days.

Trustee Corsini stated that the Village does a lot for the universities and maybe it is time to have a conversation with them and revisit this at a later date. Mr. Fasano emphasized that the residents would really like their block back.

President Adduci noted there is a petition signed by many residents and it cannot be ignored. She concurred with Trustee Gibbs in regard to pausing and having a discussion with Concordia University. She suggested gathering more information on the neighboring parking restrictions and creating consistency with these restrictions. Mr. Fasano acknowledged that the restrictions are a jigsaw and emphasized that the parking issue on the 1000 block of Jackson needs immediate attention. President Adduci stated the Board will give this issue immediate attention and noted there is one more step that needs to be taken that will benefit Mr. Fasano and his neighbors.

Trustee Corsini suggested taking a count of parking spaces on the 1000 and 1100 blocks to get a full picture. There was a brief discussion regarding whether it is administrators and/or students parking in the area. Trustee Steinke concurred that there should be consistency and added that it would be easier for police to enforce parking restrictions with consistent regulations.

In response to a question from President Adduci, Police Chief Weiss stated there is a geographic information system (GIS) map that includes all of the parking restrictions in that area and he will ask Community Service Officer Mark Kaniecki to get daily counts of parked cars around the area.

Trustee Cargie withdrew his motion, Trustee Conti withdrew her second, and the item was tabled to next Board Meeting.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Amend Title 2 of the Village Code to Create a Sustainability Commission – Ordinance &

Authorize the Village Administrator to Send Notice to the River Forest Park District Terminating the Intergovernmental Agreement for Sustainability

Trustee Gibbs made a motion, seconded by Trustee Corsini, to Amend Title 2 of the Village Code approving an Ordinance creating a Sustainability Commission and authorizing the Village Administrator to send notice to the River Forest Park District terminating the Intergovernmental Agreement for Sustainability.

Trustee Corsini asked how quickly the Village can place a notice and application for commissioners on the website. President Adduci stated there will be a notice on the Village E-newsletter, she encouraged the Sustainability Committee members to encourage volunteers to apply on the Village website. She said information about the newly created Commission will be up on the website within a few days.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Dwyer, Gibbs, Corsini, Cargie, Colwell-Steinke, and Conti
Absent: None
Nays: None

Motion Passes.

b. Communications

i. Update on Social Media Survey & Establishment of Social Media Channel (Facebook)

Management Analyst Jon Pape introduced the Jasculca Terman (JT) team and presented their recommendations. He stated the launch of the Village Facebook page is scheduled for the first week of April. He noted that the consulting fees for this project are included in the contract but there may be a desire for assistance with content, photographs and videography in the future that falls outside of the contract.

Trustee Corsini stated that social media can sometimes be a dangerous thing and asked for their thoughts on making this a one-way platform where information is posted but responses are not permitted. She asked how other jurisdictions such as the School and Park District handle it. Management Analyst Pape said the residents expressed a desire to have two-way communication in the survey. He added that restricting social media communication is not consistent with other levels of service that the Village provides and the recommendation from JT is matching that level of service. He said he does not know how the School and Park District handle their social media but will look into it. Venita Griffin, Director of Digital Strategies and Engagement at JT, stated that the community guidelines allow the Village to set engagement expectations and she noted that the Facebook page would be monitored.

In response to a question from Trustee Corsini, Ms. Griffin stated that JT will monitor the page for the first three months and after that staff would do it. Management Analyst Pape noted that JT will assist the Village in obtaining monitoring software and setting up policies.

Trustee Corsini expressed concerns about public officials possibly violating the Open Meetings Act when responding to resident postings. In response to a question from Trustee Corsini, Management Analyst Pape stated there will be guidelines for public official posts on social media. He noted that

Village Attorney Smith has experience with this and will also provide guidance for staff and elected officials.

Trustee Steinke stated that when you sign up at the high school you have to get approval to follow the page. In response to a question from Trustee Steinke, Management Analyst Pape stated that at this time we anticipate that it will be an open page.

In response to a question from Trustee Cargie, Management Analyst Pape stated that the approach at this time is to launch a Facebook page and once that is successful, possibly launch a Twitter account at a later time. He added that posting the same message on Facebook and Twitter is not effective and staff wants to be sensitive to having the right message on the appropriate social media. Dan Regan, Senior Vice President of JT, stated that most of the River Forest community prefers Facebook and only 16% were interested in Twitter. He agreed with Management Analyst Pape in regard to starting with Facebook and adding Twitter at a later date.

In response to a question from Trustee Dwyer, Management Analyst Pape stated the number of followers is valuable in terms of benchmarks but the value derived from those connections is also important. He said it is not realistic to expect every household to follow the Village's Facebook page and the Village could do a follow-up survey to determine the value of the page to residents. He noted that the Facebook messaging will be in addition to the Village website and the E-newsletter.

Trustee Dwyer stated he is not on social media and does not see the value in having a lot of followers. Trustee Steinke discussed the School and Park District Facebook pages and stated that it impacts her ability to keep up with what's going on at the school. She explained that she has it set up so that school posts appear on her feed and that helps her keep up with information. She added there is also a dialogue that happens. She stated the Facebook page is a plus to the community.

Trustee Corsini stated that the Park District just has "contact us" and "message" on their page and she believes it is the same for the School page.

Ms. Griffin stated that during the first three months they will be testing and developing benchmarks. She stated the page may result in a reduction of phone calls and an increased sense of Village pride.

Trustee Conti stated that the page should improve community engagement, improve communications with residents, and impact Village branding.

In response to a comment from Trustee Corsini, President Adduci stated it is important to know what our colleagues are doing in regard to open versus closed social media. She noted that JT has experience with this and a lot of other municipalities are embracing social media.

Trustee Gibbs stated he is looking at this as an opportunity for accuracy from the Village Hall to residents as opposed to information being filtered through other sources. He said his concern is accuracy and that a post cannot be unseen or unread. He stated for the record that he wants staff to make every effort that all information on the page is totally accurate prior to posting it.

Trustee Steinke stated that the information will be about things going on in the Village and would not be gossip related. Trustee Gibbs discussed what the average citizen might be interested in hearing about.

President Adduci stated, in regard to Trustee Gibbs's concern about accuracy, accuracy has been the

premise all as long as well in regard to Facebook and anything that goes out of Village Hall. She said she agrees the Village should be vigilant about accuracy. Trustee Steinke said it is easy to remove posts though it would not stop anyone from taking a screen shot before that is done.

Trustee Corsini stated most importantly it will help with timely communication especially in regard to emergencies, road closures, etc.

Management Analyst Pape noted that all other communication channels will remain the same and the Facebook page would be in addition to the others.

President Adduci stated the residents want this and it is probably the right direction to go. She said it should be two-way communication because we want to hear from our residents and to maintain transparency. She reported consensus with the majority of the Board and directed staff to move forward with the Village Facebook page.

- i. Waive Formal Bidding and Approve RFP Recommendation for Contract for Website Redesign to Webitects for \$29,640

Trustee Conti made a motion, seconded by Trustee Corsini, to waive formal bidding and approve the recommendation to award website redesign to Webitects for \$29,640.

Management Analyst Pape stated the goals of a new website design are to improve navigability, make information easier to find, improve customer service, provide new technology for staff on the back end, and communicate a sense of Village pride by having a website that captures it well. He discussed the process that was used to obtain proposals from vendors and that the firm Webitects was ultimately selected. He introduced Billy Belchev, President of Webitects, and discussed the web design goals. He reported that Webitects was highly recommended by other clients. President Adduci remarked that she hopes this will be the best money the Village will ever spend and believes it will reap benefits for the organization.

In response to a question from President Adduci, Management Analyst Pape stated the decision in regard to hosting the website has not been made yet and staff is awaiting a recommendation from its IT team. He stated that the website is currently hosted externally and that may be the avenue taken to reduce any downtime.

President Adduci expressed concern whether a two to three week testing period is adequate. Mr. Belchev discussed how the various testing phases will precede this period and noted that this testing will involve features and functionality as defined by the Village staff. He said the period of each phase is flexible.

In response to a question from President Adduci, Management Analyst Pape stated the Village has option to either continue support with Webitects or find support elsewhere.

President Adduci stressed the importance of the community calendar and asked how that would be integrated with the website. Management Analyst Pape stated that staff would engage the other taxing bodies to get their participation and discussed Webitects' ability to solve difficult problems. Mr. Belchev stated that District 90 uses a web standard calendar format that will be easy to integrate. He said the Library does not use the standard format but their vendor should be able to modify it so the Village can pull their calendar information.

Trustee Cargie commented that the Collaboration Committee will be working towards this. In response to a question from Trustee Cargie, Management Analyst Pape stated he will be the Village point person but will engage JT and Webitects to work with IT assist in making those connections.

In response to a question from Trustee Cargie, Management Analyst Pape stated the bids from other vendors are not easily comparable because of add-on items. He said most bids were around \$30,000 but many had add ons that exceeded the Village budget for this project and would be less affordable in the long term. Village Administrator Palm added that some of the other proposals that came in high have their own internal content management systems. He stated that as a general policy the Village has stayed away from site designers that lock clients into ongoing maintenance. He said the Village is relying more on open source systems that allow greater flexibility in maintenance and accountability.

In response to a question form Trustee Steinke, Village Administrator Palm stated Webitects is offering something similar to what the Village has now where staff has the ability to change all the text on the website, upload files, change news stories, etc. but if there are major component or page changes, the Village would require the help of professionals. He stated much of the content will remain the same but will be easier to find. He gave the example of the construction updates that the Village Engineer puts out every year that residents cannot currently find.

In response to a question from Trustee Steinke, Village Administrator Palm stated the expertise of both JT and Webitects will bring about an easily navigable website.

Trustee Steinke stated she liked the colors and designs in Webitects proposal/presentation and hopes the website will reflect those. She said the look of those are far more inviting that the current website. Village Administrator Palm stated Webitects is the only vendor that took photos in the Village and added them to their proposal which set them apart from everyone else.

In response to a question from Trustee Corsini, Mr. Belchev stated they have done projects for non-profit and public organizations but not specifically municipalities. Village Administrator Palm indicated that this is an opportunity because there are two to three major companies that design websites for several municipalities. He said these companies charge an outrageous amount for the redesign, the maintenance, and the content management system (CMS) for essentially an out-of-a-box website where they change only the text and the images. Management Analyst Pape noted that of the examples of websites Webitects provided no two look the same. He said that indicates their attention to detail and their interest in solving problems for the organizations they design for.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Dwyer, Gibbs, Corsini, Cargie, Colwell-Steinke, and Conti
 Absent: None
 Nays: None

Motion Passes.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Update on Property Tax Assessments and Village Board Direction for Development RFP at Lake and Park & North Avenue TIF District

President Adduci discussed the reassessment and stated that the Village's goal is to reduce property taxes while maintaining home values and Village services. Village Administrator Palm noted that the window to appeal the tax assessment is very small. He pointed out that the current reassessment will be reflected in the fall of 2018 tax bills.

Village Administrator Palm discussed the Madison Street TIF, lessons learned, and the upcoming North Avenue TIF. He said the process for the North Avenue TIF will begin within the next few weeks.

Village Administrator Palm reviewed the Lake & Park development noting that two years have passed and no progress has been made. He recommended getting input from the community and having a consultant assist with the RFP process who is newer to the team for a fresh set of eyes. He presented a draft timeline to the Board. He indicated that the only way to add value to the assessed valuation is by creating these economic development opportunities, otherwise property taxes will continue to rise.

In response to a question from Trustee Cargie, Village Administrator Palm stated he does not know if the senior home developer is still interested and noted that a lot of changes in real estate can take place in two years.

President Adduci supported the Village Administrator Palm's recommendations.

In response to a question from Trustee Gibbs, Village Administrator Palm stated there is no current agreement to break.

In response to a question from Trustee Steinke, Village Administrator Palm stated that in regard to the RFP he believes it is possible to get a decision by the summer.

In response to a request from the Board, Village Administrator Palm summarized the progress and timeline for Fresh Thyme. Assistant Village Administrator Scheiner stated Fresh Thyme hopes to be open by early summer but is cautious about establishing a firm date due to the age of the building and unanticipated problems that could still arise.

In response to a question from Trustee Cargie, Village Administrator Palm stated that the timeline for the TIF is to be determined. He said he wants to spend more time on communications efforts and it is realistic to expect approval by the end of the year.

Trustee Gibbs suggested a good start would be to explain what a TIF is from a fundamental standpoint. Administrator Palm concurred. He stated that one of the first meetings for the Madison Street TIF outlined the process. He said that prior to beginning the formal process we will have a meeting to explain what a TIF district is and explain the process of creating a TIF district.

In response to a question from Trustee Corsini, Village Administrator Palm stated the boundary for the North Avenue TIF is Thatcher to Harlem.

Trustee Corsini questioned whether the North Avenue Pace corridor study information would be useful in the TIF district planning and for grant opportunities. Village Administrator Palm stated it depends on whether Pace decides to take any action in response to the study. He

indicated the study was focused strictly on a transportation perspective. Trustee Corsini noted there were some discussions of beautification and installing bump outs within the study. Village Administrator Palm stated it is unrealistic to get consistency with all municipalities along the Pace bus lines in respect to streetscaping. He said that if the Village were to do a streetscape project on North Avenue it would engage with Elmwood Park. He added that the Village would do whatever would benefit the River Forest community.

In response to a question from Trustee Corsini, Village Administrator Palm stated the request for proposal (RFP) for the Comprehensive Plan will go out in early March.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no Executive Session.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Cargie made a motion seconded by Trustee Conti, to adjourn the regular Village Board of Trustees Meeting at 8:32 p.m.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Colwell-Steinke, Conti, Dwyer, Gibbs, Corsini, Colwell-Steinke, and Cargie
Absent: None
Nays: None

Motion Passes.

Sharon Halperin, Village Clerk