

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
October 28th, 2024**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on Monday, October 28th, 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 7:04 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: President Adduci, Trustees Brennan, Johnson, Bachner, Gillis, Vazquez, Village Clerk Keller

Absent: Trustee O'Connell

Also Present: Village Attorney Lance Malina, Village Administrator Matt Walsh, Assistant Village Administrator Jessica Spencer, Village Finance Director Rosemary McAdams, Police Chief James O'Shea, Fire Chief Tom Gaertner, Director of Public Works and Engineering Jack Bielak, Assistant Finance Director Keke Boyer, Deputy Police Chief James Greenwood, Police Commander Michael Swierczynski, Deputy Fire Chief David Bochenek, Human Resources Manager Trish Ivansek, Public Works Analyst Seth Jansen, and Deputy Clerk Luke Masella

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Adduci led the pledge of allegiance.

3. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

- a. Historic Preservation Commission: Historic Preservation Awards

Historic Preservation Commission Chairman, David Franek, gave a presentation on the Preservation Award winners.

Trustee Brennan asked if the Village posts the awards on the Village website to help any future potential applicants.

Chairmen Franek highlighted some of the resources available to residents on the website.

President Adduci invited the awardees up to the podium to share remarks.

Laura Maychruk highlighted the Village's Zoning Board of Appeals for granting them a variance so they could build the garage.

Alex Milling and Robert Dolehide thanked the Historic Preservation Commission and the Village Board.

Trustee Bachner highlighted how important the historic homes are to the Village's character.

Chairmen Franek commented on the quality and architectural significance of the historic homes in the Village.

President Adduci thanked the applicants and Chairmen Franek.

4. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Deborah Borman made public comment about the neighborhood dialogue program. She asked: Has the contract with the consultant been extended and if so, what date has it been extended to? How much additional money will the extension cost the Village?

Village Administrator Walsh stated that the contract has not been formally extended and the Village has not incurred any additional costs.

5. ELECTED OFFICIAL COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee Johnson wished everyone a happy Halloween and reminded everyone to vote.

Trustee Brennan asked for clarification on the neighborhood dialogue consultant contract.

Village Administrator Walsh noted that the Village is working to schedule additional meetings, to be completed by Thanksgiving.

Trustee Brennan asked if the contact deadline date will impact those meetings.

Village Administrator Walsh stated that since the necessary work has not been performed by the Consultant, the Village is in talks with the consultant on getting the work completed beyond the 10/31/24 deadline.

Trustee Brennan asked if there is anything the Village Board needed to do to allow the Village Staff to continue these events.

Administrator Walsh stated no.

Village Clerk Keller had nothing to add to the record.

Trustee Vazquez reported attending a River Forest Township housing event on October 19th. He then wished everyone a happy and safe Halloween.

Trustee Gillis reminded everyone to have a safe Halloween and encouraged everyone to vote in the upcoming election. She then congratulated River Forest residents for hosting the River Forest Fall Market.

Trustee Bachner began her comments with a land acknowledgement. She then highlighted a recent Hephzibah event at Constitution Park. She also highlighted an upcoming Men's Mental Health event on December 11th. Regarding the election, she reminded residents that they could still vote on the day of the election if they forgot to vote early. She also asked that parents remind their kids to act accordingly during the Halloween evening and asked all River Forest residents to be generous with trick treaters.

President Adduci gave thanks to those who hosted and attended the River Forest Fall Market event and hoped that the event will become an annual tradition. She then reported attending the 100-year Anniversary for the Oak Park River Forest League of Women Voters. Additionally, President Adduci informed residents about a pumpkin pickup program occurring for a compost event on November 2nd.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – October 14th, 2024
- b. Village Board of Trustees Executive Session Meeting Minutes – October 14th, 2024
- c. Administration Department Report
- d. Authorization to Sell Surplus Property – Public Works Vehicles – Ordinance

- e. General Fund and Capital Improvement Fund Budget Amendment – Ordinance
- f. Purchase Approval – Stalker Radar – Stalker Radar MC360 Message Trailer – \$20,355.00

Trustee Gillis asked to pull consent agenda items A and B for separate consideration.

MOTION by Trustee Gillis to approve Consent Agenda Items C-F. Seconded by Trustee Johnson.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Bachner, Vazquez, Gillis, Brennan, Johnson

Absent: Trustee O’Connell

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

7. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION

- a. Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – October 14th, 2024
- b. Village Board of Trustees Executive Session Meeting Minutes – October 14th, 2024

Trustee Gillis stated she pulled these for separate consideration as she was not in attendance at the meeting on October 14th, 2024, and would like to abstain.

MOTION by Trustee Bachner to approve Consent Agenda Items A and B. Seconded by Trustee Brennan.

Village Attorney Malina informed the Village Board that the minutes were amended from what was originally shared. Administrator Walsh noted the changes were regarding the notification area for the River Forest Tennis Club project and additional comments were also added for the discussion about the audit.

Trustee Brennan asked if Trustees are legally allowed to vote on minutes which they were not in attendance.

Village Attorney Malina stated that Trustees can vote on minutes when they were not in attendance.

Roll call:

Ayes: President Adduci, Trustees Bachner, Vazquez, Brennan

Absent: Trustee O’Connell

Abstain: Trustees Gillis and Johnson

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

8. RECCOMENDATIONS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

a. Zoning Board of Appeals

i. Variation Request – 7618 Vine Street – Lot Coverage – Ordinance

MOTION by Trustee Vazquez to approve an Ordinance granting the requested variations to Sections 10-8-4 and 10-8-5 of the Zoning Code at 7618 Vine Street. Seconded by Trustee Bachner.

Administrator Walsh provided background information on the variation request.

The applicant provided an explanation for the requested variation.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Bachner, Vazquez, Gillis, Brennan, Johnson

Absent: Trustee O’Connell

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

ii. Variation Request – 7611 Washington Boulevard – Lot Coverage – Ordinance

MOTION by Trustee Gillis to approve an Ordinance granting the requested variation to Section 10-8-5 of the Zoning Code at 7611 Washington Boulevard. Seconded by Trustee Johnson.

Administrator Walsh provided background information on the variation request.

President Adduci asked if any surrounding neighbors raised concerns.

Village Administrator Walsh stated that there was one comment from a neighbor about potential drainage issues, but that Zoning Board of Appeals placed a requirement for a drainage plan as part of their approval.

Village Clerk Keller commented on the unique nature of the home and lot and noted the difficulties that arise from it.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Bachner, Vazquez, Gillis, Brennan, Johnson

Absent: Trustee O'Connell

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

iii. Text Amendment Request – Electric Vehicle Charging Stations – Ordinance

MOTION by Trustee Johnson to approve an Ordinance amending the Village Code regarding the regulation of Electric Vehicle Charging Stations. Seconded by Trustee Vazquez.

Public Works Analyst Jansen provided background information on this agenda item.

Trustee Brennan asked if the changes would allow for the Village to obtain all three bronze, silver, and gold awards.

Analyst Jansen stated yes.

Trustee Brennan noted that a possibility of 5 additional charging stations in various locations within the Village was mentioned in the agenda item and asked Analyst Jansen where those would be located.

Trustee Bachner asked for confirmation that any new construction would require parking that is ready for EV charging stations.

Analyst Jansen stated that is correct.

Trustee Bachner asked for clarification on what qualifies as new construction.

Administrator Walsh stated that is determined by the building code.

Trustee Brennan noted that on page 72 there are the remarks about the 5 additional charging stations and asked for clarification.

Analyst Jansen noted that that section of the notes is about a separate IEPA grant. Those chargers would be located at the West Metra lot, the Village-owned lot at Franklin Avenue, and at the Village-owned lot immediately adjacent to CVS on Thatcher.

Administrator Walsh noted that the contract for those chargers would be subject for Village Board approval in the future.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Bachner, Vazquez, Gillis, Brennan, Johnson

Absent: Trustee O'Connell

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

b. Sustainability Commission

- i. Discussion of Recommended Gas-Powered Leaf Blower Regulations
– No Action

Analyst Jansen provided background information on the proposals from the Sustainability Commission.

Trustee Gillis asked how much a potential reimbursement would be for landscaping contractors.

Analyst Jansen stated it would be a waiver of the \$125.00 license fee per year. He also stated that if every contractor in the Village would participate, the total amount waived from the budget would be \$8,000.00

Trustee Johnson asked if there are longer lasting batteries that are viable for lawncare companies.

Analyst Jansen shared some concerns that contractors raised.

Trustee Bachner shared that a group of northern suburbs had created a working group about this topic and noted that the report from that group raised concerns about batteries as well. She also highlighted other aspects of the report and offered to share the report with the Commission.

Trustee Bachner noted that it is important that the Village utilize a phase-in program.

Analyst Jansen noted some of the other Ordinances he has found across the country and state for leaf blower restrictions. He also explained the importance of leaf blowers in the fall months.

Trustee Bachner asked if pest control leaf blowers would be restricted as well.

Analyst Jansen noted he was not aware of that and would research it further.

Trustee Brennan asked if the regulations allow gas blowers in the spring and fall and electric in the summer.

Analyst Jansen stated no, this proposal would permit gas powered blowers to be used in the summer, but contractors would not be allowed to use them at full throttle.

Trustee Brennan reminded everyone that many of these contractors will be working in Oak Park as well. She then asked that the Commission consider a proposal of electric blowers only in the summer and to leave the gas powered for the spring and fall.

Trustee Gillis asked that the Village reach out and discuss any future proposals with municipalities who have already implemented these policies to find out what works and what does not work.

Trustee Brennan raised concerns about the enforcement of this proposal. President Adduci shared her concern.

Trustee Bachner stated that the working group of the northern suburbs shared information about enforcement.

Trustee Vazquez asked if the ban will only be applied to contractors.

Analyst Jansen noted that the proposal covers everyone in town, residents included, and cited the support for the full ban in the resident survey. He then confirmed that the regulations in Oak Park cover all people in the Village, residents included as well.

Trustee Johnson asked that the Commission research other communities' practices as well.

President Adduci asked if the Commission researched any other communities besides Oak Park before this proposal.

Analyst Jansen stated the discussion mainly surrounded Oak Park, however Administrator Walsh noted that parts of the proposal were from other municipalities.

Trustee Vazquez asked if there was any data on potential cost increases and if residents were aware of potential cost increases.

Analyst Jansen noted that the Village had received some anecdotal information from contractors about the costs of the leaf blowers.

President Adduci asked how many residents responded to the Village's survey and asked if that number is considered statistically significant.

Administrator Walsh noted that the Village received around 133 responses.

Trustee Bachner noted being in support of any future regulations and asked the Village to consider any grant possibilities and reminded everyone to consider disadvantaged business owners as well.

Village Clerk Keller reminded everyone that the change will be difficult, but the Village Board can shape the Village in the way they see fit.

Trustee Vazquez noted that education and communication will be key in any future plans for regulations.

President Adduci noted that the Board appears to be in consensus that future regulations are necessary once more data and information has been gathered.

Trustee Brennan reminded everyone that the contractors main concern raised is that they need gas blowers in the fall and spring and cited responses from the

survey. She then asked why the Village would consider allowing gas blowers in the summer considering these responses.

Trustee Gillis reiterated that the Commission needs to gather data from other municipalities before making any further recommendations and encouraged the Commission to consider equitable regulations.

Village Administrator Walsh noted that the Commission included some portions in the draft ordinance that highlighted the fact that the Commission understands that this is an ever-changing field.

Trustee Brennan encouraged the Commission to implement a more direct ban with a longer lead time. President Adduci agreed.

Trustee Bachner noted that many of the suburbs who have implemented these regulations are considering lead times as well.

Trustee Brennan reiterated that most of the companies in River Forest work within Oak Park as well.

9. NEW BUSINESS

None

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. Executive Session pursuant to 5ILCS 120/2(c)(11) to discuss: Pending Litigation.

MOTION by Trustee Vazquez to enter Executive Session pursuant to 5ILCS 120/2(c)(11) to discuss: Pending Litigation and the Village Board will adjourn after executive session and will not return to open session. Seconded by Trustee Johnson.

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Bachner, Vazquez, Gillis, Brennan, Johnson

Absent: Trustee O'Connell

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn by Trustee Johnson. Seconded by Trustee Brennan

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Bachner, Vazquez, Gillis, Brennan, Johnson

Absent: Trustee O’Connell

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

The Village Board of Trustees Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.



Jonathan Keller, Village Clerk

Date: 11/18/24