



Village of Oak Park

123 Madison Street
Oak Park, Illinois 60302
www.oak-park.us

Meeting Minutes

President and Board of Trustees

Monday, May 17, 2021

7:00 PM

Village Hall

I. Call to Order

Village President Scaman called the meeting to order at 7:04 P.M. She authorized a statement be read providing that the meeting is being held remotely due to COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines and that it is not prudent to have people present at the Village Board's regular meeting location due to public health concerns related to that pandemic.

II. Roll Call

Village Trustee Enyia was not present during Roll Call due to technical difficulties. He was able to login at 7:09 P.M.

Present: 6 - Village President Scaman, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Parakkat, Village Trustee Robinson, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

Absent: 1 - Village Trustee Enyia

III. Agenda Approval

It was moved by Village Trustee Robinson, seconded by Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla to approve the Agenda. The roll call on the vote was as follows:

AYES: 6 - Village President Scaman, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Parakkat, Village Trustee Robinson, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 - Village Trustee Enyia

IV. Non-Agenda Public Comment

Village Clerk Waters read the Non-Agenda Public Comment aloud.

Gretchen Kenagy (Board member of the North Ave District, Inc.):

Gretchen requested that the Village Board recommit to completing the streetscape project and continue the work from Oak Park Ave to Austin Blvd. She also asked the Board to help in obtaining state and federal funding, as well as cooperation from the City of Chicago. She wants the

Board to provide the project with adequate staff resources and a small local match, if necessary. Gretchen requested that the Village Board allocate funds for murals, continue approving minor zoning variances for new projects, and be prepared to consider other requests for assistance that may become necessary.

V. Regular Agenda

A. [ID 21-142](#) Discuss and Develop 2021-2022 Board Goals

Village Clerk Waters read the Agenda Public Comment aloud.

Chris Donovan: Chris provided a comment on Economic Development, requesting the Village Board to create a "arm's length" relationship with any and all prospective developers by removing any/all Village officials as members of the Oak Park Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors. His second request was that the Village Board amend the Affordable Housing Ordinance by reducing the number of units that may be paid-out with in lieu fees providing for greater economic diversity in all qualifying residential developments.

The Board read through and discussed 2021-2022 Board Goals. The following specific comments were made:

Village President Scaman shared an overview of the discussion and development of 2021-2022 Board Goals. There are 5 main categories to be discussed: Sustainability, Racial Equity, Affordability, Community Safety and Community Infrastructure/Small Business.

Sustainability:

Village Trustee Buchanan's expectations for her goals is that there is accountability for the progress being made to achieve the goals. She would like to have monthly reporting with an update on the Board goals, that within a month there is an action plan including a timeline. She wants to see the recommendations from the ad-hoc sustainability task force are put into action as soon as possible, which included a full time specialist/expert in the position of sustainability.

Village Deputy Manager Lisa Shelley shared a visual which included the ad-hoc sustainability task force recommendations.

Village Trustee Parakkat agreed with his colleague Village Trustee Buchanan that the ad-hoc sustainability task force is set into place as soon as possible. Village Trustee Parakkat shared his goal of realigning the economy consistent with sustainability goals. He would also like to see

training provided to our youth in sustainable jobs and participate in the green economy. Finally, realigning by attracting investments and creating jobs in Oak Park. Village Trustee Parakkat would like to create a sustainability incubator that becomes a hub for neighboring communities to participate, to realign to a green economy and attract local, state and federal grants/start with a feasibility study. He would also like to have a feasibility study put into place.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla likes Ravi's idea. She also expressed her interest in the Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA) in Illinois and believes the Village should support this act. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla believes the highest priority is what Trustee Buchanan suggested. She would like to see an action plan set on how to implement the Greenways Plan. She suggested that the Greenways Plan be put into the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). She would also like a review of necessary ordinance revisions to allow for pollinator and community gardening in the parkways.

The Board and Village Manager Pavlicek discussed the tax levy and if this should be a part of tonight's discussion.

Village Trustee Taglia agreed with the idea of moving forward with the ad-hoc sustainability task force's recommendations, as well as Ravi's idea of an incubator which Village Trustee Taglia recommended could be done in the form of a study session.

Village Trustee Buchanan would like to create more ideas on how to generate money to support sustainability efforts. She used the example of charging a fee for leaf collection.

Village Trustee Enyia recommended the Village find a way to include the 40% of renters in the composting program.

Village President Scaman noted the creation of an annual Climate Summit.

Racial Equity:

Village Manager Pavlicek provided background information from the prior Board goals from 2020. One of the remaining components to be completed, is a "train the trainer" with internal staff as well as a racial equity assessment in conjunction with ongoing training.

Village Trustee Robinson would like to implement a racial equity toolkit to overlay various agenda items and program initiatives to determine if they advance equity goals or they have an unintended inequitable impact. She would also like to implement a census tracking data/initiative of where the

Village stands in terms of the diversity of our community. This should help to get a baseline understanding of the diversity of the community. The census data alone does not answer this. She said the suggested tool would be aligned with diversity goals.

Village Manager Pavlicek stated that Village staff are compiling that data from the 2020 census which could provide data which could allow for a study session and further direction from the Board.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla reiterated her goals in 2019. She recommended racial equity efforts made by the Village should be done with the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), as they are the foremost leader in racial equity and diversity in governing. She also made reiterated the recommendations which the former Community Relations Commission put forward. Those recommendations include, 1. creating a racial equity task force which uses the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) model and would define the goals and accountability measures in place that would be used on progress for racial equity, 2. That racial equity task force should then work with the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) to conduct an initial assessment of current Village protocols, laws and practices to determine the changes that are needed in ordinance and policies, 3. Implement a supplier diversity initiative program which would impact the Request for Proposal process, 4. Develop a racial equity impact tool, much like Village Trustee Robinson mentioned, which would be used by the Board and staff to determine if the Village is advancing equity goals or hindering them. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla stated that each of these recommendations should be committed to by the Board through a Resolution or Ordinance.

Village Trustee Buchanan would like to see the Reparations discussion back at the Board table. She stated that the former Board to issue an apology for the behavior of the government over the last century toward the first African-American residents in Oak Park. She noted that this discussion was tabled until after the elections. She would also like the current Board to discuss the recommendations brought to the previous Board by "Walk the Walk".

Village Trustee Enyia would like to engage the community and work with the Oak Park Public Library and their anti-racism work. He would also like a review of racial policy within the Village's law department. Village Trustee Enyia suggested putting a group of people made up of people of color, LGBTQIA+ and other stakeholders together to look at matters of equity. He also recommended having someone within the Village who is responsible for ensuring all activities (for example hiring, the request for proposal process, etc.) are being conducted through an equitable lens.

Affordability:

Village President Scaman asked that, in the form of a Study Session, staff bring current policies and ordinances which present challenges to Oak Park residents making it unaffordable and otherwise difficult for them to continue to reside in Oak Park.

Village Trustee Parakkat would like to keep the tax levy at 3%. He would also like the Village to perform an assessment on the possibility for Oak Park to participate in affordable community internet.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla concurred with her colleague, Village Trustee Parakkat, of bringing affordable internet to the Village. She would also like to see an affordable housing trust fund and revisit the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance (IZO). She would like to be able to clearly the expenses that the affordability dollars are used for and what is the current amount that is currently in affordable housing fund. She recommended to increase transparency and dollar amounts within the affordable housing fund. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla also asked for clarity between the terms special use revenue fund and a trust fund when referring to the affordable housing fund.

Village Trustee Taglia also requested clarity between the terms special use revenue fund and a trust fund in reference to the affordable housing fund. He recommended a Study Session on the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance (IZO) to discuss how it was developed. Village Trustee Taglia also recommended experts present during this Study Session to share what other communities are doing and the tradeoffs. He would like to have a thorough discussion on the fee in lieu versus the available affordable units.

Village Trustee Parakkat agreed with his colleague in conducting a Study Session.

Village Trustee Robinson agreed with her colleagues Trustee Walker-Peddakotla and Trustee Taglia, and added the recommendation of an additional comparative analysis/assessment of our Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance.

Village Trustee Enyia also agreed with his colleagues in conducting a Study Session. He recommended that the Village has a baseline when working with developers who are interested in building within Oak Park. He recommended a more concerned effort with multi-dwelling units and two-flats to ensure there are more opportunities for developments of that size.

Village Trustee Buchanan suggested a discussion on long-term parking and short-term parking. She recommended an increase in downtown parking fees if that increase could offset the cost for long-term parking fees for renters.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla would like to eliminate the Oak Park parking ban or an impact analysis of eliminating the overnight parking ban.

Village Trustee Robinson would like to have a comprehensive review of the current fee structure, parking permit process, and the level of communication to residents in terms of parking.

Village Manager Pavlicek suggested an interactive Study Session to determine where the Board sees their goals for policy changes.

Community Safety:

Village President Scaman said there is a current assessment which was put into place by the previous Board through the request for proposal (RFP) process. She stated the current Board will be able to make adjustments to that scope of services based on the Board's goal setting.

Deputy Village Manager Lisa Shelley shared a visual which was a compilation of discussions from the previous Board in requesting an assessment of community safety.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla wants to find out if there are better ways to respond to calls for help than the way we currently have right now. She suggested that the Village consider an alternative emergency response system which would not involve our police. She recommended that the 911 Call Center responders are trained on how to determine the appropriate response. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla would also like to consider a non-police response to minor ordinance violations and traffic stops. She would also like the Village to consider a transformative justice youth program to improve the adjudication process and find a better way to respond to youth who are committing ordinance violations. She would like the Village to look at community safety as harm reduction. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla would like to conduct an ordinance review to determine if there are some which are used to disproportionately target black and brown youth and consider rescinding those ordinances or amending them to decriminalize those ordinances. She would also like to restructure the Citizen Police Oversight Committee (CPOC) and allow the committee to have more independence.

Village President Scaman asked Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla to email her list to the Board and staff.

Village Trustee Buchanan supports her colleague's requests Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla.

Village President Scaman mentioned that the Village's youth adjudication process does not send youth to Cook County and many of the ordinance violations do not go on a young person's permanent record. The Village of Oak Park also has a Community Mental Health Board who gives \$1.7 million to mental health for people who live in Oak Park and the contracts the Village has with organizations that currently work with our Police Department. She does agree there is room for review.

Village Trustee Taglia stated that he believes our Police Department tries to do what is best for all residents, and he agrees that mental health is important to all in Oak Park.

Village Trustee Robinson would like to add a review of attrition rates among the police force to see if this could be a possible source of financial resources to pay for some of the requested items presented by Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla.

Village Trustee Enyia would like to review interdepartmental transfers within the Police Department, and the way in which the Police Department obtains new officers.

Village Trustee Parakkat inquired about a timeline. Village Manager Pavlicek provided a process how the timeline is dictated. Village Trustee Parakkat stated there are some items that do not require a consultant. He also noted, the last crime statistics indicated a rise in crime. Keeping this in mind, there should be balance in addressing the items discussed during this meeting, and ensuring the community remains safe.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla asked Village Manager Pavlicek if the consultant had been chosen by the previous Board.

Village Manager Pavlicek confirmed the previous Board did not select the consultant. The consultant and scope of services will be determined by the current Board.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla agrees with her colleague Village Trustee Parakkat that there are some items which can move forward without a consultant.

Village President Scaman would like to see the timeline for everything to better prioritize actionable items.

Supporting Vibrant Diverse Neighborhoods - Community

Infrastructure/Small Business:

Village President Scaman shared that North Avenue and small business recovery needs due to the pandemic are priorities.

Village Trustee Robinson would like for staff to review disbursement parameters pertaining to The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) money.

Village Trustee Taglia would like staff to continue to review the water loss issue. He would also like the Smart Cities idea to become a priority. The Smart Cities idea uses technology to help manage the Village's resources and assets, which will be important for the future of the Village.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla noted that the staff has done a great job of keeping the Board up to date, she also agrees with her colleague Trustee Taglia on the Smart Cities idea with a review of what that would include. She would also like to consider a revitalization plan, much like that of North Avenue, for Roosevelt Avenue.

Village Trustee Parakkat asked if there is a way to catch up with the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) as budgets allow over a time span of a years. He stated that a starting point to implement the Smart Cities idea is to offer a broad base training for Public Works employees. He would also like to see the COVID recovery task force for small businesses strengthened to retain, recover and attract new investments and businesses in Oak park.

Village Manager Pavlicek said the task force needs to be formally created under Open Meetings Act (OMA) if the task force will be incorporated into the Board goals.

Village President Scaman discussed the core values of communication, collaboration, fiscal responsibility, transparency and accountability, trust building. These cores values will be incorporated through all of the Board goals.

Village Trustee Parakkat would like to add citizen centricity to the Board's core values.

Village Trustee Enyia would like to intentionally put together a community engagement process which is incorporated within each of the five priorities. He recommended a more intentional and inclusionary way in how we talk to all of our residents.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla would like to update Village Trustee's

recommendation of citizen centricity, to community centric.

Village Trustee Buchanan reiterated that she would like to focus on the role of the commissions as well. She would like to see the commissions to be more of a mechanism to bring ideas to the Board. Village Trustee Buchanan would like to empower the Commission Chairs, and reformulate what a Work Plan means.

Village Trustee Taglia agrees with Trustee Buchanan, and added that we have too many commissions and it is not efficient.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla asked Village Trustee Taglia if there is a way to align the commission work with the Board goals, without being too restrictive on the work of the commission?

Village President Scaman suggested an education session for the Board to learn more about the commissions. She said the commission Work Plans are approved by the Board at the end of each budget season. She suggested options on ways to learn about and evaluate the current commissions.

Village Trustee Taglia suggested that staff prioritize the Study Sessions so when the information is presented it is done so in a logical fashion.

Village President Scaman provided a summary for each priority. Each Board member provided a list of the five priorities discussed during the meeting in order of their preference.

Village Manager Pavlicek will provide a written document for the Board to review.

VI. Adjourn

It was moved by Village Trustee Taglia, seconded by Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:32 P.M., Monday, May 17, 2021.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Clerk Waters**

AYES: 7 - Village President Scaman, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Enyia, Village Trustee Parakkat, Village Trustee Robinson, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0