



Village of Oak Park

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

Meeting Minutes

President and Board of Trustees

Tuesday, November 12, 2024

6:00 PM

Village Hall

I. Call to Order

Village President Vicki Scaman called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:03 P.M.

II. Roll Call

Trustee Wesley arrived late.

Present: 7 - Village President Scaman, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Enyia, Village Trustee Parakkat, Village Trustee Robinson, Village Trustee Straw, and Village Trustee Wesley

Absent: 0

III. Agenda Approval

It was moved by Trustee Straw, seconded by Trustee Robinson, to approve the Agenda. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved.

IV. Minutes

A. [MOT 24-266](#) A Motion to Approve Minutes from the October 1, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Village Board

It was moved by Trustee Robinson, seconded by Trustee Straw, to approve the Minutes. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved.

V. Non-Agenda Public Comment

Valerie Michalik: Lives in Opera House condominiums on the corner of Marion and North Blvd. Joined by her husband and neighbors. Concerned about the increase in vagrant men and women that have inundated the streets, parks, and train stations over the past six months.

Bill Bower: Lives in Opera House condominiums. Progressive deterioration of what is happening in and around South Marion and the train station, with threatening behavior, abusive language, nudity, defecation, panhandling, drug use, littering, and assault. Wants to know if there is a plan for dealing with it other than calling the police.

VI. Proclamation

B. [MOT 24-265](#) A Motion to Approve a Proclamation Recognizing National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, November 17-23, 2024

Village President Vicki Scaman read the Proclamation into the record.

Beyond Hunger CEO Michele Zurakowski accepted the Proclamation and expressed her gratitude.

Representatives from Housing Forward accepted the Proclamation and expressed her gratitude.

It was moved by Trustee Wesley, seconded by Trustee Straw, to approve the Proclamation. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved.

C. [MOT 24-268](#) A Motion to Approve a Proclamation Recognizing Native American Heritage Month Annually in the Month of November

President Scaman read the Proclamation in a pre-recorded video available on the Village website.

It was moved by Trustee Straw, seconded by Trustee Enyia, to approve the Proclamation. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved.

VII. Village Manager Reports

Public Works Director Rob Sproule presented an update on the leaf bagging program.

Trustee Robinson said she will email Village Manager Kevin Jackson to request a motion to reconsider the resident refuse credit. Trustee Wesley said he will second it.

Manager Jackson presented a STAR Award (Service Together Achieves Results) to David Ikeemeka. David accepted the award and expressed his gratitude.

VIII. Village Board Committees & Trustee Liaison Commission Reports

Trustee Straw reported the Transportation Commission meeting discussed the Vision Zero plan which will be coming back to the commission on December 2. He encouraged the community to give public input on the draft plan.

Village Clerk Christina Waters reported on behalf of the Citizen Involvement Commission that the volunteer appreciation celebration is November 14. She gave a sincere apology for the scheduling conflict that evening with the Historic Preservation Commission, Civic Information Systems Commission, and Aging in Communities Commission.

IX. Citizen Commission Vacancies

- D. [ID 24-544](#) Board and Commission Vacancy Report for November 12, 2024

There were no comments.

XI. First Reading

- E. [ORD 24-165](#) First Reading of an Ordinance Amending Chapter 18 (“Business Licensing”), Article 2 (“Fee Schedule”), Section 8-2-1 (“License Fee Schedule”) of the Oak Park Village Code

Development Services Director Emily Egan presented the Item.

President Scaman inquired about outreach. Director Egan said conversations are happening with prospective and existing businesses. A second reading will be brought back to the Village Board on November 21.

Trustee Parakkat asked if this will be looked at as part of the overall economic vitality planning process, which Director Egan confirmed it will occur on a yearly basis. Manager Jackson said all fees will be reviewed as part of the long-term financial planning process.

- F. [ORD 24-166](#) First Reading of an Ordinance Establishing the Annual Building and Construction Permit Fees and the Zoning Application Fees of the Village of Oak Park

Development Services Director Emily Egan presented the Item.

XII. Consent Agenda

Approval of the Consent Agenda

It was moved by Trustee Robinson, seconded by Trustee Straw to approve the items under the Consent Agenda. The motion was approved. The roll call on the vote was as follows:

AYES: 7 - Village President Scaman, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Enyia, Village Trustee Parakkat, Village Trustee Robinson, Village Trustee Straw, and Village Trustee Wesley

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

- G. [ORD 24-173](#) An Ordinance Amending the Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Budget

This Ordinance was adopted.

- H. [MOT 24-258](#) A Motion to Approve the Bills in the Amount of \$13,601,791.68 from September 29, 2024, through November 2, 2024

This Motion was approved.

- I. [ORD 24-134](#) An Ordinance Updating and Replacing the Map Codified as Part of Section 15-1-26 of the Village Code to Reflect the Village’s Current Time Restrictions, Time Limits, and Prohibited Parking Areas

This Ordinance was adopted.

- J. [RES 24-312](#) A Resolution Approving an Amendment to the Independent Contractor Agreement with Cerniglia, Co. for 2024 Emergency Water and Sewer Repair Work to Increase the Not to Exceed Amount from \$40,000.00 to \$82,026.63 and Authorizing its Execution

This Resolution was adopted.

- K. [RES 24-316](#) A Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of One 2025 Falcon 8-Ton Hot Patch Truck from Falcon Road Maintenance Equipment, LLC. of Freeland, Michigan through the NASPO ValuePoint Joint Purchasing Program in an Amount not to Exceed \$267,524.00 and Waiving the Village’s Bid Process for the Purchase

This Resolution was adopted.

- L. [RES 24-317](#) A Resolution Approving the Purchase of 2,000 Tons of Rock Salt from Morton Salt, Inc. at \$62.98 Per Ton For the 2024/2025 Snow Season in an Amount Not to Exceed \$200,000.00 per the State of Illinois Joint Purchasing Program and Waiving the Village’s Bidding Process for the Purchase

This Resolution was adopted.

- M. [RES 24-320](#) A Resolution Approving an Amendment to the Contractor Services Agreement with ADO Professional Solutions, Inc., DBA Lee Hecht Harrison Recruitment Solutions, to Change the Not to Exceed Amount from \$50,000.00 to \$60,000.00, and to Extend the Agreement to February 21, 2025 and Authorizing its Execution

This Resolution was adopted.

- N. [RES 24-331](#) A Resolution Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement between the Villages of River Forest, Forest Park, and Oak Park for the Phase I Engineering Study of the Harlem Avenue Viaduct Project and Authorizing its Execution

This Resolution was adopted.

- O. [RES 24-332](#) A Resolution Approving an Independent Contractor Agreement with National Power Rodding Corporation for the 2024 Ridgeland Ave Sewer Siphon Cleaning & Inspection Project, in an Amount not to Exceed \$252,610 and Authorizing its Execution

This Resolution was adopted.

- P. [RES 24-333](#) A Resolution Approving an Independent Contractor Agreement with ABM Industry Groups, LLC to Provide Building Maintenance Services at Village-owned Facilities in 2025 in an Amount Not to Exceed \$855,000.00 for 2025 and Authorizing its Execution

This Resolution was adopted.

XIII. Regular Agenda

- Q. [ID 24-507](#) A Presentation and Discussion of Alternative Response to Calls for Service Phase 2

Assistant Village Manager/HR Director Kira Tchang presented the Item. Thrive Counseling Center Executive Director Jennifer Rook provided additional information.

President Scaman inquired what overnight staffing looks like. Director Tchang said a number of positions throughout the village have overnight on-call responsibilities. They would be dispatched through WESTCOMM and are part of the social working community team. All of the mental and behavioral health related staffing would be operating out of the Village's Neighborhood Services Department.

Trustee Parakkat asked if calls to 988 get routed to Thrive and paid by the state. Director Tchang said the intent is for people to know their options and call the one appropriate to their need. The state does fund the area 590 providers. He inquired about the timeline and if a reduce in 911 call volumes is expected. Director Tchang said the Community Emergency Services and Support Act (CESSA) was signed into law in 2021. Now it is supposed to be implemented in July 1, 2025. Director Rook said the state's requirements for mobile crisis responders for any calls is 60 minutes. Thrive is hyper local and can guarantee a response time of 15 minutes for Oak Park.

Trustee Parakkat asked what costs are included in the \$600K. Director Tchang said it is all of the programming budget which includes training and external support, vehicle purchases, salary, benefits, and contributions. He inquired about call volume and Director Tchang said about 10,000 calls (20%) would have been a good fit for an alternative response. He asked if we are constrained with any of the models to adapt. Director Tchang said if the Village Board is interested in making adjustments to the model, staff would make recommendations.

Trustee Parakkat inquired about the legal risk and liability. Director Tchang said Thrive would be an additional party to any suit that involves Thrive

staff. Village Attorney Smith confirmed the Village includes fair indemnification and insurance requirements in service agreements so risk is properly allocated to the service provider if there is a claim.

Trustee Robinson asked if the budgeted amount for the Thrive-led program is for models A and B, which Director Tchang confirmed. Trustee Robinson asked what staff will propose in the 2025 budget. Director Tchang said there is a \$600K placeholder in the Neighborhood Services budget.

Trustee Robinson asked if once CESSA is rolled out, Thrive's response time will come down to be more in line with the Village's response time. Director Tchang said that is the general intent and they are trying to present a response time similar to the Village's response time now. Trustee Robinson asked how the transition would work with the Village-led model given that it is dependent on hiring. Director Tchang said the Village has an existing model with Thrive and staff will recommend renewing it for a 6-month period as staffing up would happen.

Trustee Robinson said she will rely heavily on the task force's input and is less inclined to go with the Thrive-led model because the response time piece is very important to her. Director Rook said at least low level risk calls should be implemented in July 2025. The only change in response time for Thrive would be the calls coming directly from dispatch instead of from the police. The two proposed scheduling models would expand Thrive's business hours.

Trustee Straw inquired about the experience with hiring. Director Tchang said the Village is actively recruiting for program manager and two care coordinators. The Village has a set schedule with strong benefits including a pension. Director Rook said Thrive is a full-scale mental health service organization with clinician supervisors and peers. He asked about the pros and cons with the two different models. Director Rook said Thrive wanted to provide options and will respond to whatever call times are needed. He asked if there are particular times of the day when these types of mental health calls are more prevalent. Director Tchang said WESTCOMM is not able to pull more specific data. He said he would be interested in a 7 day a week type of response.

Trustee Straw said he leans toward the Thrive-based program and appreciates it being an outside social service provider. The CESSA implementation is very important to him. He asked what kind of data Thrive will be able to provide back to the Village. Director Rook said they will look at types of calls and outcomes. The biggest challenge is to align Thrive's data with the Village's data.

Trustee Buchanan requested clarification between Thrive's Tiers 1 and 2 when it's the same team. Director Tchang said the Village requested that Thrive create a proposal modeled after what the Village was proposing. In both models, the low and high risk calls for services are responded to by teams. In low risk, first responders will respond and then peel away if they are not needed. Trustee Buchanan asked if we would still need to hire Village staff if we choose the Thrive model. Director Tchang said the Village is already hiring those positions for Phase 1. The community care navigation piece is case management and connecting people to services and respond to unhoused issues. Trustee Buchanan said she is leaning toward the Thrive-led program because of the embedded expertise and experience.

Trustee Enyia asked how many clinicians work on a typical shift. Director Rook said they have a therapist and engagement specialist during business hours and a secondary therapist available at all times. They do tend to get multiple calls at once and rely on back-up staff. He said he is leaning more heavily on a Thrive-led model until there is more stability and infrastructure in what the Village-led one can be.

Trustee Parakkat said he is also leaning toward the Thrive-led model and noted that Neighborhood Services is a new department.

Trustee Wesley asked how many calls can be tackled based on the estimated staffing models. Director Tchang said the intent would be to tackle most if not all of them. We are looking to provide coverage over the program's operating hours. He asked if police will be dispatched on all calls. Director Tchang said it doesn't happen on all calls currently. Police do not go out on EMS calls. He asked how quickly police can respond. Police Chief Shatonya Johnson said the response time is 3-10 minutes.

Director Tchang said the hiring process takes about six weeks and she thinks it is feasible to have a program manager by January 1. Director Rook said hiring a therapist position takes 1-2 months.

Trustee Wesley inquired about the mental health services billable to Medicaid for some patients. Director Rook said Thrive is certified by the state to bill for crisis services. The state provides a large portion of funding for mobile crisis responders. He said he sees merits in both programs. Public safety is a core municipal service so he sees a large draw toward the Village program.

Manager Jackson noted this is one-time dollars. He said he would assign the contract management with Thrive to the Neighborhood Services department.

President Scaman said she is interested in the hybrid model. Director Tchang said under the hybrid co-response model, the Village implements Phase 1 with our community care navigation and maintains a contract with Thrive. No one is going out on those low risk calls for service. Within 48 hours someone from the Village's care navigation team will call them as a follow-up. In the full-service model, someone from the Village would respond to the low risk call directly, go out with the officer or EMS, and provide the service in real-time at the point of call. The purpose of the community service officers (CSOs) is to respond to low risk calls for service that do not have a mental or behavioral health component.

R. [MOT 24-264](#) A Motion to Adopt the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (2025-2029) as Reviewed and Discussed by the Village Board's Finance Committee on September 10, 2024, September 26, 2024 and October 15, 2024

Sylvia Schweri: Represented Bike Walk Oak Park. Recommended the Village-wide traffic signal re-timing study be invested in 2025 and not postponed to 2026.

Interim CFO Donna Gayden presented the Item.

Trustee Robinson asked what is included in the cost of the bonds. CFO Gayden said it is the closing costs, attorney fees, and filing fees. The first interest payment would be due November 2025.

Trustee Buchanan asked why the Village would need to borrow from the fund balance. CFO Gayden said \$20M is needed to fund the Oak Park streetscape. Trustee Buchanan asked why we would borrow for that instead of paying for it. CFO Gayden said the Village is also building up the fund balance for the police station. President Scaman said she would support borrowing from ourselves and being able to pay it back to keep all options open for the police station.

Trustee Wesley said he does not like using lost revenue for capital improvements. ARPA funds were not given to us to build a streetscape project. He would rather bond it all. CFO Gayden clarified the ARPA funds are not for streetscape. It is for projects that have no funding within the capital project. He said we are going to have a new administration in D.C. and he would like to have a lot of cash on hand and not do anything to reduce that.

Trustee Robinson said she is in favor of Scenario 1. She does not want to pay interest on money we are not using and she is a little concerned about the 3-year timeframe. CFO Gayden said she doesn't recommended borrowing all of the money at once. You would only bond what you need for the streetscape.

Trustee Straw said he is in favor of Scenario 1 and preserving the optionality around the money.

Trustee Parakkat said he prefers Scenario 1. He said he wants to see the lost revenue applied as an investment to the community so the capital expenditure would be more appropriate.

Trustee Enyia said he is in favor of Scenario 1.

Public Works Director Rob Sproule presented changes to the capital improvement project (CIP) since the last Finance Committee meeting.

Trustee Straw inquired about the signal re-timing project. Assistant Public Works Director/Village Engineer Bill McKenna said it is a project to collect traffic data to develop a signal model for the Village's traffic signal system to implement pedestrian improvements at those signals. Trustee Straw asked how leading pedestrian intervals act to reduce injury risk and increase visibility. Engineer McKenna said it gives the walk signal ahead of the green light which increases pedestrian visibility. Some signals would need to be upgraded.

Trustee Straw said this is a vital part of pedestrian safety along our high injury network. It will be a recommendation in the draft plan. Staff support the recommendation. It is a short-term high priority item that will have a significant impact on pedestrian safety in our Village. He said he does not want to postpone those safety improvements.

Trustee Robinson clarified that all Finance Committee members were in support of the signal re-timing item. She asked why it was on the list to postpone. Engineer McKenna said staff were trying to come up with \$7M in deferrals and cuts to meet budget goals. Engineer McKenna confirmed it is feasible to do the local street network in 2025. Data collection would be in the spring and the model would be developed over the summer. Conversations with IDOT can happen at any time. The project would be consultant-led and they have the capacity to do this. She said she wants to make sure we are making decisions that are impactful. She said she is still leaning towards staff's original recommendation.

President Scaman asked why it was put into the original budget. Engineer McKenna said staff knew the leading pedestrian intervals were going to be a Vision Zero recommendation and there is a lot of desire from the community about improving pedestrian accessibility at traffic signals.

Trustee Parakkat agreed with Trustee Robinson and recommended

waiting for the Vision Zero recommendations and use 2025 to make sure we have the right conversations with IDOT and implement in 2026.

Trustee Wesley said this is \$300K to increase pedestrian safety and we have a fund balance of \$45,878,206. This is not a resource question. He said he wholeheartedly endorses spending the \$300K on this without further argument.

Trustee Buchanan said it makes her nervous if we go to the fund balance every time we have a personal interest in the project. CFO Gayden said her recommendation would be to leave the budget as is, allow staff to talk to IDOT, and do a budget amendment once we know it is a go.

Trustee Straw inquired about the high injury network. Engineer McKenna said those networks are used for the Vision Zero plan. It is the arterial street network in general where we have the most accidents and opportunities for accidents. Perimeter streets include Harlem, North, Austin, and Roosevelt. Internal streets include Chicago, Oak Park, Madison, Ridgeland, and portions of Jackson. Trustee Straw said this is an urgent public safety need. Delaying it to do a budget amendment after we have conversations with IDOT could mean that we are postponing making changes at the intersections we control that are on the high injury network.

Trustee Straw inquired about the intersection at Garfield and Oak Park Avenue. Engineer McKenna said improvements have been designed. The Village could go out for bid for that project in early 2025 for construction in summer 2025.

Trustee Enyia said he supports doing the low priority streets in 2025.

Trustee Wesley said he would like to see the Percy Julian item upgraded from a D to at least a B-level priority. President Scaman said she is fine with that.

Trustee Straw made a friendly amendment to add in the signal re-timing line item and Oak Park and Garfield intersection and elevate the Percy Julian priority from a D to a B, which was seconded by Trustee Wesley.

It was moved by Trustee Straw, seconded by Trustee Wesley, that this Motion be approved. The motion was approved. The roll call on the vote was as follows:

AYES: 7 - Village President Scaman, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Enyia, Village Trustee Parakkat, Village Trustee Robinson, Village Trustee Straw, and Village Trustee Wesley

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

S. [MOT 24-267](#) **A Motion by Trustees Robinson and Wesley to Discuss Village Board Support of the Oak Park River Forest Chamber of Commerce's 2025 First Friday Street Festival Series and the Chamber's Creation of the Oak Park Black and Latine Business Support Network**

Oak Park River Forest Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Darien Marion-Burton presented the Item.

Trustee Parakkat asked if engaging the broader business community is a next step. Director Marion-Burton said the BAC would work with partners like DTOP and Visit Oak Park. Trustee Parakkat asked if this is envisioned as a one-time expense that will be self-sufficient in subsequent years. Director Marion-Burton said the ask now is for one time and the goal is to find ways to subsidize some of these costs through sponsorship and other foundation partnerships. Trustee Parakkat asked if it is possible to pilot a business district and then expand. Director Marion-Burton said that would be inefficient to create one with branding which is a significant investment.

Trustee Parakkat asked how the BIPOC affinity group's work is feeding into what is recommended here. Director Marion-Burton said their goal is to replace the BIPOC affinity group with this program.

It was moved by Trustee Robinson, seconded by Trustee Wesley, to extend the meeting past 10:00 P.M. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved.

Manager Jackson said he would be happy to have a community-based group take this on and have the Village be a partner.

Trustee Buchanan said she loves both of these ideas but wonders why the Village should pay for them. Director Marion-Burton clarified that not all of Madison Street would be closed and ideally it would only be two blocks or do something in the Fenwick or Pete's parking lot.

Trustee Straw said he fully supports both programs. He asked if it would be possible to use Village space to save the \$4K venue rental fee. Director Marion-Burton said he thinks that is a possibility.

Trustee Wesley said he thinks both of these are amazing and have been put into words in a way that will attract people. He read from the Village's diversity statement. This program is actively rejecting any barriers that prevent the full participation of marginalized groups. Voting for this is an active and intentional way to live our values.

Trustee Enyia said this answers the question of why a business should join the Chamber.

Trustee Robinson said she likes these programs because they provide

some holistic support in different ways. She said she thinks these could supplement the findings of the economic vitality consultant.

President Scaman said more discussions need to happen between the Village and the Chamber to determine next steps and deliverables.

Manager Jackson inquired if this Item should be added to the FY2025 budget. Trustee Wesley requested a timeframe for when this will come back to the Board. Manager Jackson said staff can be prepared to come back early in the new year. The economic vitality strategic plan will have considerations for minority and women-owned businesses which could coalesce with this proposal.

President Scaman requested staff to connect with Growing Communities Media to get more information on their holiday gift guide. Manager Jackson said that can be put on the November 21 agenda.

No vote was taken on this Item.

XIV. Call to Board and Clerk

Trustee Enyia expressed gratitude to the election workers and Village staff.

Trustee Buchanan read a prepared statement about the outcome of the presidential election and her difficulties dealing with the outcome and her concern about the future of women in our country.

Trustee Wesley addressed the public comments about the homeless situation on Marion and said no one should be living the way those photos illustrated people are living and we are not doing anything about it. We didn't let the migrants live like that. This is a situation we allow and we treat them as less than human and throw their belongings in the trash.

Manager Jackson clarified the claims on social media that staff are being directed to throw away personal belongings are false. He recommended a public study session on the Village's response to the unhoused.

President Scaman said we are working for additional solutions and it is never fast enough and she is here to continue to work hard.

XV. Adjourn

It was moved by Trustee Straw, seconded by Trustee Wesley, to Adjourn. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved. Meeting adjourned at 10:31 P.M., Tuesday, November 12, 2024.

**Respectfully submitted,
Deputy Clerk Hansen**