



Village of Oak Park

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

Meeting Minutes – President and Board of Trustees

Tuesday, December 2, 2025, 6:30 pm, Village Hall, Council Chambers (Room 201)

I. Call to Order: Village President Scaman called the Meeting to order at 6:32 P.M.

II. Roll Call Attendance: Clerk Waters took the roll call as follows:

Present: Village Trustees: Eder, Leving Jacobson, Straw, Taglia and; Village President Scaman.

Absent: Village Trustees: Enyia and Wesley

Also Present: Village Clerk Waters.

President Scaman declared that a quorum was present.

III. Consideration of Motion to Adjourn to Executive Session to Discuss Collective Bargaining and Personnel

President Scaman called for a **Motion** to discuss Collective Negotiating matters between the Village and its Employees or the Representatives and deliberations concerning salary schedules, appointment, performance or dismissal.

President Scaman called for a Motion to approve.

A **Motion** was made by Trustee Leving Jacobson, seconded by Trustee Eder. The motion was approved.

President Scaman then asked Clerk Waters to take the roll call vote, which was taken as follows:

Roll Call Vote:

- **Ayes:** Village Trustees Eder, Leving Jacobson, Straw, Taglia, and Village President Scaman.
- **Nays:** None.
- **Abstentions:** None.
- **Absent:** Village Trustee Enyia, Village Trustee Wesley

Motion Carried by a count of 5 "aye" votes to 0 "nay," 0 abstain, and 2 absent.

IV. Adjourn Executive Session

V. Reconvene to Regular Meeting in Council Chambers and Call to Order

The Regular Meeting reconvened at 7:14 P.M.

VI. Roll Call to Reconvene Regular Meeting:

Clerk Waters took the roll call as follows:

Present: Village Trustees: Eder, Enyia, Leving Jacobson, Straw, Taglia and; Village President Scaman.
Absent: Village Trustee: Wesley
Also Present: Village Clerk Waters.

President Scaman declared that a quorum was present.

VII. Agenda Approval.

President Scaman called for a Motion to approve the Agenda, with the removal of item XVI E from the "Consent Agenda," and moving item E under the "Regular Agenda. (Discussed during XV. Public Hearing)

A **Motion** was made by Trustee Straw, seconded by Trustee Eder, to **Approve** the Agenda as amended.

- There were no questions, comments or discussion from or by the Board.
- President Scaman called for a voice vote; all voted in favor and none were opposed.
- **Motion carried** unanimously on a Voice Vote.

VIII. Minutes

A. **MOT 25-292** A Motion to Approve Minutes from the September 3, 2025 Special Meeting, and the September 9, 16, 30 and October 14 and 21, 2025 Regular Meetings of the Village Board.

President Scaman called for a Motion.

A **Motion** was made by Trustee Straw, seconded by Trustee Eder, to **Approve** the Minutes as presented.

- There were no questions, comments or discussion from or by the Board.
- President Scaman called for a voice vote; all voted in favor and none were opposed.
- **Motion carried** unanimously on a Voice Vote.

IX. Non-Agenda Public Comment.

President Scaman asked whether there were any persons wanting to make public comments. There were no non-agenda public comments.

X. Proclamation None; no action was taken regarding this item.

XI. Village Manager Reports None; no action was taken regarding this item.

XII. Village Board Committees. None; no action was taken regarding this item.

XIII. Citizen Commission Vacancies

B. **ID 25-772** Board and Commission Vacancy Report for December 2, 2025.

This report lists the expected number of members, current number of members seated and number of active vacancies for the Village's 18 citizen boards and commissions. There are currently 23 vacancies.

President Scaman stated that anyone interested in serving on a board or commission should contact Clerk Waters at clerkwaters@oak-park.us.

No other discussion transpired and no action took place regarding this Agenda item.

XIV. Citizen Commission Appointments, Reappointments and Chair Appointments

C. **MOT 25-293** A Motion to Consent to the Village President's Appointment of:
Housing Programs Advisory Committee (HPAC) – Catherine Bendowitz,
Appoint as Committee Member Transportation Commission (TC) – Julie Johnston Ahlen,
Reappoint as Commissioner

Board and Commission Information

Housing Programs Advisory Committee | The Housing Programs Advisory Committee is an advisory board concerning programs and methods to accomplish the following goals within the Village of Oak Park: enhance the quality of residential properties, attract an economically and racially diverse

population, develop and maintain affordable housing options, and increase the value of residential properties.

Transportation Commission | The Transportation Commission hears parking and traffic concerns and makes recommendations for improved parking and traffic conditions, the administration and enforcement of traffic regulations and for public education about traffic safety.

President Scaman called for a Motion to approve.

A **Motion** was made by Trustee Wesley, seconded by Trustee Straw.

- There were no questions, comments or discussion from or by the Board.
- President Scaman called for a voice vote; all voted in favor and none were opposed.
- **Motion carried** unanimously on a Voice Vote.

XV. Public Hearing

E. **ORD 25-212** Approval of an Ordinance for Refunding Certain Outstanding Bonds and Issuance of New Bonds *Moved to Regular Agenda during Agenda

This is a consideration and action on an Ordinance providing for the issue of not to exceed \$75,000,000 General Obligation Bonds, Series 2026, of the Village of Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois, for the purpose of financing streetscape and infrastructure improvements within the Village and refunding certain outstanding bonds of the Village, authorizing the execution of an escrow agreement in connection with the issue of said bonds, and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof.

Interim CFO Donna Gayden and Sprit Financial representative answered questions regarding Ordinance. The Village is seeking approval for an ordinance authorizing up to \$75 million in bonds, with \$55 million allocated for refinancing existing callable debt to capture future interest rate savings and \$20 million for the Oak Park Streetscape Project. This approach, recommended by the Finance Committee, combines both purposes into one bond series to streamline the process and avoid repeated approvals. Once issued, a detailed debt schedule will outline the new money portion, the refunding portion, and the total savings achieved.

- Trustee Taglia: Clarified that the ordinance is for refunding existing bonds and funding the Oak Park Avenue Streetscape, not a new campus bond, and asked about the minimum savings requirement and bond terms.
- Trustee Eder: Asked about the timeline for issuing or refinancing bonds, whether interest rate trends are being considered, and confirmed that the Oak Park Streetscape contract

means new money will likely be needed soon. Also asked if there is a minimum savings threshold.

- Trustee Straw: Clarified for the public that "refunding" is essentially refinancing existing debt at lower interest rates, similar to a mortgage refinance, saving the Village an estimated \$300,000–\$450,000 without changing bond terms.

President Scaman called for a Motion to approve.

A **Motion** was made by Trustee Wesley, seconded by Trustee Taglia.

- There were no questions, comments or discussion from or by the Board.
- President Scaman called for a voice vote; all voted in favor and none were opposed.
- **Motion carried** unanimously on a Voice Vote.

XVI. Consent Agenda

- D. **ORD 25-211** Concur with the Zoning Board of Appeals and Adopt an Ordinance Approving a Special Use Permit for 427 Madison LLC, to Construct Four (4) Townhomes at 427 Madison Street
- E. **ORD 25-212** ~~Approval of an Ordinance for Refunding Certain Outstanding Bonds and Issuance of New Bonds *Moved to Regular Agenda during Agenda Approval, Discussed during XV. Public Hearing~~
- F. **RES 25-277** A Resolution Authorizing the Release of the Draft Program Year 2024 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for a Comment Period and Approval Thereafter
- G. **RES 25-333** A Resolution Authorizing the Execution of Settlement Agreements in Workers' Compensation Case Numbers 22 WC 21584, 23 WC 02113, and 24 WC 19227
- H. **RES 25-202** A Resolution Approving a Contract with Lyons Electric Company, Inc. for Project 25-21, Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) Installations, in an Amount Not to Exceed \$628,252 and Authorizing its Execution
- I. **RES 25-346** A Resolution Approving a Collective Bargaining Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding Between the Village of Oak Park and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters for the Period of April 1, 2025 to March 31st, 2029, and Authorizing Its Execution
- J. **RES 25-349** A Resolution Approving a Memorandum of Understanding with the Illinois Fraternal Order of Police Labor Council, Lodge No. 8, for the Purpose of

Establishing an Alternate Work Schedule for Police Department Patrol Officers in 2026 and Authorizing its Execution

K. **RES 25-350** A Resolution Approving a Memorandum of Understanding with the Village of Oak Park and the Fraternal Order of Police Labor Council and the Fraternal Order of Police Lieutenants and Sergeants Association for the Purpose of Establishing an Alternate Work Schedule for Police Department Lieutenants and Sergeants in 2026 and Authorizing its Execution

L. **RES 25-361** A Resolution Authorizing the Submission of Three Cook County Water Affordability Program Grant Applications with Requested Funding Amounts of \$8,000, \$35,000, and \$200,000 and Approval of Any Subsequent Agreements and Authorizing Their Execution

President Scaman called for a Motion to approve.

A **Motion** was made by Trustee Wesley, seconded by Trustee Eder. The motion was approved. President Scaman then asked Clerk Waters to take the roll call vote, which was taken as follows:

Roll Call Vote:

- **Ayes:** Village Trustees Eder, Wesley, Leving Jacobson, Straw, Taglia, and Village President Scaman.
- **Nays:** None.
- **Abstentions:** None.
- **Absent:** None.

Motion Carried by a count of 7 "aye" votes to 0 "nay," 0 abstain, and 0 absent.

Agenda items D through L, excluding Agenda Item E, were therefore adopted.

XVII. Regular Agenda

M. **ID 25-744** Public Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2026 Tentative Annual Budget of the Village of Oak Park, Continued from November 18, 2025

The continued public hearing on the 2025 Village Budget was reopened from November 18, 2025, with proper notice published in the Wednesday Journal as required by law.

Budget Manager Mary Modelska outlined the proposed budget, including a 3.21% corporate levy and additional levies for police, fire pensions, debt service, and the library, totaling 3.24%. She reviewed major revenue sources—primarily property taxes, along with fines, fees, permits, and limited grants—and explained expenditure categories, noting personnel and fringe benefits as the largest costs. Visual charts illustrated revenue and

spending breakdowns, and an errata sheet was provided to reflect recent adjustments based on funding requests.

- Trustee Wesley: Asked for a year-over-year breakdown of sales tax revenue and ticketing revenue for the past three years.
- Trustee Eder: Questioned the increase in "Other Costs" from \$0 in 2025 to \$222,000 in 2026, suggested clearer labeling, and supported creating more descriptive categories for transparency.
- Trustee Straw: Clarified for the public that "refunding" is essentially refinancing existing debt at lower interest rates, similar to a mortgage refinance, saving the Village an estimated \$300,000–\$450,000 without changing bond terms.

Village Manager Kevin Jackson Acknowledged that all prior board and Finance Committee recommendations are included in the errata sheet and introduced a new recommendation to add a fire squad vehicle to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), aligning with the Baker Tilly study and the recommendation to hire six firefighters.

Fire Chief Joseph Terry Explained that the squad vehicle is a smaller, customizable unit designed to reduce wear on the main truck, improve longevity, and provide leadership training opportunities for newer firefighters, with an estimated acquisition timeline of about five months. Clarified that the squad vehicle won't solve staffing shortages directly, but will reduce wear on main apparatus and improve operational efficiency for EMS and service calls in congested areas; confirmed it will replace trucks for minor calls and be fully integrated with training before deployment.

- Trustee Straw: Asked about staffing levels for the squad vehicle, its anticipated operational frequency, and the acquisition timeline, confirming that over-hire staffing would allow the squad to run roughly 50% of the year, primarily outside peak vacation months.
- Trustee Leving Jacobson: Asked how the squad vehicle will help address understaffing issues and integrate with increased staffing plans.
- Trustee Wesley: Asked about staffing assignments for the squad, whether crews can choose calls, and if multiple squads could be stationed at different firehouses; Chief Terry explained squads will have preassigned crews per 24-hour shift, and physical constraints prevent multiple squads in all stations.
- Trustee Taglia: Sought clarification on high-rise fire response, ensuring squad crews would integrate with full department response; Chief Terry confirmed CAD system and training protocols will ensure proper coordination before the vehicle arrives.

President Scaman: Highlighted the ongoing CIP discussion about the Bike Boulevard Project; explained rationale for considering a two-year split, citing digestibility, cash flow management, and minimizing resident disruption, while reaffirming commitment to completing the project.

- Trustee Wesley: Asked about the Sustainability Fund's previous funding source (aggregation contract) and whether the Village has authority to implement a similar tax; later confirmed understanding that the Bike Boulevard project would be funded from the fund balance, not a levy, and questioned why it would be split. Preferred one-year completion to avoid future budget pressures and potential cuts.
- Trustee Eder: Expressed interest in future discussions on additional revenue sources for sustainability, then asked for clarification on errata changes, including a \$6M streetscape adjustment and ARPA fund allocations. Supported one-year completion for safety and continuity but accepted two years for fiscal prudence and flexibility for major upcoming projects.
- Trustee Straw: Reaffirmed preference for completing the Bike Boulevard in 2026 for clarity and continuity, but expressed willingness to support a two-year plan if that is the board's decision, trusting full commitment to finish the project in 2027.
- Trustee Leving Jacobson: Favored quick completion but accepted two-year compromise for financial flexibility.
- Trustee Taglia: Supported splitting the project over two years as a prudent approach to spread costs, while maintaining full commitment.
- Trustee Enya: Supported two-year approach, citing potential savings, cash flow benefits, and confidence the project will remain a priority.

President Scaman confirmed that a majority of the board supports the two-year Bike Boulevard plan, with Trustee Wesley as the primary exception favoring one-year completion.

Village Manager Kevin Jackson announced an emerging opportunity to upgrade customer experience through Granicus software enhancements, noting that staff has been working on this and timing aligned with the open budget process, with related technology projects (ERP, planning, HR systems) to be discussed in the near future. He also highlighted the value of Granicus' internal support, noting that the new Service Operations Cloud will allow more customization, creativity, and quicker issue resolution compared to the current ticket-based system.

Granicus Representative Kim Stillman Presented an AI-powered Government Experience Agent (GXA) that integrates with Oak Park's existing Granicus tools to improve transparency and customer experience by enabling residents to easily access information, complete tasks, and reduce staff workload, while ensuring responsible guardrails for accuracy and privacy; noted that no additional budget funds are requested, only reallocations within existing contractual lines. Explained the package includes a Government Experience Partner, service credits, and strategic support. Clarified data privacy measures, confirmed multilingual support in 60 languages, and assured robust testing and accuracy standards.

- President Scaman: Questioned why a different vendor was chosen over Granicus for some services and requested a memo outlining pros and cons of the selection.

- Trustee Enyia: Confirmed the AI will primarily use public-facing Village website data, with optional controlled access to external resources.
- Trustee Straw: Asked about hallucination prevention; Kim explained the system shuts down inappropriate conversations and redirects users to official channels.
- Trustee Wesley: Supported the initiative and requested details on model architecture, security testing, hallucination rates, and source citation; Kim confirmed sources are cited and promised more technical information.
- Trustee Eder: Asked about metrics, adoption, and cost; Kim reported a 70% resolution rate and an annual cost increase of \$45,000, bringing the Granicus contract to \$147,000. Later expressed skepticism, requesting hallucination data, testing results, and examples from other municipalities.
- Trustee Leving Jacobson: Raised concerns about mental health crisis scenarios and public education; Kim said outreach can be developed. Requested metrics on demand and staff time savings; Dan highlighted current search data and multilingual support.

Village Clerk Christina Waters raised a budget concern, noting the need to include two positions—one file clerk and one graduate fellow. Emphasized urgency for the graduate fellow role since the current person would lose their position if not funded.

- President Scaman: Acknowledged the request but noted the positions were not presented to the Finance Committee and suggested follow-up via a memo with precise costs before the January discussion.
- Trustee Straw: Asked about additional fringe costs for the file clerk; Kira confirmed minimal fringe (~10%) and no health insurance.

President Scaman asked whether there were any persons wanting to make public comments. There were no public comments.

President Scaman called for a Motion to Adjourn the Public Hearing.

A **Motion** was made by Trustee Wesley, seconded by Trustee Leving Jacobson. The motion was approved.

President Scaman then asked Clerk Waters to take the roll call vote, which was taken as follows:

Roll Call Vote:

- **Ayes:** Village Trustees Eder, Leving Jacobson, Straw, Taglia, Wesley, Enyia and Village President Scaman.
- **Nays:** None.
- **Abstentions:** None.
- **Absent:** None.

Motion Carried by a count of 7 "aye" votes to 0 "nay," 0 abstain, and 0 absent.

XVIII. Call to Board and Clerk.

Trustee Straw: Highlighted the approval of a contract for installing RRFBs (Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons), emphasizing their effectiveness in improving pedestrian and cyclist safety at crossings. Expressed excitement about the upcoming installations and their positive impact on bike infrastructure.

Trustee Wesley: Praised the Village's expansion with Granicus and AI, noting its potential to improve website navigation and user experience by providing context-aware information even when users don't know what to ask for.

Trustee Leving Jacobson: Promoted two community events: Dec 6: Annual "Put the Garden to Bed" event honoring gun violence victims at the community garden; Dec 8: National Gun Violence Vigil at Village Hall, commemorating victims and survivors.

Trustee Eder: Thanked snowplow crews for their work clearing streets during recent snowfalls. Announced a Jan 26 Climate Action Policy event hosted by Oak Park Climate Action Network, featuring local and state-level policy discussions.

Manager Jackson: Confirmed Government 101 civic learning program launches Jan 26 as a nine-week academy, offering residents interactive sessions with department heads. Noted strong demand with full enrollment and a waiting list.

XIX. Adjourn.

There being no further business before the Village Board, a **Motion** was made by Trustee Wesley, Seconded by Trustee Leving Jacobson, to **Adjourn** this meeting at 8:44 p.m.

President Scaman called for a voice vote; all voted in favor and none were opposed.

Motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Deputy Clerk Qiana Carswell & Village Clerk Christina Waters