



Village of Oak Park

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

Meeting Minutes

President and Board of Trustees

Monday, March 22, 2021

6:30 PM

Village Hall

I. Call to Order

Village President Abu-Taleb called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M. He 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

- Present:** 6 - Village President Abu-Taleb, Village Trustee Andrews, Village Trustee Boutet, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla
- Absent:** 1 - Village Trustee Moroney

III. Consideration of Motion to Adjourn to Executive Session to Discuss Review of Minutes and Potential Litigation

It was moved by Village Trustee Boutet, seconded by Village Trustee Taglia, to enter into Executive Session pursuant of 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21) - Approval of Executive Session Minutes, 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11) - Pending Litigation *Lein vs. the Village of Oak Park* and 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21) - Review of Executive Session Minutes. The motion was approved. The roll call on the vote was as follows:

- AYES:** 6 - Village President Abu-Taleb, Village Trustee Andrews, Village Trustee Boutet, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla
- NAYS:** 0
- ABSENT:** 1 - Village Trustee Moroney

V. Reconvene to Remote Special Meeting and Call to Order

The Special Meeting reconvened at 6:55 P.M.

VI. Roll Call

Village President Abu-Taleb asked for a moment of silence for the murders of eight people in Atlanta last Tuesday. Six of those murdered were Asian-American women. He paraphrased a comment made by the President of the United States of America, President Biden.

- Present:** 6 - Village President Abu-Taleb, Village Trustee Andrews, Village Trustee Boutet, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla
- Absent:** 1 - Village Trustee Moroney

VII. Agenda Approval

It was moved by Village Trustee Boutet, seconded by Village Trustee Andrews to approve the agenda. The motion was approved. The roll call on the vote was as follows:

- AYES:** 6 - Village President Abu-Taleb, Village Trustee Andrews, Village Trustee Boutet, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla
- NAYS:** 0
- ABSENT:** 1 - Village Trustee Moroney

VIII. Non-Agenda Public Comment

Bonita Robinson: Ms. Robinson shared her experience with her neighbor's lights shining into her home and expressed frustration with the Village President and those on the Village Board of Trustees prior to 2019. She stated that she has tried working with Village staff over the years to no avail.

Village Trustee Boutet asked if this matter should go through the adjudication process. Village President Abu-Taleb responded that matters brought before the Village Board during Non Agenda Public Comment should not be debated during the Village Board meeting.

IX. Regular Agenda

A. [MOT 21-43](#) Motion to Accept Staff Recommendation to Implement SouthTown Business District Requests Due to Oak Park Avenue Street Project

Village Manager Cara Pavlicek provided an overview of the Motion. On February 1, 2021 a contract was awarded to TranSystems Engineering for construction engineering of the Oak Park Avenue projects. Subsequent to that time, Carnival Grocery located in The SouthTown Business District requested certain incentives during the March through June construction project when Oak Park Avenue, from Harrison to Van Buren, is closed to through traffic.

Arthur Paris, owner of Carnival Grocery: Arthur expressed the impact as well as the needs of the businesses in The SouthTown Business District throughout the duration of the construction project. Arthur proposed additional Marketing opportunities to help the SouthTown Business District during this time. He would also like to work closely with "Pick Oak Park"

(POP) to implement additional marketing. In addition, he proposed options for financial compensation for the revenue losses projected to occur during construction.

Director of Development Customer Services, Tammie Grossman, shared the Village's response to the 5 original requests. That request included the coverage for the cost of signage, the communication of hours of operation, additional parking options, detours for impacted businesses and signage in the surrounding community along the sidewalks.

Director Grossman said the Village has placed multiple signs throughout the SouthTown District as well as directional signs for curbside services. Websites were setup to communicate construction updates.

Staff does not recommend the moratorium for parking fees. Director Grossman noted concern that people will use that Lot 1 for extended commuter parking. The Village made 17 parking spaces available in Lot 1 by moving Permit Parkers to a neighboring lot. Staff does recommend keeping the parking system the way it is.

Staff has also determined the construction budget is able absorb approximately \$25,000 to compensate businesses for delivery fees and/or marketing costs. Staff would like to work with The Prescott Group who is currently managing all of the communications and promotional activities related to the SouthTown District.

Staff does not recommend the No Parking ban on Van Buren and Harrison Street.

Staff does not recommend the Shopper Rewards program because there is not enough infrastructure in the SouthTown area to support this type of program.

Village Engineer Bill McKenna provided a summary and timeline of the water and sewer project taking place in the SouthTown District from the Eisenhower Expressway to Jackson Boulevard. The road is one lane of traffic going northbound. He said the Village anticipates the roads will reopen in the SouthTown District by May 5, 2021.

Village Trustee Arti Walker-Peddakotla and Village Trustee Deno Andrews discussed the difference in working with the "Pick Oak Park" team and staff's recommendation to work with The Prescott Group for the SouthTown District marketing campaign. Village Manager Cara Pavlicek added that The Prescott Group is listed in the contact with TranSystem Engineering as the sub-consultant for marketing.

Village Trustee Arti Walker-Peddakotla agrees with staff recommendations for the compensation to SouthTown businesses for delivery and marketing costs, but recommends working with the businesses to determine what is best for them and what option or combination of options the businesses prefer.

Village Trustee Deno Andrews shared the parking challenges with construction workers parking on the surrounding streets all day. He requested that staff reach out to the contractors working on the projects to see if it is possible to have the construction workers park a bit further away so there is space in the immediate neighborhood to turnover for the businesses. He does not think there are too many commuters parking during this time, making it possible to have free parking with a time limit. Village Trustee Deno Andrews also mentioned that local businesses must be able to access their designated loading zones. He also agrees with his colleague, Village Trustee Simone Boutet, with the financial compensation to businesses, but unsure about only some businesses receiving this compensation while others struggle because they are not in a deliverable type of business. He prefers to see the compensation go to marketing for the entire SouthTown District.

Village Trustees Jim Taglia and Susan Buchanan also agree with colleagues Village Trustees Simone Boutet and Deno Andrews, that financial compensation should be a general application of a marketing plan for all businesses in the SouthTown District, instead of a compensation for deliveries.

Village President Anan Abu-Taleb also agrees with the Village Trustees regarding the request for financial compensation. He would also like to see a banner posted in the local neighborhood to show patrons the progress of the construction project so they can anticipate when the project will be complete.

Village Trustee Susan Buchanan prefers to let staff coordinate the one-hour parking, only if it is possible

Village Trustee Arti Walker-Peddakotla concurs with her colleague Village Trustee Deno Andrews regarding parking.

Village Trustee Simone Boutet said she supports the marketing with The Prescott Group, increasing the communication as indicated in the public comment, and supports Village President Anan Abu-Taleb's recommendation of an ending date. She does not support the parking recommendation of free one-hour parking.

Village Trustee Jim Taglia does not agree with one-hour free parking.

Village President Anan Abu-Taleb supports the staff recommendation for parking and supports Village Trustee Deno Andrew's recommendations.

Development Customer Services Director, Tammie Grossman, indicated that she can only lower the cost of parking. To implement one-hour free parking in Lot 1, RevCon must be hired to reprogram the calet stations and Passport Parking must be hired to reprogram the meters.

Village Manager Cara Pavlicek recommended a formal motion to suspend enforcement and allow staff to reinstitute enforcement if Lot 1 is backed up.

Village Trustee Arti-Walker Peddakotla moved, Village Trustee Andrews seconded a motion to suspend enforcement and allow staff to reinstitute enforcement if Lot 1 is backed up.

It was moved by Village Andrews, seconded by Village Walker-Peddakotla, that this Motion be approved. The motion was approved. The roll call on the vote was as follows:

AYES: 4 - Village President Abu-Taleb, Village Trustee Andrews, Village Trustee Buchanan, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

NAYS: 2 - Village Trustee Boutet, and Village Trustee Taglia

ABSENT: 1 - Village Trustee Moroney

- B.** [MOT 21-49](#) **A Presentation on the Proposed Community Recreation Center Project by the Park District and the Campaign Co-Chairs for a Community Recreation Center and a Motion to Committ \$400,000 in Village Funds to the Project**

Public Comment

Gail Landers, CEO and Founder of FFC Oak Park: Gail is opposed to the use of Village funds to go to a community recreation center and provided information and data which reflects the lack of government funding to the fitness industry. Gail indicated it creates an unfair, tax free industry in Oak Park.

Jack Powers: Jack submitted a public comment opposed to the allocation of funds. He recommended that a comprehensive study of the opportunity costs of removing a sizeable piece of prime land on Madison St. permanently from the property tax rolls by building a Recreation Center versus redeveloping that land into residential and other use that would pay property taxes in perpetuity, not to mention transfer stamps/taxes, sales taxes, etc.

Monica Sheehan: Monica provided public comment opposed to this request and respectfully asked that the Village Board deny it. Monica stated that Village funds are not intended to supplement the financing of a capital works

project by another taxing body, regardless of how well intended, especially a project in which taxpayers have been denied the opportunity to vote on it via a binding referendum.

Leslie Sutphen: Leslie submitted public comment opposed to the use of tax payer funds for this project.

Jeremy Olsen: Jeremy submitted public comment in support of the proposed Community Recreation Center for the Park District of Oak Park.

Amanda Massie: Amanda submitted public comment opposed to the proposal to commit \$400,000 to the Community Recreation Center, sharing concerns pertaining to the financial challenges the community will face due to COVID.

Dr. David Ansell and Mary Jo Schuler, Ph.D provided a presentation for the Community Recreation Center on behalf of the Parks Foundation. Dr. David Ansell said The Parks Foundation is committed to raising the capital to create the building. In an effort to make the building net zero, the Parks Foundation is requesting a contingency of \$400,000.

Village Trustee Deno Andrews clarified that the \$400,000 contingency request is strictly for a sustainability project and will not go towards the capital campaign. He also established that this is not a property tax expenditure.

Village Trustee Simone Boutet stated that she is in support of this project. She asked if the project is not fully funded yet, how will the Board commit the funds for future use? Village Manger Cara Pavlicek clarified that the action before the Board this evening is to commit the funds. The formal action would be a combination of an amendment to the fiscal year 2021 budget and an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with the Park District of Oak Park.

Village Trustee Susan Buchanan asked Village Manager Pavlicek if there is an alternative to having the request come from the Sustainability Fund. Village Manager Cara Pavlicek said the Village has experienced financial losses due to COVID, however if the Board directs staff, it is possible to look into other sources of funding. Village Trustee Susan Buchanan inquired about the deadline to have the Village's commitment. Dr. David Ansell indicated fiscal year 2021. Village Trustee Susan Buchanan stated that the Environment and Energy Commission is supportive of the project being a net zero building, however the Environment and Energy Commission is unsure of the process. The Environment and Energy Commission's request is to table this item so the Environment and Energy Commission can review the proposal. Once the commission reviews the proposal, they then request to make a recommendation to the Board of

Trustees to be discussed in April 2021.

Village Trustee Arti Walker-Peddakotla also shared her concerns with this process, stating that this project seems to have been brought forward prior to the other projects the ad hoc committee has been working on. Village Trustee Arti Walker-Peddakotla wants to ensure youth do not get policed out of indoor spaces, that there are equitable practices happening at the Community Recreation Center, and that restorative justice practitioners are being placed in the building. Dr. David Ansell reassured the Board that this building is being created in the framework of equity. Further, Village Trustee Arti Walker-Peddakotla would like to see an impact assessment on the Sustainability Fund which clearly reflects expenditures and revenues.

Village Trustee Jim Taglia stated that he thinks a project of this scale is what the Sustainability Fund is best suited for. He said this is a project the whole Village can support, it has a positive impact to Madison Street and it is a good collaborative effort between the Village and Park District of Oak Park. Village Trustee Jim Taglia said these funds are meant to be disbursed and this seems like the best use. Village Trustee Jim Taglia also mentioned that we are building the Sustainability Fund at approximately \$40,000 a month. This request is equivalent to approximately 10-months of revenue into the Sustainability Fund.

Village President Anan Abu-Taleb said while he previously did not support the Community Recreation Center project, after learning more about the project's fundraising, the sustainability portion and the collaboration with a fellow taxing body to benefit the community as a whole, he is now in support of this project.

It was moved by Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla, seconded by Village Trustee Andrews, that this Motion be approved. The motion was approved. The roll call on the vote was as follows:

AYES: 6 - Village President Abu-Taleb, Village Trustee Andrews, Village Trustee Boutet, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 - Village Trustee Moroney

- C.** [MOT 21-45](#) **A Motion to Approve Recommendations for Use of Sustainability Funds in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 and Direct Staff to Prepare the Necessary Actions Including the Issuance of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ)/Request for Proposals (RFP) for Consultant Services and Submission of an Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget to Appropriate Funding from the Sustainability Fund for Marketing, Residential Retrofit Grants, Energy**

Efficiency Rebates, Consultant Services and Additional Sustainability**Staffing**Public Comment

Pamela Tate: Pamela is enthusiastically supporting the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Climate Action Task Force.

Deputy Village Manager Ahmad Zayyad highlighted that staff is in agreement with a majority of what has been suggested by the Ad Hoc Climate Action Task Force with a few strategic suggestions for moving forward. He introduced the village's sustainability technical advisor with ICLEI, Kale Roberts. Kale presented on the services they provide in aiding communities with creating a climate action plan; climate analysis tools and membership to international working groups. They provide support so that all efforts of creating and filing an RFP for a consultant are as efficient and cost effective as possible. ICLEI will provide a technical advisory and resources for all climate action plan efforts.

Staff suggested minor changes to the Ad Hoc Task Force recommendations. Staff recommends \$35,000 dedicated for a public campaign for July through September and \$200,000 from CDBG funds for a retrofit grant program. Staff will need about 90 days to come back to the Village Board with proposed details for that program and a solar energy program.

Staff agrees that additional staff is needed. Staff would like the opportunity to narrow and define the scope of services needed for an RFP/RFQ. The village has additional sustainability memberships and resources to leverage to further assess and inform the scope for the RFP process.

Village Trustee Arti Walker-Peddakotla inquired why the CDBG amount had to be reduced, to which Village Manager Cara Pavlicek indicated the Environment and Energy Commission would like to increase the minimum income threshold.

Village Trustee Simone Boutet asked that the Village Sustainability funds are used to reduce greenhouse gases, and not so much on the work of planning on how to do so. Village Trustee Simone Boutet supports the staff recommendation.

Village Trustee Jim Taglia understands why the retro-fit project is being presented, but indicated that he is concerned that the impact is not high enough because it would take several years for the retro-fit project to be completed.

Village Trustee Susan Buchanan said the ad hoc group spent a lot of time and expertise on this project. The retro-fits are important to seal before placing solar panels on Oak Park houses.

Village President Anan Abu-Taleb supports this plan and thanked Village Trustee Susan Buchanan, Village Manager Cara Pavlicek and Deputy Village Manager Ahmed Zayyad for their work on this project.

It was moved by Village Trustee Andrews, seconded by Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla, that this Motion be approved. The motion was approved. The roll call on the vote was as follows:

AYES: 6 - Village President Abu-Taleb, Village Trustee Andrews, Village Trustee Boutet, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 - Village Trustee Moroney

X. Adjourn

It was moved by Village Trustee Andrews, seconded by Village Trustee Boutet to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:22 P.M., Monday March 22, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christina Waters, Deputy Village Clerk

AYES: 6 - Village President Abu-Taleb, Village Trustee Andrews, Village Trustee Boutet, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 - Village Trustee Moroney