



Village of Oak Park

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

Meeting Minutes

President and Board of Trustees

Tuesday, February 6, 2024

6:30 PM

Village Hall

I. Call to Order

Village President Vicki Scaman called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:32 P.M.

II. Roll Call

Present: 6 - Village President Scaman, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Parakkat, Village Trustee Robinson, Village Trustee Straw, and Village Trustee Wesley

Absent: 1 - Village Trustee Enyia

III. Agenda Approval

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

IV. Minutes

- A. [MOT 24-108](#) A Motion to Approve Minutes from the January 23, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Village Board

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

V. Non-Agenda Public Comment

There was no non-agenda public comment.

VI. Proclamation

- B. [MOT 24-114](#) A Motion to Approve a Proclamation for Proclaiming February 2024 as Black History Month.

Trustee Wesley read the Proclamation into the record.

Melanie McQueen and Donna Callendar introduced Harambee/Kuumba kids who performed a dance. Harambee will perform Black History Month events at Lincoln Elementary on Feb. 17 and Longfellow on Feb. 24.

It was moved by Trustee Wesley, seconded by Trustee Buchanan, to approve the Proclamation. The motion was approved. 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 Straw, and Village Trustee Wesley

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 - Village Trustee Enyia

VII. Village Manager Reports

Village Manager Kevin Jackson introduced Assistant Village Manager/HR Director Kira Tchang who provided an update on the asylum seeker transition process and the current financials.

Trustee Robinson requested clarification on the reimbursement from the county. Director Tchang responded that the Village has not yet submitted any invoices. Cook County pre-approved \$350K for expenses incurred for January and February emergency shelter operations. Manager Jackson said those funds are earmarked to go back into the general fund as ARPA lost revenue and could be converted back to direct ARPA.

Trustee Robinson said she motioned to bring back the subgrantee contracts and allocations for discussion. Director Tchang said the Village submitted the grant application to the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus for \$1.944M. The agreements will be executed under the Village Manager's authority. Trustee Robinson said those do not seem to fall under the extension of the emergency order and these are partnerships for services beyond February 29. Village Attorney Paul Stephanides clarified the Village does not have anything in place after February 29. Trustee Robinson said those services should be vetted and discussed by the Board, which Attorney Stephanides confirmed is what the Village is doing.

Trustee Parakkat asked what happens post June with the nonprofit. Nonprofit representative Jack Crowe said the improvements are minimal to make the building habitable. Director Tchang said of the \$1.2M requested for operations of the grant, \$50K (4%) has been identified for the modest rehabs. Crowe provided more detail about the family transition shelter. Director Tchang said the nonprofit is requesting an additional \$360K in legal funding that is separate from the \$1.2M.

Trustee Straw inquired how the grant funds will be disbursed. Director Tchang said the Village has addressed start-up funding through the subgrantee agreements.

Trustee Wesley said he feels blindsided by the task force and asked why the Village chose them. Director Tchang said the resettlement dollars were previously shared with the Board. The Village submitted its \$1.244M proposal and the state said to apply for the SMASS grant. The Village

quickly put together a plan to identify where funding could be used to address the greatest needs of the asylum seekers. The task force had resettled several folks at that point and were considered the only option at the time. Chief DEI Officer Dr. Danielle Walker added that the task force members have been consistently engaging with and have established relationships with the migrant community.

Trustee Wesley expressed concern over the process by which the partner was chosen and the way it was communicated to the Board. He noted the task force has only been in operation for a month and they do not have a system of tracking and transparency. Director Tchang said the subgrantee agreement terms include a process for reporting their expenses for reimbursement and meeting the state's strict standards.

Trustee Wesley said it makes him feel extremely uncomfortable and he will not vote for this. Director Tchang said the Community of Congregations is a member of the task force and its fiscal agent. The Village has a track record of working with them and considers them a key partner. Trustee Wesley noted they are a pass through and will not be operating the program. Manager Jackson reiterated the unique circumstances and the Village's trusted relationship with the Community of Congregations.

Trustee Buchanan said this is exactly what she wanted to see happen with this funding and she strongly supports this. She said the majority of the Board has given direction to off-ramp the Village from full responsibility for the migrants, which this funding does. She is satisfied with the transparency of the funding and trusts the staff will monitor its use.

President Scaman expressed her support for the Community of Congregations and this task force.

Trustee Straw noted that Community of Congregations is where Housing Forward and Beyond Hunger came from and they have a long track record of responding to community needs. He said he supports the task force.

Trustee Wesley said he does not recall any Board consensus around starting a task force. There is a difference between transparency to the public and to this Board.

Trustee Robinson noted the Community of Congregations were not at the last meeting. She said she also felt blindsided when task force members were called down to present while the Board was given a handout. She said that process is not acceptable. We need to think beyond Oak Park's borders and the Board has to be able to vet choices and share our concerns. Manager Jackson said the emergency declaration is supposed

to enable the Manager to make decisions in the exigent circumstances that are occurring. Director Tchang said if Trustees feel blindsided, that is a failure of staff's communication and not of the partners.

President Scaman said task force members have the experience. Director Tchang noted the Village meets weekly with the task force.

Trustee Wesley said he feels a level of accountability to ask questions when funds are being directed to organizations we have relationships with and the organization is only a couple weeks old.

OPPD Police Chief Shatonya Johnson presented the pedestrian stop update for the second half of the year. The last quarterly presentation was delayed due to the emergency order.

Trustee Buchanan said she is interested in the outcomes, particularly the suspicious persons and activity. Chief Johnson said they all qualified as suspicious. There were two self-initiated activities where the officer initiated the stop. The others were calls for service.

Trustee Robinson asked if the criteria for identifying rate/ethnicity is officer observation, which Chief Johnson confirmed. Hispanics are also now being tracked on a regular basis. Age is determined by the person providing their date of birth or ID.

Trustee Parakkat inquired how this data compares with the previous year. Chief Johnson said OPPD began tracking in December 2022.

Trustee Wesley requested a copy of the presentation and a racial breakdown of the juveniles. Chief Johnson said there were four male black juveniles and one female black juvenile. They were all calls for service.

Manager Jackson introduced new Development Services Director Emily Egan and Deputy Director Brandon Crawford. They introduced themselves and shared their backgrounds.

VIII. Village Board Committees & Trustee Liaison Commission Reports

Trustee Robinson announced the Historic Preservation Commission is hosting a speaker series Feb. 8 with Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest Executive Director Frank Lipo in Council Chambers. The next speaker will be Landmarks Illinois President and CEO Bonnie McDonald.

IX. Citizen Commission Vacancies

- C. [ID 24-133](#) Board & Commission Vacancy Report for February 6, 2024.

There were no comments.

XI. Consent Agenda

Approval of the Consent Agenda

It was moved by Trustee Wesley, 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: 6 - Village President Scaman, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Parakkat, Village Trustee Robinson, Village Trustee Straw, and Village Trustee Wesley

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 - Village Trustee Enyia

- D.** [RES 24-113](#) **A Resolution Approving an Amendment to a Community Development Block Grant Subrecipient Grant Agreement Between the Village of Oak Park and Our Future Reads and Authorizing its Execution**
This Resolution was approved.
- E.** [RES 24-121](#) **A Resolution Approving an Independent Contractor Agreement with Xtreme Fire Protection, LLC for Annual Inspection and Repair Services of Fire Sprinkler Systems at Village Facilities for a Three-Year Term in an Amount Not to Exceed \$50,463.63 in 2024 with an Option to Renew for Two Additional One-Year Terms Thereafter and Authorizing its Execution**
This Resolution was adopted.
- F.** [RES 24-129](#) **A Resolution Approving a Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the Village of Oak Park and the Illinois Fraternal Order of Police Labor Council Representing the Oak Park Lieutenants and Sergeants Association Effective January 1, 2023 through December 30, 2025 and Authorizing its Execution**
This Resolution was adopted.
- G.** [RES 24-130](#) **A Resolution Approving a Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the Village of Oak Park and the Service Employees International Union Local 73 Water and Sewer Workers Effective July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2026 and Authorizing its Execution**
This Resolution was adopted.
- H.** [RES 24-118](#) **A Resolution Authorizing the Submission of a National Association of County and City Health Officials Grant Application for "Improving the Health of Young Children: Expanding Vaccine Coverage" Through Partnerships with Early Care and Education Programs in the Amount of \$120,000 for the Period of February 5, 2024 Through September 29, 2024 and Authorizing the Execution of Any Subsequent Agreements for the Grant**

This Resolution was adopted.

XII. Regular Agenda

I. [ORD 24-102](#) **An Ordinance Granting an Extension of Time to Complete Construction of the Planned Development at 261 Washington Boulevard to August 1, 2024**

Village Planner Craig Failor introduced the Item and Ambrosia Homes Development Owner Tim Pomaville presented the Item.

There was no discussion from the Board.

It was moved by Trustee Straw, seconded by Trustee Robinson, that this Ordinance be adopted. The motion was approved. 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 Straw, and Village Trustee Wesley

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 - Village Trustee Enyia

J. [MOT 24-107](#) **A Motion to Approve American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding to be Provided to Housing Forward in the Amount of \$500,000 for Renovations at the Write Inn Located at 211 N. Oak Park Avenue and Directing Staff to Prepare the Necessary Agreement for Village Board Approval**

Grants Manager Vanessa Matheny introduced the Item and Housing Forward Chief Executive Officer Lynda Schueler presented the Item. Management Analyst Arlene Pedraza presented the status of the Village's ARPA funding.

President Scaman inquired about YEMBA. Analyst Pedraza said they have not been in the ARPA allocations. Manager Matheny added they receive CDBG grants for public facility and public service.

Trustee Parakkat asked if there should be ARPA funding coming back that was allocated for migrant care. Analyst Pedraza said the Village matched \$150K for the initial SMASS grant and allocated another \$500K for the crisis response. It will all be tracked as lost revenue funds whether they are expended or reimbursed. It will go back into the general fund and be available for use.

Trustee Robinson inquired when the audit will take place. Analyst Pedraza said the annual audit ends in May and will finalize the actuals for 2023 which will determine the final number for lost revenue. Trustee Robinson noted all ARPA allocations have to be finalized by the end of this year. Interim CFO Donna Gayden said staff have started the process of asking ARPA

recipients what they are going to spend. When we get to budget season, the Board will have a strong number.

Trustee Robinson inquired about the returned CDBG funds. Manager Matheny said the Village has seven years to spend CDBG funds. The Village has \$685K remaining that is unallocated that we need to spend. There is only a cap for public service and administration funds. Public facility improvement does not have a cap.

Trustee Robinson noted the ARPA application is undated. Manager Matheny said the Village received the application in December 2022. The revised amount and timeline was received from Housing Forward a few weeks ago. They were previously given \$500K for service, not for facility. Manager Jackson said Housing Forward could have made a request and the Village could have considered other funding options. Trustee Robinson said she supports Housing Forward and would prefer the Village put out a request for the ARPA allocations to present the Board with more options.

Trustee Parakkat asked what would happen if the CDBG portion goes through and the other piece does not. CEO Schueler said the Illinois Housing Authority will be releasing their RFP in the summer so they are trying to get started on these issues that need to be addressed that go above the \$500K CDBG funding. Trustee Parakkat said he supports getting ARPA spent as quickly as possible.

Trustee Straw asked if there is a preference for doing it this way versus all of the funding coming from CDBG. Manager Matheny said the recommendation for the \$500K with CDBG is to meet HUD's requirement to spend down \$1.5M of our allocation by August 2. The goal is to add the additional \$185K to the future grant cycle starting October 1. Trustee Straw said he supports the current proposal.

Trustee Buchanan said she supports the motion and the resolution.

Trustee Wesley said he supports Housing Forward and the CDBG funding but not the ARPA funding. He said he would like to see the \$500K in ARPA funding run through a DEI assessment on the funds already distributed and an aggressive process on reaching out to additional nonprofits with a priority on black and other minority-led. Manager Matheny noted the Village has brought in five new nonprofits in the past two years through CDBG. The \$1M previously given to Housing Forward was for services to meet the Board's goals of emergency shelter and wraparound services.

President Scaman said she supports both items. She noted some of the new grantees are due to Manager Matheny's relationships from the

Community Mental Health Board. She agreed there is value in investigating the nonprofits that are not being supported. Manager Matheny noted Thursday's workshop for the next round of CDBG will have 10 new nonprofits in attendance.

Trustee Parakkat said the level of transparency and fairness of the ARPA allocation has to be a priority and there has to be a process. President Scaman said she thinks the process is very transparent. Manager Jackson said this recommendation is in alignment with the Board's goals of being more assertive in how we address homelessness in the community. This will create permanent interim housing and respite medical services.

Trustee Wesley wondered if there is a material difference between the \$700K and the \$1M in terms of the ability to help Housing Forward. Manager Matheny reiterated the \$500K recommendation was to be able to use the balance for the upcoming program year 2024. Trustee Wesley noted we can convert ARPA funds to lost revenue and lose the restrictions on how it is spent.

Trustee Robinson requested a menu of options from staff on different ways to spend the unspent ARPA fund balance when it comes back this summer, which Manager Jackson confirmed. CFO Gayden said the biggest thing is timing and we do not want to send any money back.

Trustee Wesley said we should have done a better job of ensuring our funding disbursements were diverse. President Scaman said she advocated absorbing as much of the ARPA funds into the general fund as possible. Trustee Wesley wondered if something can be done about the expensive windows at the Wright Inn. President Scaman recommended attending the Historic Preservation Commission's forums.

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

AYES: 4 - Village President Scaman, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Parakkat, and Village Trustee Straw

NAYS: 2 - Village Trustee Robinson, and Village Trustee Wesley

ABSENT: 1 - Village Trustee Enyia

K. [RES 24-112](#) A Resolution Approving a Program Year 2023 Substantial Amendment for Community Development Block Grant Returned Funds to be Provided to Housing Forward

There was no further discussion from the Board.

It was moved by Trustee Straw, seconded by Trustee Robinson, that this Resolution be adopted. The motion was approved. 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 Straw, and Village Trustee Wesley

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 - Village Trustee Enyia

L. [RES 24-116](#) A Resolution to Adopt the 2023-2025 Village Board Protocols as discussed at the September 14, 2023 Regular Meeting

Manager Jackson introduced the Item.

Trustee Wesley requested to strike public comments via email from being read at Board meetings and instead just adding them to the minutes. Attorney Stephanides said email comments are only required to be read if the meeting is via remote participation.

President Scaman said she is fine with that unless it is a special guest. Attorney Stephanides noted the minutes can get lengthy and can be made accessible and part of the record. President Scaman asked if they can be available online. Deputy Village Manager Lisa Shelley confirmed staff will look into adding that functionality. Attorney Stephanides noted staff will update the public comment language on the Board agenda.

Trustee Parakkat noted that nothing in these protocols limits a Trustee's ability to make a statement on an individual's or their own behalf.

Trustee Wesley said he prefers for a Trustee to submit an item to staff and if the work will require more than two hours, staff will request a second. Manager Jackson said he would go back to the Trustee who made the motion, let them know the item will take more than two hours, and ask the Trustee to get a second.

Trustee Wesley noted executive sessions take longer than the hour allotted. President Scaman said the Manager determines the length of time depending on the agenda items.

Trustee Buchanan requested removing the word "affirmative" for the number of poll votes required. Attorney Stephanides confirmed it can be taken out.

Trustee Straw inquired about the possibility of remote public comment to provide increased access. Attorney Stephanides said it is currently written to provide live public comment. The Trustees could amend it to provide a remote option.

Trustee Wesley said he is in favor of requiring the person to be on camera.

Trustee Robinson said she would not want accessibility to be a barrier and there have to be some threshold limits. President Scaman said she has concerns with making decisions on how people access their government. Trustee Robinson noted this is just one form of communication.

Attorney Stephanides noted the protocols state the Village Manager may limit repetitive or redundant comment and there is a regulation for individuals whose behavior disrupts or impedes the conduct of a meeting. President Scaman said she is fine with it as is.

Trustee Buchanan said she supports the requirement to be on camera.

Clerk Waters said she does not support requiring someone to be on camera and thinks there should be the option to call in or send an email. She is not in favor of reading public comments sent via email.

Attorney Stephanides clarified that people cannot be required to provide their name or address and they do not have to be residents of Oak Park. They can be required to be live and/or on camera.

Trustee Straw said he would be in favor of tabling this piece and asking Dr. Walker to come back with a DEI assessment. President Scaman and Trustee Wesley said they would support that as well. Manager Jackson agreed a DEI assessment would be valuable.

A friendly amendment was made to remove the word "affirmative" and include language requiring remote public comment to be on-camera with a subsequent DEI assessment.

It was moved by Trustee Robinson, seconded by Trustee Wesley, that this Resolution be adopted. The motion was approved. 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 Straw, and Village Trustee Wesley

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 - Village Trustee Enyia

M. [MOT 24-111](#) A Motion to Direct Village Staff to Draft a Policy for Village Board Consideration Regarding the Honorary Designation of Village Streets, Facilities, and Business Districts in Recognition of Individuals, Including Dr. Percy Julian, and Programs, Purchases and Initiatives in Recognition of Individuals

Trustee Robinson said she is interested in developing pathways to honor Dr. Julian and having staff develop a policy to address this and get formal

guidelines. She recommends posthumous honoring a resident who has made significant contributions, the meaning being focused on an area of the village that has a geographical relationship to the honoree, and requiring it be approved by a super majority of the Board. She said she likes the idea of an application fee to cover the signage costs.

Trustee Parakkat noted the original motion was around celebrating Percy Julian and he would need to dig in more to expand the focus to a broader frame. He suggested having a specific commission evaluate it before it comes to the Board.

Trustee Wesley said he does not want this process to hold up the honoring of Percy Julian. He suggested a historic district named in his honor.

Trustee Straw agreed that he does not want the process to delay honoring Percy Julian. He said he thinks there is merit to creating a process for honoring individuals.

President Scaman said she is opposed to honoring streets after individuals other than Percy Julian. She suggested the Village create a program with the Oak Park Area Arts Council to create murals in the community. She noted former Trustee Moroni wanted to see bronze sculptures in the community of famous residents.

It was moved by Trustee Wesley, seconded by Trustee Robinson, that this Motion be approved. The motion was approved. 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 Straw, and Village Trustee Wesley

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 - Village Trustee Enyia

N. [MOT 24-112](#) A Motion to Direct Village Staff to Draft for Village Board Consideration an Ordinance Amending the Oak Park Village Code to Adopt a Transient Occupancy Rental Unit Surcharge Tax in the Amount of 3.5% to be Allocated to the Affordable Housing Fund

Trustee Parakkat said he does not support this option and prefers to step it up in small increments and learn from it.

Trustee Buchanan inquired how this is different than the hotel/motel tax. Manager Jackson said this tax is the same 3.5% rate that would be applied only to short-term rentals.

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

President Scaman noted this is a pass through. AirBNB pays the tax so it

does not affect the AirBNB owner's profits. She said AirBNBs more directly affect the availability of affordable housing in our community. The hotels do not. Trustee Parakkat said it still has an impact on the end customer and he does not want to take the risk if it is not necessary. He said he would like to see data for the options under consideration.

Trustee Straw agreed that AirBNBs have an impact of removing affordable housing and said he would also like to see individual data for the hotels and AirBNBs and to highlight women and minority-owned businesses. Manager Jackson noted there were previous study sessions and the Board provided direction.

Trustee Wesley referenced a 2021 *Wednesday Journal* article about the four high rises adding 1,068 units in Oak Park. He noted there are 115 AirBNB licenses in Oak Park, which is 10% of those units. He said he supports this and doesn't need to see more data.

Trustee Buchanan noted we also have the goal of promoting tourism and the tax income from the AirBNBs has been significant. Trustee Wesley said then we need to build more units.

It was moved by Trustee Robinson, seconded by Trustee Wesley, that this Motion be approved. The motion was approved. 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 Straw, and Village Trustee Wesley

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 - Village Trustee Enyia

XIII. Call to Board and Clerk

Trustee Buchanan wished the community a happy Black History Month.

Trustee Parakkat announced that February 22 to March 1 is the first Bite the Burbs organized by Visit Oak Park and other partners.

President Scaman said she visited the White House last week and looks forward to enhancing relationships and work with partner agencies to support our many Board goals. She said she is distraught by the discussion earlier and confident the staff named the task force in the agenda item. She said she will continue to support everyone equally.

Consideration of a Motion to Adjourn to Executive Session to Discuss Lease of Property for Use by the Village

It was moved by Trustee Robinson, seconded by Trustee Straw, to adjourn into Executive Session. The motion was approved. 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 Straw, and Village Trustee Wesley

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 - Village Trustee Enyia

Reconvene to Regular Meeting in Council Chambers

The Regular Meeting reconvened at 11:19 P.M.

XIV. 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 11:20 P.M., Tuesday, February 6, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,
Deputy Clerk Hansen