



Village of Oak Park

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

Meeting Minutes

President and Board of Trustees

Monday, February 27, 2023

6:30 PM

Village Hall

II. Call to Order

Village President Vicki Scaman called the Special Meeting to order at 7:02 P.M.

III. Roll Call

Present: 6 - Village President Scaman, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Enyia, Village Trustee Robinson, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Wesley

Absent: 1 - Village Trustee Parakkat

IV. Agenda Approval

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

V. Non-Agenda Public Comment

There was no Non-Agenda Public Comment.

VI. Regular Agenda

B. [ID 23-102](#)

Presentation and Discussion of the Report of Results from the 2022 Edition of The National Community Survey for The Village of Oak Park

Village Manager Kevin Jackson introduced the Item and said staff welcome any feedback and direction from the Village Board from the presentation. He introduced Chief Communications Officer Dan Yopchick and Communications Manager Erik Jacobson.

CCO Yopchick introduced Polco Survey Research Team Member Brandon Barnett. Mr. Barnett presented a summary of the findings from the Oak Park National Community Survey.

President Scaman inquired about the number of survey participants. Mr. Barnett responded that there were 505 participants this year.

Trustee Robinson asked if additional detail can be provided on the issue of safety and the types of crimes residents are concerned about. Mr. Barnett responded that there weren't any specific questions that were asked in this

iteration, though it is an opportunity to post a follow-up survey on Polco to dig deeper into that issue. Trustee Robinson said she would be interested in doing a more focused survey on safety.

Manager Jackson said Chief Johnson will present an overview of the Oak Park Police Department (OPPD) to the Village Board as well as provide crime stats, historical trends, and comparisons with other communities. The Village is repositioning its community relations efforts and expects to have more direct engagement around community safety.

Trustee Taglia said public safety is one of the biggest issues and the Village needs to continue to focus on the things we can control, like passing the ordinance for closing gas stations. He noted that 9 out of 10 residents felt that maintaining police protection, fire, and emergency medical assistance service levels were essential. He noted that 60% of survey respondents said their overall feeling of safety was excellent or good and wondered if that means that 40% feel that it is fair or poor. Mr. Barnett confirmed that is correct.

Trustee Enyia noted that the next highest issue after safety is the residents' connection and engagement with their community, which also has a large impact on safety. CCO Yopchick added that the open survey provided an additional 350 responses and that data was similar. He said having a presence in communications and working closer with OPPD and OPFD to be more proactive will help to alleviate residents' concerns.

Trustee Buchanan noted that the survey questions reflect residents' perceptions of safety and not necessarily the reality. That is where the messaging and outreach comes in to inform residents of some of the preventive measures OPPD is doing and increase their perception of safety. Trustee Enyia added that education about fire prevention safety is important as well.

President Scaman said she considers a fair perception of safety to be good in this current climate. The perception of poor is 12% and excellent is 13%, which are also close numbers. She said she knows the Village is moving in the right direction.

Mr. Barnett concluded by saying the Village has 730 subscribers to its current Polco profile and posting follow-up surveys is free with the Village's subscription. President Scaman noted that this new survey and the previous surveys are all posted on the Village website and she recommended also viewing the Illinois Youth Survey on D200's website. Manager Jacobson noted there is a new interactive version this year beyond just the PDF.

C. [ID 23-105](#) **Review of the Proposed Expansion of Policies Tested as Part of the Village's 2019 Parking Pilot Program**

Manager Jackson said staff are seeking direction from the Village Board on the expansion of the parking pilot as recommended by the Transportation Commission and staff. Based on the outcome tonight, the Item will be scheduled for an upcoming Regular Agenda for approval sometime in March. He introduced Parking & Mobility Services Manager Sean Keane.

Manager Keane presented on the parking pilot program expansion and the proposed changes to all seven parking zones.

Trustee Buchanan asked why more spaces are being created for permit holders if it was determined there were enough spaces for all permit holders. Manager Keane said it depends on the zone. Some zones have the overall capacity but not in the areas where residents have issues.

Trustee Robinson asked why those zones weren't reconfigured instead of expanded. Manager Keane said staff did not consider any removal of street frontages as part of the process. Staff looked at improvements through expansion. Trustee Robinson said it seems the zones should be reconfigured in some instances rather than expanded.

Trustee Robinson asked how it was determined that permit holders experienced particular hardship. Manager Keane responded that the Commission directed staff to bring those back and staff made the determination based on their knowledge of what they hear from the permit holders. Parking staff had GIS staff map the locations zone by zone and presented that to the Commission.

Trustee Robinson said it was difficult for her to tell from the hundreds of pages of public comments and survey results how residents felt. There seemed to be a wide variety of feedback. She requested an overview to know if most residents are wanting the expansion or concerned about expansion. Manager Jackson said staff can follow up with a summary. Development and Customer Services Director Tammie Grossman added that the Village did several hearings for impacted residents to be able to make public comments. The Commission made changes based on the information received from those hearings.

Trustee Robinson asked if increasing the number of permit holders would have to come back before the Village Board. Director Tammie Grossman confirmed it would and staff are not recommending that at this time.

Trustee Wesley inquired about the length of the wait list. Manager Keane

responded that it depends on the zone. Zone Y7 is currently the only zone with a wait list and it is not long. There is a lot of turnover each quarter.

President Scaman asked what someone does when they cannot get a permit. Manager Keane said the Village works with them to find them a nearby lot. The Village also maintains an inventory of private lots that are available.

Trustee Taglia inquired why Zone Y7 is being expanded several blocks when there are no permit holder counts up and down Lombard. Manager Keane responded that since Zone Y7 is the most highly sought after zone, the Village had to look at some overflow areas for permit holders.

President Scaman asked if other streets were considered that would be closer for residents than Zone Y7. Manager Keane responded that the Commission approved the west side of the 300 block of Harvey for permit parking and the Village can look at adding additional north/south streets and would work with the Traffic Engineering Division to ensure line of sight and safe passing conditions.

Trustee Wesley requested more information about safe passing conditions. Manager Keane responded that signage placement and proximity to intersections would be done on a case-by-case basis with Traffic Engineering. Line of sight would ensure the block is not fully parked up and people can still turn safely at an intersection.

Trustee Taglia asked for the rationale of adding Van Buren in the Y9 Zone. Manager Keane responded that it would serve as overflow for the residential parcels on Van Buren and on Euclid.

Trustee Robinson asked if Zone Z1 permit holders do not have permits because the off-street lots are full. Manager Keane responded that some of the lots are full. The lots are 24-hour permits that are more expensive which not everyone needs. Trustee Robinson asked if the Village got feedback about the safety of parking on residential streets versus lots. Manager Keane said the Village did not get specific feedback about safety but they did received feedback from on-street permit holders that they are walking very far.

Trustee Taglia said he read that the Village sells 28 permits in Zone Z2. He asked why it is going to increase from 157 to 180 available permits. Manager Keane responded that a lot of the available spaces are on Austin and are shared use and have rush hour restrictions. Staff can look at rearranging this zone in the future to possibly reduce some of those areas that aren't necessary. President Scaman clarified that staff were looking to

increase access and not necessarily increase spaces.

Trustee Wesley asked why the Village charges for permit parking. Director Grossman responded that the on-street overnight parking program started in the early 2000s. One of the policy considerations was to limit the overnight parking available and charge for it so as not to have the streets filled with cars. There has never been a political will to abolish the overnight parking ban. There was a clear decision made to add the on-street overnight parking near multi-family buildings and to charge for it and to limit it to one permit per address so as not to erode the overnight parking ban. Manager Jackson added that there is a cost to enforcing the ban.

Trustee Wesley asked if creating additional on-street parking would defeat the traffic calming efforts on those streets. Director Grossman said she has not heard that before and parking is not used as a traffic calming strategy.

Trustee Wesley asked if the 3-hour daytime restriction applies to only the block the resident is registered on. Manager Keane confirmed that enforcement staff would be able to confirm if the vehicle belongs to a resident on that block. Trustee Wesley said it is a missed opportunity to not be able to park unless you live on that block. Director Grossman clarified that the resident-only parking is different than the daytime restrictions. Staff proposed that the Village vehicle sticker would override it and they received a lot of push back from homeowners. Staff does not recommend doing it at this time.

Trustee Wesley said this entire parking system is fraught with land mines. It makes zero sense to him to put businesses in an area where patrons can't park--not because there is no parking, but because it is restricted. He said he doesn't know how businesses are going to survive when there is nowhere for their patrons to park.

Trustee Wesley asked who can request the daytime visitor passes? Manager Keane said it is operational in the pilot area and staff recommend expanding it. The homeowner can request it through the Passport app for their guest. There is no fee. Trustee Wesley asked if someone living in a multi-family unit can request them. Manager Keane confirmed they can.

Trustee Wesley said he feels this all has to be done at one time rather than being stretched over three years. He said the whole system is super inequitable. The Village is not charging homeowners who can afford it. It is charging renters, who can least afford it, to park here. Most black residents of Oak Park rent. The Village is gaining revenue off the backs of those who can least afford it and are often already on the edge of being able to afford to live here. He said the Village has to consider who pays for this and what

they can afford to pay for versus who doesn't and what they can afford to pay for.

Manager Keane responded that the March 6 Village Board meeting will have a first reading of an ordinance for a program whereby if you participate in the Housing Choice Voucher program through the Oak Park Housing Authority (OPHA), which is income-eligible based, you would be eligible for a reduced parking permit fee, including these overnight permits. The current proposal is \$50/quarter which is a significant discount.

President Scaman wondered if the Village could identify who is most impacted. Manager Keane responded that staff are open to looking at avenues of verifying income eligibility. The first reading includes plans for expanding eligibility and working with the Oak Park Residents Corporation and OPHA to allow residents to participate in the Village's reduced fee program.

President Scaman asked if the Village can reach out to D200 and D97 to gain access to a list of residents who are eligible for free or reduced lunches or whether the Village would have to ask those residents to apply. Director Grossman said OPHA gives the resident a certification that they are on the voucher program. She said the Village can explore getting that same documentation from D200 and D97. She said that can be explored in the first reading on March 6. March 20 will be a second reading. She said the Village can look at the other subsidized apartment buildings and reach out to D200 and D97 about reduced lunches.

President Scaman asked if the Village was going to send a letter with the vehicle license renewal. Director Grossman said no, the Housing Choice Voucher program will rely on OPHA to help market the program. When the Village expands it to low-income buildings, it will rely on those building owners to help market the program. She said the Village will talk to D200 and D97 and determine the numbers so the Village Board has an understanding of what the costs might be. Staff would bring another ordinance to the Village Board to approve a reduced permit for those permits. The Village will not request a list of eligible residents from the schools but rather give the schools a letter for them to give to eligible residents. Director Grossman said the vehicle license letters are confusing and she does not want to add multiple messages to those letters.

Trustee Robinson said she thinks it makes more sense to reconfigure some of the zones, like Z6, Z2, and Y5, than to expand and then reverse the expansion if it is later determined expansion was not needed. She said it also does not make sense to her to expand the zones but not increase the permits. Director Grossman responded that would require doing another

public hearing. She said she thinks it makes more sense to expand the areas where we think parkers are going to park, examine all of the zones, and decrease areas that are not needed through another public hearing process through the Commission. If the Village Board wants to do that first, another hearing would be required and take another six months to go through that process.

Trustee Robinson responded that there are some zones where that approach makes sense and others where it doesn't seem to hold true. She doesn't want to back into lifting the overnight parking ban without being upfront as a Board that that is what we are doing. Director Grossman responded that is why the Village gave out two notices to every notice that would be impacted by the expansion so they had the opportunity to come to the Commission meeting and voice their concerns. She said she feels the Village has been extremely transparent in this process.

Trustee Robinson clarified that she is not suggesting shrinking any zones. Director Grossman understood that Trustee Robinson is suggesting the Village take away existing parking because it is expanding to new areas. Director Grossman said her fear in doing that will create additional problems.

President Scaman said she understands Trustee Robinson does not want to falsely alert the community that this Board is moving in the direction of eliminating the overnight parking ban. She said this Village Board needs to communicate that that is not our intention and ensure that any additions to parking permits would have to come back to the Village Board for further discussion. The Village Board would never seek that without being very transparent and saying that outwardly. What is before us is trying to take the same number of permits and try to help residents park safer and closer to their homes.

Trustee Robinson asked if the vehicle registrations go into the general fund. Director Grossman confirmed they go to the capital improvement projects used for streets. Trustee Robinson asked if the idea was to connect it to exemptions from the daytime restrictions, which Manager Keane confirmed is correct.

Trustee Robinson wondered if it makes sense for some of it to also go to the Parking Fund, which is at a significant deficit. Director Grossman clarified that some of the funds do go into the Parking Fund since the Parking Fund gets reimbursed for the administration of the vehicle license program. She said the Village Board has traditionally used the money generated from vehicle licenses to improve the streets and it is a wheel tax for the improvement of the streets. She said she thinks it would be hard to

put that money into the Parking Fund because it is a tax for the use of cars on the street.

Trustee Taglia said he does not see the harm in making them appropriate for their use or how they could be used and it makes sense to look at it in an efficient way.

President Scaman said she is comfortable with it as is because the numbers are not increasing and some streets may only see one or two additional cars, which she said is preferable to expanding parking to as few streets as possible and then having those few streets have a greater burden.

Trustee Wesley said he supports what staff have presented in the current agenda and he would not support reconfiguration.

Trustee Buchanan agreed with Trustee Wesley.

Trustee Enyia said the way it is expanding to offer more spaces in those zones is a good first look and he agreed with staff's recommendation.

Trustee Taglia inquired if Public Works has given their input on how expanding the zones will impact their snow and leaf removal. Manager Keane confirmed that Public Works is included throughout the process and he does not foresee any negative impacts.

President Scaman inquired about the number of vehicle licenses that drastically decreased from 2019 to 2020 and then increased in 2021 and decreased again in 2022. Director Grossman said the Village does not have enough enforcement officers to enforce it. The Village has a list of residents who did not get a vehicle license last year and will send them a nice postcard to let them know how to get one this year.

Trustee Wesley said he has heard from a number of residents that the process of obtaining a vehicle license is not user friendly. Director Grossman said they should call the Parking Office and they will help walk them through the online process.

VII. Adjourn

It was moved by Trustee Wesley, seconded by Trustee Buchanan to Adjourn. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:07 P.M., Monday, February 27, 2023.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Deputy Clerk Hansen**