



# Village of Oak Park

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

## Meeting Minutes

### President and Board of Trustees

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Monday, May 8, 2023

7:00 PM

Village Hall

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#### I. Call to Order

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

#### II. Roll Call

**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

President Scaman requested that Item H be moved to the top of the Regular Agenda.

**It was moved by Trustee Wesley, seconded by Trustee Robinson, to Approve the Agenda as amended. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved.**

#### IV. Non-Agenda Public Comment

There was no Non-Agenda Public Comment.

#### V. Proclamation

**A. [MOT 23-45](#) A Motion to Approve a Proclamation for Proclaiming May 2023 as Asian American, Pacific Islander, Desi Heritage Month.**

Trustee Parakkat read the Proclamation into the record and noted the word "Kalapriya" means "the love of art" in the Indian language.

Chief DEI Officer Dr. Danielle Walker introduced the Kalapriya Center for Indian Performing Arts. Dr. President Mridu Sekhar and Treasurer Gail Ludwig gave a presentation and shared information about the May 21 event at Oak Park Public Library.

**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:** 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

- B.**     [MOT 23-44](#)     **A Motion to Approve a Proclamation for Proclaiming May 2023 as National Jewish American Heritage Month.**

Trustee Straw read the Proclamation into the record.

Dr. Walker read a statement by OPRF History Teacher Michael Soffer.

President Scaman referenced the February 7 *Wednesday Journal* article regarding Oak Park resident Alan Hoffstadter.

**It was moved by Trustee Wesley, seconded by Trustee Buchanan, that this Motion be approved. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved.**

- C.**     [MOT 23-43](#)     **A Motion to Approve a Proclamation for Proclaiming May 7-13, 2023 as International Compost Awareness Week.**

Trustee Buchanan read the Proclamation into the record.

Environmental Services Manager Erica Helms provided information on composting in Oak Park.

**It was moved by Trustee Wesley, seconded by Trustee Buchanan, that this Motion be approved. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved.**

## **VI. Village Manager Reports**

- E.**     [ID 23-229](#)     **Update on COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Declaration**

Health Director Dr. Theresa Chapple provided a status update on the COVID-19 pandemic nationally and provided information and recommendations for Oak Park residents.

Trustee Straw asked what plans the Oak Park Health Department (OPHD) has to reach out to Medicaid patients regarding the change in continuous enrollment eligibility. Dr. Chapple said she has been giving informational talks throughout the community, including the Early Childhood Collaboration and local federally-qualified health centers. OPHD can connect people with services in the community to help them re-enroll.

Trustee Parakkat inquired about the timeframe for the transition from pandemic to endemic. Dr. Chapple responded that WHO is the entity that declares the start and end of pandemics and she will follow their guidance. We are currently in the transition phase when the public health emergency of international concern is removed, which does not put us in the endemic phase.

Trustee Parakkat asked if the community's burden of case reporting has also been removed. Dr. Chapple responded that there are still some COVID-19 reporting requirements. The CDC will not report on cases anymore, but certain organizations with a higher rate of transmission, like schools, long-term care facilities, and congregate care homes, are still required to report, which is based on the state of Illinois Infectious Disease Code.

Trustee Parakkat asked if the Village is still required to continue providing reports to the community. Dr. Chapple responded that the Village's weekly COVID-19 reports will end with the end of the declaration.

Trustee Parakkat inquired about plans for the ARPA contingency funding and whether the Health Department is caught up with the backlog. Dr. Chapple responded that the plan for the Health Department is to be caught up on the backlog by the end of 2023. To date, the Health Department is caught up on five of its seven nursing programs.

Trustee Parakkat requested to receive a status report prior to budget season. Village Manager Kevin Jackson confirmed the Village will be ready to provide that. He noted that the Village Board will have a study session this summer on the Health Department related to its vision and the IPLAN and can also provide information about the ARPA contingency fund at that time.

**D. [ID 23-230](#) Official Oath of Village Officer: Police Sergeant Michael J. Lambert**

Police Chief Shatonya Johnson introduced Command Staff, other members of OPPD, and senior chaplain Reggie Winston.

Chaplain Winston led the prayer.

Chief Johnson gave remarks.

Village Clerk Christina Waters administered the Official Oath.

Sergeant Michael Lambert gave his remarks.

**VII. Citizen Commission Appointments, Reappointments and Chair Appointments**

- F. [ID 23-226](#) **A Motion to Consent to the Village President's Appointment of:  
Fire and Police Commission - Sara Spivy, Appoint as Member**

Clerk Waters read the name into the record.

**It was moved by Trustee Buchanan, seconded by Trustee Robinson, that this Report 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

### VIII. Regular Agenda

- H. [RES 23-146](#) **A Resolution Approving a Professional Services Agreement with the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois, on behalf of the University of Illinois Chicago to Provide a Racial Equity Assessment and Report in an Amount Not to Exceed \$150,000 and Authorizing its Execution**

Dr. Walker presented the Item.

Trustee Parakkat said he has witnessed and experienced discrimination and inequities and inquired how the Village will identify the voices that are not typically included in these assessments. Dr. Walker responded that the Village will post on its website, engage with community partners, track feedback, and develop strategies to reach specific populations. Trustee Parakkat recommended taking a more balanced view rather than relying on a few self-proclaimed leaders. Dr. Walker confirmed the Village will work through many channels and networks.

Trustee Parakkat inquired about fringe benefits and indirect costs. Village Attorney Paul Stephanides responded that the professional services agreement governs the relationship between the parties. The amount is a flat \$150K.

Trustee Wesley referenced the phrase "nothing about us without us" and inquired how black voices in particular that are missed by our system can be included. Dr. Walker responded that a best practice is meeting people where they're at, including schools and churches. Word of mouth will be a powerful tool. Residents will have an opportunity to ask questions to increase their comfort level before engaging in the assessment.

Trustee Wesley asked what Trustees can do to help make this assessment

successful. Dr. Walker recommended that Trustees talk to their constituents and share their questions with her.

Trustee Robinson inquired about the timeline. Dr. Walker responded that the Village is in a strong position to have robust community engagement over the summer, analyze the data, and generate a report and presentation this fall. The implementation of the racial equity action plan will continue into next year.

Trustee Robinson asked if the budgeted amount set for next year will cover follow-up based on the report results. Dr. Walker responded that the additional funding can be used for plan implementation and aspects the Village wants to dive deeper on, such as language access and accessibility.

Trustee Robinson inquired about the separate contracts in the RFP and proposal. Attorney Stephanides confirmed that the Village's professional services agreement prevails.

Trustee Robinson requested clarification on defining marginalized groups. Dr. Walker responded that this is an opportunity to define what the assessment means in terms of racial equity and understanding how different communities experience marginalization. Trustee Robinson noted that how people self-identify their culture and heritage is not monolithic and space needs to be created to explore individual experiences.

Trustee Robinson noted the two pilot programs in the proposal and wondered if the consultant has experience in an area similar to Oak Park. The UIC consultant acknowledged that race should not be the only factor but is being centered because it is the root cause of many institutional problems. The pilot projects are testing where we are getting some traction and so we can learn from each other.

Trustee Straw noted that 40% of residents are renters and said he wants to ensure all economic and living situations are considered in the data collection. Dr. Walker said the Village will be proactive and intentional in ensuring representation and will have check-in points with stakeholder groups to determine who is missing from the data.

Trustee Parakkat noted the 8-9% immigrant population in Oak Park and said he believes interracial families are a strength in the community.

Trustee Enyia noted there are a lot of these assessments that do not reach their full potential because they do not have full participation. People can experience survey fatigue. He recommended that residents talk to their

neighbors and friends who have expressed a desire to see change in the community.

President Scaman said she looks forward to working with UIC and the Village will do everything it can to provide support.

**It was moved by Trustee Robinson, seconded by Trustee Straw, 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 Enyia, Village Trustee Parakkat, Village Trustee Robinson, Village Trustee Straw, and Village Trustee Wesley

**NAYS:** 0

**ABSENT:** 0

**RECUSED:** 1 - Village Trustee Buchanan

**G. [ID 23-211](#) Presentation on Proposed Tow Zones for the 1150 to 1200 Blocks of South Cuyler, Highland, and Harvey Avenues**

Chief Johnson presented the proposed recommendation.

Stacey Hendricks: Lives on 1150 S. Cuyler block. She thanked OPPD and the Village Board and said she and her family are relieved to have peace and quiet and they feel protected now. She supports the tow zone ordinance.

Adam Mikos: Said there is a big difference between now and last December and has been good communication between residents and the Village Board and OPPD and there was an amazing neighborhood meeting. He supports the tow zone and parking ban.

Trustee Parakkat said this is how things are supposed to work where a serious issue concerning safety was brought to the Village Board for discussion and looking at a permanent solution. He said he supports the ordinance.

Trustee Robinson noted that the increased traffic on residential streets is determined by the business hosting events rather than being a seasonal issue. She said she supports the ordinance.

Trustee Straw wondered what is being done to keep a bad situation from getting worse when a patron realizes their car has been towed. Chief Johnson said officers will still be in the area with high visibility and will be able to respond rapidly. She said Berwyn Police are also spending more time on Roosevelt Road.

Trustee Straw noted the earlier start time of the tow zone ban from the

overnight parking ban and said guest passes will need to be reserved earlier than usual. Chief Johnson said there will be extensive engagement with the community and with Mike's Place.

Trustee Straw wondered what standards could be put in place to assess similar requests from other blocks. Manager Jackson said that thinking has been included in the development of this proposal and the Village would have to see a unique circumstance like this one in order to apply this elsewhere. Attorney Stephanides added that nuisance activities would have to be heightened up to criminal activities before a similar ordinance would be adopted for other blocks.

Trustee Wesley asked if future zones would come back to the Village Board. Attorney Stephanides said this will always come back to the Board and would have to be an amendment to the code provision the Village is creating for these particular blocks.

Trustee Wesley asked what will happen if residents and/or their guests inadvertently get towed. Chief Johnson responded that there is an adjudication period where an individual can appeal their vehicle being towed.

Trustee Enyia said he experiences parking and noise issues on Ridgeland Avenue as a result of people not being able to park on the residential streets and he foresees it being a bigger issue moving forward. Chief Johnson said OPPD has considered that and will be patrolling the area to ensure we are not just pushing the problem down the street. She encouraged residents to notify OPPD of suspicious activity.

Trustee Wesley noted he is hearing from residents as far north as 1000 South Cuyler. Chief Johnson responded that the owner of Mike's Place said his patrons do not want to park more than a block so if something else is happening on those blocks, it should be reported to OPPD.

Manager Jackson confirmed this ordinance will be on the next Consent Agenda for approval.

I. [MOT 23-32](#) **A Motion to Approve an Updated Organizational Chart for the Village Manager's Office and Development Customer Services Department, Including the Creation of a Neighborhood Services Department**

President Scaman said Manager Jackson has requested to table the vote on this Motion and the next.

Manager Jackson introduced the Item and Assistant Village Manager/HR Director Kira Tchang presented the Item.

Trustee Enyia said this is a good and detailed roadmap to provide direction for the Village.

Trustee Robinson asked where the administration of the Housing Trust Fund would fall in the new structure. Assistant Manager Tchang responded that it would go in Neighborhood Services. Manager Jackson added that it would be a combination of the Neighborhood Programs Manager and Director.

Trustee Robinson asked if the Grants Manager would administer the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and if there is any cross-functionality. Assistant Manager Tchang confirmed that is correct and the Village anticipates additional grant opportunities related to housing could receive support from that position which is funded by CDBG. Trustee Robinson said she supports this structure and this is why the Village Board hired Manager Jackson to assess the organization and make recommendations.

Trustee Buchanan said she supports tabling this Item because she has concerns about the discontinuation of the Oak Park Economic Development Corporation (OPEDC) among some other questions she read aloud and said she will also email to Manager Jackson.

Trustee Straw said he supports proposed changes to the org chart which go to the visions the Village Board has been talking about in terms of community engagement and sustainability. He recommended bifurcating the discussion on pausing OPEDC funding and the org chart changes.

Trustee Parakkat said he believes the OPEDC funding and the org chart are linked and he noted the budget neutrality, which Assistant Manager Tchang confirmed. He inquired if the results of the assessment would be new spending that would impact the budget. Manager Jackson confirmed that it could if that is what the needs suggest.

Trustee Parakkat said he likes this new org structure and said it would be desirable to clarify the economic outcomes in connection with the Village Board's goals. He questioned the need to add more executive secretary positions which is not the wave of the future. Manager Jackson responded that the Village will continually evaluate need and monitor technology and efficiencies. Assistant Manager Tchang added that administrative support is currently required for each department to operate.

Trustee Wesley said he agreed with Trustee Straw in thinking the pausing of the OPEDC is separate from the org changes. He inquired where the Chamber of Commerce fits into the new structure. Assistant Manager



Tchang said the Chamber is not currently a partner agency. The business advisory work would remain in Development Customer Services (DCS).

Trustee Wesley maintained thinking it's an oversight not to include the Chamber because they are a key partner with a lot of overlap. DCS Director Tammie Grossman clarified that the Village is a member of the Chamber whereas a partner agency is funded by and has reporting requirements to the Village. The Village helps new businesses get licensed and started whereas Chamber provides membership and education activities. Trustee Wesley and Director Grossman disagreed about the amount of work OPEDC has done over the years. Manager Jackson said the Village is trying to create a holistic ecosystem for economic vitality in the Village.

Trustee Wesley inquired about the reclassification of salaries and benefits in the current recruitment environment. Assistant Manager Tchang said more analysis would need to be done on these positions to recommend the salaries. The Village generally only hires people in the mid range.

Trustee Wesley noted John Lynch's departure from OPEDC and that his salary accounts for half their budget. Assistant Manager Tchang responded that the Village does not administer OPEDC's salaries. The Village can only look at its current contract with OPEDC.

Trustee Parakkat said to him, budget neutrality is just cutting the contract. Trustee Wesley said the Village would only recoup any money OPEDC has not spent.

Trustee Wesley asked how long the economic vitality study would take. Manager Jackson estimated it could take 6-9 months. Trustee Wesley said the perception is that only sentence was used from the Envision Oak Park plan from 10 years ago. Director Grossman disagreed and said the staff did extensive work on that plan which was funded by HUD. Manager Jackson added that the Village should be taking the Board goals and policies and planning documents very seriously. Trustee Wesley clarified that he was not criticizing the work of staff but rather acknowledging the will of the Board to follow that plan and deviate from it over the years.

President Scaman said she thinks this is a very thoughtful and talented proposal. She acknowledged John Lipic in the audience. She wondered how to maintain input from the OPEDC with the new model. Manager Jackson confirmed that the Village desires to maintain their input and continue to work together.

**This Motion was tabled.**

**J. [MOT 23-24](#) A Motion to Approve an Updated Organizational Chart for the Public Works Department**

This Item was discussed during Item I.

**This Motion was tabled.**

**K. [MOT 23-46](#) A Motion to add Police Radio Encryption to the Citizens Police Oversight Committee Work Plan**

Manager Jackson introduced the Item.

Trustee Enyia said he is the liaison for the Citizen Police Oversight Commission (CPOC) and some commissioners would like to be brought in for consulting and their expertise.

Trustee Buchanan said her reasoning came from a lack of knowledge about how the radio encryption changes would affect the actual oversight of police.

Trustee Wesley referenced the email the Village Board received and said he would like to see it considered without it costing \$250K.

Trustee Robinson asked for clarification on the motion. Trustee Wesley said he motioned on this particular solution. Trustee Buchanan said she does not agree with Trustee Wesley.

Chief Johnson said OPPD has conducted extensive research. Interim Deputy Chief Dave Jacobson provided information on Broadcastify and Fountainware software options. Chief Johnson clarified that Broadcastify does not have delay capability. OPPD would have to purchase Fountainware delay software which poses security concerns. She provided a couple recent examples of implications of having information real-time. She said the director of WESCOM estimated it would take 8-12 months to secure a new recorder. OPPD is getting new radios before July. She recommends having the public review OPPD's radio communications via FOIA request.

Trustee Wesley said a lot of software gets re-purposed though he shares the concern that it has not been updated since 2011. He said he does not advocate for a new \$250K recorder. He said when a new recorder is needed, he would support purchasing one with a delay. He said he would like to remand this back to the Civic Information Systems Commission (CISC) to see if there are other software options for this Board to consider.

Trustee Enyia confirmed that CPOC is interested in discussing encryption in general.

Trustee Robinson said she would prefer to get the input closer to 2027 when the Village is able to act on it. Trustee Parakkat agreed.

Trustee Straw agreed with asking CISC now to see if there are other options. Trustee Parakkat wondered if the Village's IT department might be able to research it. President Scaman clarified that it would need to be added to CISC's work plan for 2024.

Trustee Buchanan said she would be willing to talk to CPOC members to become more informed.

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

**AYES:** 5 - Village President Scaman, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Enyia, Village Trustee Straw, and Village Trustee Wesley

**NAYS:** 2 - Village Trustee Parakkat, and Village Trustee Robinson

**ABSENT:** 0

## **IX. Adjourn**

**It was moved by Trustee Straw, seconded by Trustee Robinson to Adjourn. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved. Meeting adjourned on Monday, May 8, 2023 at 12:11 AM.**

**Respectfully Submitted,  
Deputy Clerk Hansen**