



Village of Oak Park

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

Meeting Minutes

President and Board of Trustees

Monday, April 27, 2020

6:30 PM

Village Hall

I. Call to Order

Village President Abu-Taleb called the Meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

II. Roll Call

Present: 7 - Village President Abu-Taleb, Village Trustee Andrews, Village Trustee Boutet, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Moroney, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

Absent: 0

III. Agenda Approval

It was moved by Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla, seconded by Village Trustee Andrews, to approve the Agenda. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved.

IV. Minutes

- A. [ID 20-123](#) Motion to Approve Minutes from April 6, 2020 Remote Participation Special Meeting of the Village Board.

It was moved by Village Trustee Andrews, seconded by Village Trustee Boutet, to approve the Minutes. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved.

V. Non-Agenda Public Comment

Dr. Mary Ann Bender, representing OPRF Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Bender thanked the Village for putting the health of residents first. She proposed that a Business Recovery Task Force be formed.

Anonymous. The commenter discussed the merits of the U.S. Postal Service.

Village Trustee Boutet spoke in support of a Business Recovery Task Force. Village Trustees Buchanan and Walker-Peddakotla agreed.

VI. Village Manager Reports

- B. [ID 20-121](#) Status Report to the Village Board Regarding the Response to an Emergency Affecting the Public Health Pursuant to Resolution 20-120 Adopted on March 13, 2020 and Extended by Resolution 20-124 Adopted on April 6, 2020 which Continues the Emergency through May 5, 2020

Village Manager Pavlicek stated that the day to day operations have been focusing on providing a safe work environment for first responders and other staff. She summarized the numbers of those who are working in the public and remotely, and whether they are working full time or at reduced hours. Approximately 25 positions are not working remotely or at the workplace. Staff has been looking at ways to increase services but there has been significant restructuring to ensure those employees who are working can be paid. Certain services, such as real estate transfer stamps, continue to be provided in full. The Village continues to update the public on a daily basis, while maintaining confidentiality with those who are receiving medical treatment for COVID-19. In addition, they are working on putting together infrastructure so that people can do business under the current restrictions and to open with social distancing measures in place. The Village continues to focus on residents in senior facilities.

Director of Public Health Mike Charley stated that there are currently 156 cases of COVID-19 and eight deaths. The Health Department continues to follow up on every case in regards to close contact. Assisted living facilities have been their priority. The department has begun sharing data on the website regarding staff and resident cases in those facilities. All five have had at least one positive resident case. Three have what is defined as an outbreak. Staff has been working with them as well as with Rush regarding testing. Mr. Charley gave an update on volunteers with the Health Department and their training. Additional volunteers are still needed. Regarding PPE, they are holding steady and have received requests from various health care organizations. An employee team is aggressively trying to secure more. They have also received donations of cloth masks. In regards to alternate care, McCormick Place has been set up by the City of Chicago. Patients must be sent there by their physician after being discharged from the hospital. Staff has concluded that there is no need to set up a separate site in Oak Park. Mr. Charley also discussed alternate housing opportunities set up by the Cook County Department of Public Health. Staff has determined that taking advantage of that opportunity is not necessary for Oak Park at this time.

Village Trustee Boutet asked if the Village had the capacity to purchase and share PPE with small businesses. Village Manager Pavlicek commented that there are several levels of PPE and clarified how it is distributed. Village Trustee Boutet noted that she would like to help businesses in the community be prepared for future reopening. Village Manager Pavlicek added that staff would work with specific groups to help them get access to PPE. Village Trustee Boutet also asked for information regarding the availability of testing at various hospitals in the area. Mr. Charley stated that he can look into whether the state has the full list of testing sites and work to get that information out to the public. Most of the testing is still being done through health care providers. Village Trustee Buchanan added that there are not enough tests available to test asymptomatic people. Village Trustee Boutet would also like data on active cases as opposed to a cumulative number.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla thanked Mr. Charley for releasing the demographic data. She expressed concern that the Black population is more likely to be affected by COVID, which doesn't match the racial demographics of this area. She asked what the Village is doing to assist in this situation. Mr. Charley agreed it is alarming and stated that the appropriate time to look at this and other health challenges in the Black community is during the five year assessment process conducted by the Village. They will be able to set goals for addressing these disparities and he would support more action to look into this, Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla would like proactive outreach.

Village Trustee Taglia stated that the weakest link is the long term care facilities. He commended the Village for taking the initiative with their actions.

Village Trustee Moroney asked if the testing has increased. Mr. Charley stated that it has increased significantly due to fewer restrictions as well as an increase in facilities. Asymptomatic people still cannot be tested. Village Trustee Moroney asked how many Oak Park residents are being tested daily. Mr. Charley explained the testing process. It is possible to extract data on how many were tested as well as how many tested positive. However, the state has so many tests, they are currently only adding positive cases to the database.

Village Trustee Buchanan added that the rate of positive tests is consistently 20% at her facility. She noted that there are probably a lot of people who are asymptomatic or who have symptoms but have not been tested.

Village President Abu-Taleb asked if there is a certain workforce who are testing positive. Village Trustee Buchanan stated she is assuming it is health care workers. Village President Abu-Taleb believes that the longer businesses are shut down, the harder it will be to recover.

Village Trustee Boutet discussed a study stating that we are safe if there is one case per million people. She would like staff to provide what level they are looking at as a goal in order to reopen, as well as the cause for health disparities related to various groups of people. Village President Abu-Taleb commented that staff has to prioritize their tasks at this time.

Village Trustee Andrews asked how many of the eight deaths in Oak Park came from long term care facilities. Mr. Charley stated that it was six of the eight. He also noted that he found data in response to Village Trustee Moroney's question; there have been 993 Oak Park residents tested for COVID-19.

Village Trustee Moroney asked if there has been antibody testing in the Village. Mr. Charley stated that the antibody test is not the preferred test and is not readily available. Village Trustee Buchanan added that the test is not reliable at this point by giving too many false positives.

Village Trustee Walker Peddakotla discussed data simulations and noted that some countries are seeing a second wave of infections. In addition, it is clear to her that the reason for racial disparity is systemic racism and oppression. She suggested the Village reach out to Black families to help them. Village President Abu-Taleb reminded her that the Township has been doing a great deal to help residents.

Police Chief La Don Reynolds summarized operational protocols including traffic enforcement. They have implemented their tiered approach for social distancing in the department, which requires them to wear masks in the building and in public. There have been 22 social distancing calls, which included 13 businesses. They have since come into compliance. The department has also been distributing masks received from the Park District. Public Works has been working with Police to ensure their equipment and station is decontaminated as needed. There has been, unfortunately, an increase in violent crime, but he believes this is a regional problem. Chief Reynolds stated that the Union for sworn personnel had expressed some concerns and he believes that the Village's early decision to close has been helpful.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla asked what concerns the Union had. Chief Reynolds clarified that officers have been concerned about getting infected and bringing the virus home to their families due to their contact with the public. The Village has been proactive

in that respect. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla asked what steps are being taken when an officer does get infected. Chief Reynolds stated that there is a plan in place to house staff who do.

Village Manager Pavlicek gave instructions regarding where to drop off masks that are being donated.

Village Trustee Boutet asked if the increase in violent crime includes domestic violence. Chief Reynolds clarified that there has not been an increase in domestic batteries, but there has been an increase in domestic disturbances.

Fire Chief Tom Ebsen stated that the Fire Department is doing well operationally. No personnel have tested positive. All staff on duty get their temperature taken three times per day. Ambulances that transport someone with COVID symptoms is put out of service to be disinfected. The department is well stocked with PPE. The volume of calls is approximately 50 to 60 percent of what it was prior to the COVID crisis. The peak of transporting symptomatic patients was in early April. It has since leveled off and the department is seeing an average of one or two patients a day.

Village Trustee Andrews commented that he has heard good things about the Fire Departments from community members.

Director of Public Works John Wielebnicki stated that the department continues working in three shifts and a temperature screening protocol has been implemented. There has been an increase in calls of a general nature, which is typical during this time of the year. He is looking to increase operations, which includes tree planting and landscaping. He discussed how he is actively pursuing additional PPE, such as hand sanitizer, gloves, etc. The Lake Street project is ongoing and he gave updates on other projects coming up.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla asked when the waster haulers will start picking up large items again. Mr. Wielebnicki commented that a date is unclear and it depends on when the shelter in place ends. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla asked about the status of the Greenway Plan, Mr. Wielebnicki commented that this project is near the high school, which has some work going on currently. They are looking for that to subside.

Village Trustee Boutet asked Mr. Wielebnicki if he is in the process of prioritizing projects and when the Board will be able to review that. Mr. Wielebnicki stated that he is.

Village Manager Pavlicek stated that this information is being assembled from all departments. The internal audit work has just been completed. The CFO expects a draft in approximately three weeks. She expects that and a budget amendment to be presented at the end of May. Village Trustee Boutet would like to discuss projections sooner than that. Village Trustee Andrews would prefer a complete financial picture and waiting another three or four weeks will not have as negative an impact as making premature decisions. Village Trustee Moroney agreed with Village Trustee Andrews and commented that it depends on factors that no one can predict at this time. Village Trustee Taglia noted that this is an unprecedented situation and the tools used normally do not apply now. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla agreed that the Board should wait as well. Village Manager Pavlicek added that although the Board has only heard from a few directors, all staff have been working very hard.

VII. Consent Agenda

Approval of the Consent Agenda

It was moved by Village Trustee Andrews and seconded by Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla to approve the items under the Consent Agenda. The motion was approved. The roll call on the vote was as follows:

AYES: 7 - Village President Abu-Taleb, Village Trustee Andrews, Village Trustee Boutet, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Moroney, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

- C. [MOT 20-014](#) A Motion to Approve the Bills in the Amount of \$7,581,900.94 from February 11, 2020 through April 20, 2020

This Motion was approved.

- D. [MOT 20-015](#) A Motion to Approve the February and March 2020 Monthly Treasurer's Report for All Funds

This Motion was approved.

VIII. Regular Agenda

- E. [RES 20-128](#) A Resolution Extending the Declaration of Emergency Affecting the Public Health through June 1, 2020 Due to the Outbreak of the COVID-19 Disease in the State of Illinois as Previously Declared by Resolution 20-120 and Resolution 20-124

Village Manager Pavlicek stated that Chief Reynolds, the Emergency Disaster Coordinator, has recommended that the Emergency Declaration, which expires May 1, be extended to June 1.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla asked if parking restrictions and other accommodations given to residents will be extended with the order. Village Manager Pavlicek stated that once the Board approves this, staff will revisit those items and make a determination. They will continue to work with the business community as well once the Governor begins reopening the State. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla asked if the creation of an Economic Recovery Task Force falls under this order. Village Attorney Stephanides stated that this just extends the Public Health order and the Economic Recovery Task Force is a separate item. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla would like that put on a future agenda. She also asked what plans are being implemented for Village staff to return to work. Village Manager Pavlicek commented that three quarters of the staff are already working. Employees currently working from home will continue to do so. There is a small number of staff that cannot work remotely due to the nature of their jobs and the Village has not been providing those services. Within the next 30 days, working through those employees' collective bargaining representative, there will be a need for them to return to the workplace to perform some of the services related to the CARES Act Funding. Other employees are working partial weeks at the Village, and as summer work increases they will need to increase their days on site. This will be done incrementally. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla asked about the status of funding for the homeless. Village Manager Pavlicek stated that there is an Item on the next agenda

where that can be discussed.

Village Trustee Buchanan asked if the Board Meeting schedule will continue as planned. Village Manager Pavlicek stated that it will continue as adopted. Village Trustee Buchanan asked if there is a plan for commissions to be able to meet and if not why. Village Manager Pavlicek commented that the most cautious approach is if the commission's work is related to the public health response and activities that have to happen during the Governor's Stay at Home Order, they would be able to meet remotely. Aside from being detrimental to the Village's pandemic response, with staff out of the office it is difficult to go back to a full schedule of commission meetings. Although these are remote meetings for the Board, there is activity that still requires staff to be present at Village Hall. In addition, if the commissions are discussing items that the public would want to provide input on, the Village would have to consider what their thoughts are regarding the remote meeting process. Village Trustee Buchanan asked if Sustainability Coordinator Mindy Agnew got reassigned to work on the COVID-19 response and why she didn't provide any information regarding Earth Day. Village Manager Pavlicek responded as to what Ms. Agnew has been working on, including putting out information for Earth Day.

Village Trustee Boutet shared the City of Chicago Plan Commission and Zoning Board's meeting guidelines. She would like to see development move forward, as well as the Farmers Market Commission be able to meet. In addition, she would like to see what guidelines the Village will follow to reopen.

Village Trustee Andrews would like to see a list of procurements that have been made by the Village that would've otherwise been approved by the Board. Village Manager Pavlicek explained that everything has been brought to the Board for approval immediately after purchase. Village Trustee Andrews still wanted to see what circumvented the normal process. Village Manager Pavlicek stated that staff would provide that.

Village Trustee Moroney asked for clarification regarding the Village having to follow the State's direction. Village Attorney Stephanides commented that if anything, the Village can be more stringent, but not less.

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

AYES: 7 - Village President Abu-Taleb, Village Trustee Andrews, Village Trustee Boutet, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Moroney, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

F. [ORD 20-034](#) An Ordinance Extending the July 14, 2020 Vehicle License Expiration Date Pursuant to Section 15-4-1 of the Oak Park Village Code to September 14, 2020 to Provide Emergency Assistance and to Protect the Public Health and Safety due to the Outbreak of COVID-19 Disease

Village Manager Pavlicek stated that typically notices would be in the process of being mailed for residents to renew their vehicle licenses. Staff would like to delay that until after Labor Day. The renewal deadline would change from July 14 to September 14.

Village Trustee Taglia asked if the licenses would still expire in July 2021. Village

Manager Pavlicek stated that they would, in order to be back on schedule.

Village Trustee Boutet asked if the issues with the Passport app have been resolved. Director of Development Customer Services Tammie Grossman stated that staff has been working closely with Passport. Some of the issues related to the browser have been resolved, and there have been no complaints related to the app in terms of parking permit renewals.

Village President Abu-Taleb asked if the Village has been clear regarding their expectations regarding licenses and fees. He believes that this should be on the website stating that there will be no late fees if payments are late.

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

AYES: 7 - Village President Abu-Taleb, Village Trustee Andrews, Village Trustee Boutet, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Moroney, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

IX. Call to Board and Clerk

Village Clerk Scaman extended sympathy to all the families who lost someone to COVID-19. She also extended sympathy to the family of Barbara Mullarkey, who passed away last week, and spoke fondly of her. The Chamber of Commerce and OPEDC are hosting a Zoom webinar for small businesses. Clerk Scaman thanked all health care workers and necessary staff for caring and providing for the rest of us.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla also offered condolences to Barbara Mullarkey's family. She discussed a conversation she had regarding when Village-wide composting will be available. She also spoke with the Homelessness Coalition and they mentioned that the Census response rate is at 64%. Apartment residents often do not participate and urged all to complete the survey. She also discussed the lack of outreach within the Federal Government and asked for a Resolution to advocate for progressive measures at the Federal level for essential workers.

Village Trustee Boutet discussed an article by Dan Haley about Barbara Mullarkey and said she will miss her. She is happy to see that COVID rates are not spiking but it is difficult to see the disparity among African Americans and the suffering of those trying to get unemployment. She advocated for universal health care.

Village Trustee Buchanan discussed the I-GOV meeting on Saturday and what the other governmental entities are currently doing. She also expressed her concern for small businesses in the Village. She commended the parents of small children who work and have to be responsible for their children's schooling.

Village Trustee Taglia mentioned that the Board received an email from former trustee Ray Johnson stating that they as a Board should consider, as work is re-imagined at the Village, to consider sustainability and reduction of carbon.

Village Trustee Moroney believes Oak Park residents are taking this very seriously. The businesses want to take care of their customers while keeping everyone safe. The cost

of the current path is profound. Many businesses will not reopen, joblessness is in the double digits, etc. This is not a sustainable route for the long term. He encouraged the Board to look at the data and noted that the death rate is lower than expected and it is disproportionately affecting older individuals.

Village Trustee Andrews also offered condolences to the Mullarkey family and spoke about his friendship with Barbara. He also discussed the fundraiser for Beyond Hunger and Housing Forward.

Village President Abu-Taleb expressed sympathy for the family of Barbara Mullarkey, as she was a friend of his as well. He wants the Board to think about the loss of Thomas Johnson and Leslie Jones. It is a priority of the Police Department to get to the bottom of this. He offered condolences to that family as well, He spoke about the goal of flattening the curve and thanked the community for helping to accomplish that. The hospitals have not gotten overwhelmed. He thanked the hospitals, residents and staff. He spoke about how hard staff has been working and is happy with what has been accomplished.

X. Adjourn

It was moved by Village Trustee Boutet, seconded by Village Trustee Andrews, to adjourn. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:37 P.M., Monday, April 27, 2020.

Respectfully Submitted,

**MaryAnn Schoenneman
Deputy Village Clerk**