



Village of Oak Park

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

Meeting Minutes

President and Board of Trustees

Tuesday, August 25, 2020

6:30 PM

Village Hall

I. Call to Order

Village President Abu-Taleb called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M. It was stated that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent due to COVID-19 and that it is not feasible to have a person present in Village Board chambers due to safety concerns related to the COVID-19 outbreak.

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 Taglia, to approve the agenda as presented. 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

IV. Non-Agenda Public Comment

None

V. Regular Agenda

- A. [RES 20-201](#) Motion for a Draft Resolution that Calls for Committing to Defund the Police in 2021 along with Committing to Work to Enact Other Measures that Would Lead to Meaningful Change

Public Comment:

Brian Straw: Mr. Straw submitted public comment drawing attention to the Police noting in 2020 a budget level more than 55% higher than 10 years ago, reinvesting those funds into strategies proven to reduce crime and putting plans for the construction of a new police station on hold while the Board continues discussions around public safety in Oak Park is necessary. He encourages the

Board to vote 'yes' for this resolution.

Sue Humphreys: Ms. Humphreys urges the Board to vote in favor of this Resolution, even if the Board must agree to discuss specific sentences within the Resolution.

Emily Newman: Ms. Neuman wants to see the tax dollars of hers and her neighbors to be invested in services and programs that improve, connect, secure and enrich their lives and treat everyone in Oak Park with dignity & respect. She encourages the Board to vote yes for Resolution 20-201.

Brynne Hovde: Ms. Hovde asks the Board to consider this to be the first step in a logical right-sizing and reinvestment in the Village of Oak Park. She encourages the Board to vote 'yes' for this Resolution.

Zaire Brooks: Mr. Brooks would like the Board to vote 'yes' on the Resolution in favor of defunding the police.

Oak Park Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 8: The OP FOP Lodge 8 states the Resolution to defund the police is misguided, dangerous and discriminatory. They encourage the Board to vote 'no' for this Resolution.

Veronica Bernardo: Ms. Bernardo feels scared when walking to and from work. However, she appreciates the police presents in the community. She states defunding the police will cause her to no longer feel safe walking at night.

Judith Alexander: Ms. Alexander brings attention to Oak Park Police response time, if police are adequately funded now, which police responsibilities can and should be transferred and how much realistically could be saved, and the unintended negative consequences of defunding the police. She recognizes racial profiling needs to be addressed, but more data is needed before passing this resolution.

William Dibbern: Mr. Dibbern writes to express his strong opposition to the defund the police resolution. He asks the Board to consider the safety of residents, police officers and victims of domestic violence.

Kathleen Conklin: Ms. Conklin is supportive of the Village continuing an analysis of current policing practices in Oak Park with a goal of identifying and making any needed changes, which may include right-sizing. The analysis and any recommendations should occur BEFORE a resolution with specific next steps is considered.

Rosa Cervantes: Ms. Cervantes is against defunding and abolishing the police.

Soo Ai Kudo: Ms. Kudo does not want to defund the Oak Park Police Department.

Asoka Abeysinghe: Ms. Abeysinghe is a 35-year resident is against defunding the police.

Pat Davis: Mr. Davis is against defunding the Oak Park Police Department.

Joe Shred: Mr. Shred states this is a bad decision.

Bruce Kleinman: Mr. Kleinman is against any effort or resolution to defund the Oak Park Police Department. He suggests a resolution of appreciation for the Oak Park Police.

Matt T: A resident of Harwood Heights who encourages the Board not to defund the police.

Brian Fitzgerald: While Mr. Fitzgerald recognizes there are some improvements that need to be made by the Police Department, taking away resources is not the answer.

Leslie Sutphen: Leslie thinks we need a lot more facts before voting to divert any funding from the police department.

Todd Martin: Mr. Martin appeals to Ms. Walker-Peddakotla to rescind her resolution, apologize to Village Residents, and reflect on her commitment to the position as a Trustee.

Barbara Reed: Ms. Reed is totally against the proposal to defund the police force.

Sherry Smith: Ms. Smith implores the Board not to defund the police department.

Liz Skalitzky: Ms. Skalitzky does not support any proposal to defund the Oak Park Police Department.

Jody Walker: Ms. Walker writes in support write in strong support of Resolution 20-201 Agenda Item A.

Kris Stokes: Mr. Stokes states to stop unnecessary and harmful encounters between the Oak Park and Black and Latinx people, the Board must vote to defund the Oak Park Police Department.

James Schwartz: Mr. Schwartz strongly supports Resolution 20-201, Agenda Item "A", the Freedom to Thrive Resolution.

Nikhil Trivedi: Nikhil encourages the Board to support the Freedom to Thrive Resolution to defund the Oak Park Police in the 2021 budget.

Cate Reading: Ms. Reading supports Resolution 20-201, Agenda Item - A.

Carol Smith: Ms. Smith supports defunding the police, cutting back on the number of police and using funds to provide more social services.

Board discussion:

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla provided the history of bringing forward this Resolution. She thanked Village Trustee Buchanan for her willingness to have these difficult and needed conversation. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla spoke to the important need to have conversations locally on policing and recognize that young black and brown people in our community do not feel safe. She stated that it is important to investigate who is being served by police and the history of policing. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla believes this Resolution outlines how the Village Board can move forward to make true progress on policing. She would like to see a restorative justice approach to policing so that needs of those that we are serving are understood and met. She believes this Resolution aligns our budget with our moral obligation to serving all. She urged her colleagues to have the courage to have the difficult conversations to defund the police and reallocate funding to needed social services.

Village Trustee Moroney asked that Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla state clearly her agenda for defunding the police.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla stated that the abolition movement belongs to black activists that have done extensive work to come to this awareness. She acknowledged that she is not an expert on abolition but reiterated that this conversation is a starting point to assessing what action is needed.

Village Trustee Moroney feels that defund policing terminology is divisive in its approach when the conversation should be based on that we all want residents to be treated fairly and equitably. He believes the police should be partners in this conversation. He acknowledged that reform is needed and that funding

changes may be warranted. He believes that the Village Board wants the same thing. He supports the approach that has been identified for auditing our policing needs. Trustee Moroney does not support this resolution.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla agreed that many of the approaches already identified for evaluating our public safety are valid but believes this Resolution frames the dialogue so that we are being honest and genuine for its purpose in addressing racism and racial bias.

Village Trustee Boutet feels the need to look at public safety in Oak Park separate from a national dialogue. She would like to understand completely the resources and public safety approaches that our Police and partnerships with social service agencies are already doing that may be more thoughtful than elsewhere. She would support this conversation happening with our Chief of Police, she does not support blaming our police. Village Trustee Boutet stated she believes some of the problem is that too many call the police for reasons that are not warranted. Village Trustee Boutet does not support this resolution.

Village Trustee Taglia would like more information and data before supporting this resolution. He is supportive of working together to have all needed conversations.

Village Trustee Andrews agrees with what Trustee Moroney and Boutet stated. He appreciates the need to understand root causes of crime but does not feel that justifies not having consequences. He believes it is necessary to find a balanced approach. Village Trustee Andrews looks at this resolution as having several separate initiatives within it and would support looking at it more strategically. Village Trustee Andrews cannot support this resolution as it is presented at this time.

Village Trustee Buchanan understands the challenge with the language of "defund the police". She looks at it more as reallocation of funds versus defunding the police. Village Trustee Buchanan is supportive of our police chief and acknowledges some may see this resolution as too political. Ultimately Village Trustee Buchanan supports this resolution understanding it is a needed first step to having more meaningful discussions and making progress.

Village Trustee Boutet would like to strengthen non-violent responses to crime but does not know that it needs to come from the police budget. Overall she believes the topics should be separate and while she would like to have a modern police station this is not necessarily the time spend that money. Additionally, she added that she understands the political conversation behind this topic to be lead by white people and that more black people want equal protection not less protection.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla thanked the Village Board for their willingness to have this very difficult conversation. She appreciated all of the statements made and would suggest the Village Board identify what data and what additional information it needed to continue this dialogue.

Village Trustee Boutet would like data on the type of calls received and would

like the Chief to respond, additionally she would like to understand how we determine how many police officers we need, and increase diversity on the force if needed.

Chief Reynolds had to step away and will respond to the Village Board. Village Trustee Andrews suggested members of the Village Board compile questions that would help move the dialogue. Village Trustee Taglia concurs.

Village President Abu-Taleb stated that he believes everyone on this Village Board does want to do the right thing. He believes we are looking at it differently. He stated that he is sorry for trauma caused by police interaction. He cannot support defunding the police to address these problems. He supports holding the police and the public accountable for proper conduct. He believes that securing public safety is a municipal responsibility and is managed by the Police Chief and Village Manager. He cannot support this resolution but does commit to reforming what needs to be reformed. He supports the actions outlined in the Obama pledge and an audit of police policies and processes. He stated he is supportive of making needed reforms once identified. He hopes that the Village Board can work together moving forward.

It was moved by Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla, seconded by Village Trustee Buchanan to approve the proposed resolution in draft form. This Resolution was denied. The vote was as follows:

AYES: 2 - Village Trustee Buchanan, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

NAYS: 5 - Village President Abu-Taleb, Village Trustee Andrews, Village Trustee Boutet, Village Trustee Moroney, and Village Trustee Taglia

ABSENT: 0

Village President Abu-Taleb made a statement acknowledging that he is distracted because there is a protest outside his house. He support protesting in the street and he hopes that we can all move forward together.

Village President Abu-Taleb asked all members of this Board represent the actions taken tonight on this resolutions honestly and with acknowledgement that we are willing to work together.

B. [ID 20-212](#)

A Special Meeting of the Village Board is Being Held in Order for Staff to Provide an Update on Work Being Done in Response to Village Board Direction from June 22, 2020 Related to Examining Policing in Oak Park:

1. Hold a Community Conversation;
2. Identify a Third-Party Consultant;
3. Perform a Review of the Citizens Police Oversight Committee (CPOC) via the Law Department; and
4. Evaluate Use-of-Force Policies in Accordance with Resolution in

Support of the Obama Foundation Pledge.

Village Manager Pavlicek provided an overview of this agenda item.

Public comment:

Sue Humphreys: Ms. Humphreys requested the Village Board not take action on this agenda item until the Citizen Police Oversight Committee (CPOC) have a chance to review the memorandum and recommendations.

There was no Board discussion on this item and no vote.

Village President Abu-Taleb stepped away and Village Trustee Taglia endorsed taking a ten minute recess at 8:27 P.M.

Village Trustee Taglia reconvened the meeting at 8:41 P.M.

- C. [RES 20-194](#) A Resolution Approving An Amendment to the Village's Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account Plan for Village Employees

There was no discussion and no vote on this item.

VI. Adjourn

It was moved by Village Trustee Andrews, seconded by Village Trustee Boutet to adjourn the meeting. This meeting was adjourned at 8:41 P.M. The roll call vote was as follows:

AYES: 6 - Village Trustee Andrews, Village Trustee Boutet, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Moroney, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 - Village President Abu-Taleb

Respectfully submitted,
Village Clerk Vicki Scaman
Deputy Village Clerk Christina Waters