



Village of Oak Park

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

Meeting Minutes

President and Board of Trustees

Monday, October 26, 2020

5:30 PM

Village Hall

I. Call to Order

Village President Abu-Taleb called the meeting to order at 5:32 P.M. He asked that a statement be read clarifying that the meeting is being held remotely due to COVID-19 restrictions and that it is not prudent to have people present at the Village Board's meeting location due to public health concerns related to that 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

Village Manager Pavlicek stated that the agenda includes the entire budget for public notice. The Village Board agreed to start an hour early with the intention to review as much as time permits.

It was moved by Village Trustee Taglia and seconded by Village Trustee Boutet to approve the agenda as presented. A roll call vote was taken. The motion was approved. The roll call 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

V. Non-Agenda Public Comment

None

VI. Regular Agenda

A. [ID 20-288](#) An Overview Presentation of the Recommended FY21 Budget:

1. Village Manager's Transmittal Letter: *pages 7 - 21*

2. All Fund Summary: *page 50*
3. Organizational Chart and Staffing Summary: *pages 28 - 36*
4. General Fund: *pages 51-180*
5. Partner Agency Funding Summary: *page 40*
6. Special Revenue Funds: *pages 42-43 and pages 181-239*
7. Capital Funds: *pages 240-251*
8. Enterprise Funds: *pages 252-272*
9. Internal Service Funds: *pages 273 - 280*
10. Fiduciary Funds: *pages 281 - 283*

Village Manager Pavlicek shared that the first year of the CIP is included in the budget and outlined the timeline for approving the budget in early December 2020. She shared the intention to go through the entire budget and allow for the Village Board to ask questions.

Village Manager Pavlicek began with highlighting the transmittal letter to begin the process of reviewing the proposed budget. She summarized the challenging circumstances and uncertainty in proposing a budget during this extended pandemic. Ms. Pavlicek explained the various funds that are included in the budget and how expenditures are broken down. Ms. Pavlicek explained how the Village projects the property tax levy for purposes of proposing a budget that does not exceed a 3% increase. CFO Drazner provided additional context.

Agenda public comment was read into the record by the Village Clerk:

Liz Holt, Ex. Director of the OPRF Chamber of Commerce: Thanked staff for support of small business community and requested the Village Board commit a budget to facilitate outdoor dining for 2021.

Kitty Conklin: Kitty Conklin submitted a public comment requesting the Village Board to remove the expenditure for "Friends of the Children".

Discussion on the budget continued:

Village President Abu-Taleb cautioned his colleagues to consider the uncertainty caused by the pandemic greatly affecting the parking fund.

CFO Drazner provided a snapshot of the various Village funds. Water and parking fund balances are negative. General fund savings are available to cover the water fund. Concern regarding a negative balance in the parking fund remains a concern however it was noted that Village staff have presented a balanced budget for FY2021. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla expressed

concern that the financial outlook is not good if COVID-19 budget problems continue into 2021-22. CFO Drazner is more optimistic that the Village will be able to rebound. Village Manager Pavlicek informed the Village Board the reality that this is a proposed budget and that the Village will need to continue to reassess the situation depending on how the pandemic progresses and what the cost to the Village for dealing with the pandemic overtime is. Village President Abu-Taleb shared Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla's concerns and the uncertainty of the future. Village Trustee Moroney is supportive of using the general fund to ease the burden of the current situation on tax payers. Village Trustee Boutet suggested the Village Board work to provide options for the small business community as the pandemic continues. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla agreed.

Village Manager Pavlicek provided an overview of the Village's departmental organizational chart and highlighted that the FY2021 budget includes a 3.5 staff reduction. The reduction comes from an increase in online services and adjustments in staffing needs largely in response to the pandemic.

Village Manager Pavlicek introduced reviewing of the general fund by department. CFO Drazner highlighted the 2021 recommended budget with revenues and expenses by department and forecasted 2022 budget columns. General Fund revenues are currently projected at 59M with budgeted expenditures of 61.1M. The largest category of expenditures is 47M for salaries and benefits.

Village Trustee Boutet suggested she would like to go through the general fund budget by department but began with following up on the public comment regarding "Friends of the Children". Discussion clarified that the Village Board had previously approved the Village Manager serving on the board of "Friends of the Children" by Resolution. The Village of Oak Park does not fund "Friends of the Children" as part of the Village Manager's service. Village Trustee Boutet remained questioning of the Village Manager's involvement in this organization as a good use of her time in her official capacity as Village Manager. Other members of the Village Board do not object to the Village Managers involvement with "Friends of the Children". Village President Abu-Taleb suggested members of the Village focus on productive budget discussions for a productive meeting.

As part of further general fund budget discussion Village Trustee Boutet shared her support for a new website with an open portal. Village Trustee Buchanan requested clarification on the increase in the Police budget specifically seeking to understand the expenditure for comp time. Comp time is when an officer chooses to accumulate overtime for a one time payout at the end of the year. This amount is an estimate based on the previous year and may change before the next year. Additionally, Village Trustee Buchanan would like to see

recognition of the Black Lives Matter movement in the Police budget work plan. She would like to see efforts for decriminalization and setting up of a response team. Village Manager Pavlicek noted that a Black Lives Matter response is currently in the Village Managers budget. This version of the budget was made before recent Board discussions and this budget item is currently preliminary as discussions continue.

Adjudication Director Robert Anderson provided a brief overview of his departmental budget. Village Trustee Boutet requested a report of how often residents receive tickets that are falsely provided due to possible technology errors so that the Board can understand whether there is a problem. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla requested clarification on what the job description of “community services coordinator” is in comparison to services that the Township Youth Services provides. Mr. Anderson shared that the township is limited in serving Oak Park and River Forest residents while this position will be able to similarly serve residents of Chicago and other neighboring communities in Oak Park adjudication. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla requested information on how Oak Park Adjudication and the Police Department are working to reduce criminalization of black and brown youth reflecting on the Governor’s mission to show more love toward youth who have made poor choices. Mr. Anderson highlighted how the Village of Oak Park has been a leader in separating youth adjudication from adults and so to better serve the needs of youth. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla would like to see Oak Park prioritize being a leader in taking a more compassionate approach to working with youth through adjudication. Village Manager Pavlicek further clarified the vision that was adopted from the IMPACT parent group model for the purpose of better serving youth and providing resources to those families with youth adjudication.

The Village Manager provided a brief overview of her departmental budget and responded to questions of the Village Board. Funding for the Early Childhood Collaboration is listed in the Village Manager’s Office budget because it is an IGA versus a 1-year grant cycle. Village Trustee Boutet requested the Village Board receive a quarterly litigation update. Communications Director David Powers contributed information that an open portal and new website are really two separate projects. He acknowledged that building an open portal was a priority before COVID-19 but has not moved forward with current challenges. He highlighted the value of OpenGov for building an open portal as a project for the future. Assistant Village Manager/HR Director Kira Tchang presented on accomplishments of her department during 2020. She reported that her focus will continue to be to support staff as we work through the pandemic with education and resources. Village Attorney Stephanides responded to questions regarding challenges of responding to FOIAs during the pandemic. There are a lot of FOIAs to respond to. The Law Department works with the Village Clerks

Office and the Police Department doing the best that they can to be responsive. Village President Abu-Taleb reminded everyone that work takes longer in these very difficult times. Village Trustee Boutet and Walker-Peddakotla expressed their concern that government does not have the luxury to permit for long delays in responding to FOIAs.

Director of the Community Relations Department Cedric Melton presented on his departmental budget. He updated the Village Board on the concentration of his department to assist neighbors with disputes that he feels may be directly related to the pandemic. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla feels the work of the community relations department is particularly vital during this time, particularly with regard to landlord discussions.

Director of Development Customer Services Tammie Grossman highlighted areas where DCS was able to tighten their budget. For example the proposed budget includes eliminating the multifamily housing incentives grant, reducing funding to Visit Oak Park, and deferring \$40,000 for a public art contract with the OPAAC. Included in the budget is \$50,000 for outdoor dining responsive to the OPRF Chamber concern for restaurants during the pandemic. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla expressed her concern for the proposal to cut funding for the multifamily housing incentive program as a program that directly helps multifamily building owners when they may need it most. Ms. Grossman responded that while she shares the value for the program she clarified that the Village has suggested retaining the CDBG small rental rehab forgivable loan program that may more directly benefit individual owners more than the multifamily housing incentive program because it requires a match that at this time may be more difficult for private owner. Village Trustee Moroney supports staff's recommendation. Village Trustee Buchanan requested information regarding the Village's inclusionary housing fund from development contributions. Ms. Grossman explained that the fund is currently only \$132,000 and that the intention is to bring forward a proposal on using the funds for inclusionary housing after the expected addition of \$500,000 from an approved development and others are added to the fund allowing for greater options for using the money. Village Trustee Boutet and Andrews would support separating the fund so that the Village Board can track the amount available. Village Trustee Boutet would support reserving some money for the multifamily housing incentive program in case it is needed. She would also like to have a proposal from staff to assist the small business community in response to the pandemic. Ms. Grossman reminded the Board that they had allocated \$500,000 of CARES ACT CDBG funds to assist small business, there may be hope to see more in 2021. Staff continues to work towards moving the permit process along and will bring forward ideas on assisting the small business community as they can. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla requested information regarding dollars available for rental assistance. Ms. Grossman

shared that money is available for rental assistance from county and state programs. She can provide the Board with an updated number of how many Oak Park residents have used this program. Village Trustee Boutet requested information regarding funding for Housing Forward. Ms. Grossman explained that the Village did not receive ESG funding this year. Every so often the Village does not receive this funding and Housing Forward is then eligible to receive ESG funding through the county and State. The Village writes a letter of support for Housing Forward. Housing Forward has never gone without receiving that funding.

CFO Drazner provided an overview of the Finance Department budget which includes funding for the audit, actuarial services, bank fees, and tracks inter-fund transfers from the general fund and turnover savings from vacant positions. Currently the budget includes \$1M from the general fund to the self-insurance fund and \$1M to the debt service fund. Mr. Drazner responded that the records coordinator position is currently part of the job description of two clerks within the Finance Department.

Fire Chief Ebsen presented on the budget for the Fire Department. He highlighted cuts made to equipment purchases to help balance the budget. Chief Ebsen updated the Village Board on the vital role of the Interim Deputy Chief for infectious disease and plans to provide for this need moving forward. He also updated the Village Board for the plan to add a civilian Fire Marshall to replace a retiring Deputy Fire Chief. Village Trustee Boutet requested the Chief prepare to respond to future discussion regarding possible crisis intervention work that may be a collaborative effort with the Fire Department. Deputy Chief Kobyleski responded to Village Trustee Buchanan concern for the hazardous material found in fire-fighting foam. He shared that this foam is only used for petroleum based fires and is very rare.

Director of IT Alvin Nepomuceno presented on the IT Department budget and highlighted the IT work plan including; remote working, FIBER WAN project with D97, data collection, and systems upgrades. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla suggested staff consider adding funds for an external pen test to protect government technology systems.

Chief of Police LaDon Reynolds reported on the Police Department budget with a focus on improving data collection to better respond to transparency and the addition of a Civilian Administrative Commander which will allow for a separation between community policing and operations and focus on directing professional standards. Village Trustee Boutet would like to see Resident Beat Officers (RBO's) fully staffed. She would like to have a dialogue regarding youth concerns and crisis intervention response needs. She would like further understanding of why our police force is as large as it is and wonders if this

discussion should be the focus of a study session. Chief Reynolds feels the discussion would be most effective after the completion of the RFP process for a review of the police department. He emphasized that Oak Park practices policing at the local level. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla asked for clarification on the community policing model, including resident beat officers (RBO's) and neighboring resource officers who respond to quality of life concerns for a zone of the Village that they themselves live in. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla expressed considerable concern for a policing model that increases the interaction between black and brown members of our community and police without increased transparency and accountability measures for this police department. She is very disappointed that she has not received a response to her seven questions regarding the FOP contract. She does not support the budget for the police department. Village Trustee Moroney expressed his dissatisfaction with Trustee Walker-Peddakotla's perspective that does not appreciate the work of the Oak Park Police Department. Village Trustee Boutet supports transparency and accountability. She would like a response to the "Freedom to Thrive" report. Chief LaDon Reynolds would like to respond more fully to the "Freedom to Thrive" report after the RFP process to review the police department is complete. He believes the conversation needs to include more nuanced information related to police interrogations. Village Trustee Taglia supports a comprehensive discussion after the RFP process is complete. Village Trustee Andrews supports the police budget as is.

Village President Abu-Taleb believes it is important to support Village staff. He acknowledged that this is not unconditional but all should be respectful. The role of the Village Board is local government.

Public Health Director Mike Charley provided a summary overview of his departmental budget. He is recommending a new position, "Community Health Advisor". That individual is currently covered by a grant for contract tracing grant through May 31, 2021. This role would assist with the Community Health I-Plan, work with community partners on identifying and addressing health deficiencies and disparities. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla is grateful to see a conscious effort to address health disparities. Director Charley shared the Health Department's intention to work closely with the State when a vaccine becomes available. The Village does not currently have a plan for mass testing. The Health Department will work with agencies that need it most for limited access to the antigen test (15 minutes test).

Public Works Director John Wielebnicki presented on his departmental budget. He highlighted staffing changes, changes in funding sources to reduce the burden on the general fund, and areas where the budget was reduced for FY2021. Mainly the street division and street lighting will now be paid for through the motor vehicle tax. He shared a reduction in the landscaping

account changing from three rotations to two, reduction in tree removal, and stump removal. He confirmed that following the direction of the Village Board the budget includes funding for 400 new trees. There will be a reduction in street sweeping with more litter pick-up supported in-house. He is confident that the public works department will be supplying an adequate amount of services.

It was agreed to finish discussion of the budget at the next meeting.

VII. Adjourn

It was moved by Village Trustee Boutet and seconded by Village Trustee Moroney to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 P.M.. A roll call vote was taken. The motion was approved. The roll call 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

Respectfully submitted,
Vicki Scaman
Village Clerk