



Village of Oak Park

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

Meeting Minutes

President and Board of Trustees

Monday, May 4, 2020

6:30 PM

Village Hall

I. Call to Order

Village President Abu-Taleb called the Meeting to order at 6:31 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 Moroney, seconded by Village Trustee Andrews, to approve the Agenda. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved.

IV. Minutes

- A. [ID 20-126](#) Motion to Approve Minutes from the Remote Special Meeting of April 27, 2020.

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

V. Non-Agenda Public Comment

Laura Lencioni, Chair of the Farmers Market Commission. Ms. Lencioni urged the Board not to approve any financial or staff decisions regarding the Farmers Market until the commission can meet. She also requested that they be allowed to meet as soon as possible in order to make plans to open the market.

VI. Village Manager Reports

- B. [ID 20-125](#) 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 Resolutions 20-124 and 20-128 which Continues the Emergency through June 1, 2020

Village Manager Pavlicek did not have a report but noted that Interim Deputy Fire Chief Joseph Terry would provide a public health update and Assistant Director of Development Customer Services Cameron Davis, who is the new staff liaison to the Farmers Market, would provide an update on the Farmers Market.

Interim Deputy Fire Chief Terry stated that as of this afternoon, there are 187 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 11 deaths. Eight are from long-term care and assisted living facilities. Staff follows up with them on a daily basis. All five locations have been issued official orders from Director of Public Health Mike Charley related to ways to slow the spread of the disease. To coincide with the Governor's extension of the Stay at Home Order, a fact sheet was emailed to over 1,100 businesses. Additional orders were issued to grocery stores, pharmacies and the Framers Market regarding social distancing. Volunteers continue to be trained and additional training will be planned as volunteers increase. The Health Department is working with the assisted living facilities to ensure they have adequate PPE. As requests for PPE come in from those facilities and other organizations, the Health Department continues to provide as much as they need. He discussed resources the Village has for obtaining PPE.

Village Trustee Buchanan asked about the availability of testing for residents. Interim Deputy Fire Chief Terry stated that people should continue to go through their primary care physician and that there are still parameters that need to be met. Testing availability has increased.

Village President Abu-Taleb thanked Interim Deputy Fire Chief Terry for serving in this position.

Assistant Director of Development Customer Services Cameron Davis stated that the Farmers Market will open Saturday, May 30 and extend through October 31. Operations will be in compliance with the social distancing order issued by Mike Charley. Only one Saturday will be missed. Operating hours are 7:30 A.M. through 1:00 P.M. Customers will be allowed to order online and pick-up between 9:00 A.M. and noon. There will be approximately 22 to 27 vendors. The top priority this year is safety and to ensure enough room between vendors and customers. Mr. Davis described the walking flow of the market, beginning with vehicles being parked at the OPRF Garage. The parking lot at Pilgrim will be utilized for pick-up of online orders. Masks will be required for vendors and customers and there will be washing stations throughout. No chef demonstrations or additional events will be held this year. Mr. Davis noted that volunteers are still needed. Sustainability Coordinator Mindy Agnew will be working with him and Market Manager Colleen McNicholls, as well as the commission, to recruit volunteers and operate the market. In addition, the Farmers Market Commission will be meeting on Thursday.

Village Trustee Buchanan asked Mr. Davis to respond to the public comment from the chair of the commission, Mr. Davis noted that he did reach out to Ms. Lencioni and left her a voice mail this evening. He has had several conversations with her prior to this. Staff has had to look at costs to find savings, such as crossing guards and paid assistants. However, he will be very involved and he will provide staff assistance at the market. Village Trustee Buchanan expressed concern that the chair of the commission had to resort to public comment before the Board in order to get adequate communication with staff. Mr. Davis reiterated that he and Director of Development Customer Services Tammie Grossman have had several conversations with her. Village Trustee Buchanan discussed her dissatisfaction with the level of communication between Village staff and the Farmers Market Commission, and that they should have been included in conversations pertaining to planning. Village Manager Pavlicek explained that parameters put in place by Mr. Charley regarding the handling of food due to the public health crisis includes the Farmers Market. She doesn't understand why the Farmers Market Commission cannot understand and respect Mr. Charley's right to put those parameters in place.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla agreed with Village Trustee Buchanan and wondered if

the commission had any part in the public health declaration put out today dictating how the Farmers Market would be run and when it would start. She feels that they are not being valued and is concerned about the volunteer situation, since most of them are elderly and high-risk regarding COVID-19 exposure.

Village Trustee Taglia respects the commission and supports staff. His concern is how construction is going to impact the Farmers Market this summer.

Village Trustee Andrews understands the limitations regarding commissions not being able to meet in the last couple of months. However, knowing that the Farmers Market will be moving forward, he believes it would be short sighted not to include the commission in some of the decision making due to their operational knowledge and ability to recruit volunteers. There is a disconnection, but understands both sides and all should assist in moving forward.

Village Trustee Boutet asked how patrons of the Farmers Market will know the new location. She noted that if changes are needed in the budget, it is for the Board to decide. She expressed clear dissatisfaction with the level of communication between staff, the public, the commission and the Board regarding the Farmers Market. She wants to discuss how the market is going to be staffed. More collaboration is needed as well as a sufficient budget.

Village Trustee Moroney commented that this virus took everyone by surprise and is more serious than anyone expected. Every process has turned upside down in a matter of a month and a half. Staff is doing the best that they can and from a different perspective. It is hard to include the commissioners in every decision.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla commented that the Farmers Market has been deemed an essential business by the Governor. She reiterated her strong desire to see the commission help with recruiting volunteers, planning, etc.

Village Manager Pavlicek noted that there is a lot of misinformation going around regarding volunteers. The Farmers Market Commission is meeting on Thursday and staff can report back to the Board. Staff is in agreement that they have to be very careful regarding the volunteers that they use and there are a number of public employees that can fill these roles. The budget has not been cut without the Board's approval, as the hiring process for the part-time assistants did not begin prior to the pandemic starting. There are some decisions that need to be made, but if there are employees the Village can use instead of hiring additional part timers, they may work to do that. It is also the role of the Public Health Director to make certain decisions regarding public health operations, including the Farmers Market. It will not be the decision of the commission to decide where hand washing will be, what PPE will be used, etc. However, this will be communicated to the commission.

Village Trustee Andrews commented that it seems that any budget change has to do with using Village employees rather than hiring part time staff.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla wanted to know, if the Farmers Market is an essential business, why a part time assistant is not considered an essential employee. She also wanted to make sure people will be able to use their LINK cards if they purchase online. Village Manager Pavlicek explained why hiring a new part time person is not pragmatic when there is a stay at home order, a funding issue and a staffing issue. She would rather utilize current employees to do this part time over the summer. She also verified that LINK cards will be accepted for online shopping at the Farmers Market.

Village President Abu-Taleb was hoping this discussion would go differently, Everyone agrees that the health and safety of the community is what's most important, thus the reason for the Stay at Home Order. The Farmers Market will be open soon and there is a plan for it. He noted that this order from the Governor deeming it an essential business only came four days ago. The Village Manager has been working seven days a week since March 19. He was hoping that the Board would be more appreciative of her efforts. Instead, they have found every opportunity to criticize. He would like more support for Village staff. This discussion did nothing to help the community or show appreciation for the people that work for the Village. He reminded the Board that the virus is still here and that this is still not over. Village President Abu-Taleb asked Village Manager Pavlicek to thank her staff on his behalf.

VII. Consent Agenda

Approval of the Consent Agenda

It was moved by Village Trustee Andrews and seconded by Village Trustee Moroney 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. [RES 20-101](#) A Resolution Approving Various Service Agreements with Call One Inc. to Provide Voice and Data Circuit Services in a Total Amount Not to Exceed \$90,000, Authorizing Their Execution and Waiving the Village's Bid Process for the Agreements**

This Resolution was adopted.

- D. [RES 20-103](#) A Resolution Approving a Three Year Lease Agreement and a Three Year Maintenance Agreement with Xerox Financial Services LLC and Chicago Office Technology Group Respectively for Copier and Printer Equipment at a Cumulative Three Year Cost Not to Exceed \$108,000.00 and Authorizing Execution of the Agreements**

This Resolution was adopted.

- E. [RES 20-116](#) A Resolution Approving a Customer Agreement and Rental Agreement with Canon Solutions America, Inc., for a Five-Year Lease of an Océ ColorWave 3500 Printing System in an Amount Not to Exceed \$49,825.00, Authorizing Their Execution and Waiving the Village's Bid Process for the Agreements**

This Resolution was adopted.

- F. [RES 20-122](#) A Resolution Approving the Renewal of the Annual Software License and**

Support and Maintenance Agreement dated December 15, 2014 with CityView, a Division of N. Harris Computer Corporation, for the Village's Permitting, Licensing and Inspection Services in an Amount Not to Exceed \$161,268.47 and Authorizing its Execution

This Resolution was adopted.

G. [ORD 20-035](#) An Ordinance Amending the Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Budget

This Ordinance was adopted.

VIII. Regular Agenda

H. [ID 20-122](#) Overview of the CDBG CARES (Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act Funding

Director of Development Customer Services Tammie Grossman stated that the Village will receive \$980,107 in funding. Recommendations for use of the funds are: \$400,000 to assist low and moderate income households with rent, mortgage and utilities for up to three months through Housing Forward, \$300,000 towards assisting businesses create and retain jobs for employees that are low and moderate wage earners, \$162,107 for the Village's traditional non-profit service providers and \$118,000 to go towards administrative expenses.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla asked what the \$118,000 for administrative expenses would be used for. Ms. Grossman stated that the Village is allowed to retain up to 20% of all CDBG funding to administer the program. She described how the CDBG program is run and how funding is used. Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla asked how businesses will be evaluated in order to receive funding. Ms. Grossman stated that those that hire employees that meet the income qualifications will be given funding. She added that staff will be bringing back a more detailed proposal. Today's presentation is just an overview.

Village Trustee Andrews asked when the Village would be receiving the funding. Ms. Grossman clarified that the Village would have to distribute the funds upfront and then be reimbursed. HUD will give notice when the money is available. She also noted that the Board has the ability to move the funding around between categories. This is just staff's preliminary recommendation.

Village Trustee Boutet was not supportive of funding being used for existing staff. Ms. Grossman reiterated that they have not been given the go ahead from HUD to spend the money yet. However, it is common for municipalities to keep a percentage of CDBG funds for administrative expenses and that the Village should be reimbursed for them. She explained the process again.

Village Trustee Taglia spoke in support of the program and of staff's proposed allocation of the funding.

I. [MOT 20-022](#) Trustees Walker-Peddakotla and Boutet Request a Motion to Consider the Village Board Creation of a Small Business Recovery Task Force that will work with Oak Park's Small Business Community to Support them during the Covid-19 Emergency.

Village Attorney Stephanides described the process to create a task force.

Village Trustee Andrews does not want the task force to be a Village commission. He would like them to have the ability to meet freely and not be subject to the Open Meetings Act and the information discussed kept private and not be subject to the Freedom of Information Act. He would also like the task force to represent the Village's racial diversity and the various types of businesses in the community.

Village Trustee Boutet agreed, noting it is an opportunity for collaboration to support and market the entire business community. She discussed assisting businesses with guidelines for social distancing and use of PPE.

Village Trustee Taglia supports the task force and that a group with expertise is what is needed. This should move quickly and without bureaucracy.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla agreed with all comments. The Chamber is overwhelmed and there is a need for one central point that all are functioning around. She added that the non-profits also have a wealth of knowledge and resources that exist in helping some of these businesses.

Village Trustee Moroney commented that Village Trustee Andrews has some good ideas. The Chamber is asking that the OPEDC take the lead on this. He suggested narrowing this to key stakeholders and supports Village Trustee Andrews as chair of the task force.

Village Trustee Buchanan asked, since they are all in agreement, what the next steps would be.

Village President Abu-Taleb stated that the focus of the task force needs to be fine tuned and not too broad. He acknowledged the sense of urgency. Small businesses are the soul of the community and life is not the same. He reminded all that it is important to be hopeful but this is not over. They need to be very careful. He nominated Village Trustee Andrews as chair of the task force.

Village Trustee Boutet asked how staff would provide information to these businesses and make sure the groups would be working together. Village Manager Pavlicek suggested putting this in the hands of the OPEDC to come up with a plan and come back to the Board. Village Trustee Boutet was expecting that staff would work on the program and come up with some ideas, as this is a Village goal and part of the pandemic.

Village Trustee Andrews agreed to be chair, but believes that Village Trustee Boutet is being premature in expecting a plan right now. Village Trustee Boutet shared discussions she had with stakeholders and volunteered to work with Village Trustee Andrews on the task force.

Village Trustee Moroney does not believe staff should be spending their time on this until the task force is established and their priorities are known.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla noted that the business community has asked the Board to create the task force. She doesn't understand why staff shouldn't be involved, specifically the Health Department. It is critical that a staff person be on the task force.

Village President Abu-Taleb agreed, but noted it is not a question of staff being involved, it is about when they become involved.

There was further discussion. There was consensus to name Village Trustee Andrews chair and Village Trustee Boutet a member of the task force.

This Motion was approved.

IX. Call to Board and Clerk

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla is still seeing racial disparity in regards to COVID-19. The numbers are not going down, and she advised everyone to stay safe and wear a mask in public. She added that it is Teacher Appreciation Week and gave a shout out to the Oak Park teachers.

Village Trustee Buchanan expressed gratitude to Village staff for their hard work. She stated that Village Manager Pavlicek is the best person to have in place during this disaster. As much as the businesses are the heart and soul of the Village, so are the residents, and she gave recognition to the Board of Health. She is hoping that all the commissions will be fully brought back soon.

Village Trustee Taglia is glad they came together regarding the task force. He acknowledged that the Farmers Market is important, but was disappointed that the discussion did not go better.

Village Trustee Boutet referred to information from the CDC regarding racial disparity during the pandemic.

Village Clerk Scaman commented that all government bodies have done a great job of sharing information during the pandemic and noted some online events that residents may be interested in.

Village President Abu-Taleb acknowledged how hard staff has worked. He believes it is important to create a positive environment in order to keep the right people. He has never seen a group of people so committed who work so hard and give so much attention to every detail. He discussed how difficult their jobs have gotten during this pandemic and that this is why he will always defend Village staff.

X. Adjourn

It was moved by Village Trustee Andrews, seconded by Village Trustee Boutet, to adjourn. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 P.M., Monday, May 4, 2020.

Respectfully Submitted,

**MaryAnn Schoenneman
Deputy Village Clerk**