



Village of Oak Park

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

Meeting Minutes

President and Board of Trustees

Monday, June 27, 2022

7:00 PM

Village Hall

I. Call to Order

Village President Scaman called the meeting to order at 7:02 P.M. She authorized a statement be read providing that the meeting is being held remotely due to COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines and that it is not prudent to have people present at the Village Board's regular meeting location due to public health concerns related to that pandemic.

II. Roll Call

Present: 7 - Village President Scaman, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Enyia, Village Trustee Parakkat, Village Trustee Robinson, 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 Buchanan, to approve the Agenda. 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 Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

IV. Non-Agenda Public Comment

Village Manager Kevin Jackson introduced Interim Police Chief Shatonya Johnson who gave an update on the homicide of Jailyn Logan-Bledsoe.

Village President Scaman thanked Interim Police Chief Johnson and staff for their hard work with this incident and to keeping the public safe.

The following persons spoke their Non-Agenda Public Comments aloud:

Susan Abbott: Susan Abbott spoke their public comment regarding the violence and crime occurring at the BP gas stations and asked the Board if there are changes that can be made within our control that give less

opportunity for crime.

Laura Smith: Laura Smith spoke their public comment regarding the multiple shootings that have occurred at the BP gas station and asked of the necessity of having a 24 hour gas station operating in a residential neighborhood. They asked the Board to do everything in their power to limit the hours of the gas station to help prevent this tragedy from happening again.

Barbara Shulman: Barbara Shulman spoke their public comment on behalf of a group of neighbors regarding their growing sense of a lack of safety due to crime and traffic in the residential neighborhood on Taylor Avenue. They urged the Board to act quickly , the safety of the community is not something that can wait.

Georgina Swanson: Georgina Swanson spoke their public comment expressing concerns of the BP gas station and the necessity of it being open 24 hours a day. They believe village leadership needs to develop strategies to keep everyone safe and the first step should be to limit the hours of the gas station.

Karl Leonard: Karl Leonard spoke their public comment demanding the Board do something, anything, to address the issues at the BP gas station. The Board and the business have done nothing to fix the problems and they believe the business is a nuisance and should be shut down.

Megan McLean: Megan McLean spoke their public comment expressing their concern over the increase of violence at the BP gas station. They are not sure what to ask the Board to do to address the issues but asked the Board to consider the pleas of the neighborhood and do something.

Melvin Nicks: Melvin Nicks spoke their public comment in support of closing the gas station. The neighborhood is done with the violence, the pettiness, the traffic and the amount of debris that is in connection with the gas station.

Kathleen Cantillon: Kathleen Cantillon spoke their public comment in support of shutting down the BP gas station. They expressed concerns over the increase in incidents since 2017 to which the owners have done nothing about and are negligent.

Kim Phillips: Kim Phillips spoke their public comment regarding the BP gas station has always been a nuisance that has a cycle of violence that keeps repeating. They feel if a number of crimes occurred in a particular location where it is considered a hotspot, new restrictions would be placed

on the business. They would support the gas station shutting down, or at least a reduction in its operating hours.

Kim Vulinovic: Kim Vulinovic spoke their public comment regarding the 24 hour operations of the BP gas station drastically affects the quality of life in their neighborhood and they are requesting a shortening of business hours or closing of the gas station. They do not feel safe in their neighborhood and take issue with the noise level, irresponsible driving, and the amount of litter and trash produced from the gas station.

Village Clerk Waters then read the following public comments aloud:

Marsha Borders: Marsha Borders submitted their public comment in opposition to an ordinance change that would extend the lighting on the Southfield at Ridgeland Commons from 8 to 10pm. They do not want the noise, the parking issues, or the lights. Neighbors simply want to enjoy the same peaceful and quiet environment at night afforded to others in the community.

Albert Taruc: Albert Taruc submitted their public comment in regards to the violence and robberies that occur at the BP gas station and request the hours of operation of the gas station be reduced to 6am to 10pm or midnight, which would allow the gas station to stay in business while reducing the risk of violence in the residential area.

Trisha Girdwood: Trisha Girdwood submitted their public comment pleading with the Board to take action and limit the hours of the BP gas station for the safety of all residents.

Rhoda Bernstein: Rhoda Bernstein submitted their public comment regarding the tragic, senseless, horrific murder at the BP gas station. They are in support of limiting the hours of operation for the station to be closed from midnight to 5am. They feel crime is an existential challenge to the community that depends on the Board making Oak Park as safe as possible.

Karen Burke: Karen Burke submitted their public comment expressing concerns over the BP gas station that the neighbors have been trying to engage with the Board about for much of the past year. They ask the Board to prioritize the safety of Oak Park residents and to put more attention, resources, and political will towards addressing the issue of violent crime in Oak Park.

Shelly Uslenghi: Shelly Uslenghi submitted their public comment asking the Board to address the issue of violent crime at the BP gas station at

Chicago Ave and Taylor. This 24/7 hour gas station has been a source of excessive noise, violent fights, verbal altercations and now a murder. The permit to allow a 24/7 hour gas station in a residential neighborhood should be reviewed and revised.

Hilarie and David Terebessy: Hilarie and David Terebessy submitted their public comment extremely concerned about the recent incidents of gun violence in this area. They ask the Village to consider re-zoning the gas station so that it is no longer open 24 hours; they do not believe that the business owner's profit margin should be prioritized over human life and the wellbeing of the residents of this area, all of whom also contribute significant tax dollars to the Village.

Denis Roarty: Denis Roarty submitted their public comment expressing their frustration by the Board's inaction to regulate the BP gas station as neighbors grow more anxious about the safety of their community. The village needs to ensure the business limits the negative impact on the community and not base their response on what other communities are doing to regulate gas stations.

V. Regular Agenda

A. [ID 22-204](#) **Presentation of the Final Draft of the 2022 Comprehensive Sustainability, Climate Action, and Resiliency Plan for the Village of Oak Park titled "Climate Ready Oak Park"**

Village Manager Kevin Jackson introduced Deputy Village Manager Ahmad Zayyad who introduced the Item.

The following persons spoke their Agenda Public Comments aloud:

Jonathan Rosen: Jonathan Rosen spoke their public comment on behalf of Movement of Students for Climate Action in support of the village's Climate Action Plan. They appreciate the level of community input that was put into create this plan, and they are hopeful the rest of the country will use Oak Park as a model for the action that is necessary to combat the existential effect of climate change.

Chris Pinc: Chris Pinc spoke their public comment representing the Oak Park Climate Action Network expressing their appreciation for the consulting team for its thorough process and extensive efforts to obtain community feedback and engagement. They feel now is the time to make bold decisions and urged the Board to develop a priority list, prioritizing the actions of the plan, creating a budget requirement and identifying funding sources, and a specific timeline for each priority.

Deputy Village Manager Ahmad Zayyad then introduced Sustainability Coordinator Marcella Bondie Keenan, and Breanna Mack and Stephanie Hacker from GRAEF, who then gave an overview of the Item.

Village Clerk Waters then read the following public comments aloud:

Dimitra Lavrakas: Dimitra Lavrakas submitted their public comment stating we must move away from gas. There is the problem of an aging gas line infrastructure causing explosions from gas leaks.

McLouis Robinet: McLouis Robinet submitted their public comment expressing concern about the future implementation of Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) to claim offsets which would subtract from the village's emissions. They advised Oak Park to not purchase voluntary RECs, and to add a statement in the Climate Action Plan stating that RECs must not be used in attempt to invalidly subtract from actual emissions.

Alex McLeese: Alex McLeese submitted their public comment asking the Board to be more ambitious in their climate action plan and aim for carbon neutrality by 2035 with limited offsets. The costs of transitioning away from carbon are substantial, but they pale in comparison to the costs of inaction.

Village Trustee Buchanan requested clarification on the staff tracking matrix.

Marcella Bondie Keenan responded the matrix is still in progress.

Village Trustee Buchanan requested clarification on if there is an overall amount of metric tons that need to be reduced to reach the goal of 60% by 2030.

Marcella Bondie Keenan responded 270,000 metric tons of carbon equivalents.

Village Trustee Buchanan requested clarification on if there are any estimates on how big we could go with energy efficiency, beyond the goal of 10%, considering the old housing stock in the village.

Breanna Mack responded the 10% goal was based on other peer communities, but they could forecast out different percentages to see what the emissions reduction potential could be for more ambitious goals.

Marcella Bondie Keenan added the challenge is there is a variety in Oak Park's housing from multifamily to historic and vintage, but we should always be aiming for the most amount of energy efficiency as possible.

Village Trustee Buchanan requested clarification on the cost estimate to convert all buildings to electric.

Breanna Mack responded the assumption was people would be spending

their own capital to make those transitions to their homes or businesses instead of through a village investment.

Village Trustee Parakkat clarified that the 1 Billion dollar price tag is misleading as it is actually smaller as there are avenues to fund that, but we have to be more clear about what they are. He would like to see the breakdown of funding sources aligned with strategies to create a timeline view of implementation of priorities.

Village Trustee Robinson requested clarification regarding if there are any concerns with the modernization efforts being cost prohibitive, and if there are, are there alternative measures that can be considered to offset their footprint.

Marcella Bondie Keenan responded any building can approach this in a variety of ways. Recognizing not everyone will be able to take action, the hope is others will go above and beyond to help balance this as well. The other piece are the larger structures, like commercial or multifamily buildings, that use a lot of energy can move the needle for us quickly, much more than a single family home owner. So focusing on those makes room for perhaps a low income homeowner to do less or not demanding them to do something that is unaffordable to them.

Village Trustee Robinson requested clarification regarding what sorts of tracking or measurements would be realistic to assess our progress.

Marcella Bondie Keenan responded they will be developing a website to show key performance indicators which will require more data collection than they are currently doing. Getting every large building to benchmark their energy usage annually will show how we are doing as will continuing looking at energy usage through ComEd.

Village trustee Buchanan requested clarification on if the community aggregation program is not currently 100% renewable.

Marcella Bondie Keenan responded in the affirmative, it is not. Staff is currently working on bidding out a community choice aggregation contract that will require vendors to do better than ComEd, and because of legislation the grid itself will have more renewable energy that will be accessible.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla commented there is a greater opportunity for cross collaboration with other governmental entities like the library or park district to work to achieve some of the goals and she would like to see more of that in the plan. She also feels the first line actions should be based on the climate vulnerability index; who are the most vulnerable people in our village, based on our assessments - those areas should be prioritized.

Marcella Bondie Keenan responded staff has been working with other intergovernmental and other collaborative partners to help with this. The vulnerability assessment is intended to be used that way and is called out in the economic development and extreme weather sections. The assessment should be updated regularly.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla added when we talk about climate vulnerability it has to include things like can a long-time resident keep on affording to live here in Oak Park. Housing vulnerability and climate vulnerability are tied together.

Village Trustee Parakkat requested clarification on how we are determining who the low and moderate income residents are within the community, and how are we ensuring that these residents are aware of other free programs or resources not funded by the village that are available for them.

Marcella Bondie Keenan responded they would reference the vulnerability maps based on emphasis, they would refer to the village's established income qualified program, as well as look at issue-specific things to help determine who the low and moderate income residents are. Regarding using outside available resources, they can look at how Potomac Park as part of their program is requiring the need to stack in every external funding source first before considering paying out any type of rebate.

Village Trustee Taglia expressed his appreciation for the focus on the conservation aspects of the plan and the commitment by Public Works to work towards minimizing the water loss throughout the village. He requested clarification if the final plan documents will include discussion as to what the investments might be that are needed to curb water loss. Marcella Bondie Keenan responded the short term goals are already planned for or budgeted into the CIP, but long term they will need to continue to invest in infrastructure to continue to see a reduction in the water loss in the future.

Village President Scaman expressed her appreciation to all the work that went into this plan and directed staff to develop a list of priorities and recommendations that the Board can further discuss in context with the entire budget.

B. [ID 22-208](#) Presentation on a Racial Equity Toolkit

Village Manager Jackson introduced the Item.

Human Resource Director and Assistant Village Manager Kira Tchang

then gave an overview presentation of the Item.

Village Trustee Robinson commented the terms "racial equity" and "equity" were used interchangeably throughout the toolkit and they are not the same thing. They would like to ensure they are specifically talking about racial equity in the materials. They also would like introduced into the toolkit a way to look at unintended inequality in policies or procedures - what happens when we have an initiative, policy, or program that seems completely neutral but in its application actually produces unintended, inequitable results.

Director Tchang responded race is the leading indicator and they want to begin the equity analysis in that way and staff will continue to refine the toolkit to ensure that other are considered on a deeper level. There is a thought exercise in the toolkit that asks people to reflect on unintended consequences, and the toolkit can be used to circle back to evaluate the success of a program.

Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla commented racial equity is looking at equity from a holistic perspective - race gets at the underlying issues that ultimately lift every other group up. They also recommended using the term "feasible" rather than "realistic" in step five of the toolkit.

Village Trustee Parakkat requested clarification on how they are defining the term "racial" in the racial equity toolkit and if they are referring to one specific race.

Director Tchang responded they are defining race in a similar way as the U.S. Census does and there is no specific focus on a single race when it comes to the toolkit. The racial equity toolkit is designed to get at disparities across all races, and all races experience disproportionate impact of different decisions and policies throughout community and the U.S.

Village Trustee Enyia thanks staff for all the hard work in putting the toolkit together. He recommends focusing on the engagement process and standardizing the engagement process so no stakeholders are left out of the conversation.

VI. Adjourn

It was moved by Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla, seconded by Village Trustee Robinson, to Adjourn. The motion was approved. The Meeting adjourned at 10:11 P.M., Monday, June 27, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deputy Clerk DeViller

AYES: 7 - Village President Scaman, Village Trustee Buchanan, Village Trustee Enyia, Village Trustee Parakkat, Village Trustee Robinson, Village Trustee Taglia, and Village Trustee Walker-Peddakotla

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0