

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2023
VILLAGE HALL BOARD ROOM

CALL TO ORDER: President Hofeld called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: President Hofeld led trustees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Clerk Marilyn Thomas called the roll. Those present were Village President Richard Hofeld, Trustee Lisa Purcell, Trustee Julie Willis, Trustee Anne Colton, Trustee Vivian Harris-Jones, Trustee Jay Heiferman and Trustee Lauren Roman.

President Hofeld introduced staff present: Village Manager Napoleon Haney, Village Attorney Chris Cummings, Assistant Village Manager Tyler Hall, Public Works Director John Schaefer, Finance Director Amy Zukowski, and Police Chief Denise McGrath.

MINUTES: The minutes of the meeting of July 25, 2023, were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

A motion was made by Trustee Colton and seconded by Trustee Harris-Jones to approve the minutes as presented.

Roll Call: AYES—Trustees Willis, Colton, Heiferman, and Harris-Jones. NAYS –None. ABSTAIN—Trustees Purcell and Roman. Motion carried.

CLAIMS LIST: The Claims List in the amount of \$998,022.55 was presented. There were no questions from the Trustees.

A motion was made by Trustee Purcell and seconded by Trustee Roman to approve the Claims List as presented.

Roll Call: AYES—Trustees Purcell, Willis, Colton, Heiferman, Harris-Jones and Roman. NAYS –None. Motion carried.

President Hofeld said three items totaled 68 percent of the Claims List: \$97,469.31 payment to Thorn Creek Basin Sanitary District; \$255,851.56 for employee health insurance for August; \$324,575.10 to the City of Chicago Heights for Lake Michigan water.

HEAR FROM AUDIENCE: Residents were invited to address any subject not on the meeting's agenda. No comments were offered.

The Village Board received several communications from residents via email. All messages were distributed to all Trustees and the Village President prior to the meeting. (Attached)

APPOINTMENTS: President Hofeld proposed the appointments of Sylvia Alexander who will serve on the Beautification Committee through Aug. 8, 2028; Peter Womack who will serve on the Fire and

Police Commission through Aug. 8, 2026, and James Anderson who will serve on the Fire Pension Board through Aug. 8, 2026.

A motion was made by Trustee Colton and seconded by Trustee Heiferman to approve the appointments of Ms. Alexander, Mr. Womack and Mr. Anderson.

Roll Call: AYES—Trustees Purcell, Willis, Colton, Heiferman, Harris-Jones and Roman. NAYS – None. Motion carried.

Clerk Thomas administered the oath of office to the three appointees.

OATH OF OFFICE: Clerk Thomas administered the oath of office to Lindsay Cabay who will serve as the Assistant Finance Director in the Finance Department, and James Anderson who will serve as Street Division Supervisor in the Public Works Department.

OMNIBUS VOTE: Consider a motion to pass, approve, authorize, accept, or award the following item(s):

- A. MC-1076/Liquor Manager Qualifications: Pass an ordinance amending Chapter 4 of the Homewood Municipal Code clarifying the designation and qualifications of managers where alcoholic liquor is sold.
- B. M-2261/Yield and Stop Signs/Birch Road and Gottschalk Avenue: Pass an ordinance revising schedules regulating the use of streets within the Village of Homewood to remove yield signs and install stop signs at the intersection of Birch Road and Gottschalk Avenue.
- C. Budget Amendment/Purchase/Downtown Outdoor Speakers: Approve a budget amendment allocating \$30,000 of American Rescue Plan Act funds for the downtown outdoor speaker project; waive competitive bidding due to a sole source provider; and, approve the purchase of equipment from AirNetix of Smyrna, GA in an amount not to exceed \$22,905 and \$7,095 for unforeseen installation costs related to the downtown outdoor speaker project.
- D. Budget Amendment/Waive Competitive Bidding/Vehicle Purchases: Approve a budget amendment allocating \$177,203.88 of American Rescue Plan Act funds for the purchase of three (3) vehicles; waive competitive bidding for an emergency purchase of six (6) vehicles due to limited vehicle availability; and, approve the purchase of four (4) 2023 Ford Police Utility vehicles, (1) Ford F250 Super Duty with Utility Body, and (1) Ford F150 XL Work Truck from D'Orazio Ford in the total amount of \$328,759.97 (\$267,856.56 vehicle purchase, and \$60,903.41 for additional equipment, decals, and upfitting to the vehicles).
- E. Intergovernmental Agreement/Reciprocal Reporting/Homewood School District 153: Authorize the Village President to enter into an Intergovernmental Reciprocal Reporting Agreement between Homewood School District 153 and the Village of Homewood.
- F. Budget Amendment/Waive Competitive Bidding/Strada Construction Company: Approve a budget amendment allocating \$26,000 of American Rescue Plan Act funds to the Harwood Avenue Parking Lot-Curb/Landscape Improvement project; waive competitive bidding due to a vendor currently under contract; and, approve expanding the scope of work for the contract with Strada Construction Company of Addison, IL to include 650 feet of additional curb work along Harwood Avenue; amending the not to exceed contract cost from \$119,010 to \$145,010.

- G. Agreements/Fiber Optic Carrier Equipment Point of Presence/Cook County: Authorize the Village President to enter into three (3) separate fiber optic right of entry and fiber optic carrier equipment point of presence (POP) site agreements between Cook County and the Village of Homewood for fiber conduit to be installed on or about the Village Hall, Fire and Police Departments, and Public Works buildings.

Trustee Colton asked that Item C get a separate vote.

Before the vote, Trustee Willis asked for clarification on Item E, the intergovernmental agreement between the Village and School District 153. Police Chief McGrath said the measure was needed so that the school district can comply with state law. It in no way limits or expands the work of the Police Department.

Public Works Director Schaefer was asked to explain why the board was asked to waive competitive bidding on several purchases on the agenda. He explained that police and utility vehicles are hard to come by and that bidding was impractical since few dealers have available inventory. Normally the Village purchases vehicles through the state cooperative purchase program, but no vehicles are available this year. If the Village orders vehicles, there is a waiting list of up to two years, so he searched for vehicles that were available on the market. He found these police and public works vehicles available locally and is asking for approval to purchase.

Public Works Director Schaefer said Item F is an addendum to a bid the Village had previously accepted from Strada Construction, now completing work in the Village. To go to bid for a small stretch of curb could mean an additional wait time and likely see an increase in the cost of the project. He determined it would be more cost effective to make a change order to an existing contract rather than rebid this work.

Trustee Heiferman said he was happy to see the Village being part of a Cook County program (Item G).

A motion was made by Trustee Purcell and seconded by Trustee Willis to approve Items A-B-D-E-F-G on the Omnibus Report as presented.

Roll Call: AYES—Trustees Purcell, Willis, Colton, Heiferman, Harris-Jones and Roman. NAYS – None. Motion carried.

On Item C, Trustee Colton asked to hear from audience members before a vote.

Residents came forward to complain that the outdoor speakers in downtown Homewood are disruptive to their way of life as downtown residents. The songs are distracting and not necessarily to their liking; the music plays too late and impacts their ability to watch TV or movies; they had no say in adding the amenity into their neighborhood; the \$30,000 could be spent in other ways.

Assistant Village Manager Hall said the speakers were added to the downtown area in September 2019 and music started in December 2019. They are meant to enhance the vitality of the downtown. There are 16 speakers now. The plan is to increase them along Ridge Road and Dixie Highway. The speakers are on from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday-Thursday and Sunday, and from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

President Hofeld said surveys show downtown amenities such as seating, a gathering place like the fire pit on Martin Avenue, decorative lighting, and music draw the community to the downtown. The Village has a regular schedule of events throughout the year to bring people to the downtown. The new Metra station, the Homewood Science Center and new apartments are also helping to bring people to downtown.

Trustee Colton said she believed the Village failed to engage the community on the speakers issue. She asked that action on Item C be postponed for further discussion, preferably at a Committee of the Whole meeting. Several Trustees said they didn't know the speakers were an annoyance; they had heard positive comments about the music.

A motion was made by Trustee Purcell and seconded by Trustee Colton to postpone consideration of Item C on the Omnibus Report to a future date.

Roll Call: AYES—Trustees Purcell, Willis, Colton, Heiferman, Harris-Jones and Roman. NAYS – None. Motion carried.

GENERAL BOARD DISCUSSION: Trustees thanked those in the audience for coming and offering their comments.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Trustee Roman and seconded by Trustee Colton to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Roll Call: AYES—Trustees Purcell, Willis, Colton, Heiferman, Harris-Jones and Roman. NAYS – None. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Thomas

Village Clerk

Public Comments - Board of Trustees Meeting - August 8, 2023

From: Nikki Valeriu
Sent: Tuesday, August 8, 2023 12:12 AM
To: PublicComments <comments@homewoodil.gov>
Subject: re: Village Board Meeting on August 8th, 2023

I am writing once again to comment on the issue of proposed spending outlined in the release, particularly in relation to item C on the agenda: I still do not believe that allocating roughly thirty thousand dollars for the installation, maintenance, upgrading, or, frankly, use of the speakers in downtown Homewood is a reasonable investment. It is far too much money being spent on a feature more people tolerate than enjoy. Tangentially, even a rough breakdown of subject D's spending (the total divided by six leaving each purchased vehicle at roughly \$54,793.33) is.....a stretch, but a more reasonable stretch, given the cost of vehicle equipment and specialty parts. Thirty thousand dollars is almost one village vehicle. For speakers that a minority of Homewood feels contribute positively to the overall ambience of downtown. I'm sorry, but I just cannot fathom that much money being a justifiable expense.

Tangentially, I raise concerns about the Reciprocal Reporting Agreement: namely that only serious offenses of a legitimate nature are reported through it. We are all well aware of the volatile political climate we live in, and the idea of reported incidents between students being forwarded to the police seemingly without parental approval or consultation begs the question as to what will be done to prevent abuse of the system. Particularly in relation to bullying, I would like the village to discuss and disclose more information on the agreement and its use to parents and caregivers before approval. I do not know if anyone listening to this has been bullied, but I was once a youth myself, and when young people decide they do not like a classmate, they will spread rumors about the individual regardless of the consequences. I do not want to see an increase in children being reported to agencies or being pulled into specialized classrooms away from their peers due to incident reporting.

From: Judy Ricci
Sent: Monday, August 7, 2023 10:54 PM
To: PublicComments <comments@homewoodil.gov>
Subject: Public Thank you to Trustee Anne Colton & her husband & son.

Please read at 8/8/2023 meeting.

I want to publicly acknowledge & thank Trustee Anne Colton for her assistance when a large tree branch fell from the west of me in my backyard. This was from the bad storm with 65 mph winds that happened on Friday 7/28/23. I'm a senior citizen with limited mobility. On Saturday 7/29/23 I reached out to Anne since the village was closed. She came to my rescue on Sunday 7/30/23 by sending her husband Bob & son Bill to help remove the branch and I was very grateful for their assistance.

Anne truly is concerned about citizens of Homewood as I can attest.
Again my heartfelt thanks to Anne & her husband Bob & son Bill.

Sincerely
Judy Ricci
Homewood