

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2024  
VILLAGE HALL BOARD ROOM

CALL TO ORDER: President Hofeld called the meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 7 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 Julie Willis, Trustee Vivian Harris-Jones, Trustee Jay Heiferman, Trustee Phillip Mason, Trustee Lauren Roman and Trustee Allisa Opyd.

President Hofeld introduced staff present: Village Manager Napoleon Haney, Village Attorney Chris Cummings, Director of Economic and Community Development Angela Mesaros, Finance Director Amy Zukowski, Police Chief Denise McGrath, Director of Public Works Josh Burman, and Assistant Village Manager Terence Acquah.

MINUTES: The minutes of October 22, 2024, were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

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

**Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Willis, Harris-Jones, Heiferman, Mason, Roman and Opyd. NAYS - None.**

CLAIMS LIST: The Claims List in the amount of \$1,185,571.74 was presented. There were no questions from the Trustees.

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

**Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Willis, Harris-Jones, Heiferman, Mason, Roman and Opyd. NAYS - None. Motion carried.**

President Hofeld said three bills totaled nearly 60 percent of the Claims List: \$322,029.05 to the City of Chicago Heights for Lake Michigan water; \$255,762.83 for the November premium for employee insurance; \$90,210.98 to Thorn Creek Basin Sanitary District.

HEAR FROM THE AUDIENCE: Liz Varmecky of South Suburbs for Green Space addressed the Board. She said there has been no action on the possible pollution at one of the ponds at the Izaak Walton Preserve. She said in 2022 the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency told the Village it was responsible for the Preserve, which is leased to Izaak Walton. She said the Public Works Department has not kept current with the concerns.

MEET THE MERCHANTS: DeAnna Taylor can help clients prioritize self-care at her Mom-Care Oasis. The business focuses on personal as well as business executive coaching. She will work with

clients to recognize how one small act can begin the journey to self-improvement. Young moms can benefit from her oasis program. The business is at 1921 Ridge Road.

OATH OF OFFICE: Chief McGrath introduced Officer Daniel Morrison who comes to Homewood after most recently serving with the Harvey Police Department. He had also served as a correctional officer for the Cook County Department of Corrections. Clerk Thomas administered the oath of office to Officer Morrison.

Finance Director Zukowski introduced Jeimy Vasquez who was recently hired as a full-time finance clerk. She is transitioning from a healthcare position. She will receive a bachelor's degree in finance from Western Governors University in November 2024. Clerk Thomas administered the oath of office to Ms. Vazquez.

PRESENTATIONS: Event Manager Marla Youngblood presented a check for \$2,310 to a representative of the Homewood District 153 PTA, the beneficiary of the annual Fall Chili Fest. The money was collected from attendees who made donations to taste the chili prepared by 18 chefs.

Antonia Steinmiller, the Village's communications and engagement specialist, presented certificates to participants in the Citizens Civic Academy. She said 18 people participated in the first session, and this session had 41 people. The goal is to have the academy twice a year.

A presentation by View Chicago LLC was tabled.

OMNIBUS VOTE: The board was asked to pass, approve, authorize, accept, or award the following items:

- A. Agreement/Facility Hardening and Disaster Resiliency Assessment/Interface Engineering: Authorize the Village President to contract with Interface Engineering of Chicago, IL for \$34,500, to conduct a Facility Hardening and Disaster Resiliency Assessment.
- B. Acceptance of Proposal/Network Upgrade/Urban Communications: Approve a budget amendment for \$7,825.00; and, accept the lowest cost proposal submitted by Urban Communications of Oak Forest, IL, by approving the purchase and installation of six (6) FortiGate Network Firewalls for a total cost of \$50,534.21.
- C. Amendment/Letter of Intent/Rabid Ground LLC/3003-3025 183rd Street: Approve the Second Amendment to the Letter of Intent with Rabid Ground LLC for the Village-owned property at 3003-3025 183rd Street.
- D. Agreements/Business Incentive: Authorize the Village President to enter into incentive agreements for these properties: 18201-18209 Dixie Highway; 18659-18667 Dixie Highway; 18660-18676 Dixie Highway; 17911 Harwood Avenue; 1914-1918 Ridge Road; 2048 Ridge Road; and 2057 Ridge Road. The agreements provide matching funds up to \$5,000.00 to commercial property owners to help to renovate their buildings.
- E. MC-1083/Amendment to Municipal Code/Raffle Licenses: Pass an ordinance amending chapter 6 of the Homewood Municipal Code regarding raffle licenses to set the maximum price which may be charged for each raffle chance as \$100 for single raffles and \$10 for multiple/serial raffles; and, require a fidelity bond only for those raffles which have an aggregate prize value of more than \$5,000.

- F. Purchase Approval/Ford Utility Interceptors/Currie Motors Fleet: Waive competitive bidding due to utilizing a vendor through a cooperative purchasing program and approve the purchase of two (2) Ford Utility Interceptors from Currie Motors Fleet of Frankfort, IL through the Suburban Purchasing Cooperative in the amount of \$91,026, plus \$24,000 for additional equipment and upfitting to the vehicles, for a total amount of \$115,026.
- G. Purchase Approval/Ford F-350/Currie Motors: Waive competitive bidding due to the solicitation of direct vehicle quotes and approve the purchase of one (1) Ford F-350 Regular Cab 4x2 from Currie Motors of Frankfort, IL in the amount of \$35,673; and, approve the purchase/installation of lighting, accessories, and equipment after purchase for a total amount not to exceed \$16,000 for a total cost of \$51,673.
- H. Approval/System Upgrades/Metropolitan Industries: Waive competitive bidding due to a proprietary purchase, equipment standardization, manufacturer, repair, and authorized dealer/seller, technical nature of item makes competition impractical or will negate standardization, and utilization of a vendor currently under contract or that serves as the Village designated vendor for system maintenance; and, approve the system upgrades for Water Plant #1 from Metropolitan Industries of Romeoville, IL in an amount not to exceed \$543,482.00
- I. Approval/Programmable Logic Controller and Communication Upgrades (Phase 1)/Metropolitan Industries: Approve a budget amendment in the amount of \$26,000; waive competitive bidding for Programmable Logic Controller and Communication Upgrades (Phase 1) due to a proprietary purchase, equipment standardization, manufacturer, repair and authorized dealer/seller, technical nature of item makes competition impractical or will negate standardization, and utilization of a vendor currently under contract or that serves as the Village designated vendor for system maintenance, for Metropolitan Industries of Romeoville, IL in an amount not to exceed \$145,461.

Trustee Mason asked if the contract with Interface Engineering (Item A) will include renewable energy sources. Assistant Village Manager Acquah said the Village has asked for all options.

Trustee Roman asked if the one business not approved for the ARPA funding (Item D) could still qualify for the reimbursements. Director Mesaros said the applicant had done the work before the program was started, so it did not qualify.

Trustee Opyd asked for an overview on the water pump project (Items H & I). Director Burman said this is part of the capital improvement plan. The village will be updating equipment that turns on and off water supplied to west and east sides of the Village. The 42-year-old motor control center will be replaced. He said the Village is using a company that has been working with the Village on maintenance and emergencies. Trustee Opyd commented Director Burman for bringing this project in under budget.

A motion was made by Trustee Roman and seconded by Trustee Opyd to approve the Omnibus Report as presented.

**Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Willis, Harris-Jones, Heiferman, Mason, Roman and Opyd. NAYS – None. Motion carried.**

**NEW BUSINESS:** Finance Director Zukowski summarized the 2024 real estate tax levy. Under state law, the Village may raise the levy 5% or the Consumer Price Index, which for this levy is 3.35%, and 0.5% for new construction, plus with the ending of the Southgate TIF that property comes back to the Village adding another 1% of new construction resulting in a total levy increase of 4.85%, (excluding debt service). The levy is \$7 million. With the addition of debt service, the levy will total \$7.8 million.

Out of that \$7 million, the Village is expected to meet its police and fire pension obligations. Staff recommends funding the minimum recommended by the State Consolidated Pension Funds for an amount of \$2.6 million for police and \$853,000 for fire. The pension funds had asked for additional funding to get closer to 100% funding by the 2040 deadline, but the staff recommends the minimum amount. Since 2018, the portion of the property tax levy allocated to cover the Village's public safety pension fund contributions has increased steadily.

The remaining levy funds will go to IMRF pension contributions, social security funding, auditing costs, risk management insurance and all other day-to-day expenses.

The final levy will be 50% for pensions and 50% for operations. About 10% of a property owner's tax bill goes to the Village. The Village relies heavily on sales taxes more than property taxes to meet its fiscal needs.

Since the Village approved a \$2.6 million general obligation bond this year, the tax levy also includes approximately \$750,000 to begin paying back the bond.

Director Zukowski asked the Board to conduct a Truth in Taxation hearing because the total levy is more than 5%.

Trustees thanked Director Zukowski for her report. President Hofeld said the Village works hard for business development. This discussion shows how the Village relies on sales taxes.

A motion was made by Trustee Roman and seconded by Trustee Opyd to direct staff to publish notice of Truth in Taxation hearing at set for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2024 before the regular Village Board meeting.

**Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Willis, Harris-Jones, Heiferman, Mason, Roman and Opyd. NAYS – None. Motion carried.**

A motion was made by Trustee Heiferman and seconded by Trustee Willis that the Village use the state's actuarial minimum amount due for the Police and Fire Pension Fund contributions.

**Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Willis, Harris-Jones, Heiferman, Mason, Roman and Opyd. NAYS – None. Motion carried.**

**GENERAL BOARD DISCUSSION:** Trustees congratulated the residents who participated in the Citizens Civic Academy. Trustee Heiferman said the Village had an incredible achievement with the opening of Wind Creek Casino. Trustee Opyd applauded staff for how they are able to allocate taxes and funding for Village services.

President Hofeld said there are two more free leaf pickups, and the Tree Committee has three plantings on Saturday, November 17, in memory of three residents.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** A motion was made by Trustee Mason and seconded by Trustee Roman to move to Executive Session to discuss pending litigation under 4 ILCS 120/2(c)11.

**Roll Call:** *AYES --Trustees Willis, Harris-Jones, Heiferman, Mason, Roman and Opyd. NAYS – None. Motion carried.*

The board moved to Executive Session at 7:50 p.m.

The board returned from Executive Session at 8 p.m.

**ADJOURN:** A motion was made by Trustee Opyd and seconded by Trustee Mason to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.

**Roll Call:** *AYES --Trustees Willis, Harris-Jones, Heiferman, Mason, Roman and Opyd. NAYS – None. Motion carried.*

The meeting adjourned at 8 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Marilyn Thomas  
Village Clerk



**PUBLIC COMMENTS –  
for the Tuesday, November 26, 2024 Board Meeting**

From: Bob Robertson  
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2024 9:45 PM  
To: PublicComments  
Subject: 911 and speeding in Homewood

On November 19th, 2024, at 9:34pm, I called 911. On October 10th, the Homewood Police Department posted to their Facebook page that we should call if cars are speeding. I reported for the third time on November 19<sup>th</sup> that cars were speeding on 187th Street at 9:34pm. The operator told me nothing can be done unless a formal complaint is made. This is not how this works. If I call about speeding cars, you need to do something about it, not disregard me and tell me you are powerless.