

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 2025  
VILLAGE HALL BOARD ROOM

CALL TO ORDER: President Hofeld called the 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 Nakina Flores called the roll. Those present were Village President Richard Hofeld, Trustee Vivian Harris-Jones, Trustee Julie Willis, Trustee Jay Heiferman, Trustee Patrick Siemsen, Trustee Phillip Mason and Trustee Lauren Roman.

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

MINUTES: The minutes of May 27, 2025, were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

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

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

CLAIMS LIST: The Claims List in the amount of \$1,456,414.19 was presented. There were no questions from the Trustees.

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

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

President Hofeld said three items totaled 77 percent of the Claims List: \$285,000 to the City of Chicago Heights for Lake Michigan water; \$579,000 for the street patching program; \$259,000 for one month of employee's health insurance.

PRESENTATION: Communication and Engagement Manager Antonia Steinmiller presented certificates to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cohort spring 2025 Citizen Academy participants.

HEAR FROM THE AUDIENCE: Agnes Troop suggested that the village put more information in the chronicle about TIFs and other matters so the public can be more informed.

Dr. Kristine Condon thanked Chief McGrath and the Homewood Police Department for enforcing the laws banning fireworks. Fireworks can be harmful to humans and pets. She stated that in 2024, her neighbor addressed the Village Board about the misuse of residential fireworks and she was concerned about damage to her deck. In 2023, Kristine's garage sustained property damage from the misuse of

residential fireworks from a neighbor. She would like continued support for this ban as the holiday approaches.

Resident Amy Crump read additional passages from the book "On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century" by Timothy D. Snyder regarding suspect actions by secret police. She encouraged residents to join the upcoming protest against the Trump administration's policies.

Brendon De Boer requested that the Village incorporate design elements to make crosswalks safer, including the Ridge Road crosswalks at Gottschalk and Highland. He suggested raised curbs or some other physical deterrent to slow down vehicles and make these areas safer for pedestrians.

OMNIBUS VOTE: The board was asked to pass, approve, authorize, accept, or award the following item(s):

- A. Bid Award/Valve Exercising and Fire Hydrant Flow Testing Program/M.E. Simpson Company, Inc.: Award a bid for Valve Exercising and Fire Hydrant Flow Testing Program to M.E. Simpson Company, Inc., of Valparaiso, IN, the lowest responsible bidder, for a three-year contract in an amount not to exceed \$146,286.
- B. Agreement/Jurisdictional Transfer/Harwood Avenue from Pine Road to Ridge Road: Authorize the Village President to enter into an agreement for the jurisdictional transfer of Harwood Avenue, from Pine Road to Ridge Road, from the Illinois Department of Transportation to the Village of Homewood, providing the Village with direct control over a critical roadway in the heart of the downtown business district.
- C. Intergovernmental Agreement/Maintenance of State-owned Municipal Streets/Illinois Department of Transportation: Authorize the Village President to enter into a 10-year Intergovernmental Agreement with the Illinois Department of Transportation for Maintenance of State-owned Municipal Streets located in Homewood.
- D. M-2358/Public Water Supply Loan Program/Lead Service Line Replacement Program: Pass an ordinance providing authorization to borrow funds from the Public Water Supply Loan Program in an amount not to exceed \$4,137,498 to be used to fund the Village's Lead Service Line Replacement Program in the year 2026.
- E. R-3225/Assignment and Assumption/Business Development Agreement/17748-17956 Halsted Street: Pass a resolution authorizing assignment and assumption of the Business Development Agreement for the Washington Park Plaza Shopping Center located at 17748-17956 Halsted Street.
- F. M-2359/Solicitation of Alternate Bids and Proposals/18155 Dixie Highway: Pass an ordinance directing the Village Manager to solicit alternate bids and proposals for the sale and development of the property at 18155 Dixie Highway (former Delanoe's).
- G. MC-1088/Municipal Grocery Retailers' Occupation Tax: Pass an ordinance approving the implementation of a 1% municipal grocery retailers' occupation tax and a 1% municipal grocery service occupation tax effective January 1, 2026. *Although at first glance it may appear to be more than a 1% tax, each type of sale would only be taxed under one of the categories, for a maximum of 1%.*

Before the vote, President Hofeld invited questions from the audience. Resident Amy Crump asked if a portion of the \$4 million lead service line replacement loan would not have to be repaid. Manager Haney said that was correct.

Trustee Heiferman asked if the Village already had an agreement with IDOT to maintain state highways within the village. Manager Haney said yes, there was a previous 10-year agreement that is set to expire. In response to another question from Trustee Heiferman, Manager Haney said the jurisdictional transfer of Harwood Ave. from the state to the village would have minimal impact on the agreement's financial terms since the amount of roadway involved is small.

Trustee Mason asked if the Washington Park Plaza agreement transfer would affect the terms of the agreement. Attorney Cummings said the transfer would not impact the sales tax sharing agreement. Trustee Mason asked if there were two separate sales taxes on item H. Attorney Cummings said a transaction is taxed under the sales tax or the use tax, not both, and that most purchases would be considered sales tax.

Trustee Roman stated that the 1% grocery tax was already in place and the state repealed it effective January 1, 2026, resulting in a \$650,000 budget loss to the village. The law gave the local municipalities the authority to put it back in place. This tax does not increase the sales tax; it will only change from a state-imposed tax to a local tax. President Hofeld said that as of May 15, 2025, over 200 communities had restored the grocery tax. Eliminating it would have created a \$650,000 impact on the Village. This is grandstanding by the Governor since none of this tax was paid to the state. If he was sincere about cutting taxes, the state should have reduced taxes paid to the state. This grocery tax does not affect the state at all.

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

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

**BID OPENING-17701 Bretz Drive:** Director of Community and Economic Development Angela Mesaros said that at the April 22, 2025 meeting there was an ordinance passed to solicit bids for property the Village owns at 17701 Bretz Dr. The Village published notices soliciting bids as required by law and received one bid from Bearfoot Land Company offering \$750,000. The bidder proposes to construct a self-storage facility on the site. President Hofeld asked staff to review the bid and return to the Village Board with a recommendation.

**GENERAL BOARD DISCUSSION:** Trustees thanked farmer's market coordinator Christine Banks, Event Manager Marla Youngblood, public works, police, and fire for doing a good job with the farmers market on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Trustees thanked Event Manager Marla Youngblood, public works, police, and fire for doing a good job with the Art and Garden Fair held on June 6-7. They also congratulated the Civics Academy participants for completing the course. Trustees agreed that the fireworks are a problem; they are prohibited by state law, and the maximum fine for the local ordinance violation is \$750.

Trustee Mason said to maintain situational awareness when dealing with protests.

President Hofeld asked the HF Chronicle to publicize the fireworks ordinance.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** A motion was made by Trustee Mason and seconded by Trustee Heiferman to enter into executive session to discuss: Collective bargaining and the purchase or lease of real property.

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

The board moved to Executive Session at 7:41 p.m.

The board returned from Executive Session at 8:13 p.m.

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'N Flores', is written over the text 'Respectfully submitted,'.

Nakina Flores

Village Clerk

## Adams, Nancy

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**From:** Melissa Kirk  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 28, 2025 11:24 AM  
**To:** PublicComments  
**Subject:** 05/27/25 Redevelopment Vote

**External Sender:** Use caution with links/attachments. Use caution when replying. If you are unsure please contact IT.

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my heartfelt disappointment with your vote for the Redevelopment of Park West Plaza, located at 3003-3025 183rd Street, and your decision to award it. I realize now that you were not genuinely looking for community when you awarded this bid, despite what you said; you were concerned about the least amount of money you had to spend. While I am writing specifically for Rabid Brewing, you had two community-based proposals: Rabid Brewing and VMB Ventures. You were not looking to support small businesses, as you stated, but rather the big box businesses. You opted for the cheapest option for your community rather than actual community and stability, and I guarantee you that in a few years, you will be putting this space up for bid again because Canton was not the right choice.

I was unable to attend the meeting in person due to health reasons. Still, the number of community members who showed up for Rabid Brewing—both in person and in the written word—should have demonstrated the impact that Rabid has had and will continue to have on the community. Additionally, you mentioned the strengths of Rabid's current space yet failed to consider the growth potential that Rabid could provide in a larger location. This oversight speaks volumes about the decision-making process and the priorities at play. However, you chose numbers over community, and it's disheartening that you did.

Warm regards,  
Melissa Kirk

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*"Never be afraid to try something new. Remember: amateurs built the Ark; professionals built the Titanic." - Unknown*

## Adams, Nancy

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**From:** Bob Robertson  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 3, 2025 7:50 PM  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Cars Kill People

**External Sender:** Use caution with links/attachments. Use caution when replying. If you are unsure please contact IT.

To All:

It has become increasingly apparent that much of the local press is serving more as a mouthpiece for the Greater Homewood Party than as a source of balanced journalism. Coverage is consistently glowing, as if the party can do no wrong. Unfortunately, that's far from the truth. The press's role is to question power, not cozy up to it. We need real journalism—critical, fair, and informed—not flattery disguised as reporting.

President Hofeld and his administration are making decisions behind closed doors with little regard for public input. Residents of this town deserve transparency and real opportunities to shape the policies that affect our daily lives—not just press releases, staged photo-ops, and ribbon-cuttings.

One of the most glaring failures is the administration's refusal to address our town's out-of-control traffic problem. Pedestrians and cyclists are put at risk every day while leadership continues to prioritize car-centric policies. It's as if the Greater Homewood Party values speeding cars over the safety and well-being of actual people. Cyclists and pedestrians are left to fend for themselves while the administration continues to worship at the altar of car culture. It's as if they'd rather see people killed in crosswalks than rethink their policies. And the silence from the press on all of this makes them complicit.

It's laughably obvious that much of the media has become a propaganda arm for the Greater Homewood Party. Many articles read like they were drafted by President Hofeld's PR team. If some of these so-called reporters didn't have their noses so far up Hofeld's , maybe they'd notice what's actually happening in this town.

The Village government, which the press relentlessly praises, is shutting residents out of the democratic process. Even the League of Women Voters called them out in a letter that was recently published, stating clearly that public input is being ignored. That should've sparked outrage. Instead, it was buried under another puff piece praising the administration. Does Rich Hofeld profit from deaths in this village?

This town deserves better leadership and press that acts like it gives a .

Yours Truly,  
Bob Robertson  
187th Street  
Homewood, Illinois, USA