

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF OAK PARK
HELD ON MONDAY, MARCH 23RD, 2009 AT 8:00 P.M.
IN ROOM 101 OF OAK PARK VILLAGE HALL**

OFFICIAL RECORD:

PRESENT: Trustees Hale, Hedges, Johnson, Lueck, Marsey and Pate; President Pope
ABSENT: None
QUORUM: President Pope called the meeting to order at 8:11 P.M. and declared that a quorum was present.

ALSO PRESENT: Tom Barwin, Bill Bell, Bob Clements, Loretta Daly, Ja'Net Defell, Sara Faust, Tom Gallagher, Ray Heise, Marty Noll, Sherilynn Reid, Lisa Shelley, Sandra Sokol and Steve Witt

AGENDA:

President Pope asked that the Agenda dated March 23, 2009, be approved. It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved.

A voice vote was taken and the agenda was approved.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. RETAIL STRATEGY AND COMMERCIAL DISTRICT VITALITY DISCUSSION

Oak Park Development Corporation (OPDC) President Sara Faust discussed the effects of the recession on businesses in Oak Park.

Business Services Manager Loretta Daly spoke about retail establishments that opened and closed in 2008 and trends toward new openings in 2009. Although this was a challenging time, the community was positioned strongly for a turnaround because of its demographics and access to public transportation. Those elements would help attract retail and commercial office users. Downtown Oak Park was attractive to tourists and prospective tenants. They needed to do a better job of capturing the tourism market.

Ms. Daly presented recommendations from the retail strategy report. The concept of a Central Business District, which would include the Avenue, South Marion and Downtown Oak Park, was suggested.

The roles of OPDC and Business Services were discussed. Trustee Hale said that OPDC should be involved in recruitment and retention of businesses. Business Services should be the point inside Village Hall to help a prospective business through the process of opening and help existing businesses with problems. He expressed concern that they were not focusing more on retention issues. Trustee Lueck agreed.

Ms. Faust said property owners varied in their involvement with OPDC and in recruiting tenants. They worked with property owners as much as possible, ensuring that landlords understood the kinds of improvements they needed to make to attract tenants.

Ms. Daly discussed the Work Plan that was developed; the areas addressed included education and advertising.

Trustee Lueck asked how data pertaining to failed businesses was tracked. Business Specialist Ja'Net Defell relayed information she had received from various business owners; the most common explanations were badly chosen locations and cash flow problems.

Trustee Marsey encouraged the Board to consider sales tax rebates for local businesses.

Ms. Faust described the OPDC Work Plan for 2009. Trustee Hedges asked for detail on expanding resources. Ms. Faust said they were looking for new investors.

Trustee Hale suggested they revamp retail grant and loan programs so they could include that in the next budget process.

2. BED AND BREAKFAST UPDATE AND DIRECTION

Village Manager Tom Barwin noted that there were potential ordinance changes to consider before more B & Bs could be developed.

Ms. Daly discussed recommendations regarding fire code and plumbing code compliance as well as ADA compliance. Fire Chief Bill Bell suggested hard wired fire alarms throughout the buildings and noted that sprinkler systems installed in homes decreased the number of deaths and injuries from fire, in addition to dramatically reducing property loss. Automatic extinguishers or one manual pull station on each floor would provide early detection.

Building and Property Standards Director Steve Witt gave statistics regarding fire deaths and property damage in rooming and boarding houses.

President Pope asked about the cost of sprinklers. Chief Bell said it could cost \$1.61 per square foot for a new home; more to retrofit an older building.

President Pope said they would create rules and regulations regarding smoking in B&Bs, and also ban candles, space heaters and cooking in the rooms.

There was consensus on moving the number of guest rooms from three to five.

President Pope asked about owner occupancy. Chief Bell said there was the notion that a person owned the house and they should be living in the house while guests were there. President Pope suggested that might raise a question as to whether living next door was sufficient. That needed to be discussed so they could understand the implications.

Mr. Witt said that they would get further clarification on owner occupancy from Attorney Heise.

President Pope directed staff to come back with an ordinance to reflect this .

6 AUTHORIZATION FOR SEVERANCE PAYMENT

The agreement would allow for a payment of \$34,486 to former Deputy Village Manager M. Ray Wiggins, for one week's pay per each of 14.4 years of service.

It was moved and seconded to authorize the payment of a non-union severance payment to former Deputy Village Manager M. Ray Wiggins.

Trustee Marsey said he would vote no and expressed concern about a waiver as part of this agreement that would relinquish all rights to pursue a wrongful termination suit.

Trustee Lueck said the language that he could not otherwise criticize or speak negatively of the Village and Trustees was unacceptable. They could not limit the right to free speech.

It was moved and seconded to remove "otherwise criticize or speak negatively" from language on Page 2.

The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

It was moved and seconded to add "on the part of the Village, officers or employees with regard to this employment action."

The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

President Pope asked for a vote approving the authorization for the non-union severance payment as amended.

The roll call on the severance payment agreement was as follows;

AYES: Trustees Hale, Hedges, Johnson, Lueck and Pate; President Pope

NAYS: Trustee Marsey.

The amended agreement was approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Ordinance 2009-0-019 Amending Chapter 7, Article 7 of the Village Code entitled SIGN CODE and Chapter 2, Article 18, of the Village Code entitled ADMINISTRATION; COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION
4. Resolution 2009-R-059 entitled RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A SUBORDINATION OF LIEN: PIP-002
5. Resolution 2009-R-060 entitled RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REHABILITATION LOAN AND A LEAD HAZARD REDUCTION GRANT SRF-012
7. Resolution 2009-R-061 entitled RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN APPLICATION FOR THE INCLUSION OF IMPROVEMENTS TO EAST AVENUE INTO THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM IN THE NORTH CENTRAL COUNCIL OF MAYORS

Approval of the Consent Agenda

It was moved and seconded to approve the items under the Consent Agenda. True and correct copies of the Resolutions and Ordinance are herewith ordered to be filed in the Office of the Village Clerk..

The roll call on the vote was as follows:

AYES: Trustees Hale, Hedges, Johnson, Lueck, Marsey, and Pate; President Pope

NAYS: None

The Consent Agenda was approved.

ADJOURN

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 P.M. on Monday, March 23rd, 2009.

SUBMITTED AND RECORDED IN THE OFFICE OF:

Sandra Sokol, Village Clerk

By: MaryAnn Schoenneman
Executive Secretary