

**APPROVED MINUTES - SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF OAK PARK
HELD ON THURSDAY, MARCH 1ST, 2012 AT 7:00 P.M.
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF OAK PARK VILLAGE HALL**

I. CALL TO ORDER

President Pro Tem Lueck called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Trustees Hedges, Johnson (7:10), Salzman and Tucker; President Pro Tem Lueck

ABSENT: Trustee Brewer and President Pope

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda for the meeting. A voice vote was taken and the agenda was approved as presented.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Eric Davis, 1112 N. Lombard Ave. Mr. Davis spoke in favor of a Village cost sharing grant program to assist homeowners affected by flooding.

Zerrin Bulut, 1105 N. Harvey. Ms. Bulut urged the Board to take measures on improving the sewer system as well as offering grants to homeowners for flood prevention improvements in their homes.

Jeff Danielski, 122 Le Moyne Parkway. Mr. Danielski also spoke in favor of a cost sharing program for flood prevention.

Joseph Meyer, 805 Gunderson. Mr. Meyer noted that addressing flood concerns should be a priority of the Village.

**V. STATUS REPORT ON POTENTIAL FLOOD MITIGATION EFFORTS AS OUTLINED
IN THE MWH CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT**

President Pro Tem Lueck stated that topics to be discussed will include downspout disconnection, overhead sewer systems, Village-wide study of the sewers, inlet restrictions, bioswales on Le Moyne and hazard mitigation.

Downspout Disconnection

Public Works Director John Wielebnicki gave an overview of the recent storm events and subsequent discussions that followed. He stated that several opportunities for improvements were suggested in this report and noted that downspout disconnection ranked highest. This could be incorporated as part of Building and Property Standards' neighborhood walk inspection program. The downspout disconnection program is currently

being proposed as voluntary but can be changed to mandatory. He referred to the brochure drafted, stating that it will be distributed to homeowners and describes the benefits of disconnection as well as step-by-step instructions.

Trustee Johnson asked that the section in the brochure regarding disconnecting and extending the downspout be clarified. Mr. Wielebnicki explained that the downspout should be disconnected from the pipe going into the sewer and extended away from the building to prevent seepage. He noted the need for clarification.

Trustee Johnson added that some distinction between single family and multi-family residences should be addressed in the language, as the increased runoff from multi-family buildings may create additional problems. Mr. Wielebnicki agreed, adding that this is why they must be cautious in regards to making this a mandatory program.

It was moved and seconded to direct the Department of Public Works to pursue a voluntary downspout disconnection program as presented with the suggested changes discussed.

The roll call on the vote was as follows:

AYES: Trustees Hedges, Johnson, Salzman and Tucker; President Pro Tem Lueck

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Brewer and President Pope

The motion was approved.

Overhead Sewers and Backflow Prevention

The next topic of discussion was overhead sewers and backflow prevention. Mr. Wielebnicki acknowledged that these types of systems give residents almost 100 percent protection from Village sewer backup. He gave a presentation that described how gravity and overhead sewers and backflow prevention valves operate. Mr. Wielebnicki stated that a grant versus loan program was discussed at length with the Finance Committee. Their recommendation is to move forward with a loan program of 50 percent reimbursement up to a maximum of \$2,500; \$225,000 would be dedicated towards this program.

President Pro Tem Lueck confirmed that the Board was in agreement that it is an appropriate action to support the overhead sewer and backflow prevention program in some way. She stated that the Village has a history of investing in private property for the public good and noted that the flooding is a public infrastructure failure, although not entirely Oak Park's. Changes on the individual property are the most effective and efficient way of dealing with the flooding issue and it's in the public interest to maintain property values. Trustee Johnson added that this impacts the household and the health and well-being and the quality of life of residents, based on an impact from somewhere else.

President Pro Tem Lueck stated that the two major issues to be decided are the dollar amount to be invested in individual households and whether it be a grant, loan, or a combination of the two.

Trustee Salzman asked for a recap of what was discussed by the Finance Committee and how they arrived at their recommendation. Trustee Hedges stated that other communities provide matching funds. Also, this would be consistent with some of the Village's other loan programs, given that the money would come due when the house is sold. He added that this would not cause an immediate financial burden and be interest free, unlike a home equity

loan. Trustee Tucker was in favor of a grant program and noted that there are problems with the loan program, such as hurting one's credit or placing a secondary loan on a property when its principal does not support the loan.

Housing Services Manager Tammie Grossman spoke about the current grant and loan programs that her department administers, adding that the flood mitigation program, whether it be loans or grants, should coordinate with those programs.

Trustee Hedges suggested a means test. Ms. Grossman noted that Housing Services at one time had a garage grant program with a means test associated with that program. Different levels of grants were given based on the homeowner's income.

There was a discussion regarding whether this program should be grants or loans. Trustee Johnson spoke in favor of grants, and at a higher level than what was proposed by the Finance Committee. Trustee Tucker agreed and referred to Ms. Grossman's comments and stated that should they move forward with a grant program, those of lower income status should also still be eligible to participate in the grant program as well as the current Housing Services loan program.

With the consensus of the Board favoring a grant, the discussion focused on determining what amount should be offered. Trustees Johnson and Tucker were in favor of \$4000 - \$5000, which would cover half the cost of installing a flood mitigation system. President Pro Tem Lueck pointed out that the higher the amount given out, the fewer people it would benefit. Trustee Salzman agreed, stating that this should be available to the largest amount of people possible and suggested \$1500. President Pro Tem Lueck suggested \$3500 as a compromise between the highest and lowest figures discussed.

Trustee Hedges stated that those with financial difficulty should be considered first. Ms. Grossman recommended that people under a certain income threshold be allowed to apply first, by a specific date. Once those applications are processed, grants can be offered to other applicants.

Trustee Tucker raised the issue of a retroactive component; those who were already issued a permit could retroactively apply and be reimbursed. The Board agreed to a two year retroactivity. President Pro Tem Lueck added that these residents would then be in line before anybody else, except for those who meet the income criteria.

There was discussion regarding the means test as well as documentation of prior flooding.

It was moved and seconded to create a \$3500 grant program with a means test and instruct staff to prepare the necessary documents for the Board's finalization and the retroactivity component.

The roll call on the vote was as follows:

AYES: Trustees Hedges, Johnson, Salzman and Tucker; President Pro Tem Lueck

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Brewer and President Pope

The motion was approved.

Sewer Study Update

Village Engineer Jim Budrick spoke about the next step being considered; a combined sewer system modeling project. The first phase, to be completed in 2012, is the development of a detailed GIS map of the existing sewer system that will give three dimensional information regarding locations and elevations. The cost for this is \$100,000. The next phase, to be completed in 2013, consists of creating a working model of the sewer system to be used for future planning and designs, for working out a more detailed inlet restriction program, as well as focus around capital improvements as improvements are made to the sewer system. The cost for this is \$150,000. He added that the Finance Committee supported this proposal and is moving ahead with an RFP.

Trustee Johnson expressed concern regarding how beneficial and appropriate this system would be and asked if other communities were using this type of software. Civil Engineer Bill McKenna explained how this will address the needs of the Village.

It was moved and seconded to direct staff to prepare an RFP.

The roll call on the vote was as follows:

AYES: Trustees Hedges, Johnson, Salzman and Tucker; President Pro Tem Lueck

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Brewer and President Pope

The motion was approved.

Inlet Restriction

Mr. Wielebnicki stated that Inlet restriction is another opportunity that was recommended regard to dealing with flooding. He was proposing to begin a pilot program to test the effectiveness of that on one block in the Northwest portion of the Village. The Finance Committee recommended allocating \$25,000, which includes surveying, the cost of the restrictors and monitoring afterwards. The work would be done in-house.

It was moved and seconded to move forward with the pilot program and the Finance Committee's recommendation of up to \$25,000 for the inlet restriction initiative.

The roll call on the vote was as follows:

AYES: Trustees Hedges, Johnson, Salzman and Tucker; President Pro Tem Lueck

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Brewer and President Pope

The motion was approved.

Mr. Wielebnicki and Mr. McKenna gave an update on the sewer system inspection.

Bioswales

Mr. Wielebnicki commented that the construction of bioswales was also included in the recommendations. He added that the Village had applied for a Green Infrastructure Grant for Le Moyne Parkway, from Lombard to Austin and Harvey to Austin, to convert what is currently a grass parkway and the highest point on the street, to a bioswale, which would become the lowest part of the street. The grant is for 40 percent of a total estimated cost of \$1.9 million; this work would be completed in 2013. He added that should this go forward, a public meeting with the residents of that area would be held, as this will change the overall look of

that whole section of the Village. Mr. Wielebnicki and Mr. McKenna explained the construction process and function of bioswales.

Mr. Wielebnicki stated that infrastructure grant application has been submitted for a Green alley project, which will convert eight alleys to permeable pavement. This would be a 2013 capital improvement project for 2013 as well.

Mr. Wielebnicki gave an update on discussions regarding approaching FEMA with a multi-hazard mitigation plan.

VII. ADJOURN

It was moved and seconded to adjourn. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M. Thursday, March 1, 2012.

SUBMITTED AND RECORDED IN THE OFFICE OF:

By: MaryAnn Schoenneman
Interim Deputy Village Clerk

Teresa Powell, Village Clerk