

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE
Oak Park Village Board

Minutes
June 1, 2013
Township Office
105 Oak Park Avenue
10:30 am

Attendees:

Colette Lueck - Village
Ray Johnson – Village
Adam Salzman – Village
Teresa Powell - Village
David Boulanger – Township
Clarmarie Keenan – Township
Jim Gates – D97
Janet Kelenson – Library
David Sokol - Library
Jeff Weissglass – D200
Paul Aeschlman – Park District

Observers:

Cara Pavlicek
Bridgette Baron

The meeting was called to order at 10:49 am. Trustee Johnson reported that minutes of the last meeting were not yet available. He announced that the decision to invite CFOs from the taxing bodies to attend has been postponed due to transitions at D200 and the Park District.

Attendees introduced themselves and indicated that some have been assigned to participate and others are in the process of determining representatives to I-Gov for the coming term of office.

Trustee Lueck noted that this committee was established two years ago by the Village Board to enhance collaboration and that the group has already identified many areas of collaboration and encouraged additional areas to work together, including the expanded OP/FYI, which now includes all governments.

Trustee Johnson shared the mission/vision/action statement adopted by I-Gov, and noted that Trustee Tucker had helped to draft it.

Cost Savings Discussion: Staffing

Mr. Sokol suggested that mention of staff be incorporated into the statement, since staff costs have the largest impact on all budgets. He also noted that current purchasing through consortia by local governments also provide savings within each government's areas of purchasing.

Mr. Boulanger noted an interest in exploring savings in the area of health insurance premiums as an area of potential savings.

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Trustee Johnson mentioned a suggestion in the Wednesday Journal for sharing of an HR director, as both the high school and Village are currently seeking to fill this position, and also noted use of an intern at Village Hall this summer. Village Manager Pavlicek noted that this is something that has been mentioned as a topic for discussion with Superintendent Isoye at the high school.

Mr. Gates suggested that D97 may also be interested in being included in discussion.

Ms. Kelenson suggested that this committee note that they have taken notice of this editorial. Trustee Salzman added that they recognize an opportunity. Ms. Kelenson noted that the Library Director had been shared with the River Forest library at one point and that there might be lessons learned from this. Mr. Sokol noted that the Public Works director had been shared with Parks.

Trustee Salzman noted that payroll vendors are being used by several governments and that it would be worthwhile to explore the combined purchasing power of several governments. Ms. Pavlicek and Mr. Boulanger also offered comments on this topic.

Mr. Weissglass noted that the high school is discussing the teacher evaluation process and that this topic adds complexity to possible collaboration. Trustee Johnson also noted that the Village has 11 bargaining units and is also discussing evaluations. Mr. Aeshlman noted the Park District's seasonal hiring and use of students for the summers. Mr. Weissglass suggested opportunities below the director position. Mr. Gates mentioned job fairs and possible sharing of this process.

Reports from Governments

Trustee Johnson invited representatives to report on highlights of current initiatives.

Mr. Sokol reported that a new executive director has been hired by the Library and that an assistant director position is now vacant.

Ms. Keenan reported that Township Director Morgan and his wife have twins.

Trustee Lueck reported that the Village Board is meeting next weekend to determine committee assignments and direction for the coming term.

Ms. Kelenson reported that the library has received \$3.7 million in grants and that Illinois is keeping library funding steady in their budget. She discussed upcoming renovations at the main library, and noted the 10th anniversary of the new library building and 110th anniversary of library services in Oak Park. She thanked the high school for hosting the August 2-3 book fair and noted that the library is now providing free wi-fi services in Scoville Park, along with a summer reading program for all ages.

Mr. Aeschlman noted the grand reopening of Scoville Park, progress on the new gymnastics center, and work with the YMCA to reduce childhood obesity. He thanked the Village for coordination on water main repairs, which provided significant savings as part of the Ridgeland Commons renovation, and noted grants received for Maple Park and Austin Gardens and mentioned staff recently hired.

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Trustee Salzman also noted that the Village will be discussing policy and protocol issues and suggested that the I-Gov goals should be the top priority of goal-setting.

Mr. Boulanger discussed the Township's assistance to about 20 local people without a permanent address and the support provided by PADS and the Township, as well as coordination with the Village, Parks, Library and Senior Services.

Trustee Johnson noted that the Village is actively working on development alternatives for the current surface parking lot in downtown Oak Park and sees the negative impact of proposed I-290 expansion as a top priority and concern, along with pension reform by the State of Illinois. He commended D97 on development of a Legislative Advocacy Group.

Trustee Lueck reported that the state junior colleges have apparently agreed to take over pension responsibility from the state over a 20 year period. Mr. Gates noted that such changes do not solve the structural deficit issues.

Mr. Weissglass noted that the high school board has four new members; John Phelan is president, he is Vice President and Jackie Moore is secretary. The new CFO comes from the Lombard school district, where he worked with 6 schools. He reported on the strategic planning process, which the Board hopes to adopt by the end of the summer. He also noted a new financial committee which will address the appropriate size of the high school's fund balance and levy of referendum. He invited those who are interested to get involved; this group will be subject to the Open Meetings Act as an open process.

Trustee Lueck noted that the Village's Comprehensive Plan will also refer to the Strategic Plan of the high school. Ms. Pavlicek and Mr. Weissglass are also serving on the Good Government Committee of the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Lueck noted that saving money is key, along with understanding how the tax burden is distributed, and how the governments can reduce or hold steady the tax level.

Mr. Aeschlman suggested that I-Gov address the structure of the total annual tax levy at the macro level and its impact on the tax burden and emphasized the need to coordinate. Mr. Gates noted that this group can only recommend to local governments. Mr. Weissglass noted that the high school Financial Advisory Committee will gather information on the tax trajectory and overall annual increase to provide better understanding. He noted that 62% of property tax goes to the school districts. Mr. Gates noted that school districts never know in advance what state funding will be, and noted the need to understand and explain the big picture of property taxes.

Trustee Salzman noted that former Village President Pope had come before the I-Gov committee to recommend a multi-jurisdictional budget document to educate the public; Trustee Johnson noted that this idea had originally come from the Council of Governments. Ms. Pavlicek noted that CFO Craig Lesner of the Village is preparing a draft document. Several participants offered comments on this topic and Mr. Salzman suggested that I-Gov request a copy of the draft document for review at the next meeting.

Mr. Weissglass noted that Mr. Phelan will chair the high school Financial Advisory Committee and could bring their findings to this group when the report is ready.

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Mr. Gates reported that the D97 website has a report on “promises made and kept” reporting on use of funds from the last Referendum; he noted the Common Core, International Baccalaureate and presenters for effective legislative advocacy in the district.

Mr. Boulanger noted challenges of 200 students reported to be homeless for schools to address. Mr. Weissglass noted a legislative forum on September 19 to address the homeless question.

Mr. Johnson noted that a draft One View letter from I-Gov has been in development and will share this with those involved in I-Gov before finalizing it.

Mr. Johnson suggested that the next I-Gov meeting be on July 13 or 20 and will send a Doodle to set the date. Items for this agenda will include the following:

1. One View letter review
2. COG financial document review by Village CFO Craig Lesner
3. Big picture review on tax levy issue

It was recommended that shared health insurance be postponed to a later date, as some governments are not open to this right now; however, it may be helpful to compare information for future discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:02 pm.