

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE
OAK PARK LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

APPROVED Minutes
Saturday, November 15, 2014
Oak Park Village Hall Room 101
9:00 am-10:30 am

Attendees:

Paul Aeschleman - Parks
Peter Barber – Village
Matt Baron – Library
Graham Brisben - D97
Jim Gates - D97
Steve Gevinson – D200
Victor Guarino - Parks
Clarmarie Keenan - Township (9:25)
Ade Onayemi – Township
Colette Lueck - Village
Jeff Weissglass – D200

Absent:

Andrea Ott – Village
Bruce Samuels - Library

Others Attending:

Teresa Powell – Village

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:07 am by Colette Lueck.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of October 18, 2014. The location of the meeting was incorrect and was amended to Oak Park Township Senior Center. The minutes were approved as amended.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Discussion of Feedback from the October 25 Assembly of Local Boards

The group discussed feedback from the October 25 Assembly. This process provided much useful information and got people thinking collectively. Slides were clear and provided just the right amount of information for discussion. Breakout sessions worked well. Mr. Gates noted that the administrators appreciated the information and asked "What's next?"

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Mr. Weissglass reported that discussion at his table was difficult. This led to discussion recent comments at a meeting of business leaders by the Village President. The consensus of the group was that the remarks were not helpful to the ongoing work of the Intergovernmental Committee and did not recognize the efforts now under way by governments or the opportunities for further positive action by all of the boards initiated by the October 25 meeting.

Next Steps

A better approach is to hold the line on spending and to review and understand the numbers that Tax Assessor ElSaffar provided in his written information. Increases in operating costs that are not under local control tend to overwhelm ongoing cuts in costs.

The total debt of local governments and when it will be retired is also an important area to investigate.

Mr. Weissglass noted that the Civic Federation has a set of measures on taxation that may be helpful to discussion of tax rates. Mr. Aeschleman suggested that the level of debt would also be helpful to know. Following further discussion of how to respond to recent comments, it was agreed that the message is that all boards care about the level of taxation and are now in the process of making a responsible collective effort. All elected officials live in town and pay taxes too.

There was conversation about sharing the slides with the Business and Civic Council members and with the Chamber of Commerce or even inviting them to the next meeting of I-Gov. There was general agreement to focus on what boards are doing to address these issues, build support for next steps.

There was brief discussion of Assembly expenses and agreement to split the moderator cost along with the distribution of costs for the BBQ.

There was a brief discussion of the questions raised at the Assembly and how to compile and review responses from the table discussions. Ms. Lueck suggested that I-Gov needs to consider the purpose of the next Assembly, what topics to address, follow-up and benchmarks to track. The table discussion provides feedback on next steps and needs to be compiled for easier readability by question rather than by table.

There was agreement that it is vital to maintain and develop relationships with the business community and to tackle the core question of taxes and sustainability. Demographic trends and information from the Civic Federation will be helpful. Are we overtaxed; do we provide too many services? What can we live without? Businesses should be part of the conversation.

It was agreed that it will be helpful to engage with the business community, to provide common information. In response to the question of public insecurity, Mr. Weissglass noted that real wages have dropped while prices rise. What is the reality of people leaving Oak Park when their children finish school?

Mr. Gevinson suggested that a subcommittee focus on key parameters to address all of these concerns. Mr. Brisben suggested that the table discussion responses on mission be aggregated as the voice of the elected officials and anchor these ideas to our primary missions.

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Next Meetings

The next meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee will take place on Saturday, December 13, 9:00 a.m. at the Oak Park Township Office Board Room. Topics will include the Eisenhower Issues (deferred from this meeting) and a review of the summary of table discussions. A subcommittee will work with Mr. ElSaffar on property tax questions, with a report on this topic for the January meeting.

Monthly meetings thereafter will be determined via Doodle with a goal of holding the next Assembly on the first Saturday in May. This will be at a transition time between old and new boards following the April 7 Municipal Election.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

SUBMITTED AND RECORDED IN THE OFFICE OF:

Teresa Powell, Village Clerk