

APPROVED MINUTES

**VILLAGE OF ANTIOCH
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Senior Center Building: 817 Holbek, Antioch, IL
September 25, 2019**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hanson called the September 25, 2019 Committee of the Whole meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 7:05 pm in the Municipal Building: 874 Main Street, Antioch, IL.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Mayor and Board of Trustees led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL

Roll call indicated the following Trustees were present: Macek, Yost, Dominiak and Johnson. Also present were Mayor Hanson, Attorney Dorando, Administrator Keim and Clerk Romine. Absent: Trustees Pierce and Poulos.

IV. ABSENT TRUSTEES WISHING TO ATTEND REMOTELY

There were no absent trustees wishing to attend remotely.

V. Approval of the August 28, 2019 Special Meeting and Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes as presented - Trustee Dominiak moved, seconded by Trustee Yost, to approve the August 28, 2019 Special Meeting and Committee of the Whole meeting minutes as presented.

Upon roll call, the vote was:

YES: 4: Macek, Yost, Dominiak and Johnson.

NO: 0.

ABSENT: 2: Pierce and Poulos.

THE MOTION CARRIED.

VI. REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Oath of Office – Terry Fears – Chief Huffman presented new officer Terry Fears. Clerk Romine administered the oath of office to Officer Fears. His wife Brittany placed his pin.

2. Façade Grant Request – Las Vegas Restaurant – Director Garrigan reviewed the request from The Vegas Cafe for a façade grant in order to restore several of the historical features of the structure. The applicant is proposing to remove the stucco on the first floor and expose the original brick of both historic buildings, replacing any damaged brick with new brick. They would also add wainscot and trim with wood bulkheads to each existing window along Main Street. The total project cost is expected to be \$40,500, and the applicant is seeking a 50% reimbursement in the amount of \$20,250.

3. First Fire Protection District of Antioch Tax Referendum Initiative Discussion – Fire Chief Jon Cokefair addressed the board stating the intention of the Fire District to place referendum questions before the voters in the district at the March 17, 2020 election. He provided an overview of staffing, fleet, stations and coverage area for the district as well as call history, and the income and budget for the district. Chief Cokefair further addressed costs to the taxpayers if the referendum passes, and the potential amount generated. The additional revenues would be used for staffing increases, as well as identified capital projects.

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4. Discussion regarding Deercrest Phase 2 – Mayor Hanson introduced Mr. Troy Mertz, who was invited to present and speak with the homeowners regarding his townhome project in the subdivision. Mr. Mertz stated he has been working on the project since approximately 2014, and has owned the property since 2012. He has worked with Village Staff to bring forth a project in substantial conformance with what Neumann Homes previously developed. There are a total of 84 lots, with 64 in a cluster. The existing townhome area has 16 available lots, and approximately 40 townhomes already built by Neumann. He presented the elevations, which are in substantial conformance with what Neumann Homes built. Mr. Mertz further reviewed the amenities included with the townhomes.

A number of residents in Deercrest Subdivision, and the Townhomes within the Deercrest subdivision, expressed concerns with the development. Some of these concerns included the type of units being built, potential for low income renters, decrease in property values, and overall management of the homes. They further requested that the development be included in the master homeowners association or the townhome homeowners association. Mr. Mertz responded to resident concerns, and said he looks forward to working with the associations. He commented on the cost of each unit, and the current market showing strong indications that rentals will be successful. He would like to work with the homeowners and be a good neighbor in the community. Attorney Dorando added that the property is properly zoned, and there are no restrictions on the development Mr. Mertz is proposing.

Mr. Paul Johnson, president of the Clublands Homeowners Association, relayed his experiences with Mr. Mertz in their subdivision. Although he said this situation is different, their relationship with Mr. Mertz has been nothing but positive. He discussed his history of experiences with Mr. Mertz, who was very open to understanding homeowner concerns. Mr. Johnson recommended that the homeowners try to work with him.

5. Downtown EMG Signs – Director Garrigan presented the request from several organizations to ask the Village Board if they would support to allow Electronic Message Boards (EMG Signs) in the Village's downtown sign district, which was created in June, 2017 via the sign ordinance. Staff has had discussions with the United Methodist Church, School District 34 and the Antioch Library.

Dr. Skidmore asked that presented the request to waive the EMG ban for those specific organizations as well as the historical society, should they want one in the future. He distributed proposed signs he believes beautify the business community.

Mr. Scott Zalatoris, Treasurer for the Antioch Public Library District, highlighted the unique relationship the library and village share. He said they have over 100 events/month, which brings people into the community. He said one way to expand their communication is with an electronic message board. Ms. Jennifer Drinka, Director of the Antioch Public Library District, discussed break in communications, and the status of their current sign. She said the most effective form of communication they currently use is the sign and newsletter, and their current sign is deteriorating.

Ms. Sally Stoner, representing the United Methodist Church, said they have an older congregation, and are trying to bring in younger people. Their existing sign freezes, and is difficult to change, and must be done with a blowtorch. She discussed the neighboring property, and the gas station use of an EMG sign just north of the property.

In lieu of special use and variance proceedings, the organizations have requested that the Village amend its code to allow EMG signs in the downtown sign district.

Director Garrigan stated that the sign ordinance was a very controversial endeavor, with a tremendous amount of input from the business community. He believes the board did not want to see EMG signs in the downtown at the time of the sign code approval.

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Those present discussed the history of the area, and the precedent this may set if approved, allowing the business community to have similar requests.

Ms. Drinka said the proposed sign would be simple and classy and a replica of what is there now, but electronic. Staff asked for direction from the Village Board on whether relief should be provided to allow EMG signs in the downtown, and specifically if the organizations should be required to file variance or special use applications, or if staff should bring forth a code amendment.

Trustee Macek suggested staff work on the design of the proposed sign to make it more historical. He believes service industries, and organizations such as this should be able to get the word out on events that benefit the community. He is in favor of a sign for the church and library and doesn't think it will hurt the downtown look.

Trustee Dominiak believes these petitions should go to the Planning and Zoning Board. She said the Planning and Zoning Board spent a lot of time and effort on the downtown sign ordinance, and have waived fees in the past. She thinks these groups should follow procedure and apply for a variance. She said she is not in favor of a text amendment, and thinks this should go through the process. She opined that it should be 4 independent applications, with the board waiving the fees.

6. Review of criteria for the BIG Program – Director Garrigan discussed the recently approved Business Incentive Grant (BIG) Program and the numerous inquiries from the business community since its approval. Staff is proposing to establish a set of criteria which will be used when considering each application, including the impact on the Village's sale or property tax value, improving the physical appearance of a block or corridor, visibility of the business, impact the improvement will have on the building appearance, and other criteria. Staff proposes the use of a scoring system to rank each application before bringing them to the Village Board for consideration. Trustees agreed with the criteria, and this item will be placed on a future Village Board agenda for consideration.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

No report.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Personnel and Pending Litigation, Lease of Village Property, Collective Bargaining – property - The Mayor and Village Board did not go into executive session.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the Village Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting adjourned at 10:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori K. Romine, RMC/CMC
Village Clerk