

APPROVED MINUTES

VILLAGE OF ANTIOCH BOARD OF TRUSTEES COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

Village of Antioch, Lake County, Illinois

Municipal Building: 874 Main Street, Antioch, IL 60002

Call In # 1-312-626-6799

Public Access Code: 592-598-564

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/592598564>

March 9, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Gartner called the March 9, 2022 Committee of the Whole meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 6:30 pm at the Antioch Municipal Building located at 874 Main Street, Antioch, IL and via Zoom.

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, Pedersen, Bluthardt, Burman and Dominiak. Also present were Mayor Gartner, Attorney Vasselli, Administrator Keim and Clerk Romine. Absent: Trustee Pierce.

IV. Absent Trustees Wishing to Attend Remotely

There were no Trustees wishing to attend remotely.

V. Approval of the February 23, 2022 Committee of the Whole meeting minutes as presented

Trustee Bluthardt moved, seconded by Trustee Pedersen, to approve the February 23, 2022 Committee of the Whole meeting minutes as presented. Upon roll call, the vote was:

YES: 5: Macek, Pedersen, Bluthardt, Burman and Dominiak.

NO: 0.

ABSENT: 1: Pierce.

THE MOTION CARRIED.

VI. Mayoral Report

Mayor Gartner asked for a moment of silence for the current state of affairs in the Ukraine.

Acknowledgements: Antioch Community High School Wrestling Team – Mayor Gartner recognized the team for their recent placement of 4th place at the IHSA State Tournament. Head wrestling coach Wilbur Borrero thanked the board for the recognition.

Citizens Wishing to Address the Board

There were no citizens wishing to address the board.

VII. Regular Business

1. Request from Grayslake for a Resolution Supporting the Efforts of the Canadian National Railroad to Improve the North Central Service Corridor with the Installation of Double Track Rail Infrastructure to Enhance Emergency Response and Reduce Vehicle Traffic Delays in the Corridor – Administrator Keim reviewed the recent discussion of this item at the last meeting, and invited Mayor Rhett Taylor and Administrator Mike Ellis from the Village of Grayslake to present their request for this resolution.

Mayor Taylor discussed the concerns from their community, and request for the Village Board to approve the proposed resolution in support of an extension of the double-track in an attempt to alleviate congestion and stopped trains blocking traffic in the Grayslake community. The Village Board discussed their concerns with additional congestion with the addition of train cars, and their desire to support and help a neighboring community.

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2. Artwork proposal for the Ghosted project – Director Garrigan reviewed the long-term marketing and economic development efforts that include ghost murals painted throughout downtown. There are currently five building owners that have agreed to participate in the program and host the artwork.

Ms. Rachael Smith, All Together Group, provided a background of the marketing effort, and the historical nature of Antioch. A ghost sign is an old hand-painted advertising sign that has been preserved on a building for an extended period of time. They researched history on all five building locations, pulled imagery for what the store looked like, and also researched similar historical advertising signs for those businesses.

Trustee Macek said he likes the ghost signs, but cautioned to stay away from brand names.

Trustee Pedersen is excited about the initiative, but asked about the history of PM&L and the dates in their proposed sign. She likes the proposal and looks forward to seeing it finished.

Trustee Bluthardt was disappointed with the proposal and does not like the designs or color choices, particularly the ice cream downtown design. He believes it will take away from the downtown more than help, and said he would like to see some changes before the board moves forward with the project.

Trustee Burman asked if the designs are expected to be lighter than the rendering in the proposal and asked if there was a way to make the borders look older. She thinks the ice cream sign is welcoming for kids.

Trustee Dominiak does not believe the colors are historic and thinks colors should be more historic with the buildings. She does not like the ice cream sign, and would prefer the sign say "Welcome to Downtown Antioch and remove reference to Snow White's and the ice cream. She likes the back of PM&L but it may be too 'Vegas' which may have been the style. She thinks more work is needed to get to more historic colors.

Mayor Gartner would prefer more historical colors for the signs as well. He asked if the artists had input on these or if they just from the marketing group. Ms. Smith responded that the sign painting team is not able to engage without final artwork being submitted.

Ms. Smith summarized that it sounds like there's agreement from the board to move forward and play with the colors.

Trustee Bluthardt would like to see some alternatives, and previous versions of Village of Antioch sign. Trustee Dominiak suggested some kind of mural for kids and families visible from the new park. Ms. Smith discussed conversations with that building owner who has decided to move forward with their own mural.

3. Presentation of Salary Study – Ms. Kathy Lamkin, HR Consultant for Antioch, discussed the recent difficulty attracting candidates for vacant positions and retention of existing employees based on the current salary ranges in place. She discussed previous methodology used to determine salary ranges, increases, and inequity of the ranges since the 2019 salary study was completed. This evening, the issue of ranges for employees and the placement of employees in those ranges based on their number of years was presented. She remarked that the minimum salary range is the least you would pay someone minimally qualified for the position, and the maximum is the most you would pay for the position. When approved in 2019, it was agreed to do a salary study every few years, so a new salary study was completed in 2022. Ms. Lamkin discussed the methodology stating that surveys were sent to comparable communities, job descriptions were reviewed, new maximums were established, and placement of the positions within the range was completed. Minimums were calculated at 70% of the maximum in order to attract quality candidates. Employees not yet at the minimum would be brought up to the minimum, and employees with 10+ years in their position would be placed at the midpoint. Employees working 5-9 years in a position would be brought halfway between the minimum and midpoint. She commented that most of the recently hired employees are not affected by this study because they were hired above the minimum in order to recruit quality candidates. She stated that most unions are 4-6 years to move through a range, and non-unions may be up to 15 years to get to their maximum salary range.

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She commented on treating employees equally and having an equitable range established. Ms. Lamkin reminded the board that this is a consideration of the position, and not the person in that role.

Trustee Macek said this is needed. He commented that there are a lot of great people working here, and he doesn't want to lose talent. He commented on the cost of living, and said this is well justified for the positions. Trustee Pedersen agrees. Trustee Bluthardt said it makes sense, but it's a lot to take in.

4. Capital Discussion – Administrator Keim presented the capital plan, and focused on the projects that keep coming up in conversations. He asked the board to take time to read the document. He presented the top projects identified in the plan and other required expenses such as the quiet zone certification. The projects were presented in order of how the Village Board ranked the projects.

Trustee Dominiak discussed the Sawmill and Lake Michigan water and asked for it to be a topic of conversation at another meeting. Administrator Keim discussed remediation for the iron in Well #5 and thinks we need to take a look at the water system in general as the first step in the process. Administrator Keim discussed the identified funding source for each of the projects. He recommended cash and fund balance be used for capital (one-time) expenses, and not ongoing operational expenses because those are not sustainable. Trustee Bluthardt asked if the grant funding sources were awarded or hoped to be awarded. Administrator Keim responded that both are included. The grant from Stormwater Management has been awarded, and is awaiting on funding from the state, but the Grimm Road grant has not been awarded. He further discussed the availability of the funding sources. He then showed the costs distributed over a period of 5 years to develop the plan. Administrator Keim presented road conditions and progress made in road paving over previous years.

5. Antioch Theater Discussion – Director Garrigan discussed the previous request for assistance from the Village with the acquisition of the Antioch Theater. Staff has worked with the applicant on different options for financing. The first option is from the purchaser, and includes what would allow her to operate the theater. The second option has been explored by staff with local banks. In the second option, the village would take the lead in financing the loan for the theater with a bank, which is a loan the banks would not support without a significant amount of capital from the applicant.

Director Garrigan discussed the options for the loan, interest rates, and monthly payments.

Ms. Linda Monty, applicant, presented her pro forma based on the ticket tax and past performance of the theater. She commented on the volatility of the theater business, and said they will be adding other events to make it more viable.

Trustee Macek said he likes the theater, but doesn't like the Village owning it if something happens. He thinks due diligence is needed and Mr. Downey should provide a 5-year history to incorporate revenues outside of Covid.

Trustee Bluthardt loves the theater, and is willing to work with the applicant on a ticket tax and liquor license, but said we're not a bank, and doesn't know where the money would come from if provided by the Village. Director Garrigan said staff has concerns as well, and have not identified the funding source of the requested \$400,000. Trustee Bluthardt doesn't see this as possible at this time based on the information provided. Ms. Monty said this is an important expense toward economic development. Trustee Bluthardt said he is willing to work on alternative or additional options because of that.

Trustee Dominiak asked if there was a pro forma for the second option. Director Garrigan replied that he did not present that to the board because the applicant is not agreeable to that option. Ms. Monty said a shorter term and higher interest rate could cripple the business. Trustee Dominiak said that Mr. Downey had a personal guarantee previously, and asked if Ms. Monty could provide a personal guarantee. She said she could not provide a personal guarantee, but may be able to for a portion of the loan, and possibly come up with more money.

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6. Façade Grant Request for property located at 425 Lake Street – Director Garrigan presented the request for a façade grant for improvements to 425 Lake Street in the amount of \$29,000. He discussed the goals and guidelines of the façade program. The applicant is proposing to incorporate a stone wainscot to the exterior of the building while maintaining the original brick. It's up to the Village Board to determine if this complies with the façade guidelines.

Trustee Macek said the board missed the opportunity to provide a grant on the previous building improvements, and he would support this request.

Trustee Pedersen commented on the history of the building, and the excitement when recent improvements were made. She believes it's attractive, and is in the main corridor coming into town, and doesn't understand how the Limerick was able to obtain a grant, and he didn't. She said it looks much better than it did before and supports the improvement.

Trustee Bluthardt said we need to make sure the grants are based on the proposal in hand and not because they didn't get something in the past. He agrees that the building looks much nicer, but thinks the board needs to look at the current proposal and not make up for something that happened in the past.

Trustee Dominiak believes the façade grants are for historic buildings, and discussed the location and visibility of the building. She doesn't support this and thinks the funding could be used on other projects.

Trustee Macek commented that if he was looking at the past, they would be getting more than \$29,000. He discussed the scoring of the projects and commented on the history and visibility of the building. Trustee Bluthardt said he supports this project, but advised the board does not try and make up for a previous board's decision.

Trustee Dominiak commented on the previously approved beautification program presented by the Lakota Group includes recommendations for this area. She added that she supports grants for historic facades focused on Main and Lake Street. She further stated she had concerns awarding the grant to a building that has limited visibility and is in an area that is recommended for redevelopment.

This item will be placed on the next village board agenda for consideration.

7. Consideration and approval of an Ordinance adding one more Class "A" and "A-1" Restaurant Liquor License for Casa Ruiz located at 934 Main Street and pro-rating fees – Ms. Michelle Ruiz was unable to be heard via Zoom. Clerk Romine presented the request for Casa Ruiz to obtain a Class "A" and "A-1" restaurant liquor license. This is a brand new license, and this business did not previously possess a liquor license for this location.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Gartner asked the board to consider a special meeting be scheduled March 30 in lieu of the March 23 meeting, if needed.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the Village Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori K. Romine, RMC/CMC
Village Clerk