

# 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 February 22, 2023

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Gartner called the February 22, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 7:12 pm at the Antioch Municipal Building located at 874 Main Street, Antioch, IL and via Zoom.

### **II. ROLL CALL**

Roll call indicated the following Trustees were present: Pierce, Macek\*, Pedersen, Bluthardt, Burman and Dominiak\*. Also present were Mayor Gartner, Attorney Vasselli, Administrator Keim\* and Clerk Romine.

*\*indicates attendance via Zoom.*

### **III. Absent Trustees Wishing to Attend Remotely**

There were no objections to Trustees Macek and Dominiak attending remotely.

### **IV. Approval of the February 8, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting minutes as presented**

Trustee Macek moved, seconded by Trustee Pedersen, to approve the February 8, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting minutes as presented. Upon roll call, the vote was:

**YES: 6:** Pierce, Macek, Pedersen, Bluthardt, Burman and Dominiak.

**NO: 0.**

**ABSENT: 0.**

**THE MOTION CARRIED.**

### **V. Mayoral Report**

No report.

### **Citizens Wishing to Address the Board**

None.

### **VI. Regular Business**

#### **1. Discussion regarding the future downtown park property located at Main and Depot –**

Administrator Keim provided an update on the park property, and said the architect is doing final refinements of the building, as well as a final design along with 3D renderings to put it in context with surrounding properties. He said the rest of the design team is finalizing bid packages, and they are hoping to complete in March with an April advertisement. He discussed other timing requirements, as well as permitting for the project. He hopes for a bid award at the second meeting in May. Trustee Pierce asked about the timing of the bid and the bid award. Administrator Keim responded that it will likely be at least one month that it will be out on the street for bid. Trustee Pierce said this is more of a redevelopment corridor than a park, and thinks the board needs to talk about the redevelopment and transformation of the property.

Trustee Macek agreed, and thinks it should be named Memorial Park to honor veterans. He mentioned Antioch residents who should not be forgotten and should be considered.

Trustee Dominiak asked if there was any way to accelerate the bidding process, or do a pre-bid announcement so they know it's coming. Administrator Keim responded that they have made many of the contractors in the area aware of the project, and are checking in with the contracting community, so there has been an effort to make the bidding community aware of this project. Administrator Keim said they will do their best to get it ready, barring any delays in the project or added features that may delay the project.

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Trustee Burman thinks we need to slow down a bit and re-evaluate and prioritize some things. She feels there are certain things not being considered and it's going way too fast.

**2. Township Supervisor Shaughnessy discussion regarding Osmond Fitness Park** – Township Supervisor Shaughnessy presented his idea for an outdoor fitness facility/court as a part of a National Fitness Campaign. He said the project costs approximately \$150,000, and they received a \$50,000 grant. He is asking the Village Board to support the project, and provided an overview of the National Fitness Campaign. He indicated they are trying to get commitments from major contributors in the community, as well as the Village and Township. He reviewed the concept design of the court, and sponsorship opportunities. Supervisor Shaughnessy discussed the potential location on the East side of Osmond Park. He asked the board to consider this request, and make a commitment at their next Village Board meeting.

Trustee Pierce asked what amount he was requesting from the Village. Supervisor Shaughnessy said they are looking for \$10-25,000, and ideally it would be 5 groups giving \$20,000 each. He said they have until the end of 2023 to put up the court, which should only take a couple of weeks according to Supervisor Shaughnessy.

Mayor Gartner asked if Supervisor Shaughnessy has reached out to any other communities that have similar parks in Illinois, and its durability and use. Supervisor Shaughnessy said Michigan has a number of these facilities and is not sure of the potential use in Antioch. Mayor Gartner added that there was a favorable recommendation from the Park Board on this item included in the board's packet materials.

Trustee Bluthardt asked Supervisor Shaughnessy what he envisions for the maintenance costs, and who is responsible for maintenance moving forward. Supervisor Shaughnessy said the maintenance should be minimal outside of vandalism. Trustee Bluthardt asked who is responsible under insurance coverage, and when the money would be required. Supervisor Shaughnessy will collect funds later from everyone else once he received a commitment from the Village and Township.

Trustee Dominiak would like to know how this fits in with Village spending now, and said they have to look into the budget before a commitment could be made. She asked that the Village Administrator look into how this would be funded. Trustee Dominiak asked if there were cameras in Osmond Sports Park, and if there is a need for cameras by this area and who would be responsible for that cost. Supervisor Shaughnessy said there is an easy way to add another camera, and is a cost that would be incurred by the Township.

Mayor Gartner asked for a list of commitments and where the funding is before the board makes the commitment at their next meeting. He asked if there were any AED devices in that park or any other parks. Supervisor Shaughnessy said there are two for Viking football which are removed when they aren't there, and baseball has two.

Trustee Dominiak recommended that the Village and Township offer a match for what other donors are willing to give.

**3. Veterans Memorial Committee** – Mayor Gartner provided an overview of the public input process for the park at Main and Orchard, and wants to make sure we have a respectful and memorable veterans memorial whether it's at the new park, or somewhere else in town. He wants to make sure this happens, regardless of where, and understands the frustration of this group. He would like a plan of action for something memorable.

Ms. Debbie Rentner discussed a meeting last Thursday with Mayor Gartner and Administrator Kiem to discuss the possibility of adding a veterans memorial at the park at the corner of Main and Depot. She provided a background to this effort going back to 2012, and continued discussions over the next several years including discussions on the location of the memorial. She discussed meetings with various village officials over the years, and the evolution of the project. She commented on soil samples that were never done.

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Mr. Paul Hettich presented a packet from the Lake County Veterans Assistance Commission, and said they do have the ability to do this. He said if this process gets approved, they will get this built. He stated that he served on the CLC veterans commission when they did their memorial and their steering committee. He presented four pictures, one of which was used for a memorial ceremony in Antioch as well as other memorials in Antioch, including the one in front of Village Hall, the tank and the Blue Star Memorial. He indicated that none of them have space for any kind of ceremony and have never been used. He said there is a shovel ready project, including a sketch and two examples of what they would like as a memorial. He said the Park Commission was never informed of the park at Main and Orchard. He said the only time they heard about the park was when Administrator Keim addressed the Park Board on February 15. He discussed the Lakota online survey and response, and the public input opportunity during the wine walk, in which he participated. He commented on the public input process and his involvement in the military and various boards which he serves. Mr. Hettich said he guarantees if you put his group in front of an architect, they can have this project done within hours.

Mr. Jay Jozwiak discussed the local veterans buried in cemeteries in Antioch, and the community involvement and donations made by the various veterans groups in Antioch. He said they are part of the Village and want to be treated as part of the Village.

Ms. Rentner said they do not want to delay or interrupt the progress on the park, and want to work with the Village. She said not building a veteran's memorial is a slap in the face to the veterans. She commented that they can meet the 6-8 week deadline to get the project out to bid.

Mr. Hettich thanked board members that will support them in these efforts.

Trustee Pierce said he doesn't appreciate the comments made by Mr. Hettich, and does not necessarily believe that the memorial belongs in this location. He added that for Mr. Hettich to come in with a war tactic presentation was unprofessional and uncalled for.

Trustee Macek discussed his fathers service in World War II and his return from his tour of duty. He found other routes to serve when unable to enlist, and his father is honored on the wall in Lindenhurst. He said they should have been involved from the beginning of the project. He would like the board to act on a financial commitment to do soil samples, and wants money set aside for an investigation into the soil samples

Trustee Pedersen would love to see a memorial for the Veterans. She would like to review and look at the materials presented, and has heard the comments made. She would like a memorial, but is still not sure where.

Trustee Bluthardt said he doesn't think there is anyone on the board or the Village that doesn't respect and appreciate the service veterans provided. He agrees there should be a more appropriate veterans memorial somewhere in this town. From his perspective, he does not recollect any requests being made at previous meetings for a veteran's memorial. He finds it hard to believe that there are many residents who are unaware of the park project at Main and Depot as it has been on agendas and through approval processes. He did express concern that the Park Board was not more directly involved. He said there has been much information about the project, and wishes they would have come forward earlier, but now the Village Board is at a point where they have come to a consensus on what will go there, and have budgeted accordingly. He stated that it can be changed, but will cost money and time to make those changes, and would like to see progress, not regression. He asked if this would be funded by the Village, and asked what would be taken away from the project that has already been decided if a memorial is placed in this park. He would love to see the committee of two expanded, and plans to design and build something proper. He agrees the veterans deserve a memorial. Trustee Bluthardt added that he did not appreciate being threatened that if he votes no that it's war, and would like to see a nice memorial built that honors all branches of service.

Trustee Burman said if this has been an ongoing discussion, she doesn't see it as an oversight. She has noticed a pattern similar to this where things are talked about and never get done. She doesn't

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understand how this could be forgotten and think it is disrespectful. She commented on the 5G towers in Heron Harbor that residents were unaware of. She thinks things are being pushed through and doesn't think it's honest or transparent. She thinks the board needs to slow down a bit and prioritize what we're doing here. She doesn't feel as though there are enough decisions being made by people who were elected.

Trustee Dominiak doesn't think there's anyone on the board that doesn't support veterans or wouldn't support a veteran's memorial. She doesn't disagree that the Park Commission, which is advisory, could not have had some formal participation in this process, but she also doesn't see how anyone in the public didn't know this was a project in town. She said they have gotten more done in the past 2 years than for the previous 10 she served, and doesn't think we need to slow down. Trustee Dominiak stated that the hole has been there for 4 years, and people are screaming about it. She discussed the survey and the typical response rates for surveys. Her concern with placing a memorial on the property is that it is last minute, and it is being redeveloped as a park; a place where people will congregate and have fun. She said the pictures of other memorials are places of reverence, and doesn't see placing a memorial in a park which is a gathering place for fun. She thinks it needs a bigger space, and we need a memorial that is honorable to people that have served. She asked how we move forward, make a commitment to the veterans that we are behind them, and find the best place for the memorial. She also stated she felt threatened by Colonel Hettich's presentation, did not appreciate his comments, and will not be threatened into voting.

Administrator Keim said most of what was said was very factual, and doesn't think there needs to be an investigation. He said it was 6 or 7 years ago when he recalls a discussion on soil borings and obtaining costs, but was not given direction to proceed with that expenditure to move forward with borings. He said the Village very deliberately entered into a process to develop a park which included a public input component. That resulted in a downtown beautification plan which included the most sought after and popular features the board wanted to see in the park. He proceeded on a directive from the Village Board to move forward with the approved beautification plan. He said it is in the board's purview to decide what goes into this park. He doesn't want a memorial to be an afterthought or something that is added to the back of the park. He fully supports the veterans and would like clear direction on how to proceed. Administrator Keim added that there are teams of engineers, landscapers, architects, and many other professionals working behind the scenes who would need to be involved if the board decides to place a memorial in this park.

Mayor Gartner is proud of the process that the board and staff has gone through for this project, and is not looking to slow anything down more than it already has been. He said the Village is transparent, and discussed what the Village has done in reference to this project, including contract approvals, web updates and over 20 meetings where this was discussed. He agrees the Park Board could have been included. He agrees that a veteran's memorial is lacking in this town. Mayor Gartner asked that a meeting be scheduled with this committee to follow up, including the labor group, architect, Village Administrator, a Park Board member, a trustee and member from Antioch Township. He doesn't want to delay this, but wants to come to a point for a consensus and agreement to move forward with a memorial project.

Trustee Pierce agrees we need to move forward with some sort of memorial, but doesn't know if this is the right place.

Trustee Macek doesn't understand why the Park Board was not more involved in the project, and doesn't come to our meetings, and is confused as to why they didn't have a bigger say-so.

Trustee Pedersen said she can think of possibly three locations that would be a great spot for a veteran's memorial to include parking, easy access and would like to be a part of the process. She's not sure this park is the place for it, and would like this to be on the next COW agenda.

Trustee Bluthardt encouraged anyone with an issue with anything going on in the Village to let elected officials know so we can prevent this type of thing from happening in the future.

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Trustee Dominiak likes the idea of a meeting, and suggested the veterans committee work on creating a 501c3 in order to help fundraising efforts.

**4. Downtown Beautification Committee Update** – Director Garrigan provided the board with an update on the downtown beautification efforts. He reviewed the plantings and lightings placed downtown, and relocation of the farmers market to the northwest corner of Main and Orchard. The committee would like to ensure the safety of the property for the farmers market, but also make some small improvements on a limited budget for the corner. He discussed the decorative aspect of a statue to give better visibility and native plantings. The food truck festival will continue on Toft Street, and the committee recommends painting crosswalks on Toft to create a small festival space to highlight the area for the food truck events.

Trustee Bluthardt asked if there was any consideration to doing a ghost sign or artwork on the adjacent building near the Farmers Market. He would love to see the lot cleaned up in any fashion.

Trustee Dominiak added Michael is going to reach out to the art community for their involvement in an art project on Main Street.

Trustee Pierce is excited about any improvements to that vacant lot.

Those present discussed the concept of parklets on Toft Street, and Mayor Gartner said New York City had outdoor eating areas that were similar to RVs or buses that are covered outdoor dining areas. Trustee Dominiak said it was discussed to come up with areas on Toft for kids to play and a place to bring more people into a community setting. Trustee Pedersen asked if parklets would be temporary. Director Garrigan responded that they could be temporary or seasonal.

**5. 2023 Concert Update** – Communication Specialist Jim Moran provided a quick update on concert planning for the bandshell, and recapped last year's concert series. He said there will be 8 Thursday night concerts, including the kickoff concert. He discussed costs for bands, and will have more specific data during budget processes. He doesn't have any specifics to share at this point, but said country music was mentioned and said the potential cost would be \$17,000. He added that one of the country music stations he is working with has over 1 million listeners, which would increase economic development downtown.

Mr. Moran recommended more events for the bandshell, including a partnership with 95 WIII rock after the successful kickoff concert last year, and would like a rock show on a Saturday night at the end of August.

Another proposed event is a 70's, 80's, 90's weekend in July hosted by WXRT which would cost approximately \$30,000. Mr. Moran said WXRT would take care of the bands, and he doesn't have more specific details at this time. Conceptually, WXRT has been around a long time, and XRT concerts are always done well. He further discussed concession revenue and improved branding and visibility. Before he looks into the option, or talks with anyone, he wanted feedback from the board on whether or not to move forward.

Mr. Moran presented different ways to help the Village offset the cost and maximize economic development including beer sales, involving other non-profits, sponsorship opportunities, and relationships with radio and media partners. He added that he and Director Garrigan are hosting workshops for local businesses to improve their profits.

Mayor Gartner agrees that they should be taking care of revenue sources as the events get bigger. He likes the way the Chamber does their events where they get the profits, and the non-profit organization volunteering at the event keep the tips.

Trustee Pierce thinks this is all good for the Village, and is excited that they are holding workshops for the businesses, adding that it doesn't help if the businesses aren't prepared for more traffic from events and concerts.

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Trustee Macek commented on the number of events, and the potential for misappropriation of police protection. He asked why the Village should give up someone patrolling his road to cover added events. He understands it brings in revenue, but is concerned with security. Mr. Moran said the first person he speaks to when these events come up is Chief Guttschow to make sure it doesn't overstress the police department.

Trustee Pedersen asked what the \$30,000 is for if the radio station is taking care of the bands. Mr. Moran replied that it would basically go to media exposure, but has not gotten far into specifics. He commented that sponsors could be utilized, and what the Village spends could be justified with media exposure.

Trustee Bluthardt asked if there would be an opportunity for local businesses to act as sponsors that would get play on XRT as well. Mr. Moran responded that could be an opportunity. Trustee Bluthardt asked if we have an indication of what a standard revenue is generated at concerts vs. a Royal Bliss type concert. Mr. Moran said he is hoping to get more information on that during his meeting with the Moose Lodge. Trustee Bluthardt said he has no issue with non-profits getting a majority of the smaller events, but would like the Village to recoup more of those costs. He would also like to know if sales for a 3-day concert event would exceed 30,000.

Trustee Dominiak appreciates the enthusiasm and creativity and new ways to bring people in and looks forward to hearing how that goes.

### **VII. OTHER BUSINESS**

Trustee Pierce said several parts of town are getting hammered with branches, and asked we set up a couple of dates for brush pickup, and make the community aware of those dates.

Trustee Pierce commented on the resource fair to be hosted at the high school by the Antioch Police Department, and asked the board to help share the information.

### **VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Personnel and Pending Litigation, Lease of Village Property, Collective Bargaining –** The Mayor and Board of Trustees 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 9:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lori K. Romine, RMC/CMC  
Village Clerk