

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
October 11, 2023**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Gartner called the October 11, 2023 committee of the whole meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 8:32pm 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: Burman, Bluthardt, McNeill, Pierce, Macek and Pedersen. Also present were Mayor Gartner, Attorney Vasselli, Administrator Keim and Clerk Romine.

III. Absent Trustees Wishing to Attend Remotely

There were no Trustees attending remotely.

IV. Mayoral Report – Mayor Gartner said the concepts for Village Hall or public works are concepts, and he asked that they focus more on Public Works than Village Hall during the discussion at this meeting.

Citizens Wishing to Address the Board

There were no citizens wishing to address the board.

V. Regular Business

1. Approval of the September 27, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting minutes as presented – Trustee Pedersen moved, seconded by Trustee Burman, to approve the September 27, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting minutes as presented. Upon roll call, the vote was:

YES: 6: Burman, Bluthardt, McNeill, Pierce, Macek and Pedersen.

NO: 0.

ABSENT: 0.

THE MOTION CARRIED.

2. Discussion regarding Village Hall and Public Works Facilities – Administrator Keim said this is a good opportunity to provide the Board with an overview of the work done so far and introduced Mr. Mark Rhode from Williams Architects to review the progress made so far.

Mr. Rhode presented the meeting matrix which shows what work has been done and what the next steps are. He discussed the staffing for today, 10 years out and 20 years from now. Mr. Rhode addressed parking for the facilities and reviewed the space needs analysis. He presented the site plan for the Village Hall, and proposed uses for the existing space. He then presented the floor plan and 3D renderings of what the building could look like when completed.

Mr. Rhode provided a floor plan for the proposed public works facility, which provides a split-level plan. He reviewed the amenities of the facility in both the lower level and upper level. 3D renderings were shown of the exterior building space. He discussed potential building materials, but said it is very early in the design phase, and those decisions have not been made.

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Mr. Rhode provided the cost estimate for Village Hall at \$6.8 million and Public Works estimated at \$15.5 million, which are the total project costs to include construction, engineering, architecture, building amenities.

Trustee Bluthardt discussed funding for the project, and asked if the cost figures are broken down, and what those amounts would be without the addition at the Village Hall. Mr. Rhode said there are budget numbers for systems, and discussed the existing equipment and mechanicals being original to the building, and about 27 years old. Trustee Bluthardt discussed Public Works, and asked if there are any considerations that could reduce the cost of the building. Mr. Rhode responded that everything on the exterior is standard, and a reduction in costs would mean reducing the square footage of the building. Mr. Rhode discussed similar projects, their sizes and costs. This estimated cost includes parking and amenities on the site.

Trustee McNeill asked for a breakdown of the board room space and discussed the windows at the Public Works facility. Mr. Rhode said the windows are a lower cost than the walls. Costs include parking lot, lighting and security.

Trustee Pierce discussed the potential for higher costs after the projects start based on the costs incurred for the Open Space Development at Main and Depot. He doesn't know how the Village could consider affording these costs at this time. He voted no to the purchase of the building for Village Hall because he knew there would be an excessive cost. He commented that Public Works is working in poor conditions, but we can't afford \$12.5 million for a new facility. He appreciates the work that has been done, but thinks these proposals are unacceptable. He concluded by saying the Village Board has to figure out a way to help Public Works and move on and this isn't it.

Trustee Macek said we are out of control with our spending.

Trustee Pedersen asked if the cost includes engineering site work. Administrator Keim replied that it does.

Trustee Burman said the cost is not far off from what the Village is spending right now on a park, said we need the proper resources to maintain the park. She said Public Works should have been a first priority over the park, and is not happy with the other expenses approved by the Village Board.

Trustee Bluthardt said capital plans have been discussed, and the presented materials are a best-case scenario. Now the Board has to think outside the box to see what can be done with available funds to give Public Works their space. He added that the Board needs to focus on capital projects to address the needs we currently have.

Trustee Pierce discussed initially expected costs for the facilities, which was substantially lower than what is presented.

Trustee Macek discussed pending cost increases for fuel and construction materials.

Trustee Pedersen asked if there were any prospects for grant money for Public Works. Administrator Keim discussed prospects, but is unsure of the likelihood of obtaining those grants. He further discussed the cost analysis and what is involved in estimating costs. He discussed ARPA funds, bond proceeds, SMC Grant money, and other funding opportunities for this project. Assistant Administrator Eccles advised that she is meeting with a federal grant writer next week. Those present discussed funding, grants, and what has been received.

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3. Discussion regarding a text amendment to the Form Based Code related to uses on Lake Street – Director Garrigan discussed the text amendment, which would restrict uses on Lake Street to retail uses, similar to what was approved last year on Main Street. Staff is looking for feedback to see if there is support to limit services and offices on Lake Street. This would not include existing businesses, which would continue to be allowed to operate their businesses, and variances could be granted for service uses requesting relief from the Village Board.

Trustee Bluthardt asked what the target numbers would be on Lake Street. Director Garrigan replied that it would be the same concept as what was approved on Main Street; no additional services or offices will be allowed to go above the current level. Trustee Bluthardt asked why this proposed amendment wouldn't include Toft or all of the downtown area. Director Garrigan responded that Toft is limited to the uses currently, and further restrictions would not make sense. He added that the two main commercial corridors downtown are Main and Lake. He further stated that 3 commissioners recommended denial and 2 supported the proposed change on the Planning and Zoning Board.

Trustee McNeill discussed the vacant spaces in downtown Libertyville which are difficult to fill because of the restrictions they've placed on service-based business. She said they are currently backtracking in, and reconsidering their restrictions. She added that some service-based businesses will bring people into town as well.

Trustee Pierce said he sees Main Street as the heart of downtown, and said Lake Street is historically been what it is now. He hasn't seen enough change on Lake Street to justify this amendment, and therefore doesn't support it at this time.

Trustee Macek doesn't support this amendment, stating it is restricting the building owner rights.

Trustee Pedersen agrees with Trustee Pierce, that Lake Street has historically had similar uses and doesn't agree with an amendment.

4. Discussion regarding Employee Handbook Amendments – Assistant Village Administrator, Ashley Eccles, reviewed information requested by the Village Board during the last discussion of the employee handbook amendments. She provided the Board with the data requested from the previous meeting, which includes remaining accruals. She commented that in all levels of the Village, this serves as a staffing retention tool. A majority of those employees affected are in the Police and Public Works departments. She added that the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the police union provides that unused vacation time is compensable. She commented that the prior employee handbook allowed an annual rollover of twice the accrual, and the updated handbook reduced that to 1 year of annual accruals. She added that legal counsel has advised staff of a movement to exempt municipalities from the Paid Leave for All Workers Act, so the amendments the Village has prepared in response to that Act will be on hold until that time.

Trustee Bluthardt said he did research and people were amazed at the amount of rollover allowed. He asked if employees were just not taking vacation, or accruing too much vacation to take. Assistant Administrator Eccles said it's a fair mixture of both. Trustee Bluthardt asked if there are ways we could request that employees use their vacation time, and said he wants to look at amount of rollover allowed. Administrator Keim added that the purpose of a reduced allotment from the previous policy was to reduce the amount of rollover. The total budgeted amount is \$95,000 which will cover this vacation payout and union vacation payout.

Trustee McNeill said she is interested in the option as long as restrictions, caps and budgeting are in place, and doesn't want it going out of control. She likes to reward employees who show up and dedicate themselves, and said it works in her office.

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Trustee Pierce commented on military leave and what he has experienced in the civilian world. He doesn't think people should be paid out and should be taking vacation. He said vacation is to take time off, and not how much money you can be paid out at the end of the year. He doesn't personally agree with this right now.

Trustee Macek commented on the upper echelon of the Police Department and Public Works, and the public safety triangle. He discussed sacrifices the staff makes, and said if they get a little extra money for all of their hard work, this should be approved. He said this isn't the spirit of Antioch, and expressed concern with a potential morale problem, and said this is taking benefits away from staff. He doesn't support taking anything away from Police or Public Works.

Trustee Pedersen said she works in a government office, and they have to take vacation time or they lose it; but added that they are fully staffed and have more funding. They also don't have a police or fire department. She has seen so many nights with Police Officers or Public Works working after hours on an incident or water main break. She added that we aren't fully staffed, but are working with a skeleton crew and asking them to do more. She sees this as one thing the board can do to support staff.

Trustee Burman agrees with Trustee Macek and Pedersen.

Trustee Bluthardt asked if a study was done on this with neighboring communities on vacation payout. Clerk Romine responded that a survey was completed through the Northwest Municipal Conference, but it related to rollover and not payout. Trustee Bluthardt clarified that the payout last year was to catch up, and this would allow a payout on an annual basis. He wants to put something in place that tries to get staff to use their vacation time so there isn't this issue or build up in the future.

Trustee Pierce thinks something can be done about the accrual process and vacation process. He expressed concern with using vacation as compensation.

Trustee Macek commented on the conditions that Public Works endures when working after hours on a water main break.

This item will be placed on the next Village Board agenda for consideration.

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

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the Village Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting adjourned at 10:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori K. Romine, RMC/CMC
Village Clerk