

**VILLAGE OF NORTH RIVERSIDE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING DECEMBER 14, 2020
ZOOM MEETING 7:00 PM**

Mayor Hermanek called the meeting to order with a Pledge of Allegiance and a Roll Call. In attendance were Trustee Czajka, Trustee Flores, Trustee Demopoulos, Trustee Mandel, Trustee Mengoni and Trustee Sarro.

Others in attendance were Administrator Scarpiniti, Attorney Hayes, Police Chief Garcia, Fire Chief McDermott, Recreation Director Mrozik and Public Works Director Kutt.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustee Czajka moved seconded by Trustee Sarro to approve the agenda for this meeting as presented. Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Trustees Czajka, Demopoulos, Flores, Mandel, Mengoni, Sarro

NAYS: None. Motion carried

BIDS-None

CASH RECEIPT REPORT

Trustee Sarro moved and Trustee Flores seconded to approve the Cash Receipt Report for the month of October, 2020 in the amount of \$2,007,084.57. Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Trustees Czajka, Demopoulos, Flores, Mandel, Mengoni, Sarro

NAYS: None. Motion carried

Trustee Sarro moved and Trustee Flores seconded to approve the Cash Receipt Report for the month of November, 2020 in the amount of \$1,896,572.24. Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Trustees Czajka, Demopoulos, Flores, Mandel, Mengoni, Sarro

NAYS: None. Motion carried

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Mengoni moved, seconded by Trustee Flores to approve the November 16, 2020 Village Board Meeting Minutes as presented. Roll Call Vote:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES(continued)

AYES: Trustees Czajka, Demopoulos, Flores, Mandel, Mengoni, Sarro

NAYS: None. Motion carried

REPORT OF TRUSTEES

Trustee Czajka

Trustee Czajka read the following report from the Parks and Recreation Department:

Thank you to everyone who has made our last two events extra special. On December 2nd, we hosted a drive-in and virtual Tree Lighting Ceremony with many jolly passengers and viewers in attendance. If you missed it, please feel free to view the recording on the North Riverside Recreation Facebook Page.

This past Monday, Santa and the Mobile DJ Fleet traveled through North Riverside spreading joy and collecting new toys for families in need at Pillars Community Health. We are so happy to report that we collected hundreds of toys that evening. Thank you to all of the generous donors. Your giving spirit helps make the season bright. We are grateful to all of the families and neighbors that shared in the festive fun!

If you would like to donate, there are plenty of opportunities located in the Village Commons. There is a Live Coat Drive for anyone that may need a coat or for those who would like to leave one. We are accepting donations for Oak Park Animal Care League, the Housing Forward Shelter, Riverside Township Food Pantry, RBHS A.S.T. Book Drive, and Toys for Tots. Lastly, we also have our annual Giving Tree to help those in need in North Riverside. All donations are accepted during business hours.

The Recreation Department is working on final preparations for the Winter Fun Guide. With the safety and wellness of all customers and participants and adaptability in mind, you will see much variety throughout the programs and events we are offering. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out directly to the Recreation Department.

Trustee Czajka read the following Request for Board Approval:

WSSRA provides recreation programs for adults and children who have a physical impairment, a mental disability, or any other type of disability. Residents of all ages can participate in year-round programming specially designed to meet their individual needs. The Village of North Riverside is one of thirteen member agencies that make up the consortium.

WSSRA's Board of Directors is comprised of one Delegate from each community that serve as a voting member to set policy, authorize expenditures, and help guide the organization.

REPORT OF TRUSTEES (continued)

The Village Administrator is recommending the following positions to be appointed as Delegates and Alternate Delegates on the WSSRA Board of Directors to represent the interests of the Village of North Riverside:

Director of Parks and Recreation- Delegate
Program Coordinator- Alternate Delegate

Trustee Czajka moved and Trustee Mandel seconded to designate the positions of Director of Parks and Recreation as Delegate and Program Coordinator as Alternate Delegate to the WSSRA Board of Directors for the Village of North Riverside.

AYES: Trustees Czajka, Demopoulos, Flores, Mandel, Mengoni, Sarro

NAYS: None. Motion carried

Trustee Demopoulos

Trustee Demopoulos wished all the residents a Happy Holidays.

Trustee Flores

Trustee Flores wished all a Merry Christmas

Trustee Mandel-No report

Trustee Mengoni

Trustee Mengoni wished all a Happy Holidays.

Mayor Hermanek read an email before Trustee Sarro's reports as it pertains to one of her reports. The email was from a resident residing in an apartment and asked if the board would reconsider giving the \$400 water credit to those residing in apartments.

REPORT OF TRUSTEES (continued)

Trustee Sarro

Trustee Sarro read the following Administrative Committee Meeting Minutes from the November 9, 2020 meeting:

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm and the following is a summary of the meeting:

Item #1: 2020 Tax Levy

The Administrator provided a brief overview of the detailed tax levy request packet distributed to Trustees in advance of the meeting. She highlighted the increasing cost of the Village's police and fire pension obligations and the necessity of capturing all available revenues where ever possible. She praised the Village Board for making pension funding a top financial priority over the past six years by adopting a written Pension Funding Policy and consistently funding the required annual pension costs. Even though the Village has made great strides in its funding strategy the past six years, the funding levels of both the police and fire pension funds continue to drop while the Village's annual pension costs are increasing at a staggering rate. Annual pension costs are expected to exceed \$4M in the upcoming 2022 fiscal year. For a taxed capped community with limited revenue raising authority, the Administrator strongly recommended continuing with the past levy philosophy of maximizing the annual levy request in an attempt to capture all available revenues.

Administrator Scarpiniti presented 2 levy options to the Committee:

- Freeze the 2020 tax levy request at the 2019 level of \$561,000. With the additional loss and collection factor, the tax extension should generate the same revenue as 2019 and remain flat at \$578,000.
- Increase the 2020 levy request by 2.5%, thereby generating an estimated \$19,000 in additional property tax revenue. This tax levy strategy would allow the Village to capture additional new construction value and maximum the Village's levy request. With CPI at 1.9%, the current tax cap would limit the Village's levy to \$7,000 without new construction growth. Anything above a 2.5% levy increase would surpass the saturation point.

The anticipated increase to North Riverside homeowners with a home value of \$180,000 is less than \$10 for the entire year.

Trustee Sarro started the committee's discussion of the two levy options presented. Trustee Demopoulos asked how the increase would impact the commercial properties. The Administrator responded that it was more difficult to assess the general financial impact on the commercial businesses since they are very different for comparative purposes to one another. There currently exists a large discrepancy between what businesses pay in North Riverside since their assessed values vary significantly based upon business use. She did note that last year,

REPORT OF TRUSTEES (continued)

many of the smaller general office businesses saw little to no increase in the portion paid to the Village while the larger retail businesses were impacted greater. The impact is determined by the overall assessed value of the property with businesses properties being impacted more than residential properties primarily due to having a higher assessed value.

Trustee Flores asked if there would be any problems if the board voted to freeze the levy. The Administrator responded that freezing the levy would prevent the Village from capture additional revenues on new construction growth, which has historically been outside the tax cap formula and available only for a limited time. A tax freeze would lower the Village's tax base for all future levy requests so the impact is not just isolated to one year.

Mayor Hermanek recommended that the board pass the 2.5% increase to capture the additional revenue.

After more discussion, Chairwoman Sarro polled the full Committee, including Trustee Mandel, for direction and all agreed unanimously (5-0) to freeze the 2020 levy request at \$561,000.

The Mayor reminded the Committee that past boards had long history of freezing the tax levy and that placed undue pressure on the Village financially. The Administrator reinforced that point by explaining that the levy builds on itself every year, so the impact of a tax freeze isn't felt in just a one year, but rather it's cumulative. She reiterated the tax analysis performed 10 years ago that showed the cumulative effect of freezing the levy over a 20 year period amounted to over \$200,000 in lost revenue annually.

Chairwoman Sarro asked if anyone wanted to reconsider freezing the levy, but all declined.

Item #2: New Village Lobbyist

Mayor Hermanek explained that The Roosevelt Group was terminated earlier in the fall and recommended a new lobbyist group, GR Consulting. Detailed biographies of the principal employees – Art Turner and Larry Luster, were provided to those in attendance along with a marketing brochure on the firm. Their monthly rate would remain the same as The Roosevelt Group. With the current environment, Mayor Hermanek emphasized the importance of having representation in Springfield.

Trustee Sarro asked if we could share their services with another community. Mayor Hermanek explained that it was not in the Village's best interest to share their lobbyist with another community due to competing interests.

Trustee Mengoni made a motion to retain GR Consulting as the Village's new lobbyist and Trustee Flores seconded the motion. The motion passed committee by vote of 4-0, with Chairwomen Sarro polling Trustee Mandel who agreed with the Committee's recommendation.

Item #3: Fiscal Year Financial Update

REPORT OF TRUSTEES (continued)

Administrator Scarpiniti provided year to date financial information on all funds through September 30, 2020, with estimated fiscal year end projections. Detailed discussion on all the Village's major revenue sources and the financial impact from the pandemic ensued.

An updated status report was provided on several outstanding projects within Public Works. Installation of the new South End sidewalks was complete and demolition of the Old Church property was set to begin soon. The internal assessment of the standpipe has been delayed to due to weather and is now planned for late spring. Due to this delay, completion of this project will carry-over into the new fiscal year. Once the standpipe's internal framework has been completely assessed, the Village will receive a detailed report that will provide a more accurate financial indication of the cost to sandblast, repair and reapply the cathodic protection to the standpipe.

The MFT Fund received a Rebuild Illinois Grant that the Village has earmarked for the demolition of the 8th Ave property.

Item #4: COVID Related Grants and Assistance

Mayor Hermanek recapped the impact of the pandemic on Village residents and businesses. He presented a three part stimulus relief package for the Committee to consider.

1. A one-time \$400 water credit to single family residences. This would cost approximately \$840,000 and would be funded either from deferring planned capital projects or current Water Fund reserves.
2. Waive the 2021 liquor license fees for all bars and restaurants that serve on premise alcohol, but not including gaming cafes. This would cost approximately \$50,000 and would come out of the General Fund
3. 25% reduction in all business licenses, excluding Ziegler's. The approximate cost would be \$50,000 and come out of the General Fund.

Chairwoman Sarro asked how the Village would fund this stimulus package. Administrator Scarpiniti responded that the Village received approximately \$186,000 in CARES funding from Cook County and \$100,000 could be earmarked to cover the business license and liquor license portion of the financial assistance package.

Trustee Demopoulos voiced his opposition to only providing residents with the water credit and expressed his concerns about what he perceived as inequities to the commercial water accounts. Mayor Hermanek explained that the reduction in business license fees was designed to provide stimulus relief for businesses. Administrator Scarpiniti also added that businesses have been offered additional opportunities for financial assistance from the County, State and Federal governments.

REPORT OF TRUSTEES (continued)

Chairwoman Sarro did an informal poll of the Committee, including Trustee Mandel, and all were in agreement. Formal board action will be taken at the December 14th Board Meeting.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Trustee Sarro read the following Request for Board Action:

At the November 9, 2020 Administrative Committee Meeting, the Mayor proposed a three part COVID-19 stimulus package for homeowners and businesses of the Village of North Riverside. The details of the Mayor's proposal are outlined below:

- All single family residential homes (approximately 2,100) would be eligible for a one-time credit on their residential water bills equal to \$400. The estimated cost for this financial relief approximately \$840,000 and funding would need to come from either postponing planned water/sewer infrastructure projects budgeted in this current fiscal year or Water Fund reserve balances.
- All bars/taverns and restaurants with a current 2020 on premise consumption liquor license will have their liquor license renewal for calendar year 2021 waived. This would impact approximately 14 businesses at an estimate cost of \$50,000.
- All businesses with a current 2020 business license, except Zeigler Ford, will receive a 25% discount on the renewal of their business license fee for calendar year 2021. This would impact approximately 570 businesses at an estimated cost of \$50,000.

The total anticipated cost of all three stimulus packages is \$940,000. The Village received \$186,278 in CARES Funding from Cook County and could earmark \$100,000 to fund the business components of this stimulus package.

Trustee Sarro moved and Trustee Mengoni seconded to approve the Mayor's recommended three part COVID-19 stimulus package and to direct the Village Attorney to prepare the proper ordinance for passage at the next Village Board Meeting. Roll Call Vote:

On the question, Trustee Mandel asked if the MFT fund received by the Illinois Grant was received to demolish the property on 8th Avenue. Trustee Sarro said that Trustee Mandel's question has nothing to do with the passage of the Mayor's stimulus package and that she would answer that question after this was passed.

AYES: Trustees Czajka, Demopoulos, Flores, Mandel, Mengoni, Sarro

NAYS: None. Motion carried

Trustee Sarro went back to Trustee Mandel's question earlier regarding the Illinois Grant and stated that we have received that grant for the 8th Avenue Project.

Trustee Sarro read a Request for Board Action as follows:

REPORT OF TRUSTEES (continued)

At the November 9, 2020 Administrative Committee meeting, the Mayor discussed his decision to terminate the Village's agreement with the Roosevelt Group, the current lobbyist firm, and the Village's need to retain the services of a new lobbyist. All trustees, including the Mayor, acknowledged the necessity for continued representation at both the state and federal levels to assist the Village with its pursuit of important local interests and needs.

Marketing information was presented to the Committee for GR Consulting and the Mayor requested approval by the Committee to retain their services. GR Consulting was founded in July, 2020 as a government relations and public affairs consulting and strategy firm, but has over 20 years of campaign and political experience between its principal members. Detailed biographies on each of its principal members was provided and reviewed by all board members.

The proposed monthly cost to retain GR Consulting is \$4,000 and is the same amount that was paid to the prior lobbyist firm. Sufficient funds are available in the Village's current budget.

Trustee Sarro moved and Trustee Flores seconded to authorize the Village President to sign an agreement with GR Consulting for lobbying services for the Village of North Riverside and to direct Attorney Hayes to prepare the necessary Resolution for passage at the next board meeting.
Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Trustees Czajka, Demopoulos, Flores, Mandel, Mengoni, Sarro

NAYS: None. Motion carried

Trustee Sarro read the following Request for Board Action:

In early November, the Village received a combined request for voluntary recognition certification by employees of the Village's Public Works, Administration, Community Development, Recreation and Police Records Departments and Teamsters, Local 705. This initial request was discussed in executive session on November 16, 2020. The Village's Labor Attorney, Carey Horvath, and the Village Administrator were directed by the Board of Trustees to meet with Teamsters Local 705 representatives to discuss the request and seek additional clarification on the positions being requested for inclusion within petition.

On December 8, 2020, Teamsters, local 705 submitted a revised request for voluntary recognition certification for 7 members of the bargaining unit to include the full time positions of Foremen, mechanics, and laborers of the North Riverside Public Works Department. These positions are all classified as full-time, non-exempt positions of the Village of North Riverside and maintain similar job characteristics and duties/responsibilities to one another. Based upon the current job descriptions of these positions, we are of the opinion that they would be eligible for recognition.

REPORT OF TRUSTEES (continued)

Trustee Sarro moved and Trustee Demopoulos seconded to approve a request for voluntary recognition certification of 7 full time public works employees with the job classifications of Water Foreman, Public Works Foreman, Mechanic and Public Works Laborer with Teamsters, Local 705 and to authorize the Village President to execute the necessary documents with the Illinois Labor Relations Board. Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Trustees Czajka, Demopoulos, Flores, Mandel, Mengoni, Sarro

NAYS: None. Motion carried

Trustee Sarro read the following Request for Board Action:

In early November, the Village received a combined request for voluntary recognition certification by employees of the Village's Public Works, Administration, Community Development, Recreation and Police Records Departments and Teamsters, Local 705. This initial request was discussed in executive session on November 16, 2020. The Village's Labor Attorney, Carey Horvath, and the Village Administrator were directed by the Board of Trustees to meet with Teamsters Local 705 representatives to discuss the request and seek additional clarification on the positions being requested for inclusion within petition.

On December 8, 2020, Teamsters, Local 705 submitted a revised request for voluntary recognition certification for 8 members of the bargaining unit to include full time positions of customer relations specialist, financial analyst, senior financial analyst, administrative assistant, records analyst, and office manager of the Village of North Riverside's Administration, Police Records and Recreation Departments and the part time position of Administrative Assistant in the Village of North Riverside's Community Development Department (previously referred to as the Building Department). All of these positions, except the part time Building Administrative Assistant position are classified as full time, non-exempt positions of the Village of North Riverside and maintain similar job characteristics and duties/responsibilities to one another.

The part time Building administrative assistant position is a non-exempt part-time, IMRF eligible position, which consistently works 35 + hours per week year round and possesses comparable job duties and responsibilities to the full time administrative assistant position. This position is unique in the sense that it functions similar to a full time position in terms of hours worked, job function and duties/responsibilities, but does not qualify for any employee benefits other than IMRF. It is the only position of its kind within the Village's position classification structure.

Based upon the current job descriptions of all of these positions, we are of the opinion that they would be eligible for recognition.

Trustee Sarro moved and Trustee Flores seconded to approve the request for voluntary recognition certification of 8 non-exempt office employees of the Village of North Riverside's Administration, Community Development, Police Records, and Recreation Departments with job classifications of customer relations specialist, financial analyst, senior financial analyst,

REPORT OF TRUSTEES (continued)

administrative assistant, Building administrative assistant, records analyst and office manager with Teamsters, Local 705 and to authorize the Village President to execute the necessary documents with the Illinois Labor Relations Board. Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Trustees Czajka, Demopoulos, Flores, Mandel, Mengoni, Sarro

NAYS: None. Motion carried

MAYORAL REPORT

Mayor Hermanek reminded residents about the Fire Department Santa Run on December 19th starting at 10:00am and will continue until they run out of bags. This event will be a drive thru event at Veterans Park.,

Mayor Hermanek also mentioned that he has had several complaints from residents regarding the businesses that have decided to remain open during the pandemic. He reminded everyone that our police department is very busy with other calls during the holiday season.

CORRESPONDENCE-None

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Trustee Sarro moved, seconded by Trustee Flores to approve the list of bills submitted for this meeting totaling \$504,234.15 and to have them paid out of proper funds when such funds become available. Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Trustees Czajka, Demopoulos, Flores, Mandel, Mengoni, Sarro

NAYS: None. Motion carried

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

Trustee Sarro moved and Trustee Flores seconded to approve the Tax Levy Ordinance 2020 **(20-O-16)** and to waive the reading. Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Trustees Czajka, Demopoulos, Flores, Mandel, Mengoni, Sarro

NAYS: None. Motion carried

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIIONS (continued)

Trustee Sarro moved and Trustee Flores seconded to approve an Ordinance Abating the Tax Hereto Levied for the year 2020 to Pay Principal and Interest on \$2,760,000 General Obligation Bonds (Alternate Revenue Sources) Series 2016, of the Village of North Riverside. **(20-O-17)** and to waive the reading. Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Trustees Czajka, Demopoulos, Flores, Mandel, Mengoni, Sarro

NAYS: None. Motion carried

Trustee Mengoni moved and Trustee Sarro seconded to approve an Ordinance Approving Text Amendments to Title 17 in the Zoning Code Related to the Joint Plan Commission/ZBA and to Permitted and Conditional Uses in the Village of North Riverside **(20-O-18)** and to waive the reading. Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Trustees Czajka, Demopoulos, Flores, Mandel, Mengoni, Sarro

NAYS: None. Motion carried

Trustee Sarro moved and Trustee Demopoulos seconded to approve the 2020 Village Board of Trustees Meeting Dates **(20-O-19)** and to waive the reading. Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Trustees Czajka, Demopoulos, Flores, Mandel, Mengoni, Sarro

NAYS: None. Motion carried

UNFNISHED BUSINESS-None

NEW BUSINESS-None

AUDIENCE-None

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Mengoni moved and Trustee Demopoulos seconded for adjournment of this meeting at 7:45pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

**KATHY RANIERI
VILLAGE CLERK**

