

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR SESSION
11004 Carpenter Street, Mokena, Illinois 60448

Session #003

February 8, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fleischer called the Regular Session of the Board of Trustees to order at 6:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board of Trustees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL/ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Clerk Martini called the roll and the following Trustees were present:

Joseph Budzyn
Debbie Engler
George Metanias
Jillian Hersted
Jim Richmond
Joe Siwinski

Also present were: Clerk Melissa Martini (Village Board Room); Village Administrator John Tomasoski (Village Board Room); Assistant Village Administrator Kirk Zoellner (Village Hall); Village Attorney Carl Buck (Village Board Room); Community and Economic Development Director Alan Zordan (Village Board Room); Finance Director Barb Damron (Village Hall); Interim Chief of Police Tim McCarthy (Village Hall); Building and Planning Director Matt Ziska (Village Hall); and Civil Engineer Dan Peloquin (Village Hall)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Trustee Engler made a motion to enter executive session at 6:31 p.m. to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(1); collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2); and litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11). Trustee Metanias seconded.

AYES: (6) Budzyn, Engler, Hersted, Metanias, Richmond, Siwinski

NAYS: (0)

Absent: (0)

Motion carried

RECONVENE REGULAR SESSION

Trustee Metanias made a motion to adjourn the executive session and reconvene the regular meeting at 6:44 p.m. Trustee Siwinski seconded.

AYES: (6) Budzyn, Engler, Hersted, Metanias, Richmond, Siwinski

NAYS: (0)

Absent: (0)

Motion carried

Mayor Fleischer announced a 10-minute recess.

Mayor Fleischer advised residents that the night's meeting started with an executive session at 6:30 p.m. before the regular meeting. He welcomed everyone in attendance and stated it was good to see residents come out since Governor Pritzker's recent decision to place Will County in Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan.

Mayor Fleischer informed residents of the list of rules for public comment located in the Board Room and advised residents to read them. He further advised residents that they do not need to wait for public comment for their comments to be addressed. He stated that residents may also call the Village Hall, where their comments will be directed to the appropriate department head. He reminded residents that public comment is not public debate. Residents may address the Board with their comments and the appropriate department head will follow up with them after obtaining their contact information. He advised that Village Administrator John Tomasoski will deliver a presentation later in the night's meeting to inform residents of the Village's Report A Concern option on the Village website.

DISCOVER MOKENA

Clerk Martini presented the Community Calendar.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Fleischer informed those wishing to speak at Public Comment that they were encouraged to call (708) 478-2148 after in-person comments have been heard. He asked that residents state their name and address.

Mayor Fleischer asked if there was anyone at the Village Hall who would like to speak at public comment.

Mr. Nick Sunzere stated he is a write-in candidate for Village President and that he has not heard back from Mayor Fleischer regarding a request for a debate. He asked Mayor Fleischer to address his request during the Mayor's Comments portion of the meeting.

Mayor Fleischer thanked Mr. Sunzere.

Mr. Harley Schinker commented regarding a series of articles in the newspapers that advised recent litigation was filed against the Village of Mokena in excess of \$1,000,000. He inquired as to what impact that will have on future property taxes.

Mayor Fleischer requested Village Administrator John Tomasoski to direct Mr. Schinker's comment to Finance Director Barb Damron.

Mr. Jim Schlegel advised he received his second COVID-19 vaccine at Veteran's Affairs (VA) and that it was the best military operation. He commented on the proposed property for the new police department facility and stated he doesn't want to see the police station leave the downtown area. He hopes the new building has great architecture, is environmentally friendly and is something the Village is very proud of.

Mayor Fleischer thanked Mr. Schlegel.

Mr. Tom Durkin congratulated the Mayor and Board of Trustees on the low property tax rate Mokena has and stated that they have done a great job with residents' tax dollars.

Mayor Fleischer and the Village Board thanked Mr. Durkin.

Mayor Fleischer repeated the public comment call-in number.

Ms. Amanda Montgomery called the public comment line. She commented that it is unprofessional of a Village police commander to misquote her regarding her choice to not be involved with the police department's neighborhood watch group. She further stated she has been harassed on social media by the same police commander's wife. Ms. Montgomery asked who will be involved in creating the policies and procedures for use of a drone in the police department. She asked if those policies and procedures will align with the Freedom of Drone Surveillance Act and will they be available to the public.

Mayor Fleischer and the Village Board thanked Ms. Montgomery.

Mayor Fleischer closed public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

Village Administrator John Tomasoski presented four (4) items on the Consent Agenda for Board approval. These items are strictly administrative in nature.

- a. Motion to adopt Resolution No. 2021-R-001, a resolution pertaining to membership in the Chicago Southland Convention and Visitors Bureau, and to authorize the Village President to execute same.
- b. Motion to adopt Resolution No. 2021-R-002, a resolution pertaining to the allowance of permit work by municipal employees in lieu of a surety bond, and to authorize the Village President and the Village Clerk to execute the same.
- c. Motion to grant approval to Will County to conduct its Residential Electronics & Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day Saturday, March 27, 2021, at the Hickory Creek Metra commuter parking lot, and to authorize the use of municipal/Village resources for event coordination.
- d. Motion to approve minutes from the January 18, 2021 Work Session.

Trustee Engler made a motion to approve Consent Agenda items 6 (a), (b), (c), and (d) as depicted in the February 4, 2021 Request for Board Action prepared by the Village Administrator. Trustee Siwinski seconded.

AYES: (6) Budzyn, Engler, Hersted, Metanias, Richmond, Siwinski

NAYS: (0)

Absent: (0)

Motion carried

Trustee Richmond requested to Village Administrator John Tomasoski that information regarding Will County's Residential Electronics & Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day be posted in the newsletter and on Channel 6 for residents.

Village Administrator Tomasoski advised Trustee Richmond that information regarding Will County's Residential Electronics & Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day will be featured on multiple Village platforms.

Trustee Engler made a motion table Agenda Item 7(e) for future consideration by the Board. Trustee Siwinski seconded.

AYES: (6) Budzyn, Engler, Hersted, Metanias, Richmond, Siwinski

NAYS: (0)

Absent: (0)

Motion carried

FINANCE REPORT

Finance Director Barb Damron entered the Board Room and presented the accounts payable list for February totaling \$941,390.55. She highlighted the following invoice to be paid:

- \$233,013.89 to Electrical Conduit Construction for the LED Streetlight Conversion Project.

Trustee Engler made a motion to approve the monthly accounts payable in the amount of \$941,390.55. Trustee Siwinski seconded.

AYES: (6) Budzyn, Engler, Hersted, Metanias, Richmond, Siwinski

NAYS: (0)

Absent: (0)

Motion carried

Finance Director Barb Damron left the Board Room.

APPOINTMENTS/PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

N/A

PRE-SCHEDULED PROPOSALS/PRESENTATIONS AND VISITORS

N/A

PUBLIC HEARINGS

N/A

OLD BUSINESS

N/A

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS

Village Administrator John Tomasoski requested Director of Economic and Community Development Alan Zordan present the Schedule of Development.

Director of Economic and Community Development Zordan presented the Schedule of Development.

Village Administrator John Tomasoski provided a COVID-19 update. He provided information regarding the Will County Department of Health's Phase I vaccination plan. He highlighted the Matthews Family's 17-foot snowman featured on WGN News. Village Administrator Tomasoski advised residents of how to utilize the "Report A Concern" feature on the Village web page.

TRUSTEES' COMMENTS

Trustee Hersted thanked Village Administrator John Tomasoski advising residents of how to utilize the "Report A Concern" feature on the Village web page. Trustee Hersted asked Village Administrator Tomasoski for an update regarding Ms. Dorelle Ackermann's and Mr. Ed Donnelly's public comments from the January 25, 2021 Board meeting.

Village Administrator Tomasoski advised Trustee Hersted that Assistant Village Administrator Kirk Zoellner has been in contact with Ms. Ackermann regarding her public comment from the January 25, 2021 Board meeting. Village Administrator Tomasoski further advised Trustee Hersted that he and Interim Director of Public Works Mark Detloff have reached out to Mr. Donnelly regarding his public comment from January 25, 2021 and have not received a response.

Trustee Budzyn read a prepared statement regarding the interactions that transpired between himself and Mayor Fleischer at the January 25, 2021 Board meeting. Trustee Budzyn discussed the reasoning for his actions at the January 25, 2021 Board meeting involving public comment protocol and the development of a new police facility.

Trustee Siwinski responded that he disagreed with Trustee Budzyn's prepared statement. He further stated the Village Board was elected to work together, and that Trustee Budzyn's prepared statement was an insult to the Village Board. Trustee Siwinski provided an update regarding the new police facility and advised Trustee Budzyn that he looks forward to working with him on the project.

Trustee Metanias echoed Trustee Siwinski's comments. He discussed the reasons he ran for office in 2005, stating that it was not a good time for our Village due to the Village Board being unable to work together due to various circumstances. Since his time as Trustee, the Village Board progressed into a good working relationship and he hopes the current Village Board does not fall into a bad place again. He asked residents to stay safe due to current cold temperatures and provided a reminder that the Village Hall is open as a warming center. Trustee Metanias asked residents to drive safe and thanked the Public Works Department for their time and hard work snowplowing. He commented on the 17-foot snowman in Mokena and that his grandchildren were amazed by it.

Trustee Engler commented that the 17-foot snowman was fun to see. She complimented the Public Works Department on the fabulous job snowplowing. She advised residents whose mailboxes have been damaged due the snow and/or snowplowing to contact the Village Hall and they will be provided with a temporary mailbox until the weather warms up and a permanent replacement can be installed. Trustee Engler asked that everyone look out for their neighbors and the elderly through the inclement weather. She advised residents to shop Mokena.

Trustee Metanias asked residents to please move cars out of the street when it snows in order for snowplows to clear the whole street and do their job.

Trustee Richmond passed on the opportunity to make comments.

CLERK’S COMMENTS

Clerk Martini passed on the opportunity to make comments.

MAYOR’S COMMENTS

Mayor Fleischer requested that residents who use a snowblower on their driveways do not blow the snow into the street as it makes it more difficult for the Public Works Department to snowplow.

Mayor Fleischer stated that he is Mayor Fleischer and not candidate Fleischer, and that being the Mayor of Mokena is his job. He advised that he will not respond to anything pertaining to an election and insisted he will not be accused of electioneering at an open meeting. He asked Village Attorney Carl Buck if electioneering was a violation of the Open Meetings Act.

Village Attorney Carl Buck answered yes.

Mayor Fleischer responded that he will not be found guilty of an open meetings violation and advised Mr. Nick Sunzere that he will not be discussing the matter with him while he is sitting in the position of Mayor at the night’s meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Siwinski made a motion to adjourn the regular session and enter into the scheduled work session at 7:35 p.m. Trustee Engler seconded.

AYES: (6) Budzyn, Engler, Hersted, Metanias, Richmond, Siwinski
NAYS: (0)
Absent: (0)
Motion carried

Respectfully submitted,

Frank A. Fleischer, Village President

ATTEST:

Melissa Martini, Village Clerk