

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2024  
VILLAGE HALL BOARD ROOM

CALL TO ORDER: President Hofeld called the meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 7 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: President Hofeld led trustees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Clerk Marilyn Thomas called the roll. Those present were Village President Richard Hofeld, Trustee Julie Willis, Trustee Anne Colton, Trustee Jay Heiferman, Trustee Vivian Harris-Jones, Trustee Lauren Roman and Trustee Allisa Opyd.

President Hofeld introduced staff present: Village Manager Napoleon Haney, Village Attorney Chris Cummings, Director of Economic and Community Development Angela Mesaros, Public Works Director John Schaefer, Fire Chief Bob Grabowski, Police Chief Denise McGrath and Finance Director Amy Zukowski.

MINUTES: The minutes of the meeting of April 9, 2024, were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

A motion was made by Trustee Opyd and seconded by Trustee Heiferman to approve the minutes as presented.

**Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Willis, Colton, Heiferman, Harris-Jones, Roman and Opyd. NAYS – None. Motion carried.**

CLAIMS LIST: The Claims List in the amount of \$1,043,866.20 was presented. There were no questions from the Trustees.

A motion was made by Trustee Opyd and seconded by Trustee Heiferman to approve the Claims List as presented.

President Hofeld said three items made up 48 percent of the Claims List: \$145,838.36 to Burns & McDonnell Engineers for work on the proposed removal of lead water lines; \$278,984.25 to the City of Chicago Heights for Lake Michigan water; and \$78,760.90 to Thorn Creek Sanitary District.

**Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Willis, Colton, Heiferman, Harris-Jones and Opyd. NAYS –None. Motion carried.**

HEAR FROM THE AUDIENCE: President Hofeld invited members of the audience to address the board on any subject not on the agenda. Resident Kevin Crabtree wanted to follow up on his concerns of two weeks ago about traffic in the Village. He asks for the Village to continue work to eliminate the problems of speeding and yielding to pedestrians.

President Hofeld assured Mr. Crabtree that staff is working on the issue. Trustee Colton thanked Mr. Crabtree for keeping the issue top of mind.

Louis Dutka Jr. of East Hazel Crest asked what can be done about people begging in the median on Halsted Street. He's concerned for their personal safety and the safety of drivers. Police Chief McGrath said police can ask if the person needs assistance, but nothing more according to an Illinois Supreme Court ruling.

Mr. Dutka also raised the issue of people sleeping in the Homewood Post Office building. He went into the building one night and found people there. Police Chief McGrath said police have been checking the building.

MEET THE MERCHANTS: Director Mesaros introduced Uncle John's Bar-B-Que at 17947 S. Halsted St., rated by the New York Times as one of the Top 25 restaurants in the Chicago area. The audience gave a round of applause to this announcement as Director Mesaros introduced Aja Kennebrew, owner. Ms. Kennebrew explained that she took over the business from her father in 2019. He moved the business to Homewood in 2016 after having the business in Chicago. They specialize in BBQ and smoked meats and have recently added turkey to the menu.

PRESENTATIONS: R-3179/Retirement/Doug Hank Jr. A motion was made by Trustee Opyd and seconded by Trustee Roman to approve the resolution honoring Doug Hank after his long career with Public Works. Clerk Thomas read the Resolution.

***Roll Call: AYES -- Trustees Willis, Colton, Heiferman, Harris-Jones and Opyd. NAYS --None. Motion carried.***

Director Schaefer said he and Hank started together with the Fire Department and then went to work at Public Works together. He listed Hank's many talents within the department, including certified arborist and operator of heavy equipment. Hank received a round of applause from the audience.

Arbor Day Proclamation: Clerk Thomas read the proclamation declaring April 26, 2024, as Arbor Day in the Village. President Hofeld said he received a letter from the Arbor Day Foundation recognizing the Village for its efforts at sustainable urban forest management. He congratulated Public Works for their ongoing efforts.

Citizen Civics Academy: Clerk Thomas read a proclamation on the success of the first Citizen Civics Academy. Village Manager Haney presented certificates to the participants who were present. He thanked staff member Antonia Steinmiller for her work organizing the six-week program that gave citizens a chance to meet with staff from various departments to understand the jobs they do.

Homewood Science Center: Edie Dobrez, director of the Homewood Science Center, gave the 2023 annual report outlining HSC programs. She gave copies of the annual report to the Trustees. It is also available on HSC website.

She outlined the free STEM Saturdays programs. During the week HSC hosts school groups. Exelon is underwriting a new conservation program for middle school students. A Cook County grant is helping fund Girls STEAM Ahead programs. July 18 will be the Summer Fest fundraiser and Walk Walton is in October.

In addition, Director Dobrez said the building is being used for film screenings, LGBTQ meetings, choirs, Girl Scouts, and robotics programs.

President Hofeld said the concept for the science center came from former staffer Rachel Jones who elevated it from the initial children's museum. He thanked Director Dobrez for all her work bringing it to greater heights. He thanked the Trustees for their continued support.

Trustee Heiferman, who serves on HSC board, said the science center took a 180-degree turn from the initial concept and he is honored to be a part of it.

Trustee Opyd said she has been happy with the programs and activities for the public and for school students.

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT: Director Mesaros introduced two representatives – Kelsey Zlevor and Fiona Kennedy of Muse Community + Design -- who gave a wrap-up of a study on a transit-oriented development (TOD) plan underwritten by the Regional Transportation Authority. Civil Tech did the transportation design segment of the study. The community was invited to offer input at various points in the year-long study, as were the Village's departments, including Public Works, Police and Fire.

The study was broken into four sections: Rides, Navigate, Enjoy, Arrive with a focus on downtown Homewood and cyclists' experiences. Recommendations focus on Dixie Highway and 183rd Street, and how best to access entrances to downtown with a focus on the two viaducts; a need for signage; upgrading cyclists' experiences on entering downtown.

The presenters urged passage of the study by the Village Board. The study offers a suite of options to be used as a guidebook.

President Hofeld said the basics of the study are presented and can help with next steps. Some suggestions are do-able but others may not be, but he appreciated that the study offers options.

President Hofeld asked if anyone in the audience had questions on the plan. One resident asked how many people participated and the presenters gave numbers from the 11 consulting board members to dozens of people at Village events, such as Fall Fest and business owners. They estimated several hundred people were involved throughout the study.

Trustees thanked the presenters and Director Mesaros and staff for their efforts.

OMNIBUS VOTE: Consider a motion to pass, approve, authorize, accept, or award the following items:

- A. Reappointment/Tsia Jones/Veterans Committee: Approve the reappointment of Tsia Jones to the Veterans committee for a three-year term ending on April 23, 2027.
- B. M-2287/Lease Amendment/Homewood Science Center: Pass an ordinance authorizing deletion of the building at 2018-2020 Ridge Road from the Village of Homewood lease to the Homewood Science Center.
- C. M-2288/Plat of Subdivision/3043-3055 183rd Street: Pass an ordinance approving the Upham Plat of Subdivision for the property located at 3043-3055 183rd Street.
- D. Purchase Approval/Chipper Box/Arbortech: Waive competitive bidding due to high demand and limited availability of forestry equipment; and, authorize the purchase of a customized 11-yard Chipper Box from Arbortech of Wooster, Ohio in the amount of \$32,060.

- E. Contract Renewal/Custodial Services/EcoClean Maintenance: Approve a renewal contract with EcoClean Maintenance of Elmhurst, IL for custodial services in an amount not to exceed \$51,480.
- F. Bid Award/Tree Services/Homer Tree Care/Winkler's Tree Service: Award the bid for tree removal (\$34.75/inch) and stump removal (\$10.00/inch) to Homer Tree Care of Lockport, IL, the lowest responsible bidder, in an amount not to exceed \$100,000; and, award the bid for sectional tree trimming (\$84.00/tree), spot tree trimming (\$240.00/tree), and emergency removal (\$500.00/hour) to Winkler's Tree Service of LaGrange Park, IL, the lowest responsible bidder, in an amount not to exceed \$88,000.
- G. Bid Award/Crushed Limestone/Shepley Motor Express: Award the bid for crushed limestone to Shepley Motor Express of Thornton, IL, the lowest responsible bidder, at the prices of \$17.15 for CA6, \$24.75 for 1" stone and \$24.50 for 2" stone, in an amount not to exceed \$49,500.
- H. Bid Award/Concrete Flatwork/Strada Construction Co.: Award the bid for concrete flatwork to Strada Construction Co. of Addison, IL, the lowest responsible bidder, based on the unit prices submitted in an amount not to exceed \$143,510.
- I. Bid Award/Bituminous Mixes/D. Construction: Award the bid for Bituminous Mixes to D. Construction, Inc. of Coal City, IL, the lowest responsible bidder, at the prices of \$67.00/ton for Surface mix, \$64.00/ton for Binder mix and \$140.00/ton for Cold Patch mix in an amount not to exceed \$54,000.
- J. Scavenger License Renewal/Fiscal Year 2024-2025: Approve the renewal of the Scavenger licenses for Homewood Disposal, Allied Waste Transportation, Inc., and Waste Management, Inc.; and the Limited Scavenger licenses for Midway Building Supply, Tri-State Disposal, and Total Disposal.
- K. MC-1080/Amendment to Class 16 Liquor Licenses: Pass an ordinance amending the language for Class 16 liquor licenses to include the State of Illinois Brewer's License.
- L. M-2289/Increase of Class 16 Liquor Licenses/Homewood Brewing Operations LLC/18225 Dixie Highway: Pass an ordinance amending the Table of the Number of Liquor License Limitations by Class to increase the allowed number of Class 16 liquor licenses by one for the proposed Homewood Brewing Operations LLC at 18225 Dixie Highway.
- M. M-2290/Permit Renewals/Sale of Alcoholic Beverages Outdoor: Pass an ordinance waiving requirements governing outdoor alcohol sales for certain licensees; and approve the issuance of 10 Permits for Sale of Alcoholic Beverages Outdoor, valid from May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2025 upon payment of the permit fee.
- N. M-2291/Adoption of Transit-Oriented Development Plan: Pass an ordinance adopting the Village of Homewood Transit-Oriented Development Plan, an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.
- O. R-3180/Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan: Pass a resolution establishing the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan process.
- P. M-2292/Budget Adoption/Fiscal Year 2024-2025: Pass an ordinance adopting the annual budget for the fiscal year beginning May 1, 2024 and ending April 30, 2025.

Trustee Colton asked about Item M and whether an issue with The Ridgewood had been settled. Director Mesaros said it was; the business will serve on its back patio.

Trustee Colton asked about Item B. She wanted assurances that the previous owner who donated the building to the Village was aware that the property may be up for sale. She was told the previous owner was so informed. Trustee Colton also asked when the Village took control of the building and it was offered to the Homewood Science Center did the Village know the building was

uninhabitable. President Hofeld said the thought was the building would be a science center annex, but was unaware of the extent of the building needs – a roof and tuckpointing. It still needs HVAC and ADA updates, Director Schaefer said, estimated at \$100,000. Fire Chief Grabowski said the building was never not safe, but it wasn't up to code, and he asked that before it be used by the public that it be brought up to code. Grabowski said that's when the interior was gutted. Trustee Colton said her position is the Village should improve its processes and do an inspection of any building it acquires before it takes possession of it.

Trustee Heiferman said when the Village acquires a property it is generally because it doesn't have a clean slate. The Village takes them on to create something better for the community. He also commented on the amount of work that went into the budget and the transit-oriented development plan and both took special attention on the part of Public Works.

Trustee Roman addressed the HSC annex building asking Village administrators to market the space for ideas on how to use the space or how to sell the space.

Attorney Cummings was asked to address Trustee Roman's suggestion. He said because the property is in a TIF district the Board would enter into a redevelopment agreement, similar to the action taken on the former Brunswick Zone property. It's always the Trustees' discretion on how to market the property.

Trustee Opyd asked about LaVoute getting an outdoor liquor sale license, but she was told they have a separate status because of the hotel. She also commended Public Works for all the efforts they put into their many projects.

Trustee Opyd said she remembered the space (in Item B) when HSC was in there. Now the space is magnificent with the exposed brick and the ceiling beams. She sees great opportunities for the space and hopes to see a business plan.

A motion was made by Trustee Colton and seconded by Trustee Roman to approve the Omnibus Report as presented.

***Roll Call: AYES -- Trustees Willis, Heiferman, Harris-Jones and Opyd and President Hofeld. NAYS --None. Motion carried.***

**GENERAL BOARD DISCUSSION:** Trustee Willis said she appreciated the TOD presenters calling Homewood a great place.

Trustee Colton asked what could be done about the disconnect on parking. Residents don't believe there's enough parking, but it doesn't reflect what the Village outlined in the parking study. She acknowledged that signage is coming, and she wants the Village to connect to Google Maps to reflect parking.

Trustee Heiferman said his First Monday open meeting will be at Bergstein's.

Trustee Harris-Jones reminded everyone cicadas are coming.

Trustee Roman was excited by the Village interactions from the Citizens Civic Academy and the TOD plan. She asked if there were any updates on traffic concerns. Manager Haney said he called a

meeting of department heads to discuss 1) speeding; 2) parking in downtown; 3) security and safety around schools. The group will have some recommendations for the board at the May 14 meeting.

Trustee Opyd congratulated Police Chief Denise McGrath for running the Boston Marathon this month. Trustee Opyd said she believes speeding is down on 183rd Street and Ridge Road. She thanked staff for all their efforts on the 2024-25 budget and was happy to be part of the Cicada T-shirt sale. She thanked Edie Dobrez for her report.

Trustee Opyd reminded the community they could still sign up for Clean-Up Day on Saturday, and tickets were still available for the 100th celebration at the Homewood Library.

A motion was made to move to Executive Session by Trustee Roman and seconded by Trustee Opyd.

***Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Willis, Colton, Heiferman, Harris-Jones, Roman and Opyd. NAYS – None. Motion carried.***

The Board moved to Executive Session at 8:23 p.m. to discussion pending litigation under 5ILCS 120/2(c)11.

The Board returned from Executive Session at 8:55 p.m.

A motion was made by Trustee Roman and seconded by Trustee Opyd to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees.

The meeting adjourned on voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Thomas  
Village Clerk