

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2025
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 Vivian Harris-Jones, Trustee Jay Heiferman, Trustee Lauren Roman and Trustee Allisa Opyd. Trustee Phillip Mason was absent.

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

MINUTES: The minutes of February 11, 2025, and minutes from the public hearing on the proposed North Halsted TIF District were presented. There were no questions from the Trustees.

A motion was made by Trustee Opyd and seconded by Trustee Harris-Jones to approve the two sets of minutes as presented.

Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Willis, Harris-Jones, Heiferman, Roman and Opyd. NAYS -None.

CLAIMS LIST: The Claims List in the amount of \$322,889.89 was presented. There were no questions from the Trustees.

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

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

President Hofeld said the \$87,296.59 payment to Thorn Creek Basin Sanitary District totaled 27% of the Claims List.

HEAR FROM THE AUDIENCE: Resident Amy Crump addressed the board on what she said was “a tidal wave” of misinformation. She warned that too many people are drawn in by what she called “amplifiers” who use social media megaphones to spread disinformation. She said it pays to research whether the information is real or fake, if it is trustworthy and if it can be fact checked.

Vernon Alsberry, the outgoing mayor of Hazel Crest, addressed the board as the Democratic candidate for Bremen Township Supervisor in the April 1 election.

Resident Patrick McAneney asked for an update on the proposed development of the village parking lot. The Village is entertaining a proposal for an apartment building on the west side of the lot. President Hofeld said there was nothing new on that project.

McAneney also asked about old library building that seems to be in a state of disrepair. He asked if it was being torn down. President Hofeld said not at this time. Later in the meeting Manager Haney explained that a crew sent to the building to remove asbestos thought their job was to take the building down. The company will be making repairs to the building. It is the site of a future water tower, but not at this time.

PRESENTATION: F. Thomas Voltaggio of Interface Engineering gave a report on the utilities used as back-up power in the Village. His company was hired to give an assessment after Village Hall was shut down for three days following July's tornado when power was knocked out. Police and Fire Departments used back-up generators. Mr. Voltaggio said the Village has functional facilities, but several needs should be addressed.

Village Hall could use a new natural gas generator system; police and fire could use updates to their systems. The Brian Carey Center has newer equipment and is in good shape. Public Works is drawing power from a pump station. Pump Station One needs new equipment. Although the Village does routine maintenance on that generator, it is dated and should be replaced. The company also looked at the possibility of installed solar panels. He said the Village Auditorium would be able to accommodate panels.

OMNIBUS VOTE: The board was asked to pass, approve, authorize, accept, or award the following item(s):

- A. R-3210/Renewal of Class 8 Tax Incentive/925 175th Street: Pass a resolution supporting and consenting to a Class 8 Cook County tax classification for the property at 925 175th Street owned by Fleetpark, LLC.
- B. R-3211/Purchasing Agreement/Northern Illinois Municipal Electric Collaborative: Pass a resolution authorizing the Village Manager to enter into a purchase agreement for electricity through the Northern Illinois Municipal Electric Collaborative (NIMEC) for the period of May 2025 through May 2026 (12 months) or up to and through May 2028 (24 or 36 months), following the NIMEC group bid scheduled to take place on Tuesday, March 4, 2025.
- C. MC-1086/Municipal Code Amendment/Notice Service Procedure: Pass an ordinance amending the Homewood Municipal Code to reflect that violators shall have two opportunities to appear at a hearing date.
- D. MC-1087/New Liquor License Class/Class 6A Special Use Permit: Pass an ordinance creating a Class 6A Special Use Permit liquor license.
- E. M-2338/Class 6A Liquor License/Amendment to the Table of the Number of Liquor License Limitations by Class: Pass an ordinance amending the Table of the Number of Liquor License Limitation by Class to include Class 6A liquor licenses.
- F. M-2339/Class 6A Liquor License/Fee Schedule Amendment: Pass an ordinance amending the "Liquor License" section of the Village of Homewood Fee Schedule to add a fee for Class 6A liquor licenses.
- G. M-2340/Redevelopment Plan/North Halsted Tax Increment Financing District: Pass an ordinance approving the redevelopment plan and project for the North Halsted Tax Increment Financing redevelopment project area.
- H. M-2341/Redevelopment Project Area/North Halsted Tax Increment Financing District: Pass an ordinance designating the North Halsted Tax Increment Financing redevelopment project area.
- I. M-2342/Tax Increment Allocation Financing/North Halsted TIF District: Pass an ordinance adopting tax increment allocation financing for the North Halsted Tax Increment Financing redevelopment project area.

- J. Bid Award/Security Camera System Project/Imperial Surveillance, Inc.: Award a bid for the Village Security Camera System Project to the lowest responsible bidder, Imperial Surveillance, Inc. of Arlington Heights, IL in the amount of \$181,946.74.
- K. M-2343/Serial Raffle License/Marian Catholic High School: Pass an ordinance temporarily suspending the maximum prize and sale date limitations in the Homewood Municipal Code for the Queen of Hearts raffle conducted by Marian Catholic High School, subject to an approved background check.
- L. M-2344/Stipulation/2024 Assessed Value/Wind Creek, IL LLC: Pass an ordinance authorizing execution of a stipulation between Wind Creek, IL LLC and the Villages of East Hazel Crest and Homewood regarding Wind Creek's appeal to the Cook County Board of Review concerning their 2024 assessed value.

Trustee Heiferman asked for clarification on Item A asking if the building was a place the Village should be endorsing for another Class 8 tax incentive. Fire Chief Grabowski said the building is well maintained. It is in a TIF district.

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

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

NEW BUSINESS: M-2345/Special Use Permit/18035 Dixie Highway: The board considered Niya Jones' application for a special use permit for an indoor commercial place of assembly, "The Livie Room" (events space) at 18035 Dixie Highway, in the B-2 Downtown Transition zoning district.

Director of Economic and Community Development Director Angela Mesaros reported that the Village's Planning and Zoning Committee split 3-3. Since a majority of the Planning and Zoning Commission did not vote for the proposal, the application was not recommended by that body.

The petitioner, Niya Jones, came before the Village Board to address their questions. She proposes to take over a business that last was a popcorn shop and make it into an event space between 10 a.m. and 1 a.m. She estimated the largest party would be 50 people. She said she had a parking agreement with Dr. Eldridge, a dental office on Ridge Road, but could not say if she would be limited to the number of spaces available. She also said she would be willing to install an ADA-compliant bathroom. President Hofeld said doing that would reduce the usable space even more.

Several trustees voiced concerns that this location is not appropriate for an event space, given its small size, single bathroom, lack of parking, and potential congestion impacting nearby businesses if they were operating at the same time.

A motion was made by Trustee Willis and seconded by Trustee Heiferman to *deny* the special use permit.

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

Discussion/Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget: Director of Finance Amy Zukowski summarized the draft budget for FY2025-26. The General Fund is budgeted for \$27.9 million in revenue and \$27.8 million in expenses with a budgeted surplus of \$128,876.00. Of that revenue figure, \$6.2 million, or roughly 30%, is derived from sales taxes. Another significant revenue source this year is \$1.1 million in gaming tax revenue from the new casino.

On the expense side, more than 60% of the General Fund is allocated to pay salaries and employee health insurance. Director Zukowski also summarized budgets for the water and sewer fund, capital projects, debt service, and TIF funds.

The entire draft budget is posted on the Village's website. The Village Board on March 11 will conduct a public hearing on the proposed budget. Director Zukowski anticipates the Board will vote on the budget at its March 25 meeting.

The trustees thanked Director Zukowski and her staff for their efforts.

GENERAL BOARD DISCUSSION: Trustee Heiferman said he will be at Bergstein's Deli from 5 to 6 p.m. on Monday, March 3, to hear from residents.

President Hofeld said Primo's Restaurant has officially opened.

Trustee Opyd reminded residents that the Homewood Business Association is hosting Restaurant Week. She also applauded the new director of the Farmer's Market.

Trustee Harris-Jones acknowledged an interview conducted by ABC7-TV with Public Works Director Burman.

Trustee Roman asked if there was any funding available to demolish the old library building. Chief Grabowski said there was such a program through Cook County but it hasn't been funded since the pandemic.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Trustee Heiferman and seconded by Trustee Opyd to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Thomas
Village Clerk