

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
TUESDAY MARCH 25, 2025
VILLAGE HALL BOARD ROOM

CALL TO ORDER: President Hofeld called the meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 7:00 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 Phillip Mason, Trustee Lauren Roman and Trustee Allisa Opyd.

President Hofeld introduced staff present: Village Manager Napoleon Haney, Village Attorney Chris Cummings, Assistant Director of Community and Economic Development Noah Schumerth, Director of Public Works Josh Burman, Director of Finance Amy Zukowski and Assistant Village Manager Terence Acquah.

MINUTES: The minutes of the March 11, 2025, regular Village Board meeting, the FY 2025-26 budget public hearing on March 11, 2025 and the public hearing on the proposed Harwood TOD Tax Increment Financing District were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

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

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

CLAIMS LIST: The Claims List in the amount of \$806,903.16 was presented. There were no questions from the Trustees.

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

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

President Hofeld said two items totaled 51 percent of the Claims List: \$321,600.10 to the City of Chicago Heights for water; \$90,233.64 to Thorn Creek Sanitary District.

HEAR FROM THE AUDIENCE: Resident Amy Crump addressed the board on authoritarianism and how anticipatory obedience leads to people making poor choices.

Numerous members of the public came forward to address what they believe is pollution in a stormwater detention pond at northwest corner of the Izaak Walton Preserve south of the Homewood Disposal corporate headquarters. Several claimed the Village was not willing to hear their complaints or take them seriously. Members of the public acknowledged that the Village has done testing, but they believe it's not enough and consequently the Village has allowed hazardous water to remain in the pond.

Village Manager Haney addressed their concerns saying the issue is not one-sided. The Village is not against the residents and the Village is trying to address their concerns. He believed going to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency for guidance was the right thing to do. The Village would be hiring another consultant this week. The Village anticipates a comprehensive study will be done by the consultant and the Village, with the board of the Izaak Walton Preserve, will address whatever issues come from that report.

A resident asked if his neighborhood to the west of the White Castle on Halsted Street would be impacted by the removal of lead pipes. He was directed to the Village's website for more information.

Another resident asked if the fence that used to border 183rd Street west of Culver's could be replaced. The fence was taken down by the Public Works Department because it was in poor condition. Manager Haney said the Village has budgeted funds to replace the fence.

Rev. Doyle Landry raised his concerns about lack of jobs for Black youth.

Omnibus Vote: Consider a motion to pass, approve, authorize, accept, or award the following item(s):

- A. R-3215/Executive Session Minutes/Approval/Destruction: Pass a resolution approving executive session minutes from June 11, 2024 to November 26, 2024, and authorizing the destruction of executive session audio recordings from February 7, 2023 through July 25, 2023.
- B. R-3216/Release of Executive Session Minutes: Pass a resolution determining minutes or portions thereof from executive sessions no longer requiring confidential treatment.
- C. M-2348/Multiple Raffle License/The Tim Early Foundation: Pass an ordinance temporarily suspending the multiple raffle license sale date limitations in the Homewood Municipal code for The Tim Early Foundation for the split the pot raffles to be held at 18436 Governors Highway between April 26, 2025 and June 8, 2025.
- D. R-3217/Cook County Tax Incentive/2207 183rd Street: Pass a resolution supporting a Class 8 status under the Cook County Real Property Assessment Classification for real estate located at 2207 183rd Street.
- E. M-2349/Adoption of Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget: Pass an ordinance adopting the annual budget for the fiscal year beginning May 1, 2025 and ending April 30, 2026.
- F. M-2350/Adoption of 2025 Official Zoning Map: Pass an ordinance adopting the official zoning map for calendar year 2025 reflecting amendments which were approved by the Board of Trustees in 2024.
- G. Agreement/General Retainer/Legal Services/Christopher J. Cummings, P.C.: Approve the renewal of a General Retainer Agreement for legal services with Christopher J. Cummings, P.C. of Homewood, IL for a minimum of two (2) years (May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2027); and, authorize the Village Manager to execute the General Retainer Agreement.
- H. R-3218/Appointment of Representative/ECOM/SOUTHCOM Joint Emergency Telephone Board: Pass a resolution authorizing and approving the appointment of Village Manager Napoleon Haney as representative and Fire Chief Robert Grabowski as alternate delegate to the ECOM/SOUTHCOM Joint Emergency Telephone System Board.

President Hofeld called Laura Hall of Fido's Landing (Item D) to the podium to offer information on the organization's work. She said Fido's Landing adopts and rescues dogs, does outreach with therapy dogs and works with kids with autism. It will offer veterinary care for dogs adopted out and do dog training. Trustees wished the group success at their Homewood location.

A motion was made by Trustee Heiferman and seconded by Trustee Mason to approve the Omnibus Report.

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

General Board Discussion: Trustees thanked residents for coming and sharing their opinions with the board. Trustee Roman told the audience that the issue should not be that the Trustees don't care about the pond issue, but rather recognize that every decision takes time and that the Village is moving forward with another consultant.

Trustee Opyd said the Village should consider developing a Green Committee. She also said she felt a Committee of the Whole meeting would give the public more time to comment on their concerns.

President Hofeld said he's been a member of the Izaak Walton Preserve for 50 years. He walks his dogs through the preserve every morning. He is an advocate of the work of Izaak Walton Preserve and those who say he doesn't care about the pond issue and the health of Izaak Walton are mistaken.

President Hofeld announced progress on two new restaurants: Mongolian BBQ plans have been approved, and Tequila Raizes now owns the property (the former Savoia's T'Go site). The Village is working on another new restaurant in the old Brunswick Bowling Alley site.

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Thomas
Village Clerk