

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 22, 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 Nakina Flores called the roll. Those present were Trustee Vivian Harris-Jones, Trustee Julie Willis, Trustee Jay Heiferman, Trustee Patrick Siemsen, Trustee Phillip Mason, Trustee Lauren Roman, and Village President Richard Hofeld

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

MINUTES: The minutes of July 8, 2025, were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

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

Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Harris-Jones, Willis, Heiferman, Siemsen, Mason, Roman. NAYS – None.

CLAIMS LIST: The Claims List in the amount of \$822,531.27 was presented. There were no questions from the Trustees.

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

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

President Hofeld said two items totaled 50 percent of the Claims List: \$325,000 to the City of Chicago Heights for water and \$90,000 to Thorn Creek Sanitary District.

HEAR FROM THE AUDIENCE: Resident Amy Crump and three other neighbors and their children talked about gunfire that happened on July 21, 2025. The gunfire took place on Olive Rd by James Hart School. The neighbors said this is the fourth time shots were fired in their neighborhood and they are very concerned for their safety so they formed a neighborhood watch. The neighborhood watch is asking if they can have a dedicated police officer to act as a liaison to their group. They also asked for the police department to make the results of their investigation public, and to explore placing cameras in the area.

Agnes Tropp was happy that the HF Chronicle published an article on TIF's and said keep up the good work. She would also like the property to be appraised.

PRESENTATION: Gray Megan from View Chicago LLC made a presentation and sought input from the Village Board about a proposed monument sign at 175th Street and Halsted Street. Gray said this would be a large digital board used for advertisement. The Village would be able to use the sign whenever it is not being rented by a business. All advertisement would be approved by the Village.

President Hofeld stated that this has never been allowed before. Trustee Heiferman says sign would be contrary to the Village's sign ordinance. Residents said they would be concerned about light pollution and how it does not benefit the Village. Trustee Siemsen asked if police would be able to use the sign for public safety messages and the answer was yes. Trustee Mason said it does not fit the community. Trustee Roman said she thinks it might benefit the community because they could post information about events for the public.

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

- A. Budget Amendment/Acceptance of Proposal/Professional Engineering Services/Burns & McDonnell: Approve a budget amendment of \$90,000 to the water sewer fund; and, accept a proposal from Burns & McDonnell of Chicago, IL for professional engineering services (Tasks 1, 2, and 3) in an amount not to exceed \$90,000 to assist the Village of Homewood in Design and Bidding of Lead Service Line Replacement Fiscal Year 2026 in accordance with the United States Environmental Protection Agency and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency requirements.
- B. Letter of Intent/American Dance Center/1933 Ridge Road: Authorize the Village President to sign a Letter of Intent (LOI) between the Village of Homewood and the American Dance Center to complete a due diligence period to perform the necessary analysis and evaluation of the property at 1933 Ridge Road, Homewood, IL with the intent of potentially negotiating a Purchase and Sale Agreement with the property owner.
- C. Intergovernmental Agreement/Illinois Department of Health Care and Family Services/Ground Emergency Medical Transportation Program: Authorize the Village President to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Illinois Department of Health Care and Family Services for reimbursement of unrecovered costs of ambulance transports through the Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) Program.
- D. Agreement/Illinois Department of Transportation/Traffic Signal Improvements: Authorize the Village President to enter into an agreement with the Illinois Department of Transportation supporting the improvement of the existing signalized intersection of Riegel Road at Holbrook Road for the modernization of traffic lights, traffic signal cabinet, and increased-visibility street name signs, with an estimated amount of \$1,772.73 to be reimbursed to the State of Illinois for the removal and replacement of Emergency Vehicle Preemption devices.
- E. Purchase Approval/Two Snow Plow Trucks/Rush Truck Centers/Henderson Products Inc.: Waive competitive bidding due to purchasing through a joint governmental or cooperative purchasing program; authorize the purchase of two (2) 2025 International HV607 chassis from Rush Truck Centers of Springfield, IL in the amount of \$232,252.82; and, authorize the purchase and delivery of two (2) truck prep packages from Henderson Products Inc. of Huntley, IL in the amount of \$359,548.41, for a total purchase price of \$589,587.23.

Before the vote, President Hofeld invited comments. Trustee Mason asked what the length of time for the LOI on item B was and can they enter into any other agreement while this LOI was in place. Attorney Cummings said that the LOI was in place for 60 days and that they are not to negotiate with any other offers during this time. Trustee Mason asked if the traffic signals due for modernization on item D was owned by the Village. Director of Public Works Josh Burman said we only pay for the maintenance agreements. President Hofeld said the Village owns 1 of the 4 signals.

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

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

OLD BUSINESS: Director of Finance Amy Zukowski along with Dave Naumann with Burns and McDonnell on Zoom were open to take questions from the Board and ask for direction for water rate study options to finalize the Water Rate Study Report based on the selected water rate options and to present the final Water Rate Study to the Board. President Hofeld asked what it the most equitable way to have water rate increases to benefit the capital improvements for the water system based on all the information that was presented on previous meetings on April 22, 2025 and July 8, 2025?

Option 1 would increase rates 7.75% annually across the board. Option 2 would charge a higher fixed rate for customers with larger water meters but the per gallon charge for water would be the same for all customers. increase Option 3 would charge a higher fixed rate for customers with larger water meters and would charge a higher per gallon charge for larger water customers.

The recommendation given was option for 2 and after review staff feels like this would be the best option. The Board agreed that option 2 was the most stable and predictable option for a water rate increase. Since 94% of water customers have the smaller water meter, they would not have to pay the highest fixed fee.

A motion was made by Trustee Mason and seconded by Trustee Willis to direct staff to prepare an ordinance setting future water rates based upon option 2.

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

BID OPENING: Assistant Director of Economic and Community Development Noah Schumerth opened bids for Sale of Village-Owned Property at 18155 Dixie Highway. There were three bids. Bawadi Construction for \$4,000 with the intended use of a mediterranean restaurant. Mike Hussain for \$50,000 with the intended use of an Asian restaurant. Erich Baker for \$1,000 with the intended use of a soft play for children under 7 years old. Staff will review the bids and return to the Village Board at a future meeting with possible options and development and award recommendations.

A motion was made by Trustee Roman and seconded by Trustee Harris-Jones to direct staff to evaluate these three bids and make a recommendation.

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

GENERAL BOARD DISCUSSION: Trustees wanted to thank residents for coming out and voicing their concerns and comments about recent shootings as they are just as concerned. Trustees are relieved that no one was injured and have complete confidence in the Police Department to handle the situation. Trustee Mason would like to possibly come out to one of the neighborhood watch meetings. President Hofeld said we are not going to tolerate this crime. Trustees are glad that the community is working together to come to a solution.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion was made by Trustee Siemsen and seconded by Trustee Roman to enter into executive session to discuss following: Purchase or lease of real property under 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5).

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

The board moved to Executive Session at 7:57 p.m.
The board returned from Executive Session at 8:11 p.m.

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nakina Flores
Village Clerk