

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

DATE OF MEETING: March 10, 2026

To: Village President and Board of Trustees

Through: Napoleon Haney, Village Manager

From: Angela Mesaros, Director of Economic and Community Development

Topic: Amendment to Municipal Code governing Donation Collection Boxes

PURPOSE

Currently, the Homewood Municipal Code prohibits “donation collection boxes,” with the exception of paper recycling boxes. A federal appeals court recently ruled that donation boxes are protected by the First Amendment; therefore, the Village cannot prohibit them. However, the Village can still impose reasonable restrictions on these boxes. This requires an amendment to the municipal code that establishes restrictions. Staff requests that the Village Board approve an amendment to Chapter 4 of the Municipal Code concerning unattended donation collection boxes. This amendment requires Board approval.



Paper recycling boxes (St. John Neumann's lot)

PROCESS

Donation box refers to any receptacle or container located outside of an enclosed building that is used for collection and storage of donated items or materials. Approval of this amendment will establish standards for the registration (with the Village), placement and location, design and identification, and maintenance and operation of unattended donation collection boxes.



The proposed amendment will establish the following regulations:

Registration Requirements:

- Each donation collection box must be registered with the Village separately.
- Registrations are valid for one year (annual registration).
- Registration is non-transferable; a change in operator requires a new registration.
- Registration Applications must include name, address, telephone number and email, proof of registration with the Secretary of State of Illinois, 24-hour emergency contact, site plan, street address, written consent from the property owner, liability insurance, maintenance plan, and tax-exempt status.

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



Location Requirements - Donation collection boxes:

- must be located on private property on a paved surface.
- are prohibited in any parking spaces that are required/mandated by the Village - where the Village requires a minimum number of parking spaces. (*Example: The Village requires a minimum of 21 parking spaces for Business X. Business X cannot use any of the 21 parking spaces to place a donation box*).
- are prohibited in any areas/spaces required or established by the Village as fire lanes, loading zones, or emergency vehicle access areas.
- are prohibited within any required building setback, landscaping area, drainage, utility, or access easement, or designated flood area.
- cannot obstruct pedestrian or vehicle traffic sight lines.
- are not permitted on vacant properties.
- are not permitted within residential neighborhoods unless placed at a church, school, or community center.
- are limited to only one (1) per property and cannot be within 500 feet of another collection box.

Design Standards – Donation collection boxes:

- must be made of durable, weather-resistant, waterproof materials.
- may not exceed six feet in height, five feet in width and five feet in depth.
- must have a secure door.
- must be a single, neutral color.
- may not be mechanized or powered.

Identification and Signage:

- Contact information must be permanently affixed to the box.
- Every donation collection box must display a sign, stating “ALL DONATIONS MUST FIT INTO AND BE PLACED INSIDE THIS BOX. LEAVING ITEMS OUTSIDE THE BOX IS PROHIBITED.”

OUTCOME

Unattended donation collection boxes, if not properly maintained and regulated, can become nuisances attracting illegal dumping, litter, graffiti, and blight and will be cited. Amending the language for donation boxes will provide standards for regulation which are consistent with constitutional protections. The ordinance language will provide reasonable, content-neutral regulations governing the placement, registration, maintenance, and operation of unattended donation collection boxes.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

- **Funding Source:** N/A
- **Budgeted Amount:** N/A
- **Cost:** N/A

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



LEGAL REVIEW

Completed

RECOMMENDED BOARD ACTION

Pass an ordinance amending the language in Chapter 20 of the Homewood Municipal Code governing donation collection boxes.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Ordinance