



Village of Poplar Grove – Board Meeting Memo

08/20/2026

Gifts, Donations, and Sponsorships Policy

1. Background:

The Village is considering adoption of a formal policy to establish a clear and consistent process for reviewing, approving, accepting, and documenting gifts, donations, and sponsorships offered to the Village. The policy is intended to ensure that donations provide a benefit to the community while protecting the Village from unintended financial, operational, or other obligations.

2. Current Status:

A proposed policy has been prepared for review by the Village Board of Trustees. The policy addresses donation and sponsorship approval, fundraising, recordkeeping, maintenance and long-term costs, donor recognition, and safeguards against preferential treatment of donors.

3. Fiscal Impact:

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with adopting the policy. The policy is intended to ensure that potential costs associated with donations, including installation, maintenance, repair, and replacement, are considered before acceptance.

4. Legal Review (if applicable):

Legal review may be requested prior to final adoption to ensure the policy is consistent with applicable laws and Village requirements.

5. Recommendation:

The Village President recommends that the Village Board of Trustees review the proposed policy and consider approval, with any revisions the Board deems appropriate.

6. Supporting Documents (if applicable):

- ☒ Attached- Gifts, Donations, and Sponsorships Policy
- ☐ Not Applicable

Village of Poplar Grove

Gifts, Donations, and Sponsorships Policy

I. Purpose and Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent process for the acceptance, review, approval, and documentation of gifts, donations, and sponsorships made to the Village, including the installation, long-term maintenance, and operation of donated or sponsored elements. Such gifts, donations, and sponsorships may be accepted when, they are consistent with the Village's mission and priorities and enhance the quality of life in the community.

The guidelines and standards established by this policy shall apply to all gifts, donations, and sponsorships offered to or accepted by the Village after the effective date of this policy.

II. Definitions

“Gift or Donation” – For purposes of this policy, the terms “gift” and “donation” are synonymous and shall hereafter be collectively referred to as “donations.” Donations include any tangible or intangible asset, monetary contribution, service, material, equipment, property, or other item of value that the Village is prepared to accept pursuant to this policy and any administrative guidelines under this policy. Unless otherwise determined by the Village Board of Trustees, all accepted donations shall become the sole property of the Village.

“Donor” – An individual, business, corporation, organization, governmental entity, foundation, or other legal entity that makes or offers a donation to the Village.

“Sponsorship” – A monetary or in-kind contribution provided to the Village by an individual, business, organization, or other entity in support of a Village program, event, activity, facility, project, or initiative, in exchange for an acknowledgment or other recognition approved by the Village. A sponsorship shall not create an ownership interest, management right, or other control over the Village, its property, programs, services, or activities.

“Sponsor” – An individual, business, corporation, organization, foundation, or other legal entity that provides or offers a sponsorship to the Village.

“Donation or Sponsorship Acceptance” – The Village’s formal approval to receive and retain a donation or sponsorship in accordance with this policy, applicable law, and any applicable administrative guidelines. Acceptance may be subject to conditions established by the Village.

“Fundraising” – Any organized activity, campaign, solicitation, event, or effort undertaken by or on behalf of the Village for the purpose of generating monetary donations, in-kind donations, sponsorships, grants, or other contributions to support Village programs, departments, events, activities, facilities, projects, or other approved Village purposes. Fundraising activities shall be conducted in accordance with this policy, applicable law, and any administrative guidelines established by the Village. The authorization to conduct a fundraising activity shall not, by itself, constitute acceptance of any donation or sponsorship, and all donations and sponsorships received through fundraising activities shall remain subject to the applicable approval and acceptance requirements of this policy.

III. Consistency with Village Interests

Donations and sponsorships may only be accepted when they have a purpose consistent with the goals and objectives of the Village and are in the best interest of Poplar Grove. The Village must always consider the public trust and comply with all applicable laws when accepting donations and sponsorships.

IV. Guidelines/Standards for Accepting Donations and Sponsorships

Donations and sponsorships shall be accepted only if they have a valid use to the Village. Donations and sponsorships intended to either become incorporated into Village parks as well as donations and sponsorships of equipment, vehicles, or facilities intended to supplement those of the Village often involve considerations of aesthetics, costs, and compatibility whose features shall be evaluated using the following criteria:

The donation or sponsorship will not conflict with any provision of law and shall not conflict with the Village's comprehensive plans, recreation plans, or park design.

1. The donation or sponsorship will not add to the Village's workload unless it provides a net benefit to the Village.
2. The donation or sponsorship places no restrictions on the Village, unless agreed to by the Village Trustees.
3. All donations or gifts shall become the sole property of the Village unless determined otherwise by the Village Trustees in writing. The Village has no duty to return any donation, as all donations are irrevocable and otherwise final upon receipt by the Village. The Village Trustees have the final authority to relocate, remove, or dispose of any donation at any time, with or without notice to the Donor.
4. All donations and sponsorships will receive recognition appropriate to the level and nature of the donation or sponsorship as determined by the Village President. For those of a capital nature, that may be in the form of signage, plaques, markings, or other means the Village should deem appropriate. Regardless of the recognition strategy selected, the intent shall be to appropriately honor the donor or sponsor for their contribution to the community. To ensure uniformity of appearance and good taste on any recognition, the language of such plaques shall also be approved by the Village Trustees. Donation acknowledgments, sponsorship acknowledgments, and memorial plaques shall be made of bronze and be of the highest quality, life, and durability. In cases where bronze plaques are not feasible, other alternative types may be considered. The appearance of traditional commercial advertising shall be avoided.
5. The Village and community have an interest in ensuring the best appearance and aesthetic quality of public lands and facilities. Donations and sponsorships shall reflect the character, be consistent with the intended surroundings, and complement the aesthetics of the proposed site.
6. Since donated or sponsored elements and their associated recognition become Village property, the community has an interest in ensuring that all elements remain in good repair and are maintained appropriately. In addition, Village of Poplar Grove has an interest in ensuring that the short- and long-

term repair costs are reasonable and that repair parts and materials are readily available. Elements must be of a quality to ensure a long life and be resistant to weather, wear and tear, and acts of vandalism.

7. The proposed donation or sponsorship cannot substantially interfere with the intended current or future use of the land or facility where it is being proposed to be located. Preference will be given to donations and sponsorships that are unique in nature, have historical or cultural relevance, and could attract visitors to the community.
 8. The Village also has an interest in knowing in advance the full cost which may be associated with a donation or sponsorship, namely those costs that relate to the installation, maintenance, and operation during the donations or sponsorship's expected life cycle. The costs to install, operate, repair, and/or maintain a mechanical and/or electric system proposed for use in conjunction with a donation or sponsorship shall be identified prior to acceptance by the Village Trustees.
 9. Monetary donations approved by the Village Trustees will be deposited to the fund in which the intended use of the donation is to be achieved. This money shall be placed into a restricted fund in the Donations budget responsible for achieving such intended use.
 10. The Village Trustees shall not approve any donation or sponsorship that may meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - A. Be offensive or contain morally questionable material;
 - B. Include a restriction that entails special considerations or favors beyond those afforded to any other resident, whether donating or non-donating;
 - C. Create any other concern, real or perceived, that may result in the loss of reputation, appearance of impropriety, or other negative impact on the Village from accepting the donation, gift, or sponsorship
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V. Donor Consideration and Village Business

No donor or sponsor shall expect, request, or receive any preferential treatment, special consideration, or other benefit from the Village because of, or in connection with, any donation or sponsorship. The acceptance of a donation or sponsorship shall not influence, and shall not be conditioned upon, any Village procurement decision, contract award, zoning or regulatory matter, permit, license, approval, inspection, enforcement action, or any other business, service, program, or operation of the Village.

The Village shall not grant any donor or sponsor any advantage, preference, or special consideration in connection with any Village procurement, regulatory matters, contract, service, business, or other Village operation in exchange for, or because of, a donation or sponsorship. All Village decisions shall be made independently and in accordance with applicable law, Village ordinances, policies, procedures, and the best interests of the Village and its residents.

VI. Village President Authority to Approve Donations and Sponsorships

The Village President shall be authorized to accept or reject offers of donated money, equipment, in-kind donations, and sponsorships to Village Departments or to the Village in general up to \$5,000 per donation or sponsorship. Donated money will be expended for general purposes within the department or specified purposes, if agreed upon with the donor or sponsor, as one-time supplements to the department's operating budget. Donations of equipment will be considered based upon program outcomes, department goals and needs. Each donation or sponsorship will be evaluated for usefulness and potential replacement costs.

When approving donations or sponsorships with a value of less than \$5,000, the Village President shall base his/her decision upon the Guidelines/Standards in Section IV. Any donation or sponsorship with a value greater than \$5,000 shall require approval by the Village Trustees prior to acceptance.

VII. Procedures for Making and Accepting Gifts, Donations, and Sponsorships

The Village Trustees shall have the full and final authority to approve or deny all donation and sponsorship proposals, including those made by the Village President. Prior to submitting a Donation or Sponsorship Application Form (Attachment A), the donor or sponsor, or their representative, shall contact the Village Office to discuss a proposed donation or sponsorship. Such pre-application meeting shall assist both the prospective donor or sponsor and the Village in determining whether a donation or sponsorship will meet the criteria contained in this policy.

If a donation or sponsorship appears to be in accordance with this policy, the donor or sponsor, or their representative, will then submit a Donation or Sponsorship Application Form and meet with Village Staff members to determine the specific nature of the donation or sponsorship, proposed location, and yearly maintenance and operational costs for review and processing. The written proposal, including a Staff report, will be sent to the Village Trustees for its decision.

Village Staff or the Village Trustees may request additional information including but not limited to scaled drawings; artists' renditions; or other documents to better illustrate the exact nature of the donation or sponsorship. The Village may choose to consult with other agencies or organizations in the review process. The Village Trustees may also send any proposal to the appropriate Village Lawyer for review with subsequent recommendation to the Village Trustees.

VIII. Processing, Recordkeeping, and Documentation

All donations and sponsorships offered to or accepted by the Village shall be processed and documented in a manner that promotes transparency, accountability, and compliance with this policy and applicable law.

- A. **Monetary Donations.** Shall be received and deposited by the Village in accordance with the villages established financial procedures.
- B. **Non-Monetary Donations.** For donations of equipment, property, materials, services, or other non-monetary items, the Village shall document the nature and estimated fair value of the donation.
- C. **Records.** The Village shall maintain records of donations and sponsorships accepted by the Village, including the application or proposal, approval or denial, supporting documentation, correspondence, applicable restrictions or conditions, estimated value, and any related agreements or resolutions. Records shall be maintained in accordance with the Village's applicable records retention requirements and the Illinois Freedom of Information Act and other applicable laws.
- D. **Audit and review.** Donation and sponsorship records shall be available for review by the Village President, Village Trustees, Village Treasurer, or other authorized Village personnel as appropriate. Donations and sponsorships shall be subject to the same financial controls, auditing requirements, and recordkeeping standards applicable to other Village funds, property, and transactions.



200 N Hill St
Poplar Grove IL 61065
815.765.3201

Gift, Donation, & Sponsorship Application Form

Attachment A

Thank you for your interest in donating to the Village of Poplar Grove. Your gift, donation, or sponsorship will be considered by the Village of Poplar Grove Trustees after this form is completed and a Staff Report is prepared. All donations shall become the sole property of the Village, and the Village has no duty to return any donation. All donations and sponsorships are also subject to the *Policy Acceptance of Gifts, Donations, and Sponsorships* adopted by the Village.

1. Name, Address, & Phone number of Donor/ Sponsor:

2. Description of Gift / Donation/Sponsor:

3. Value of the Gift, Donation, or Sponsorship (Market Value): \$

4. What is the intended purpose or use for this gift, donation, or sponsorship?

5. If applicable, what are the yearly maintenance and operational costs associated with gift, donation, or sponsorship?

6. Do you have or are currently seeking to establish a contractual relationship with the Village of Poplar Grove? If so, please disclose the nature of the contractual relationship:

Signature & Title of Donor

Date

Internal Use of Village of Poplar Grove use only

Date application was received: _____

This application is: Accepted by the Village of Poplar Grove on _____

Rejected by the Village of Poplar Grove on _____