

VILLAGE OF THORNTON, COUNTY OF COOK  
MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING – JUNE 3, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Acting President Pisarzewski called the Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Acting President Pisarzewski reported the meeting was being recorded by Clerk Pisarzewski and also recorded live on social media.

ROLL CALL

Present at Roll Call: Acting President Pisarzewski, Trustees Cunningham, Reynolds, Kaye, Glaser; Recreation Director Dunlop; Police Chief G. Beckman; Public Works Superintendent Roberts; Fire Chief Schweitzer.

Also Present: Administrator D. Beckman; Attorney S. Dillner; Engineer Kaminsky; Treasurer Frye.

Absent: Trustee Atkinson.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kathleen Andersen Reingold, 106 East Harriet, stated, if the Village felt it should have a parade for Memorial Day, it should be silent to honor those that died while serving our country. She would like to see a separate Veteran's Day luncheon for the veterans; but for those who have died or put their lives on the line, that's a special kind of funeral. There should be no parade at all. We need to show more respect.

Ms. Reingold asked the process by which \$400,000 was to be paid for the new water meters to Calumet City. Administrator Beckman explained an RFP was put out requesting bids to replace over 1000 water meters in homes and businesses in Thornton. This was the lowest bid received. When asked, Administrator Beckman stated there is a breakdown of the costs involved in the RFP document, and he will get that information to Ms. Anderson.

Noel Wiora, 315 Water Street, thanked Administrator Beckman for everything he has done for the Village and happiness in his retirement. She spoke to the Board in support of allowing residents to own chickens in Thornton. Last week, the chicken industry was hit hard with bird flu which is going to cause the cost of eggs to skyrocket. She reiterated her reasons why the Village should support allowing residents to keep chickens, including many surrounding communities are changing their laws to allow chickens. Allowing chickens in Thornton supports food security, enhances community resilience, provides educational opportunities, has environmental benefits, and so many other things.

## COMMMITTEE REPORTS

**Budget and Finance Report** – Trustee Reynolds reported there is a draft of the budget that's still being worked on by Administrator Beckman and Treasurer Frye. Administrator Beckman stated, as soon as there is a final draft of the budget, it will be released.

Treasurer Frye provided the Board with an updated summary report. Some adjustments have been made: An overtime expense for the clerk's office was added due to trying to get lost data back into the system which is going to require overtime. There was a small error in the street department's payroll which tweaked the payroll taxes and retirement benefits a bit. Regarding the Downtown TIF III, with having the gas station come off the tax roll, we are anticipating no revenue coming into that fund but we are budgeting expenses for that fund. There is a small amount of cash in that fund currently, but more expenses are being budgeted than what there is cash on hand. So the Village picked up a transfer of a loan from the general fund into the Downtown TIF fund of \$45,000. Even though this is a loan which will be paid back sometime in the future, for cash flow purposes in budgeting, that needed to be accounted for. In the debt service fund, the Village only is receiving about 90 percent of its levy. A small transfer was budgeted from the General Fund into the debt service fund of about \$15,000 to be sure money was there for bond expenses. The good thing for the tax levy is one bond is rolling off this year and saving the Village about \$200,000 in its tax levy.

Treasurer Frye stated the water and sewer fund is in a negative cash position. The sewer rates have not changed for the last twelve years. In order for this fund to be self-sufficient, she suggested increasing the sewer rate to cover this deficit. She stated, in the coming months, the Board needs to address this issue or the Village will be borrowing from the General Fund to subsidize the water and sewer fund. In the water capital fund, the IEPA loan repayments were computed into the budget which will begin in February of 2025. There are sufficient funds to cover those payments.

The budget for the General Fund is based on a 4.9 percent increase in the tax levy. So whatever is approved in anticipated revenue on the tax levy is what the Board needs to hold to in November/December when the tax levy is done. The good news is, because of the fact that \$200,000 is rolling off of the bonds, the overall increase to the tax levy is less than 2 percent. The 4.9 is based on the levy without the debt service; but because the debt service is rolling off, the overall increase is less than 2 percent.

Treasurer Frye commented, with the addition of the full-time Fire Department, the Village has doubled its Fire Department costs in the last three years – that funding needs to be considered somewhere. The Board approved a Fire Department contract recently. The Village is under negotiations for the Police

contract. So it's necessary that the Board hold to this projected tax revenue and levy.

A detailed complete file will be provided to the Board; and she is requesting the budget be approved at the next Board meeting. Then the Appropriation Ordinance can be finalized so it can be approved at the first meeting in July. This ordinance must be filed with Cook County by the end of July. There are no extensions granted.

Treasurer Frye stressed this is the Village's operating budget. Last year, the Board approved the Appropriation Ordinance at a percentage over the operating budget. She suggested putting the Appropriation Ordinance on the agenda for the first meeting in July. Then if there is a problem, it can still be approved at the second meeting in July. At the next meeting in June, Treasurer Frye would need to know what numbers are in the budget and she can move forward with the Appropriation Ordinance formatting for the July 1<sup>st</sup> Board meeting. Last year, the Board approved the Appropriation Ordinance at a percentage over the operating budget which would leave a little bit of leeway in case something comes up. Administrator Beckman suggested, if anyone contacts Treasurer Frye with questions or concerns, to please copy Melissa Wiak to help familiarize her with the budget. Attorney Dillner commented there needs to be four yes votes to pass the budget.

**Community Center 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** – Trustee Kaye announced it's the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Community Center. There is going to be a party on June 22, from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. There will be games, raffles and prizes.

#### ENGINEER'S REPORT

No report.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

No further report.

#### ATTORNEY'S REPORT

**603 and 605 Ridge Road** – Attorney Dillner reported the closing for 603 and 605 Ridge Road is scheduled for tomorrow morning. Those two parcels are being sold by the Village to the cemetery. There was another part of that transaction for the storage lockers which involves tax deeds that are still in court.

**110 South Williams** – Attorney Dillner stated, at the last meeting, the Board considered a couple proposals on 110 South Williams. He recommended entering into a Redevelopment Agreement with Ken Zeperelli who agreed to pay \$5,000 for that property. Attorney Dillner is asking for a consensus of the Board to prepare the Redevelopment Agreement. It would be a standard agreement where the buyer pays closing costs and agrees to rehab the property within a year

or it reverts back to the Village. There is a substantial amount of work that needs to be done to that building. There was a consensus of the Board to have Attorney Dillner prepare the Redevelopment Agreement.

**Mobil Gas Station** – Attorney Dillner reported there is an ongoing discussion with someone interested in the Mobil gas station. There are still a number of unresolved issues. He suggested that he work with the new administrator, and meet with the interested party to work out some of these issues.

#### ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

No report.

#### PRESIDENT’S REPORT

No report.

#### OLD BUSINESS

Trustee Reynolds asked the status of the May 6 minutes. How do they get approved. Acting President Pisarzewski stated the minutes were amended and are in the Board’s packet for approval.

#### NEW BUSINESS

No report.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for the good and welfare of the Village, a motion was made by Trustee Glaser, seconded by Trustee Kaye, to adjourn the Committee meeting.

All in favor.

Motion carried.

Acting President Pisarzewski adjourned the Committee meeting at 7:29 p.m.

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Debra L. Pisarzewski, Clerk