



Agenda Item Executive Summary

Draft Resolution Authorizing Village President to Sign
Extension to Illinois Cash Farm Lease with Steven
Mitchell to February 28, 2026 for Village-Owned
Property in Winnebago Highlands

Committee or
Board Board

Item Name

BUDGET IMPACT

Amount:	N/A	Budgeted:	N/A
List what fund:	N/A		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pursuant to settlement of a lawsuit filed against Mantle Development Group, LLC, in 2020 and settled in March of 2021, the Village of Winnebago acquired 34.9 acres of land located within the corporate limits of the Village of Winnebago from Developer Mantle Development Group, LLC. Approximately 25 of those acres consist of tillable farmland, although not of stellar quality because the topsoil on the land had all been stripped, and was not otherwise properly maintained by the prior owner, or those who the prior owner allowed to farm the land. While the end goal is to sell the land, in the interim, pursuant to a lease agreement initially entered with local farmer Steven Mitchell for the lease term of approximately April 12, 2021 to February 28, 2022, the land is currently farmed by Steven Mitchell. That lease was extended, per resolution, from February 28, 2022 to February 28, 2023, then, per Resolution No. 2023-04R, for the lease term from February 28, 2023 to February 29, 2024, and then, per Resolution No. 2024-08R, for the lease term from February 29, 2024 to February 28, 2025. Mr. Mitchell pays \$1,200.00 annually to farm those approximate 25 tillable acres with corn, soybeans, wheat, or alfalfa, and in consideration of the low rental price, agrees to mow all the non-tillable land of the 34.9 acres according to the Village ordinance requirements, which relieves the Village of the responsibility for the maintenance of the same by its own staff or the hiring out of a third party, the latter of which would cost approximately \$20,800.00 per year.

Although the lease term is for a year at a time, the Village still has the right to sell the land in the interim, and the only financial obligation of the Village to Steven Mitchell as Lessee would be that if due to the sale of the land the crops of the Lessee were destroyed, the Village as Lessor shall reimburse Steven Mitchell as Lessee, upon proof of expenditure, for the cost of inputs having been expended to plant the affected acreage for farming, which shall include the cost of seed, fertilizer, chemicals, and like materials, but shall not include the labor costs for such input process or the value of the crops.

This lease is up for renewal again, for the lease term of February 29, 2025 to February 28, 2026, with there being oral expression for the continuance of the lease, and the matter now being finalized with this resolution.

It is to be noted that due to sale of certain portions of the land by the Village in 2023 and 2024, the current total acreage owned by the Village is 33.27 acres, rather than the 34.9 acres listed in the original lease.

ATTACHMENTS (PLEASE LIST)

Draft Resolution

ACTION REQUESTED

- ☐ For Discussion Only
- ☒ Resolution
- ☐ Ordinance
- ☒ Motion:

MOTION: I MOVE TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-__R, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING VILLAGE PRESIDENT TO SIGN EXTENSION TO ILLINOIS CASH FARM LEASE WITH STEVEN MITCHELL TO FEBRUARY 28, 2026 FOR VILLAGE-OWNED PROPERTY IN WINNEBAGO HIGHLANDS

Staff: Rachel Windgassen, Assistant Deputy Clerk Date: 2/5/25