

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE GURNEE VILLAGE BOARD**

**GURNEE VILLAGE HALL
OCTOBER 23, 2023**

Call to Order

Mayor Hood called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Other Officials in Attendance

Patrick Muetz, Village Administrator; Austin Pollack, Assistant to the Village Administrator; Bryan Winter, Village Attorney; David Ziegler, Community Development Director; Heather Galan, Public Works Director; Brian Gosnell, Finance Director; Christine Palmieri, Director of Human Resources; Ellen Dean, Economic Development Director; Nick Leach, Village Engineer; Jodi Luka, Management Analyst; John Kavanagh, Fire Chief; Brian Smith, Police Chief.

Roll Call

PRESENT: 6- Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ross, Garner, O'Brien

ABSENT: 0-

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Hood led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**A. APPROVAL OF
CONSENT AGENDA**

It was moved by Trustee Balmes seconded by Trustee Garner to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Roll call,

AYE: 6- Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ross, Garner, O'Brien

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 0- None

Motion Carried.

**B. CONSENT
AGENDA /
OMNIBUS VOTE**

The Village Administrator read the consent agenda for an omnibus vote as follows:

1. Approval of minutes from the October 9, 2023 Village Board meeting.
2. Approval of Ord. 2023 – 72 authorizing the execution of a Recreational Lease with Commonwealth Edison Company to maintain a recreational path between Dilleys Road and Illinois Route 21 (Lease No. 100301).
3. Approval of Ord. 2023 – 73 authorizing the execution of a Recreational Lease with Commonwealth Edison Company to maintain a recreational path between Knowles Road and Hunt Club Road (Lease No. 102671).
4. Approval of Ord. 2023 – 74 authorizing the execution of a Recreational Lease with Commonwealth Edison Company to maintain a recreational path adjacent to Washington Street (Lease No. 108132).
5. Approval of setting a bid date of November 8, 2023 for 2024 fuel purchase.
6. Approval of Public Works Department recommendation to renew a mowing and landscape maintenance contract for Class A, B and C sites with Sebert Landscape for 2024 - 2026 at an annual cost not to exceed \$137,000.00 (0% rate adjustment).
7. Approval of Payroll for period ending October 6, 2023 in the amount of \$1,183,093.78.
8. Approval of Bills for the period ending October 23, 2023 in the amount of \$1,583,705.36.

It was moved by Trustee Garner, seconded by Trustee Thorstenson to approve the Consent Agenda for an omnibus vote as read.

Roll call,

AYE: 6- Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ross, Garner, O'Brien
NAY: 0- None
ABSENT: 0- None
Motion Carried.

C. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. Approval of a Proclamation designating October 23 - 31, 2023 as "Red Ribbon Week" in the Village of Gurnee.

Mayor Hood summarized the Proclamation for the record.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Ross to approve of a Proclamation designating October 23 - 31, 2023 as "Red Ribbon Week" in the Village of Gurnee.

Voice Vote: ALL AYE: Motion Carried.

Administrator Muetz reminded the Village Board there will be a Committee of the Whole meeting next Monday. The discussion topic will be the water system. Central Lake County Joint Action Water Agency Executive Director Bill Soucie and Village of Gurnee Utility Supervisor Brett Fritzler will be presenters.

D. REPORTS

None.

E. OLD BUSINESS

None.

F. NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of Ord. 2023 – 75 granting a Major Modification to the Woodside Park Planned Unit Development (PUD), more specifically 6737 Revere Court, pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance.

Administrator Muetz said American Tower owns a 150' cell tower located on Revere Court. AT&T submitted a building permit application to add 5G antennas to the tower structure. The structural report that accompanied the application revealed the tower couldn't support the weight of the new 5G antennas as they weigh more than current antennas. Plans were submitted by American Tower Company to bolster its structural integrity by installing an exoskeleton that comprises of securing four, approximately 3" diameter steel support posts, with brackets every 3 feet on center up the sides of the tower to a height of 67.5 feet. The color of the support rods, brackets and bolts are proposed to match the color of the existing tower. The PUD allows the monopole structure to remain, but structural modification of the tower is not allowed and requires a Major PUD Amendment. Muetz stated two residents spoke regarding the petition. One was the property owner in favor of it. The other was a resident who expressed concerns about damage to the path and lawn area around the path near the tower. The Planning and Zoning Board is forwarding a unanimous favorable recommendation on the petition subject to the modification of the access path to accommodate equipment/trucks/vehicles needed to complete the project and any future vehicles required to access the site for ongoing maintenance / improvements, and that any landscaping that is disturbed during the process be replaced at the petitioner's expense. Following this recommendation, American Tower objected (via a letter dated October 2, 2023) to the access drive /landscaping improvements being tied to the tower modifications. It cited Section 6409 of the Spectrum Act stating this was an eligible facility request that must be approved and cannot be conditioned on path/landscape improvements per the legislation. Attorney Winter reviewed the letter and agreed with American Tower's position. As a result, the Village Board is only considering the installation of the exoskeleton.

Trustee Garner asked what the three-inch support poles are made of.

Mr. Gong Lin, representing American Tower, said steel.

Trustee Woodside asked what comfort can be provided to the residents as it relates to landscape and access road repair.

Mr. Lin said the project should not result in any landscaping or road damage but if it does, American Tower will repair it.

It was moved by Trustee Garner, seconded by Trustee O'Brien to approve of Ord. 2023 – 75 granting a Major Modification to the Woodside Park Planned Unit Development (PUD), more specifically 6737 Revere Court, pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance.

Roll call,

AYE: 6- Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ross, Garner, O'Brien

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 0- None

Motion Carried.

2. Approval of Ord. 2023 – 76 adding one Class 1 Tobacco and Alternative Nicotine Products License by amending Section 7-8 of Chapter 7 of the Gurnee Municipal Code entitled "Tobacco and Alternative Nicotine Retailers" (Grand Convenience Store – 3701 Grand Avenue, Unit J).

Administrator Muetz said the Village has received an application for a Class 1 Tobacco license (incidental sales) in conjunction with the opening of Grand Convenience Store at 3701 E. Grand Avenue. This is the building that houses A Major Music and Pro-Nails among other businesses. The convenience store is to open on the west-end in the former Free COVID Testing space. The Police Department conducted the necessary background checks and found nothing to preclude issuing the license.

It was moved by Trustee Balmes, seconded by Trustee Garner to approve of Ord. 2023 – 76 adding one Class 1 Tobacco and Alternative Nicotine Products License by amending Section 7-8 of Chapter 7 of the Gurnee Municipal Code entitled "Tobacco and Alternative Nicotine Retailers" (Grand Convenience Store – 3701 Grand Avenue, Unit J).

Roll call,

AYE: 6- Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ross, Garner, O'Brien

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 0- None

Motion Carried.

3. Approval of renewals related to the Village's self-insured medical plan:

- Health Insurance Plan's Stop Loss Coverage a period of 12 months with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois at an estimated cost of \$570,205.00 and \$22,295.00 for aggregate coverage; and
- Administrative Services Only contract for a period of 12 months with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois at a rate of \$76.12 per employee per month and adjusted for anticipated annualized prescription rebates of \$321,282.00.

Director of Human Resources Palmieri said staff worked with Peter Wright of Wright Benefits Strategies on the health insurance renewal. She stated that this year Wright went to the market to solicit quotes for the Village to review. Three quotes were received from alternate providers. While the proposals indicated there could be some savings on the claims side, it would result in significant changes to network access for Village employees. There is also the potential for shifting costs away from the provider to the Village or employees. Once these factors were reviewed more in-depth, the potential for savings shrinks and in staff's opinion does not justify switching from Blue Cross Blue Shield. She stated staff will continue to monitor the market and strategically request quotes. Director Palmieri stated the initial stop loss renewal was reduced significantly through negotiations.

Director Palmieri then review Affordable Care Act fees, an increase in the stop loss level to \$90,000 from \$80,000 and pharmacy/drug costs. She stated staff continues to work to control medication costs while being sensitive to disruptions to service. She stated rebates will help offset other plan costs. Director Palmieri stated other third-party administrators would not offer such rebates. She then reviewed voluntary programs offered by Blue Cross Blue Shield to help reduce claim costs, emphasizing it is up to the employee whether to utilize them or not.

Director Palmieri concluded by stating staff works to balance the quality of the health insurance program with fiscal constraints.

Trustee Balmes asked if the renewal could be multi-year.

Director Palmieri and Mr. Wright stated health insurance is very timely. Therefore, a multi-year renewal may not be advantageous to the Village. Mr. Wright stated more predictable coverages such as vision and dental can be locked in for multi-years.

Trustee Thorstenson asked about the 12-month renewal timeframe given all the work that goes into the renewal.

Mr. Wright stated the industry is basically fixed on a 12-month basis as the IRS code is set on a January to December schedule.

Trustee Garner asked Mr. Wright if the Village was receiving the best plan for rate.

Mr. Wright stated considering all the factors, yes. He stated once potential savings are rigorously examined, they are contingent on directing employees to certain providers and based on averages, not the Village's workforce and its current usage patterns. He stated Blue Cross has performed very well for the employee and the Village. Mr. Wright stated moving away from Blue Cross Blue Shield could result in more disruption for employees for only a 1% to 2% cost savings. He then discussed how health insurance is very personal and if the Village were to switch providers, it needs to look at it from a wholistic perspective and the impact on the Village staff. Mr. Wright stated Gurnee has a strong relationship with Blue Cross, but still seeks outside quotes every three years or so, which helps provide a point of comparison and negotiation leverage.

It was moved by Trustee Balmes, seconded by Trustee Garner to approve of renewals related to the Village's self-insured medical plan.

Roll call,

AYE: 6- Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ross, Garner, O'Brien

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 0- None

Motion Carried.

G. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

Closing Comments

None.

Adjournment

It was moved by Trustee Balmes, seconded by Trustee Garner to adjourn the meeting.

Voice Vote: ALL AYE: Motion Carried.

Mayor Hood adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

**Andrew Harris,
Village Clerk**