

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

**GURNEE VILLAGE HALL
MAY 17, 2021**

Call to Order

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

Other Officials in Attendance

Patrick Muetz, Village Administrator; David Ziegler, Assistant Village Administrator / Community Development Director; Bryan Winter, Village Attorney; Heather Galan, Acting Public Works Director/Village Engineer; Brian Gosnell, Finance Director; Christine Palmieri, Director of Human Resources; John Kavanagh, Fire Chief; Brian Smith, Police Chief; Jack Linehan, Assistant to the Administrator

Roll Call

PRESENT: 5- O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ross
ABSENT: 1- Garner

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Hood led the Pledge of Allegiance.

A. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Thorstenson to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Roll call,

AYE: 5- O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ross
NAY: 0- None
ABSENT: 1- Garner
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 May 3, 2021 meeting.
2. Approval of request to dispose of certain Police Department documents as authorized by the State of Illinois Local Records Commission.
3. Approval of Engineering Division's recommendation to award the 2021 Concrete Sidewalk Replacement Program to Schroeder & Schroeder at a cost not to exceed \$125,000.00 (2019 Joint Bid Consortium Program Pricing).
4. Approval of request from Public Works Department to purchase 168 LED streetlight heads from the low bidder, City Electric Supply, at a cost of \$122,739.12.
5. Approval of Payroll for period ending May 7, 2021 in the amount of \$853,396.32.
6. Approval of Bills for the period ending May 17, 2021 in the amount of \$3,426,224.15.

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

Roll call,

AYE: 5- O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ross
NAY: 0- None
ABSENT: 1- Garner
Motion Carried.

C. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. Presentation of Gurnee Teacher of the Year awards:
 - Erik Sator & Len Wojciechowicz– Gurnee School District 56
 - Joy Barbknecht – Woodland School District 50
 - Robin Kubik – Warren Township High School District 12a

Dr. Colleen Pacquette, Gurnee School District 56 Superintendent, introduced and spoke briefly about Erik Sator and Len Wojciechowicz.

Dr. Lori Casey, Woodland School District 50 Associate Superintendent of Education, introduced and spoke briefly about Joy Barbknecht.

Dr. John Ahlgrim, Warren Township High School District 121 Superintendent, introduced and spoke briefly about Robin Kubik.

Mayor Hood, Don Henderson and State Representative Joyce Mason presented each teacher with a plaque in recognition of their achievements. Mr. Henderson also presented each recipient with a check from the Donald Henderson Foundation

D. REPORTS

1. Presentation by Ali O'Brien – Vice President of Community & Workforce Partnerships: College of Lake County Advanced Technology Center Update.

Ali O'Brien, Vice President of Community & Workforce Partnerships, provided the Village Board an update on the Advanced Technology Center project. Dr. O'Brien, along with Dr. Richard Ammon and John Hardaker reviewed the vision, need for such a facility, key building specifications, programming that will be offered and building layout to name a few items. The team also provided a video that provided a visual rendering of the building layout.

Mayor Hood thanked the CLC team for the update and stated the Village is very excited about this project.

2. Presentation by Finance Director Brian Gosnell: COVID-19 Financial Update #15.

Director Gosnell presented a PowerPoint related to the COVID-19 Financial Update #15 and the American Rescue Plan.

Director Gosnell noted the following in the COVID-19 Financial Update #15;

- Expected Duration
 - Restore Illinois - Phased Re-Opening
 - Currently 28 day Bridge Phase (May 14th)
 - Phase 5 Illinois Restored (June 11th) barring any significant increases in COVID-19 metrics
- Big Three Status
 - Six Flags
 - Safety Protocols and Capacity Limits
 - Gurnee Mills
 - Safety Protocols and Capacity Limits
 - Great Wolf Lodge
 - Safety Protocols and Capacity Limits
- General Fund Revenues
 - Gosnell noted thru April total General Fund revenues were \$6.8 million or 15.6% behind last year, and \$6.7 million or 29.8% behind budget. Gosnell noted these numbers are final on a budget basis, and include the \$1.4 million CARES Act funds received in October.
 - Gosnell noted the Big Four (Sales Tax, Amusement Tax, Hotel Tax and Food & Beverage Tax) finished the year \$7.3 million or 29.3% behind last year.
 - Sales Tax is finished the year at \$14.8 million, which is \$2.4 million or 14% behind last year.
 - Amusement Tax finished the year at \$744 thousand, which is \$3.0 million or 80% behind last year.
 - Hotel Tax finished the year at \$642 thousand, which is \$1.2 million or 66% behind last year.
 - Food & Beverage Tax finished the year at \$1.4 million, which is \$603 thousand or 30.1% behind last year.
- General Fund Expenditures preliminarily finished the year \$4.6 million or 10.9% behind budget, Gosnell noted some expenditures are still coming in but should not be significant to the General Fund. Gosnell noted this savings only partially offsets the loss in revenues.
- The General Fund is expected to finish the year with a \$1.1 million deficit for FY2020/2021. Gosnell noted that the deficit combined with the FY2021/2022 budgeted deficit of \$922 thousand means the Village is projected to utilize \$2.0 Million in fund balance over a two-year period as a result of the pandemic

after making significant cuts and receiving \$1.4 million in CARES Act funds.

Director Gosnell noted the following in the American Rescue Plan Act Update;

- American Rescue Plan Act -
 - Signed March 11, 2021
 - Includes \$65.1 Billion for Municipalities
 - Gurnee Estimate - \$3.75m
 - Eligible Costs through December 2024
 - Costs to respond to the public health emergency with respect to COVID-19...
 - Costs to respond to workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency...
 - Costs to make necessary investments in water, sewer and broadband infrastructure...
 - Costs for the provision of government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue of a municipality due to the COVID-19 public health emergency relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year of the municipality...
 - Distributed Through State in Two Allotments
 - 60 Days After Enactment (May 2021)
 - 12 Months after 1st Distribution (Summer 2022)
- Gosnell noted the latest guidance released from the Treasury only addressed entities receiving funds directly from the Federal Government and did not pertain to the Village, but the amounts allocated to the Village did not change. He further noted the Treasury is hoping to get funds out to States and Entitlement communities quickly, and the \$3.75 million allocated to the Village is well below the loss of revenue for the fiscal year.

Trustee Thorstenson asked about Hotel Tax and if Great Wolf Lodge is giving an uplift to the total revenue as they seem busier than other hotels.

Gosnell noted the April receipts compared to earlier months and that Great Wolf lodge was seeing activity greater than even some pre-COVID months.

E. OLD BUSINESS

None.

F. NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of Ord. 2021 – 33 granting a Special Use Permit for an Electronic Message Board Sign on property located at 325 Tri-State Parkway pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance (ALEC).

Administrator Muetz said ALEC has petitioned for a Special Use Permit to allow an electronic message board in front of its new location at the northeast corner of Washington and Tri-State Parkway. The proposed sign is an 8-foot tall 2-sided sign with a 31.2 sq. ft. electronic message board. The electronic message board component is proposed in order to display general information regarding the services they offer, as awareness of their brand/business and what they offer has always been a challenge for the credit union. ALEC is agreeable to the 10 conditions placed on the other two electronic message board signs in the Village. The request was before the Planning & Zoning Board on April 7th and received a favorable 5-1 recommendation.

Trustee Ross said she is against electric message boards. She then provided some history on how the original electronic message board came about. She stated it started with the High School and seniors that wanted to gift it to the school. It was not allowed at the time and an exception was made specific to those circumstances. It was not believed this would set the precedent for other requests that came in. She continued to state these signs are advertising/marketing signs and she does not believe it's appropriate for the driving public to see these messages. She concluded that she is worried the more the Village approves these requests, the harder it will be to say no in the future.

Trustee Balmes said she doesn't disagree with what Trustee Ross said but this is the way of the future.

Mayor Hood stated he feels the Village's restrictions provide a great deal of control that make these message boards more acceptable.

Trustee Thorstenson said the building on this property is beautiful and this sign will be a nice final addition.

Trustee Ross said it is a beautiful building and ALEC has been in business for 30 years without an electronic message board and therefore does not feel it is necessary.

It was moved by Trustee Thorstenson, seconded by Trustee Balmes to approve of Ord. 2021 – 33 granting a Special Use Permit for an Electronic Message Board Sign on property located at 325 Tri-State Parkway pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance (ALEC).

Roll call,

AYE: 4- O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside

NAY: 1- Ross

ABSENT: 1- Garner

Motion Carried.

2. Approval of Ord. 2021 – 34 vacating an alley from Belle Plaine Avenue to the Village's eastern limits – north of Greenwood Avenue and south of Highland Avenue.

Administrator Muetz said an alley is currently platted from Belle Plaine Avenue east to our limits between Greenwood and Highland Avenues. The alley has created issues for residents in this stretch who would like to perform improvements in their backyards as the rear yard setback requirement may come into play. Staff looked at multiple options to address the issue. After weighting the pros and cons of each, staff is recommending two-blocks of alley in this area be vacated at no charge to the residents. The Village has no plans to construct an alley in this location. The only other alley that staff has identified which would meet these requirements is directly south of the subject area. At the time that the lots along Clearview Drive between Belle Plaine Avenue and the Village of Gurnee boundary line to the east are developed, staff would suggest a similar alley vacation approach. Typically, vacation requests are initiated by the resident and after an appraisal, the Village charges 25% of the appraised value of the area being vacated. Based on values in this area, the entire two-blocks would generate less than \$20,000 for the Village. Since staff is initiating the vacation, it recommends this fee be waived. The alley is approximately 16 feet wide. Therefore, the property owners on either side would each gain about 8 feet of property.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Ross to approve of Ord. 2021 – 34 vacating an alley from Belle Plaine Avenue to the Village's eastern limits – north of Greenwood Avenue and south of Highland Avenue.

Roll call,

AYE: 5-, O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ross

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 1- Garner

Motion Carried.

3. Approval of Ord. 2021 – 35 approving a license and maintenance agreement for the use of Village right-of-way between the Village of Gurnee and Warren Cemetery Association.

Administrator Muetz said this is a clean-up item. The Cemetery Road right-of-way includes the main drive isle for the cemetery. The cemetery has maintained the right-of-way, including mowing and snow removal in the winter. This has gone on informally for many years. In addition, the sign for the cemetery has been located in the right-of-way for a number of years. To formalize current practices, an agreement has been drafted. The cemetery will continue to maintain the right-of-way in exchange for permission to allow the current sign to remain. The term of the agreement is for a period of

ten years and will automatically be extended for successive ten-year periods unless written notice is given in accordance with the agreement. The Village maintains all rights to use, access and occupy the right-of-way even under this agreement. If a situation arises where the existing use of the right-of-way conflicts with a utility or public infrastructure project in the future, then the Cemetery is solely responsible to relocate the sign.

Trustee O'Brien stated there are two signs in this area (one sign, one rock in the median) and asked if both should be included.

Acting Public Works Director Galan said the agreement covers everything in the right-of-way and therefore the rock would be included in the agreement.

Trustee Ross said since the rock is in the median it would be covered under the agreement.

Administrator Muetz said if the rock is in the center median, it would be maintained by the cemetery. The Village will not be maintaining any signage.

Attorney Winter said anything contained within the legal description would be covered by the agreement.

It was moved by Trustee Balmes, seconded by Trustee Woodside to approve of Ord. 2021 – 35 approving a license and maintenance agreement for the use of Village right-of-way between the Village of Gurnee and Warren Cemetery Association.

Roll call,

AYE: 5- O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ross

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 1- Garner

Motion Carried.

4. Informal review of Bridge Development's proposal for approximately 576,000 sq. ft. of industrial/warehousing and 4-acres of commercial/retail on property located south of Washington Street, west of Rt. 21, and east of the I-94 Tollway.

Bridge Development is seeking informal review of a plan for approximately 576,000 sq. ft. of industrial/warehousing and 4-acres of commercial/retail on property located south of Washington Street, west of Rt. 21, and east of the I-94 Tollway. The property consists of a total of 44-acres and is called out as a Community Character area on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan due to its size, location and proximity to key transportation access and other community assets. The Comprehensive Plan concept for this parcel reflects Commercial Core/Mixed-Use Development consisting of Commercial, Hospitality and Residential. On March 3rd the Planning & Zoning Board (PZB) conducted an informal review of the project. The PZB did not support the project due to its departure from the Comp Plan, incompatibility with other businesses in the area, traffic concerns and uniqueness of this vacant parcel. The petitioner has requested an opportunity to present the proposal to the Village Board, though if Bridge decided to move forward, it would start with requests before the PZB. PZB requests would include annexation, lot consolidation and rezoning, as well as potentially some Special Use Permits related to architectural standards.

Dan Riedel, property owner, provided a brief summary of the property stating it is 44 acres in total which is comprised of 19 different parcels, some of which are in the Village currently with the remaining located in unincorporated Lake County. He stated based on feedback from the Planning & Zoning Board (PZB) the plans have been revised. The buildings are the same size, but oriented different on the property and the commercial component has been expanded from four acres to 10 acres. He stated this project is not asking for any assistance or generating any school children. Mr. Riedel continued to say it will be a significant property tax and job generator.

Nick Siegel, partner at Bridge Development Partners, stated he is looking for feedback on the revised plan. He is hoping the outcome will be something that satisfies both sides.

Mr. Riedel discussed the size of the buildings, their orientation and the screening that will be in place on each end.

Mayor Hood stated he would now allow Trustees to ask questions and provide feedback.

Trustee O'Brien said resident comments he has seen to date have been overwhelmingly negative. He stated the proposal is not consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (Comp Plan).

Trustee O'Brien said this is one of the few large vacant parcels left. He stated while the building orientation has changed, the size remains the same and they are much larger than the small commercial building proposed at the corner. He concluded by stating based on feedback and what he is seeing this evening, resident would not want him to vote to support the proposal.

Trustee Thorstenson stated she appreciated the revisions to the building orientation; however, she believes the project adds little value to the residents and is concerned about increased truck traffic based on the number of loading docks. She stated this property site is not the correct property for additional truck traffic.

Trustee Ross asked why the proposal was before the Village Board for an informal review when the developer has already received negative feedback from Mayor Kovarik and the PZB.

Mr. Riedel mentioned the Comp Plan and its vision. He then referenced statements in the Comp Plan that he felt supports this project.

Trustee Ross asked if Bridge Development only focused on industrial developments. Mr. Siegel stated Bridge's focus is industrial and that it works with other partners for commercial and retail. Trustee Ross then asked if entertainment options that would complement Six Flags has been considered.

Mr. Riedel stated the property has been vacant for 40 years and previous proposals that have been brought forward have not materialized. He stated he believes this proposal is a good use for the property and will be a major benefit for the community. He stated waiting will result in the Village missing out on these benefits.

Trustee Woodside stated he appreciates the improvements that have been made since the PZB meeting. He stated he is concerned about its divergence from the Comp Plan, but recognizes that adjustments may be necessary. He concluded by stating change to the Comp Plan and the favorable recommendation from the PZB would be necessary in his opinion.

Mr. Riedel again referenced the Comp Plan and statements related to industrial development and the I-94 corridor. He stated he is surprised the Board is not supportive of the proposal.

Trustee Balmes stated she understands that strictly retail is not realistic, however semi traffic is a concern. She also expressed concerns about the size of the buildings and the visual impact they will have. She stated it is very difficult to not respect the concerns the residents have shared.

Mr. Riedel stated four major developers over the past year have approached him with the same conceptual plan. He stated this product is in high demand. He said this is contiguous to the Grand Tri-State park and the buildings are comparable in size. He stated the Amazon and ULine buildings in Wisconsin are five times the size of the buildings Bridge is proposing.

Mr. Siegel stated this product produces more value-added jobs. He stated while everything is speculative at this point, he sees the tenant mix similar to Grand Tri-State and there not being a large

amount of semi traffic.

Mayor Hood then opened the floor for others that would like to speak in relation to the informal review.

Trustee O'Brien asked if it was possible to say no semi traffic or have fewer buildings.

Mr. Siegel stated fewer buildings, potentially three or four with the same total square footage, would be palatable, however, no semi traffic would be a non-starter. Four buildings at 100,000 square feet each is about as small as Bridge could go.

Glenn Christensen stated the plan is a work in progress, however, the visual impact will not be as great as one would think due to the landscaping and topography. He stated in his opinion entertainment should be located at Gurnee Mills. He concluded by reviewing the tax impact for the school districts and that the Village Board should work to keep business in Illinois.

Shawn Depke stated he has known Mr. Riedel for many years, stating he has been working on this property for years. He continued to state in his opinion no one wants to build by Six Flags. He concluded by stating the Board should work with Mr. Riedel, especially since this project does not generate any kids.

Joe Passalino stated he is neutral on this proposal. He stated his experience is retail off of Grand Avenue is very difficult. He then shared his experience owing Saratoga Square. He stated waiting on something better for this property is not the answer. He said he drives by a different Bridge development daily and has not seen much traffic. He encouraged the Board to keep an open mind.

Miriam Argueta stated she is the CEO of Build to Empower which brings people together. She stated as a resident she agrees with feedback from the Trustees, however as a business owner she sees the vision for this property. She stated that virtual shifts are happening all over, so it is important to keep in mind the way the world is operating is constantly changing.

Mayor Hood stated the next steps could be reappearing before the PZB after further modifications to the proposed plan or deciding not to move forward.

Dan Robison stated in his opinion the language and maps presented in the Comp Plan don't agree with each other. He stated these are not big buildings in relation to others being built and they can be improved aesthetically with architecture and landscaping.

Mayor Hood stated feedback has been provided and he would be willing to meet with the petitioner to discuss it further.

Mr. Riedel requested clarification on the next steps.

Mayor Hood stated feedback has been provided and further discussions can take place.

Mr. Siegel said Bridge would continue to modify the plans. He then asked what the Trustees would like to see in relation to industrial building size.

Mayor Hood said he would speak further with the Board and staff and provide additional feedback.

Trustee Balmes asked what plan was presented to the PZB.

Mayor Hood stated it was the prior plan showing two large buildings.

Trustee Balmes stated significant changes have been made.

Mr. Riedel summarized the changes made since the PZB meeting.

Trustee Balmes stated three or four buildings could be more palatable. She also stated better renderings would be helpful. She

reiterated her traffic concerns in this area.

Mr. Riedel repeated that four other similar developers have approached him turning away Bridge will stigmatize the property.

Trustee O'Brien stated smaller buildings more distinguishable and attractive façade would be positive rather than large, square buildings in a visible location.

Mr. Siegel stated the buildings could be upgraded.

G. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

H. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Adjournment to Executive Session

The Village Attorney stated that tonight's Executive Session will reference:

5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (21) Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under this Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06.

5 ILCS 120/2 2 (c) (1) which states: The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body of legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body to determine its validity

It was moved by Trustee Balmes, seconded by Trustee O'Brien to adjourn the meeting into Executive Session.

Roll call,

AYE: 5- O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ross

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 1- Garner

Motion Carried.

Mayor Hood adjourned the meeting into Executive Session at 8:44 p.m.

Recall to Order

Mayor Hood recalled the meeting to order at 9:12 p.m.

PRESENT: 5- O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ross

ABSENT: 1- Garner

Closing Comments

None.

Adjournment

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

Voice Vote: ALL AYE: Motion Carried.

Mayor Hood adjourned the meeting at 9:12 p.m.

**Andrew Harris,
Village Clerk**