

VILLAGE OF OAKWOOD

Study Session Meeting Minutes – February 13, 2023

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Wright called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

CATHI FRITZ	LINDSEY LIGHT	BOB PARR	DOIT ROBERTS	ROBERT WRIGHT
Present	Present	Present	Present	Present

VILLAGE HALL UPDATE

- The payroll system and login-in for employees have all been figured out. All are running, and there are no significant issues at this time.
- Since the audit review, the office has discovered that going to modified cash will not work.
- An official Facebook page has been created for the Village Hall.
- The new computers are still on backorder and may need to be ordered through Amazon.

VILLAGE PARK PROJECTS

- The basketball court will be striped this spring.
- Updated drawings for the park restrooms have been received. B. Parr asked if cutting the bathrooms by 1/3 would save some money as the cost seems much since the park doesn't bring in any revenue. Mayor Wright stated he could see if another drawing that is 1/3 cut could be provided. We could allow dual bids and request one as primary and then an alternate.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

Larry Maynard and Randy Smith from District 76 were in attendance to address the board regarding the SRO. He stated he couldn't say enough about how much he appreciated the Oakwood Police Department and all they have done to help cover this need for the district. A proposal was received from the police department that would cover 10-15 hours per week, but the school board felt it was not in the best interest of safety for the students and staff as safety is their number one priority. This position provides the district with the resources needed to do what the state requires, such as training, educational resources, and building relationships.

The question was asked if the board voted to discontinue the position for the district. Mayor Wright stated the board had never voted to terminate the position. It's finding the right person who is willing to take on this position that has been the issue. The board is interested in having an agreement that would allow these services. Mayor Wright stated that the trustee's only reason for suggesting the part-time option was because that has been status quo for 15 months and there have been no complaints from the school or any citizens. However, the village cannot sign off on SRO paperwork and programs without a contract. The part time option would satisfy that requirement. Further, the village has provided the part-time services for free over the past 15 months and it seems fair that the village is compensated if that arrangement were to continue. The payment schedule proposed mimicked the prior agreement when there was a full-time SRO, but any frequency of payment could be arranged. The contract with the school expired in June 2022, so any terms could be negotiated. This village is interested in supporting the school in this endeavor, but the wider school district must also play a part in the costs. If a full-time officer is hired for the SRO role, the two parties would have to discuss the amount paid by the school as there have been significant changes in policing and costs since the SRO role was introduced. Although there is belief that officers are abundant and willing to be an SRO for Oakwood, there is no data to support that presented to the trustees.

C. Fritz asked whether there are alternative options, such as looking to the state or county for coverage. Maynard stated they are dealing with a staff shortage as well.

It was agreed that the board and school board are interested in coming up with an agreement. Mayor Wright asked the district to develop a list of gaps with what they currently need to get with the coverage the department has been doing. Maynard stated that part of it is spending time with students and staff and building the required relationships.

Bobby Woodard Jr. was in attendance and agreed with everything that was said. He feels there are options to hire retired police officers with the experience they are looking for to cover the district's needs.

C. Fritz stated obviously the school representatives do not want to be responsible for agreeing to a part-time option and then something happen which may appear to have been resolved or prevented had the SRO been full time. However, there are other options to supplement security without having a uniformed and armed police officer. C. Fritz asked Superintendent Maynard if the school was exploring those options because there is not certainty that the village will be able to hire an officer to meet these needs. Mr. Maynard responded that the school is looking into all options. C. Fritz stated that it seems the SRO is a multi-role job and several skills needed to be effective. That may be a difficult position to fill. She would like to see more details about the job description and the type of individual that is needed.

Bobby Woodard Jr. stated his concern is that there are students making strong threats at the junior high and high school which an SRO needs to address.

Mayor Wright asked about that and what is being done. Mr. Maynard and Chief Soderstrom stated that those issues were already being addressed by school procedure - even with the part-time services to date.

Mayor Wright asked that Mr. Maynard review the schools needs and they would arrange to have further discussions on the matter. In the interim, both will explore options regarding the SRO.

SOUTHERN TIRE MART UPDATE

The Southern Tire Mart updated building plans have been received. Next, meet the board will need to decide how much to charge for the permit. Currently, it costs \$3,750, but Mayor Wright recommends the permit at least cover the cost the village has to cover the onsite inspections by Fehr Graham.

VILLAGE PARK SIDEWALK

The sidewalk to the park is still in the process of the engineers drawing up the plans. Mayor Wright will recommend to the board to extend the sidewalk into the park for easier access rather than having to walk around parked cars.

VILLAGE SIDEWALK REPAIRS

Mayor Wright informed the board that about 2 miles of sidewalk within the village need to be replaced. D. Roberts recommended starting by looking around the school and branching out. He also would like to see not just sections being replaced but strips of sidewalks being replaced.

KELLY STREET BRIDGET

The water company has been having issues with IDOT in getting the water main run under the bridge. They are finding out it is again rules and state statutes. Boring under the creek may be the only option. Once new plans are developed, they will be presented to the board.

DIGITAL SPEED SIGNS

Ron Soderstrom reported they are seeing a decrease in speeding from the last several months. Once the digital signs are delivered, they will be installed. These signs will also provide reports with more information data that is auto-generated. IDOT rejected the request to lower the speed limit on 150 coming into town. Mayor Wright will follow up with IDOT regarding the board's concerns.

VILLAGE GROWTH PLAN

Promotion of the Illinois Institute of Rural Affairs will start with getting at least eight community members interested in being part of this process.

WATCHFIRE SIGN POLICY

Mayor Wright presented a proposed policy for the digital sign to the board that would be voted on at the next meeting.

GO GOV SYSTEM ACCESS

Mayor Wright asked if the board had access to the system. This is a good way for the board to stay current on project management issues. He will check with Julie on how to give access to the board.

EMS DEPARTMENT PLAN

Caroline Darr provided the board with an overall vision of the department as she would like to see it go full-time at some point for coverage. She feels the department is letting the community down in turning over calls to outside resources. She feels there are opportunities out there to bring in more revenue. Revenue was down 40% from last year, and all the turned-over calls would be an opportunity for additional income to be received.

C. Fritz said she feels this is a great opportunity and feels they need to look closer at the next several months and get a good analysis of what it will take to move in this direction.

106 LEE STREET PROPERTY

The purchase has been completed, and prices for removing the trailer and cleanup are being investigated.

GRANT WRITING

Mayor Wright stated Attorney Mudd's office has services for grant writing for villages. Using their paralegal costs much less as so many grants are available out there that might fit the village's needs.

4TH OF JULY COMMITTEE

At this time, Mayor Wright hoped several would volunteer for the 4th of July committee. He has had several voice their wiliness, and he hoped they would be at the meeting today. The village hall will advertise more on the new Facebook page. He is hoping there is interest so a celebration can be done.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODES

A draft of a new property maintenance code was provided to the board. It has what other villages use and defines the required parking spaces, setback lines, etc. It also combines International Building and Residential code requirements. He is asking for the board to review and provide feedback.

VILLAGE BUDGET

L. Light will meet with department heads and provide a paper form of the budget next week. She hopes this will help eliminate unused line items and overspending on specific line items. The current system doesn't allow department heads access to their current budget, and what she is developing is a way to see what is being spent each month.

SCOTT STREET WALK BRIDGE

D. Roberts has requested the board look into redoing the walk bridge on Scott Street. Mayor Wright stated he would add this to the project list for review.

Having no other items to discuss, Robert Wright motioned at 8:13 pm to go into Executive Session.

Bob Parr seconded.

	CATHI FRITZ	LINDSEY LIGHT	BOB PARR	DOIT ROBERTS	ROBERT WRIGHT
YES	X	X	X	X	X
NAYS					
ABSENT					

Motion Carried

Bob Parr motioned at 9:30 pm to adjourn.

Cathi Fritz seconded.

	CATHI FRITZ	LINDSEY LIGHT	BOB PARR	DOIT ROBERTS	ROBERT WRIGHT
YES	X	X	X	X	X
NAYS					
ABSENT					

Motion Carried

Submitted by,



Connie Young, Clerk

3/20/23