

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
TUESDAY –DECEMBER 23, 2014
VILLAGE HALL BOARD ROOM

CALL TO ORDER: Village President Hofeld called the regular meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Approximately 30 people from the public were present. One press representative was in the audience.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Village President Hofeld led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Clerk Marilyn Thomas recorded the roll call. Those present were Village President Richard Hofeld, Trustee Barbara Dawkins, Trustee Lisa Purcell, Trustee Karen Washington, Trustee Jay Heiferman and Trustee Anne Colton. Trustee Ray Robertson was absent.

INTRODUCTION OF STAFF: Village President Hofeld introduced staff members in attendance: Village Attorney Christopher Cummings; Village Manager Jim Marino; Director of Finance Dennis Bubenik; Director of Public Works John Schaefer; Fire Chief Bob Grabowski; Police Chief Larry Burnson and Assistant Village Manager Michael Marzal.

MINUTES: There were no comments or corrections to the minutes of December 9, 2014 as amended. A motion was made by Trustee Colton and seconded by Trustee Purcell to approve the minutes of December 9, 2014 as amended.

Roll Call: AYES – Trustees Dawkins, Purcell, Washington, Colton and Heiferman. NAYS – None. ABSENT – Trustee Robertson. Motion carried.

CLAIMS LIST: The Claims List of \$858,518.28 was reviewed. President Hofeld said three-quarters of the expenses were attributed to \$106,344 for sewer work; \$277,067.65 for Lake Michigan water from the City of Harvey; and \$234,222 for a new ambulance.

A motion was made by Trustee Colton and seconded by Trustee Purcell for the Board to approve the December 23, 2014 Claims List in the amount of \$858,518.28.

Roll Call: AYES – Trustees Dawkins, Purcell, Washington, Colton and Heiferman.. NAYS – None. ABSENT – Trustee Robertson. Motion carried.

PRESENTATION:

RESOLUTION R-2203 / BRIAN LONG / RETIREMENT / PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT: The Board was asked to approve a resolution honoring Brian Long as he retired from the Village of Homewood after 20 years with the Department of Public Works.

Public Works Director John Schaefer commended Mr. Long for his outstanding service to the Village, his willingness to share his wealth of knowledge with others within the department, and his dependability on the job.

A motion was made by Trustee Colton and seconded by Trustee Washington for approval of Resolution R-2203 honoring Brian Long on his retirement.

Brian Long thanked his wife for her years of support during his absences plowing snow and handling other overtime jobs. He thanked President Hofeld, the trustees, residents and business owners, as well as his co-workers, for their many years of support.

Roll Call: AYES – Trustees Dawkins, Purcell, Washington, Colton and Heiferman. NAYS – None. ABSENT – Trustee Robertson. Motion carried.

HEAR FROM THE AUDIENCE: President Hofeld invited members of the audience to address any issues not on the agenda. No comments were offered.

OMNIBUS VOTE: Village Clerk Thomas read the following items:

- A. LOBBYING SERVICES AGREEMENT / ALFRED G. RONAN, LTD.:
Authorize the Village President to execute a Lobbying Services Agreement with Alfred G. Ronan, Ltd. for a period of one year effective January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015.
- B. REVISED 183RD STREET INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT – HAZEL CREST: Authorize the Village President to enter into a revised intergovernmental agreement between the Village of Homewood and the Village of Hazel Crest for the resurfacing of 183rd Street from Sacramento Avenue to Brentwood Drive.
- C. ORDINANCE M-1949 / MAP AMENDMENT/VARIANCE – 17707 HIGHLAND: Pass an ordinance approving a Zoning Map amendment to rezone from R-2 single-family residential to R-4 multi-family residential the property located at 17707 Highland Avenue, Cook County, Illinois, and a variance to allow the construction of a 3-unit multi-family building on a lot less than 9,300 square feet in size on said property.
- D. RESOLUTION R-2204 / CLASS 6B PROPERTY TAX DESIGNATION RENEWAL / 1205 175TH STREET: Pass a resolution determining the appropriateness for renewal of Class 6B status pursuant to the Cook County Real Property Classification Ordinance as amended April 9, 2002, for certain real estate located at 1205 175th Street, Homewood, Cook County, Illinois, to be conveyed to Francis and Crnich Real Estate Partnership.

A motion was made by Trustee Colton and seconded by Trustee Purcell to approve the Omnibus Report as presented.

Roll Call: AYES – Trustees Dawkins, Purcell, Washington, Colton and Heiferman. NAYS – None. ABSENT – Trustee Robertson. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

ORDINANCE M-1948 / PUD AMENDMENT – MULTI-TENANT BUILDING / 17725-17727 HALSTED STREET: The Board was asked to approve an amendment to the Planned Unit Development to allow for construction of a new store building at 17725 Halsted Street. The developer, Shiner Group LLC, has contracted with Sleepy's as one tenant. A second tenant is still to be named.

The Board reviewed the architect's revisions for the building and agreed with the changes he made, including a cultured stone for the exterior, additional windows facing Halsted Street and an improved landscaping plan.

A motion was made by Trustee Colton and seconded by Trustee Purcell to approve the project with the changes.

Roll Call: AYES – Trustees Dawkins, Purcell, Washington, Colton and Heiferman. NAYS – None. ABSENT – Trustee Robertson. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE M-1950 / SPECIAL USE – 18065 HARWOOD AVENUE: The Board was asked to consider granting a special use permit for a salon and spa at 18065 Harwood Avenue. Jonathan Kane Salon and Spa, a five-year-old business employing 26 people, will be moving to Homewood from Flossmoor. Owner Larry Kane said he looks forward to moving to Homewood to offer hair, skin, nail and body services. His business has received national commendations, and he has excellent customer loyalty. He estimated his business will begin construction of the space on Harwood shortly after January 1, 2015.

A motion was made by Trustee Colton and seconded by Trustee Purcell to approve a special use permit for Jonathan Kane Salon and Spa at 18065 Harwood Ave.

Roll Call: AYES – Trustees Dawkins, Purcell, Washington, Colton and Heiferman. NAYS – None. ABSENT – Trustee Robertson. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

COMMUNITY SCIENCE CENTER DEVELOPMENT: Village Manager Marino asked the Board for direction on negotiating with Global Studios for a concept plan on the feasibility of development of a community science center in downtown Homewood. The study would evaluate the market for a science center and give the Board options on how to develop the center and find funding sources.

Rachael Jones, a consultant to the Village, made a presentation on community science centers and how Homewood could benefit from a science center. She said the Village has been investigating science centers since 2010 when the Village solicited the children's museum in Frankfort and the Kohl's children's museum. One model is the Helix Science Center in Los Altos, Calif. that drew 55,000 visitors a year. Ms. Jones said to keep Homewood's downtown viable, it needs to retain and recruit foot traffic. Homewood also needs to sustain its downtown to increase property values and that a vital downtown helps the community to grow.

The Village is hoping that the development of the boutique hotel and the changes to the downtown streetscape with the Martin Avenue improvements will be one way to get people to the downtown. A science center would give Homewood a wider draw. It would be accessible by Metra. It could host school classes, library and park district programs and it would be available for special programs.

A children's museum has a very specific age target, Ms. Jones said. A science center will be a draw for people of all ages. Today's focus on science education is another positive to developing a science center.

Global Studios has worked with hundreds of museums and science centers and has set up exhibits for those centers. They rotate out exhibits much quicker than the Museum of Science and Industry, encouraging repeat visits to the science center.

Manager Marino said the Village intends to purchase Ryan's Funeral Home as a site for the science center. The Village will not be operating the center and the intention is to sell the property to the operator.

President Hofeld opened the meeting to comments from audience members. Several in the audience questioned why the Village was purchasing property if it didn't have the concept plan complete. There also was concern about taking a major piece of property off the tax rolls.

Attorney Cummings said the state determines if the building comes off the tax rolls. He said the building may be part business operation with a gift shop and food service.

District 153 School Board Member Alex Bosch asked the Village Board to consider sharing the sale proceeds with other taxing districts when the Village sells the Ryan's property. He also asked the Board to find a way to keep the property on tax rolls long enough for Cook County to recognize the higher equalized assessed valuation (EAV) as a result of the CBD TIF district expiring because this will generate more tax revenue for the districts. Trustees asked Attorney Cummings to study these options.

Other residents wanted to know what would become of the property if Homewood doesn't develop a science center. They questioned the urgency in purchasing the property. Manager Marino said the Village is terminating the Central Business District

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district and intends to spend the money in the fund for improvements in the downtown area. This science center concept would be one piece in improving the downtown, and that the Ryan's property is an excellent location.

Trustee Dawkins told the audience she was excited about the prospect of developing a science center. She called Homewood the diamond of the South Suburbs, and she is willing to do this project to keep Homewood a premiere community. An investment in the downtown is an investment that will benefit the Village, the residents and the future, she said.

Trustee Purcell said the science center is something that will draw visitors to Homewood.

Trustee Washington said the concept of a science center is something that will strengthen programs in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) that are being offered in Homewood Schools and Homewood-Flossmoor High School.

Trustee Colton said the Village needed to move forward with the study. She said Homewood is succeeding because it takes "bold steps" that keep it a relevant, strong and vital community that people want to live in.

Trustee Heiferman said he agreed with the concept and was willing to support the study.

A motion was made by Trustee Colton and seconded by Trustee Dawkins to prepare a contract with Global Studios to develop a concept plan for a Homewood Community Science Center.

Roll Call: AYES – Trustees Dawkins, Purcell, Washington, Colton and Heiferman. NAYS – None. ABSENT – Trustee Robertson. Motion carried.

PURCHASE OF PROPERTY – 18022 DIXIE HIGHWAY: Manager Marino asked the Board to consider the purchase of property at 18022 Dixie Highway, commonly known as Ryan's Funeral Home, through the Central Business District Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. He said the intention is to have a suitable location for a Homewood Community Science Center. This property is ideally suited for a science center because it is centrally located in the downtown. The TIF is meant to activate development, and it is believed the science center will spur development in the downtown area.

President Hofeld said the property was appraised at \$605,000 but owner Mike Ryan has agreed to a reduced price of \$475,000. President Hofeld recognized and praised Mike Ryan for working with the Village to purchase his property at a price it could afford. By doing so, Mike Ryan is making a significant contribution to the community that should be commended.

Manager Marino said the Village also will consider the possibility of vacating alleys behind Ryan-Tews Funeral Home at 18230 Dixie Highway. Any recommendation to close the alley will come before the Village Board for final approval.

Attorney Cummings provided the Board with this assessment: The parties agree that if the Board of Trustees vacates all or portions of the alleys as requested by the Seller (Ryan's) and the vacation ordinance requires the abutting property owner to pay fair market value for the vacated alley, the difference between the appraised value for 18022 Dixie Highway and the purchase price (\$130,000) shall be considered compensation to the Village if the alley(s) are vacated as requested by the Seller.

Audience members told Trustees they would be making a mistake by purchasing the property on speculation that a science center will be created; and paying commercial property rates for something that will be used as a non-profit site was wrong. They felt that District 153 was being shortchanged. The TIF money should be distributed not spent in the last hours of the TIF. One woman said people care about the schools; that's why senior citizens voted for the District 153 bond issue a few years ago. One person questioned the environmental safety of putting a science center next to a gas station.

Mayor Hofeld said this effort should not be considered a move against the schools. The Village is working in tandem with all the taxing bodies of Homewood. Keeping Homewood a viable and healthy community with great schools, parks and library are all things that new residents look for.

Trustee Heiferman told the audience it would be shortsighted not to take advantage of the Ryan purchase, and Trustee Dawkins said the Village having control of the property will give the Trustees a say of what will happen to the property—as a science center or for another use.

Trustee Colton said although there are those who criticize the TIF, the Village has distributed more than \$45 million to the taxing bodies in Homewood over the 23 year life of the TIF while making improvements to the downtown, and the EAV of the downtown properties has increased tremendously as a result of the TIF.

A motion was made by Trustee Colton and seconded by Trustee Dawkins to amend the Central Business District TIF budget to include a line item for the purchase of land.

Roll Call: AYES – Trustees Dawkins, Purcell, Washington, Colton and Heiferman. NAYS – None. ABSENT – Trustee Robertson. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Trustee Colton and seconded by Trustee Purcell to give authority to Manager Marino to enter into a contract for the purchase of property at 18022 Dixie Highway for \$475,000 plus customary closing costs with funds from the Central Business District TIF and for Manager Marino and Attorney Cummings to execute documents for the purchase of the property.

Roll Call: AYES – Trustees Dawkins, Purcell, Washington, Colton and Heiferman. NAYS – None. ABSENT – Trustee Robertson. Motion carried.

MANAGER’S REPORT: None

GENERAL BOARD DISCUSSION: Trustee Dawkins invited the community to the New Year’s Eve Day Celebration from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. December 31 at the Auditorium.

Trustee Heiferman commended staff for the work they did on drawing Pop-Up Shops to downtown Homewood. He said the stores made a difference in the business district. He also will be conducting “meet and greet sessions” with community members from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. on the first Monday of every month at Starbuck’s at 18051 Harwood Avenue. The first session will be January 5.

A motion was made by Trustee Colton and seconded by Trustee Purcell to move to Executive Session to discuss: the Purchase or Lease of Real Property.

Roll Call: AYES – Trustees Dawkins, Purcell, Washington, Colton and Heiferman. NAYS – None. ABSENT – Trustee Robertson. Motion carried.

The Board adjourned to Executive Session at 9:10 p.m.

The Board returned from Executive Session at 9:20 p.m.

The Board adjourned the regular meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Thomas
Village Clerk