

MEETING MINUTES



Village of Homewood
Community Relations Commission
Minutes from September 14, 2020

Village Board Room
2020 Chestnut
Homewood, IL 60430

CALL TO ORDER:

Meeting called to order at 7:09 PM, by Chairman Phil Kosanovich

ROLL CALL: The meeting was held via Zoom due to shelter in place executive order. Members present were Phil Kosanovich, Andre Thames, Shannon Olison, Nancy Spaniak, Robert Pascarella, Troy O'Quin, Tom Hamilton, Heather O'Malley, Keith Harris, and Gianni Sansone.

In attendance from the Village Board, Trustee Lauren Roman. Village Staff Liaisons in attendance, Jennifer Quirke and Allisa Opyd.

Not in Attendance: Ardell Roundtree

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was put forth by Spaniak to approve the June 1, 2020 minutes and O'Quin second the motion.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Community Relations Committee Review

Chairperson Kosanovich asked for all members participating in the Zoom meeting to give an update on themselves and their families.

B. Village Hall Updates

Quirke reviewed with the committee Village Hall and community updates.

Amtrak has started the renovations for the ADA upgrades to the Amtrak site on Park Ave. \$75 million dollars have been allocated to upgrade all of the Amtrak stations, with \$25 million allocated to the Village of Homewood station. This is phase 1 for the Amtrak/Metra renovation of the stations in Homewood. To kick-off to the renovations, there will be a groundbreaking ceremony in Homewood, on September 28, at 10AM.

The Fire Department will host a virtual Open House with hands on experience for families to do together. Look for information posted on the Village website.

C. Review Farmers Market and July 3 Drive-in movie

The farmers market is still doing well and has increased attendance each week. Releasing to the public the safety measures implemented increased the confidence for people to shop the market. The market manager and the Village are researching if it is possible to have the indoor market.

July 3rd Drive-in movie was a great success with 89 cars full of moviegoers. The Villages of Homewood, Flossmoor and the HF Park District are looking at more opportunities to work together on events, utilizing all safety measures.

D. Halloween in Homewood

The Village is waiting for information from Governor Pritzker's office to determine if it is safe to allow trick or treating on Halloween. If the state of Illinois is not allowed to have trick or treating, the Village will still have some Halloween fun. Residents can participate in "Haunted Homewood" Home Decorating Contest. The contest application period is October 1-October 26, judging October 29, 6:00PM to 8:30PM, and winners announced October 30.

There are three categories for the house-decorating contest:

- Scariest: Entries judged on overall sense of fright.
- Special Effects: Entries judged on mechanical special effects.
- Child friendly: Entries judged on cheery themed decorations, suitable for all ages.

Winners announced on October 30 and will receive a \$25 Aurelio's gift card and a sign in their yard.

The Homewood Business Association (HBA) is hosting their 2nd Annual Witches Night Out (WNO), on Thursday October 22, 5pm-9pm. Participants will receive a WNO shopping bag on Martin Ave Square to start their shopping experience. In the bag, they will receive information for participating restaurants and bars with WNO specials. Shoppers are encouraged to dress up in witches costumes and participate in the "Best Witches" costume contest; winner will receive a gift basket from the HBA.

E. Holidays in Homewood

Due to the pandemic, Homewood will not be hosting Holiday Lights or Miracle on Martin. However, the Homewood Business Association (HBA) will still have holiday shopping experiences to entice consumers to shop independent businesses in Homewood. The HBA kicks-off the holiday shopping season on November 4, with their Holiday Window Reveal. Businesses will have removed their autumn window displays and will reveal their holiday, festive window themes.

The HBA will celebrate Small Business Saturday on November 28 and will continue through November Sunday 29, extending another day of holiday discount shopping. The Village will partner with the Cancer Support Center once again this year with Christmas tree sales. The trees will be sold on November 28, Small Business Saturday. The Village is exploring other opportunities to celebrate the holiday season. The committee discussed having a holiday scavenger hunt or holiday bingo.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The group discussed ways to welcome new residents to Homewood. One idea was to host a virtual meet and greet with the Mayor and Village staff. Post pandemic would be to hold a monthly coffee with the Mayor; however, does this take away from Mayor Hofeld's "Saturdays with the Mayor", from 9am to noon?

The Committee also discussed ways to engage the community, possibly with videos. Have residents make a 30 second video "Reflections of 2020", residents discussing how they made it through 2020. The videos would live on the website and social media. The Village did try a video concept; however, had very few participants. If we move forward with the video, Andre will be able to assist.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, October 5, at 7:00PM

ADJOURNMENT: O'Malley put forth a motion to adjourn the meeting and O'Quin second the motion.

Respectfully submitted,
Allisa Opyd