

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
OF
VILLAGE BOARD

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
COUNTY OF HENRY)
VILLAGE OF ORION)

The regular meeting of the President and Board of Trustees was held at 7:30 p.m., November 19, 2012, at the Village Hall, 1202 4th Street, Orion, Henry, Illinois. The following members were present: Cooper, Peterson, O'Leary, Newman, and Drucker. Absent: Lawson.

President Cooper called the meeting to order and led the board in the Pledge of Allegiance. He said Trustee Lawson was absent due to job-related issues.

It was moved by Drucker, seconded by Peterson to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held November 5, 2012. Ayes: Peterson, O'Leary, Newman, and Drucker. Noes: None. Absent: Lawson.

It was moved by Drucker, seconded by Peterson to approve the bills for the month: General Fund-\$58,363.97, Recycle Collections-\$1,880.48, Water O&M-\$16,238.70, Water Cap. Impr.-\$34,906.96, Sewer O&M-\$34,427.64, Sewer Depr.-\$8,098.09, Sewer Cap. Impr.-\$34,114.50, C.R. Hanna Trust-\$1,000.00, and Fines-\$4.99. Ayes: Peterson, O'Leary, Newman, and Drucker. Noes: None. Absent: Lawson.

Mr. Tom Engelmann, auditor, gave a brief review of the village's Fiscal Year 2012 annual audit. He reminded the board to be diligent about oversight in financial transactions. Mr. Engelmann said the city of Dixon, Illinois, suffered tens of millions in lost revenue due to theft by a former employee who transferred funds from a city bank account to one or more of her own personal bank accounts. He said he spot checks transfers as a part of his audit for the village to make sure money removed from one village account is received by another village account. Mr. Engelmann suggested the Finance Committee, at least one month annually, compare bills approved for payment against cancelled checks. President Cooper thanked Mr. Engelmann for his advice.

Mr. Ron Thompson thanked all who helped cut down, erect, and decorate the Christmas tree in the Central Park band shell. He also thanked Mr. & Mrs. Russ Woodley for donating the tree. President Cooper expressed his appreciation to Mr. Thompson for overseeing the tree project every Christmas.

Trustee Newman said the police computer was receiving the security camera feed in addition to the village clerk's computer. At this time the images will not be fed to the squad computers. Trustee Newman said the system can be expanded at any time.

Trustee Drucker said the proposed tax levy for 2012 will be the same as 2011, or \$193,155. He said the Finance Committee wanted to avoid an increase, if possible, due to an upcoming increase in sewer user fees. The tax levy hearing will be held December 17th.

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The minutes of November 19, 2012 continued:

Two options for a sewer rate increase were presented to the board. The choice was between a flat monthly fee of \$4.98 and a consumption-based fee of \$1.54 per thousand gallons. The increase will repay a \$400,000 loan for the sewer relief main project. Trustee Drucker advocated the flat rate. Small users would see a higher percentage increase than large users; however, the revenue would be more stable than consumption-based revenue. Trustee Drucker pointed out that users' conservation methods have decreased revenue in the past, forcing the village to utilize TIF revenue to subsidize sewer revenue intended to repay an existing loan. He also said the village's existing computer program is at its limit for consumption-based fees. Adding another such fee would require an immediate software upgrade. Trustee Drucker felt the school district might think twice about its decision to forgo payment for its relief main easement if the village chose a consumption-based rate, which would cost the district much more than a flat rate. Trustees Newman and O'Leary favored the consumption-based rate, since a flat rate would impact the elderly. Trustee Newman said the consumption rate would give users an option to reduce the impact through conservation methods. Trustee O'Leary said it would be difficult to tell small users they would have to pay the same as large users. Trustee Drucker warned that conservation methods would have a detrimental effect on water revenue as well as sewer. President Cooper said the relief main project wasn't being done as a result of higher usage. It was because of deficiencies that had existed in the system for some time. President Cooper also said Trustee Lawson had previously expressed an opinion that he favored the flat rate. It was moved by Drucker, seconded by Peterson to adopt a flat rate of \$4.98 per user per month based on a proposed \$400,000 loan for the sewer relief main project. Prior to the vote, Trustee Drucker reminded the board the rate could be reduced if the village obtained grant funds. The motion was called for a vote. Ayes: Peterson and Drucker. Noes: O'Leary and Newman. Absent: Lawson. President Cooper broke the tie in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Trustee Newman said the Henry County Sheriff's Dept. union contract was approved and increases in deputy pay will affect the village. Deputies will see a 3% wage increase December 1, 2012 and a 2% increase December 1, 2013. Other changes in scheduling, holiday pay, and time off will also affect the village. Though Trustee Newman said there was potential for a big financial impact, he wanted to thoroughly review the costs and options before making a recommendation to the board. He was confident the village still had options to control costs, though it could come at the expense of reduced coverage. The board briefly discussed a change made by the department to require 9-hour shifts, which created unnecessary overlapping coverage in the village.

Trustee Newman said he asked deputies to police drivers failing to stop at stop signs.

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The minutes of November 19, 2012 continued:

Concrete pads were installed in Central Park by Trustee Peterson and Park Supt. Arnie Sandberg. A concrete memorial bench will soon be placed on the pads. The bench was delivered to the village last week.

President Cooper and Trustee Peterson learned at a meeting that ash trees will be devastated by the emerald ash borer. Love Park has more than 30 ash trees. Others are growing in Central Park, at Village Hall, and on street rights-of-way. It was determined treatment to prevent pest damage would be too expensive as it would need to be continued for the life of the tree. The recommended plan involved planting new trees of a different species near existing ash trees and removing the ashes as they start to fail. The village will need to identify new, hardy species for replanting. Trustee Peterson discovered maple and oak trees have some vulnerability. Funds will be allocated in future budgets for the removal and replacement of trees.

Trustee O'Leary reported good progress on the sewer relief main. Contractors were nearing 7th Street and remained optimistic the job could be completed this year, weather permitting. In other sewer business, Trustee O'Leary said a building contractor would be replacing the roof on the sand filter building along with addressing some other deficiencies.

It was noted that revenue from Millennium Waste was on the increase. To date, the village has billed the company for approximately \$5,700. The revenue is expected to be used to help pay down the sewer relief main loan. Orion Sanitary District funds may also be available to pay down the loan.

A blockage was found in a main between 7th and 8th Streets in the 1400 block on Saturday, November 10th. Tree roots caused the blockage. Though the main was opened enough to allow for flow, it will need to be thoroughly cleaned. Trustee O'Leary said the main will be televised to assess its condition.

President Cooper said a tube, 60' in length, will be installed under 14th Avenue near the sewer relief main project. The existing tube had deteriorated. The new one will be installed by the contractors hired to do the sewer work.

Trustee Drucker said included in the bills approved for payment was a final payment to Putnam County Painting for work done on the east tower. He also said flushing of mains was half done and might need to be halted until Christmas decorations have been erected. President Cooper confirmed that he had asked employees to erect the decorations by Thanksgiving.

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President Cooper said the village would be looking at increases in building permit fees. Fees have not been increased for some time and are much lower than other communities. A sample of fees has been obtained from Cambridge, which mirrors the county's rate structure.

President Cooper said information will be in the next edition of The Nosy Neighbor regarding door-to-door solicitors. It has been noted that a certain contracting company has been doing work in Orion at exorbitant prices and using high pressure sales tactics. President Cooper said he intends to talk to the company about its tactics, and he asked the board to consider adoption of an ordinance to regulate solicitors by doing background checks and requiring they pay a fee to solicit. The ordinance could be structured to exclude nonprofit organizations such as Girl Scouts, church and school groups, etc.

President Cooper said a village holiday party for the board and employees would be held Dec. 11th or 12th at The Factory Restaurant.

The board agreed by general consensus to grant Christmas bonuses as follows: \$1,250 for full-time employees; \$500 for the deputy clerk; \$100 for each inspector; \$50 MSO gift certificates for each full-time police officer; \$20 MSO gift certificates for each part-time police officer; and \$50 Factory gift certificates for each board member and the village attorney.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was moved by Drucker, seconded by Peterson to adjourn. Ayes: Peterson, O'Leary, Newman, and Drucker. Noes: None. Absent: Lawson.

Lori A. Sampson
Village Clerk

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