

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 on January 3, 2022, at Village Hall, 1202 4<sup>th</sup> St., in the Village of Orion, County of Henry, State of Illinois. President Cooper called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the board in the Pledge of Allegiance. Attendance at the meeting was as follows:

Present: Jim Cooper, Mel Drucker, Mike Dunlap, Jim Hickerson, and Neal Nelson

Absent: Bob Mitton and Steve Newman.

Mr. Nelson moved to approve payment of the following bills due at the beginning of the month: General-\$3,750.28; Water O&M-\$275.55; and Sewer O&M-\$1,753.13. Mr. Drucker seconded the motion and the board voted without discussion as follows:

Ayes: Drucker, Dunlap, Hickerson, Nelson

Noes: None

Absent: Mitton and Nelson.

The motion passed.

**I. Discussion from the floor**

a. Orion American Legion Post 225

Kevin Johnson, Commander of the Orion American Legion Post 225, asks that the board amend portions of the municipal code governing the issuance of liquor licenses. Mr. Johnson was not able to attend the meeting, so Mr. Cooper raised the issue for discussion.

Mr. Johnson would like to hold about fundraising events for the American Legion throughout the year. They would be located in the basement of Post 225 at 409 11<sup>th</sup> Ave and would include the sale of alcoholic beverages. In order for the village to issue Class B liquor licenses<sup>1</sup> for these

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter XIII, Section 6.2: Class B license shall entitle the licensee to make only retail consumption sales of alcoholic liquor at any banquet, picnic, bazaar, fair, carnival, or similar public or private assembly where food or drink are sold...Such Class B licenses shall be issued only to clubs, associations, societies, fraternal or benevolent organizations which are organized not for pecuniary projects.

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events, Sections 6.2-1 and 16.0 of Chapter XIII of the municipal code may need to be amended. Section 6.2-1 limits the issuance of Class B licenses to two (2) per year per applicant.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Johnson would like to hold about six events per year. Section 16 mandates that “[n]o license shall be issued for the sale at retail of any alcoholic liquor within 100 feet of any church.” Post 225 is located directly across from and within 100 feet of the First Baptist Church.

Mr. Cooper expressed support for Mr. Johnson’s request, especially because the village has not strictly enforced the liquor license code. In particular, multiple Class B licenses have been issued for Main Street Orion events located within 100 feet of a church. Class B licenses are also regularly issued for fundraising events for and actually held within local churches.

Chris Lundburg suggested that Mr. Cooper, as liquor commissioner, grant variances for the American Legion instead of amending the code.

Mr. Cooper continued this issue for further discussion.

b. Orion Area Food Pantry

Steve Wright, director of the Orion Area Food Pantry (OAFP), wished to be heard on the OAFP’s relationship with the village in light of the new village hall project. He emphasized that the OAFP would like to remain inside the village hall and is willing to contribute money to the installation of a food pantry if and when village hall moves. The OAFP is self-funded, but currently does not pay rent or utilities to the village. Mr. Wright explained that their current revenue sources include grants from the Wyman R. Coulter Trust and emergency funding from state and local governments. However, their primary revenue source is community donations; they also receive regular food donations from individuals and food drives. Mr. Wright is constantly surprised by the overwhelming generosity of the Orion community.

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<sup>2</sup> Section 6.2-1: “Such Class B license shall permit such sale of alcoholic liquor for a period of not more than six (6) consecutive days and not more than one Class B license shall be granted to any such club, association, society, fraternal or benevolent organization in any period of 30 days not more than two times per calendar year.”

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Mr. Cooper expressed support for the OAFP. He emphasized that, unlike Main Street Orion, it is totally volunteer operated.

**IV. Committees**

a. Streets

Mr. Nelson reported that the village employees did a good job clearing up the recent snow. In light of some complaints made by residents, Mr. Nelson clarified that plowing priorities are the main avenues, truck routes, and schools. Once those areas are clear, the village moves on to residential streets. Mr. Cooper also thanked the employees for their good work.

Mr. Nelson and Neil Dahl, Street Superintendent, reported that there is an issue with the backhoe. Mr. Dahl is in the process of purchasing the replacement part necessary for the repair.

Mr. Hickerson asked whether residents are required to shovel their sidewalks. He has received complaints about residents not shoveling their sidewalks, especially those near schools. He suggested that the village start issuing citations. Mr. Cooper believes there is an ordinance to this effect, but it is not strictly enforced. There is a concern that seniors may injure themselves.

b. Sewer

Mr. Hickerson had nothing to report.

c. Water

Mr. Drucker had nothing to report.

d. Recreation

Mr. Dunlap had nothing to report.

e. Finance

Mr. Newman was absent. Nothing to report.

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f. Police

Mr. Newman was absent. Nothing to report.

g. Buildings & Grounds

Agenda Item VI(g)(i)(1) reserved for executive session.

h. Human Resources

Mr. Drucker stated he had nothing currently to report, but that there may be some future developments.

**V. Executive Session**

Mr. Drucker moved to enter executive session for a question-and-answer session with Ricky Newcomb, a planner with Bi-State. Mr. Newcomb is helping the village prepare an application for the Rebuild Downtown and Main Streets Capital Grant program. The board also discussed the legal status of the on-going animal control case with John Ames. Mr. Hickerson seconded the motion and the board voted without discussion as follows:

Ayes: Drucker, Dunlap, Hickerson, Nelson

Noes: None

Absent: Mitton and Newman.

The motion passed and the board went into executive session at 7:26 p.m.

**-BEGIN EXECUTIVE SESSION-**

**-END EXECUTIVE SESSION-**

After the board re-entered regular session Mr. Dunlap moved to approve Resolution No. 2122-06—Resolution of Support. The resolution authorizes the village to submit an application for a Rebuild Downtown and Main Streets Capital Grant application. The application will request a

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grant for the purchase and renovation of the Peterson Building for use as a new village hall/community center. Mr. Hickerson seconded the motion and Mr. Cooper invited discussion.

Mr. Drucker questioned how the board can submit an application for funds to purchase and renovate the Peterson Building before it has voted to purchase and move village hall to the Peterson Building. Mr. Dunlap, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Hickerson, and Mr. Cooper agreed that the village is just submitting an application for a grant. The village is not required to accept any funds awarded nor is the board voting to purchase the Peterson Building. Rather, a grant award would be a relevant factor in a future vote to do so. Mr. Cooper stated it would be a mistake to turn down the opportunity to submit an application; the board needs to think about the future of the community. Mr. Nelson stated that renovation of the Peterson Building will hopefully encourage additional development in the commercial district Mr. Hickerson stated that the only real downside to submitting the application is the risk of angering the DCEO if the village turns down an award.

There being no further discussion, the board voted as follows:

Ayes: Dunlap, Hickerson, Nelson

Noes: Drucker

Absent: Mitton and Newman.

The motion passed.

Mr. Hickerson noted that the board has not resolved the outstanding water meter issue raised by Paul and Nancy Hancock, and asked that it be put on the agenda for a vote at the next regular meeting.

There being no further business to come before board, Mr. Nelson moved to adjourn. Mr. Drucker seconded the motion, and the board voted as follows:

Ayes: Drucker, Dunlap, Hickerson, Nelson

Noes: None

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Absent:           Mitton and Newman.

The meeting was duly adjourned.

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Erin Lange  
Village Clerk