

Village of Elm Grove Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Board of Trustee Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 PM.

Roll Call:

PRESIDENT KOLESKI
TRUSTEE SHEPHERD
TRUSTEE STUCKERT – via zoom
TRUSTEE SCHINDLER
TRUSTEE SAYAS
TRUSTEE CASTILE
TRUSTEE HILLMANN

TOM HARRIGAN, VILLAGE MANAGER
HECTOR DE LA MORA, VILLAGE ATTORNEY
KATHERINE GEHL, ASST. VILLAGE MANAGER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR
JASON HENNEN, POLICE CHIEF
IAQAM HANS, IT DIRECTOR
LOGAN KEIN, RECREATION MANAGER

1.) Update on Village Personnel

Village Manager Harrigan introduced Mr. Logan Kein who recently started as the Village’s Recreation Manager. Mr. Kein was present to introduce himself to the Board. Mr. Kein noted that he is a University of Stevens Point graduate with a degree in Natural Resources. He worked for the Dane County Sheriff’s Office before most recently working in Logistics for Target Corporation.

Village Manager introduced Mr. Iaqam Hans who has worked as the Village’s new IT Director for about one (1) month. Mr. Hans is currently working on many project for the Village including computer upgrades, dispatch upgrades, and implementation of a new phone system. Mr. Hans was present to introduce himself to the Board and explained that he has degree in Information Technology and prior to coming to the Village he worked at help desk to support the POS system for Culver’s.

2.) Discussion on Speed Enforcement within the Village

President Koleski introduced the item. President Koleski explained that many of the Trustees have been approached about speed enforcement in the Village and he wanted this discussion so that a consistent message can be given to residents.

Chief Hennen was present at the meeting. He noted that the department is familiar with the high frequency locations where speeding is an issue: Watertown Plank Road, Sunnyslope Road, Westover Road and Highland Drive. Chief Hennen explained that it is important to remember that traffic in the Village has been impacted by construction over the last six (6) months. The department has utilized data collection devices to capture vehicle counts and speed and most data collection shows that motorists are traveling in the low 30s. Chief Hennen believes a lot of complaints that they see are based on perception which is not always accurate. Ideally moving forward the goal would be to have someone specifically designated to traffic enforcement.

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Trustee Castile asked about the common perception that there is an 8mph tolerance in the Village. Chief Hennen said anything over the posted speed limit is considered speeding; however, officers are given discretion on a situational basis but statistically most tickets probably come in at 13/14+mph. Chief Hennen also referenced comments that have been made about the speed signs going dark at certain speeds and that this is done to disincentive people playing games with the speed counters.

President Koleski said a common question they hear is what officer discretion means. Chief Hennen said discretion is given for the time of day, location, and situation. Tickets are given to seek further compliance and promote safety and sometimes the situation can be handled a different way than a ticket being given.

Trustee Shepherd asked if the Trustees should be the front line responding to questions or if they should be directed to the department. Chief Hennen said he is happy to take any calls but believes it is okay for Trustees to have dialogue with the residents.

Attorney de la Mora said citizens often think in absolute terms and asked if a list of items where the officer has discretion can be created and shared with the Trustees. Chief Hennen said that this could be done and could be useful as talking points for the Trustees when speaking with residents.

Trustee Castile said the main goal should be to address speed and safety and data and extra patrol should be utilized.

Trustee Sayas noted that she does not believe there is a speeding problem in the Village and has seen people using the speed signs appropriately. She explained it is important to remember that there are a number of the same people who are complaining frequently. Trustee Sayas has not received calls with people saying there is a speeding issue. There were two (2) people in attendance at last Public Safety Committee meeting for speed by Tonawanda.

President Koleski would like to see dialogue that anything over 25mph is speeding but that the officers maintain discretion. He would like to look at areas over a longer period of time to get better information.

Chief Hennen said there is a page on the Village's website for people to request a speed trailer. These requests go directly to police department staff.

3.) Watertown Plank Road Traffic Detour

a. Potential stop signs at various intersections on Elmhurst Parkway

President Koleski introduced the item noting that Trustee Shepherd had asked to have a discussion after being made aware of people driving the wrong way on Elmhurst Parkway and instances where accidents almost occurred. Trustee Koleski saw a "Do Not Enter" sign placed on Elmhurst Parkway but would like to see signage added on Elmhurst Parkway at the intersection of Legion Drive.

Trustee Shepherd explained that a safety issue was not apparent on Elmhurst Parkway prior to the detour. There are a lot of non-residents coming through the area and he believes yield or stop signs on Elmhurst Parkway cross streets for northbound and southbound traffic would be helpful.

Chief Hennen said it takes about two (2) weeks for a detour to settle. He has reviewed adding stop or yield signs at the cross streets on Elmhurst Parkway but does not believe it is a safe time to do it. Residents

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understand the current traffic pattern and if they are not accustomed to new signs they may be missed where non-residents noticing the signs would be expecting traffic on the cross streets to yield or stop. He also noted that this evaluation usually goes through the Public Safety Committee.

President Koleski, Trustee Stuckert, and Trustee Castile have noted issues with the detour seems to be with non-residents. It seems the current detour is not effective.

Trustee Hillmann asked if another sign should be added along 124th Street to direct people further to Elmhurst Parkway as it seems that people are getting confused currently and are not going far enough. He believes we should do something on cross streets on Elmhurst Parkway and that yield signs would be ideal.

Trustee Schindler noted that he believes the intersection of Elmhurst Parkway and Notre Dame Boulevard and Fairhaven Boulevard are the problem areas.

Trustee Sayas explained that the data does not show historic issues on Elmhurst Parkway. However, she does believe it is dark on Elmhurst Parkway and some sort of lights or flashers could be helpful. Temporary yield and stop signs may be good because of the construction but does not believe long-term is justified.

Chief Hennen said if yield or stop signs are added the area could also be flagged to make the new signage noticeable. Currently, whoever is in the intersection first should be the one yielding, legally.

Village Manager Harrigan clarified where these signs are being considered. It was noted at the intersection of Elmhurst Parkway and Notre Dame Boulevard, Blue Ridge Drive, Fairhaven Boulevard, and Woodside Lane on both sides of Elmhurst Parkway for traffic traveling northbound and southbound.

The Village will notify of the change with flagging and on social media channels.

Attorney de la Mora explained that Staff can put out signs as an emergency order but this should be added to next Board meeting for formal action which will allow for enforcement.

4.) Discussion on Pedestrian Pathways and Cost Estimate Updates

a. Ad Hoc Pedestrian Pathway Committee rankings – September 25, 2023

Trustee Stuckert introduced the item and explained that the Ad Hoc Committee's priority in 2024 is the pathway on Highland Drive from North Avenue to Gebhardt Road. The Committee would like to go further on Highland Drive but cost estimates are restricting. The next priority, earmarked for 2025, is a pathway on Juneau Boulevard from Village Park to Crescent Drive and Gremoor Drive from Legion Drive to at least Arrowhead Court, further if budget allows.

b. Updated cost estimate: Highland Drive – North Avenue to Gebhardt Road

Trustee Schindler noted that priorities have shifted a little bit but Highland Drive and the area by schools are highest. He explained that the Public Works/Utilities Committee confirmed/recommended that the next pathway should be Highland Drive. The Committee has also reviewed road costs and it is expected that we will not be able to do everything we want to do.

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President Koleski and Trustee Stuckert reiterated that pathways on the main roads in the Village are priority and the Village is committed to a pathway per year for the next three (3) years.

5.) Update on Underwood Creek Daylighting Project

Village Manager Harrigan explained the steps that need to be taken for this project to begin. The Village will be having a call with the engineer who designed this project initially. CAD files need to be provided to the property owners of the parking lot to decide together how parking will be configured.

Negotiations with CP Rail will have to take place and could take a long time. The CP Rail will not identify encumbrances. Trustee Shepherd noted that a third party surveyor and title company should come in and do that.

Trustee Stuckert asked if we will we require green space in the parking lot. Village Manager Harrigan explained that the only requirement by Code is impervious surface requirements. President Koleski said this could be encouraged through discussions with the property owners.

Village Manager Harrigan explained a new wetland delineation must be done as the current has expired but not much should change. Final permitting cannot be submitted for review until easements have been secured and are at 90% completion.

Village Manager Harrigan explained that education materials for the referendum will begin to be rolled out in November. There is the potential for flyers to be mailed and for presentations to be given. Referendum will have to be sent to the Waukesha County Clerk's Office by Tuesday, January 23, 2024 to be included on the April ballot. If the referendum is approved it is expected the work will begin August of 2024.

President Koleski believes that sharing the renderings will be very important for people to see what it will actually look like.

Village Manager Harrigan noted that we own the former One Hour Martinizing property and a placard could be placed. The idea has also been presented to mark the area in the parking lot. We could do an open house to present the proposal.

Trustee Sayas believes a big concern from the public is the traffic and believes marking the area could help visualize what it will be like.

President Koleski requested that language for the referendum be finalized by the end of the year and placed on the December Board agenda.

Village Manager Harrigan said the "next steps" list could be updated to include deadlines and an information-sharing strategy can be created for the Board to review.

6.) Caroline Heights Construction Update

Village Manager Harrigan said these updates are shared with the Village from Catalyst Construction weekly and are uploaded to the Caroline Heights Construction Update page on the Village's website.

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Attorney de la Mora noted the website should explain that Catalyst Construction is the general contractor for the project.

7.) Review and discussion of proposal from Ruekert & Mielke for grant assistance services

Village Manager Harrigan introduced the item and said it stems from conversations at the last Committee of the Whole meeting. He does not know how many communities Ruekert & Mielke does this service for but it appears that they can tailor their assistance to the specific community. The service would have Ruekert & Mielke provide direct updates to the Village about new grants and changes in programs and could provide assistance with actual submittals at an additional increased cost. He believes there could be a benefit to it.

Trustee Shepherd asked if Ruekert & Mielke are aware of the Village's intention to create a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. Village Manager said he believes they are. He is also aware of residents who have offered to help with grant applications.

President Koleski explained that he sees the value-add in this is for Ruekert & Mielke to evaluate the chance of success on grants so we are not wasting staff time. He thinks we could try it for year and see if it is valuable.

Trustee Sayas asked if there are references or previous partners that we could contact to see if they believe these services were helpful.

Village Manger Harrigan thinks this service could be worthwhile to try but thinks it is a good idea to check references first before committing. Staff can do this and report back to the Board.

President Koleski also noted it is important to see if there are funds in the budget to support this.

8.) Update on Municipal Water Extension to Emerald Woods Condominiums, 13050-13070 Bluemound Road

Village Manager Harrigan introduced the item and noted that Emerald Woods has 99 condominium units. There are two (2) wells that service the condos but one (1) has failed. As a result, Emerald Woods looked to get water from Brookfield. Because municipal water will be provided by the City of Brookfield to Emerald Woods, the City of Brookfield will be required to review and approve the engineering and design of the water extension. The Village of Elm Grove will also have to review and approve the engineering and design of the extension. It will then be sent to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for review and approval. Emerald Woods is bearing the costs of this extension.

Trustee Schindler asked if this is a location for future extension. Village Manager Harrigan stated yes, through Dunleith Circle to the Brookfield water main on Elm Grove Road.

9.) Discussion on policy for public participation via video conferencing (Zoom) during public meetings

President Koleski asked for the Trustees' input on allowing public participation in meetings via zoom.

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Trustee Stuckert said she is in favor of allowing public participation via zoom. Believes we should give people the opportunity to participate if they are not able to attend in person.

Trustee Hillmann said he is sympathetic to people who cannot attend in person but thinks it could cause issues and disruptions. Trustee Shepherd agreed.

Attorney de la Mora said there is case law in Wisconsin which requires municipalities to accommodate people who want to attend the meeting but we have the online streaming which allows this. The structure of the Village's meetings could make this type of public participation difficult because we have historically allowed the public to speak throughout the meeting.

Trustee Stuckert believes we should allow it but require people to pre-register to speak during the public comment section only. Expectations should also be set.

President Koleski asked that based on tonight's feedback, Staff draft a recommendation and bring it to the Board for consideration.

Trustee Schindler noted that he would also like a two (2) minute limit enforced for public comment. President Koleski said this was done when there were larger projects in the works so he believes there is precedence behind this.

Trustee Sayas was in agreement that a two (2) minute time limit should be enforced noting that a time limit will make people come with concise thoughts and comments.

Attorney de la Mora suggested that a time limit be set for oral comments but then the Board also accept written comments.

Trustee Shepherd was in agreement that the time limit should be two (2) minutes.

10.) Update on recent email phishing campaign

Trustee Hillmann left the meeting at 7:26 PM.

President Koleski wanted to make the Board aware that there have been recent phishing emails posing as him. He explained that when in doubt, they should follow-up in a communication channel that you are confident in.

11.) Other Business

President Koleski noted that the first Operating Budget workshop is tomorrow, October 5th. As it stands the budget is currently over the levy limit. The budget includes an additional police officer which will go before the Administration & Personnel Committee and Finance & Licensing Committee. He would like to see the potential revenue associated with a new officer being added.

Trustee Shepherd asked if there are any interviews scheduled for the Village Clerk position. Village Manager Harrigan said he is in the process of scheduling an interview.

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President Koleski asked if there is a date set for the November Committee of the Whole meeting. Ms. Gehl noted that it will most likely be November 29th but she still has to confirm some Trustee availability. She will notify the Trustees when it is set.

12.) Adjourn

MOTION BY TRUSTEE SHEPHERD, SECOND BY TRUSTEE SAYAS, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. ALL WERE IN FAVOR.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Minutes transcribed by: Katherine Gehl
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