



VILLAGE OF THIENSVILLE
Committee of the Whole
MINUTES

DATE: Monday, March 7, 2022

LOCATION: 250 Elm Street, Thiensville, WI
FIRE DEPARTMENT TRAINING ROOM

TIME: 6:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

President Mobley called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

PRESIDENT:	VAN MOBLEY
TRUSTEES:	JENNIFER ABRAHAM (EXCUSED) ANGELINA APOSTOLOS KRISTINA ECKERT ROB HOLYOKE KENNETH KUCHARSKI DAVID LANGE
ADMINISTRATOR:	COLLEEN LANDISCH-HANSEN
ATTORNEY:	TIM SCHOONENBERG
STAFF:	POLICE CHIEF CURT KLEPPIN DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES/PUBLIC WORKS ANDY LAFOND VILLAGE CLERK AMY LANGLOIS (EXCUSED)

III. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

A. Open to any resident or taxpayer on items not subject to a public hearing: Please be advised per §19.84(2), information will be received from the public. Village policy limits a three (3) minute time period per person, with time extension by the presiding official's discretion or a vote of 2/3 of the Board or Committee; be further advised that there may be limited discussion on the information received, however, no action will be taken under public comments. Written comments on agenda items are encouraged to be sent and addressed to the intended body by noon on the day of the meeting. Comments received timely will be forwarded to all members of the body. If you wish to speak, you must pre-register by emailing the Village Clerk at alanglois@village.thiensville.wi.us by 4:00 PM on the day of the meeting or by signing in immediately prior to the meeting.

Comments pertaining to the Thiensville Fire Department will be heard during Business Item A. 1.

There was no correspondence received or citizens to be heard present.

IV. BUSINESS

A. Discussion and update regarding Thiensville Fire Department

1. Citizens to be Heard

Jim Counsellor, 609 Sunny Lane - Mr. Counsellor believes that this is the most important decision and legacy that this Board will make during their tenure on the Village Board and shared the following: doing nothing is not an option, property taxes will go up no matter what option is chosen and will support any option that the majority of residents opt for. Additionally, according to studies contained in the report from the Wisconsin Policy Forum, impacts on response times are almost always inevitable. The emotional concerns revolve primarily around the potential domino effect if merging the fire departments could lead to merging the police department and DPW. Mr. Counsellor does not want to forever lose the uniqueness of our Village and stated that this decision could change the culture of the community with both short and long term ramifications. A structured comprehensive opportunity for the community to weigh in as to which option is supported is essential. Mr. Counsellor offered his services as a resident representative on any working committee.

Bonnie Heintskill, 307 Bel Aire Drive - Ms. Heintskill agreed with Mr. Counsellor and understands and supports paying higher taxes for fire services.

Bill Edwards, 400 Alta Loma Drive - Mr. Edwards endorses Mr. Counsellor's ideas and strongly urges the Board to utilize what Mr. Counsellor can offer to the community. Mr. Edwards also agreed with Ms. Heintskill's comments.

President Mobley noted that Mr. Counsellor is welcome to attend the open meetings regarding the Fire Department. Trustee Lange thanked those that attended this evening and agreed that this decision is the largest decision before him on the Board and noted the information on the Village website from the Wisconsin Policy Forum as very useful and informative.

President Mobley shared that the City of Mequon recently advertised for 3 Paramedic/Firefighter positions and received 9 applications; only 5 had the required qualifications. President Mobley shared that Cedarburg is interested in working with Thiensville and Mequon. Cedarburg utilizes our Paramedics which produces revenue for the Village.

John Treffert, 184 Riveredge Court - Mr. Treffert noted this is not all accidental and that communities with unionized full-time fire departments have been pushing for increased training requirements for years and, therefore, these requirements have resulted in a

lack of interest in this career. President Mobley noted that these requirements are state-mandated. Mr. Treffert agreed that this is one of the most important decisions before the Board.

Trustee Eckert attended the Fire and EMS Working Group meeting last week and shared that it was eye-opening and thanked Mr. Counsellor for the offer of his services. Trustee Eckert suggested speaking to members of the Fire Department.

Trustee Holyoke shared that the Board is listening to resident comments and understands this important issue. Trustee Holyoke noted that the cost of the study has been expressed as a concern and believes that this was an honest study. Another concern that was shared with Trustee Holyoke was the domino effect of the Fire Department turning into more consolidation and noted merging the Fire Department may keep the Village more financially viable. Trustee Holyoke supported a questionnaire being sent to residents.

Jim Reilly, 231 Riverview Drive - Mr. Reilly thanked the Board for the opportunity for the residents to speak about the Fire Department and questioned if costs would go down if merging departments. Administrator Landisch-Hansen shared that the preliminary analysis did not include capital i.e. purchase price of a fire truck, etc.. The three main factors include equalized value, call volume and population. Administrator Landisch-Hansen believes that finding something proportionately equitable will be possible.

Administrator Landisch-Hansen shared that the Working Group is a meeting group and not an actionable body so any action will go before the respective Board/Council.

Concern regarding personal connections was expressed and how that may not happen if combining with other municipalities. Also shared was concern regarding long-term residents vs. those who only live here for a short time and how those short-time residents may impact this decision.

Jeff O' Donnell, 510 Crescent Lane - Mr. O' Donnell thanked the Board and shared that personal service is awesome. Also, if there is a survey sent to residents, costs should be included and appreciates the cooperation with the residents. Mr. O'Donnell questioned if there was a merger where the station/staff would be located. President Mobley shared that this is still being discussed.

President Mobley shared that the Fire Chief and Assistant Chief have shared with the Board that the current structure is not sustainable.

Bob Blazich, 627 Lake Bluff - Mr. Blazich noted that there is a difference between a failing and a not sustainable department. Trustee Eckert noted that at a recent Working Group it was shared that: we need a sustainable plan, the department is in crisis mode every day and the system is delicate. The Board has taken action by hiring a full-time Paramedic/Firefighter.

Christine Lange, 428 Alta Loma Drive - Ms. Lange does not want to see a path taken and then not addressing other means to fill in the gaps i.e. hiring only permanent employees but yet there may be others who wish to volunteer. Ms. Lange would like to

see a combined effort to not disenfranchise those that want to help and suggested everyone working together. Trustee Eckert noted that volunteers do need qualifications and certifications that were never needed before, and finding people to do this is difficult.

Dave Koskinen, 509 Park Crest Drive - Mr. Koskinen questioned what the response times would be if combining. President Mobley stated that those figures have not been obtained. Mr. Koskinen appreciates the Board's time and seeking resident comments.

Administrator Landisch-Hansen shared that the Fire Department employees are paid per call and a majority of our members do not live in the area. When running a call to Cedarburg, the Village is reimbursed from Cedarburg (the Village has an agreement where we are paid 50% of the call).

Assistant Chief Deutsch shared that total fire call volume for 2020 was about 75; 8 of those calls involved some sort of active fire. Based on the numbers from the 2020 Annual Report, Mr. Reilley questioned if the Village could contract with Mequon for fire services and keep the EMS services.

B. Review and action regarding Resolution 2022-04 A Resolution Approving Amended Memorandum of Understanding Between the Village of Thiensville and the City of Mequon Establishing a Joint Fire & EMS Working Group to Include the City of Cedarburg and the Town of Cedarburg (att)

Administrator Landisch-Hansen noted that this is the same agreement the Board approved between the Village and the City of Mequon and now includes the Town and City of Cedarburg.

MOTION by Trustee Lange, **SECONDED** by Trustee Eckert to recommend to the Village Board to approve Resolution 2022-04 A Resolution Approving Amended Memorandum of Understanding Between the Village of Thiensville and the City of Mequon Establishing a Joint Fire & EMS Working Group to Include the City of Cedarburg and the Town of Cedarburg. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

C. Update regarding Thiensville Municipal Bond Rating

Administrator Landisch-Hansen shared that as we are looking to issue debt for the TIF District, the Village has gone through the rating process for the first time since 1985. The Village received a very favorable rating from Moody's - Aa3. President Mobley thanked the current and past Boards for their strong governance.

D. Update regarding Drop Boxes for Return of Absentee Ballots

Attorney Schoonenberg shared that on August 19, 2020 the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) sent Wisconsin Clerks a memo noting it was ok to use drop boxes for absentee ballots. On January 20, 2022 a judge disagreed with this and ordered the WEC retract that memo. Due to this recent order, use of the Village's mail drop box is suspended for voting purposes until there is further guidance.

Signage will be installed. If a ballot is placed in the drop box, the voter will be contacted.

E. Review and action regarding Capital Expenditures List (att)

Administrator Landisch-Hansen shared the following capital expenditure requests from the Thiensville Police Department: \$4,500 for desk, hutch, storage, office chairs and locker and \$2,000 for (9) metal badges, cloth badges and patches. The following are the requests from the Thiensville Fire Department: \$4,000 for 2 ambulance modems and \$20,000 for 9 sets of turnout gear. All requests were budgeted.

MOTION by Trustee Lange, **SECONDED** by Trustee Kucharski to recommend to the Village Board to approve the following Capital Requests for the Thiensville Police Department: \$4,500 for desk, hutch, storage, office chairs and locker and \$2,000 for (9) metal badges, cloth badges and patches and the following requests for the Thiensville Fire Department: \$4,000 for 2 ambulance modems and \$20,000 for 9 sets of turnout gear.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

F. Review and action regarding Resolution No. 2022-02 A Resolution Approving Private Property Infiltration and Inflow Reduction Agreement with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (att)

Director of Community Services/Public Works LaFond shared that the sewerage district provides a program to reduce private property infiltration and inflow. This is run like a grant program where there is money available. The current project is based on three known homes that were built low in comparison to the sewer line. This project will work towards remediating this through a process called hung plumbing. Cost of this is about \$40,000.

MOTION by Trustee Eckert, **SECONDED** by Trustee Apostolos to recommend to the Village Board to approve Resolution No. 2022-02 A Resolution Approving Private Property Infiltration and Inflow Reduction Agreement with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

G. Review and action regarding Proclamation in Honor of Skippy's Burger Bar, 25 Year Anniversary (att)

Administrator Landisch-Hansen noted that the Village would like to take opportunities to recognize monumental anniversaries of our local businesses.

Trustee Kucharski thanked the Board for this recognition.

MOTION by Trustee Lange, **SECONDED** by Trustee Apostolos to recommend to the Village Board to approve Proclamation in Honor of Skippy's Burger Bar, 25-year Anniversary.

Ayes: Trustees Apostolos, Eckert, Holyoke, Lange and President Mobley

Naes: None

Abstain: Trustee Kucharski

MOTION CARRIED.

H. Review and recommendation regarding:

1. Operator's License - New:

a. Skippy's Burger Bar (action regarding New Operator's License for Lindsey Mariel Maier will be taken on March 28, 2022)

Morgan Marie Ruska

MOTION by Trustee Holyoke, **SECONDED** by Trustee Eckert to recommend to the Village Board to approve New Operator's License for Skippy's Burger Bar: Morgan Marie Ruska.

Ayes: Trustee Apostolos, Eckert, Holyoke, Lange and President Mobley

Naes: None

Abstain: Trustee Kucharski

MOTION CARRIED.

I. Review and recommendation regarding Appointing the Following New Fire Department Members:

1. Trevor Kobleski

2. Joel Santa Maria

Mr. Kobleski is currently a licensed EMT-Basic and is working towards Firefighter I certification at this time. Mr. Santa Maria plans to enroll in the Fire or EMT-Basic class.

MOTION by Trustee Apostolos, **SECONDED** by Trustee Lange to recommend to the Village Board to approve Trevor Kobleski and Joel Santa Maria as New Fire Department Members. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

J. Discussion and possible action regarding Noise Ordinance (att)

Director LaFond noted that Village Ordinance did not have a decibel level or any times attached to it. In June, 2020 the Board adopted Ordinance 2020-04 repealing and

replacing Section 30-1 regarding noise and outdoor noise in an effort to make the Ordinance more specific. The Ordinance requires outdoor venues to annually apply with a site plan, provide hours of operation and list events. This is staff approved with the Board as the appeal body. The decibel level is currently 85 at the lot line.

Director LaFond would like to have a discussion with the barree in regards to the original site plan which included shade sales which would help with the noise.

Trustee Kucharski is an advocate for a 60-75 decibel level. From Trustee Kucharski's research, 85 decibels and up can be damaging and is too loud for our community. Trustee Kucharski believes 70 decibels is a fair level and would not go higher than 75 decibels.

Trustee Lange inquired if this applied to all the festivals. Director LaFond noted that this pertains to outdoor music venues. Village Park is not included in this Ordinance; the Park has its own hours.

Trustee Eckert inquired of Chief Kleppin if the Police Department was receiving complaints regarding noise. Chief Kleppin shared that occasionally a complaint is received for the barree noise level. Chief Kleppin also shared that sitting on Main Street in the municipal lot, normal traffic is about 59.8 decibels, when in Walgreens parking lot, the tornado siren is about 101 decibels, someone cutting their grass while about 20 yards away is about 72 decibels, talk radio inside the squad is about 60-63 decibels, a train is between 70-75 decibels without the horn, the Blues Fest - from Elm Street and the boat launch - was about 70-79 decibels and at the Fire Department it was 65 decibels.

Trustee Holyoke questioned if it is not such a decibel level issue as it is the time of day.

Trustee Kucharski noted that there may be people who will not call the Police Department because they do not want to complain or cause problems.

MOTION by Trustee Lange, **SECONDED** by Trustee Apostolos to recommend to the Village Board to Amend Ordinance No. 2020-04 to Change the Maximum Decibel Level from 85 to 75 Decibels. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

K. Discussion and possible action regarding Music in the Park, Donation of Instruments from Bob Blazich and Gathering on the Green (Trustee Eckert)

Trustee Eckert asked for an update regarding the donation of instruments from Mr. Blazich and Gathering on the Green. Director LaFond noted that a park designer was consulted as to the best location for the instruments in Village Park. The plan shows the instruments placed in the Park between the two playgrounds. Another question was what would happen during a festival or if the park was rented and the instruments were being used. Covers are not made for these instruments, however, Director LaFond found a canvas cover that could be locked if needed to quiet them for a period of time.

There are possibly five instruments that will be donated. These are all muted devices for public parks. A babble drum was delivered and taken to the Park to see how loud it was. When standing in front of the Fire Department with the instrument in the Park, it sounded like a wind chime. There would be some Village labor involved in pouring the concrete

bases. Mr. Blazich is excited about the donation and likes the location in the Park.

MOTION by Trustee Eckert, **SECONDED** by Trustee Apostolos to recommend to the Village Board to Move Forward With Plans for Music in the Park, Donation of Instruments from Bob Blazich and Gathering on the Green. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

V. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS BY TRUSTEES AS MAY PROPERLY BE BROUGHT BEFORE THE BOARD

A. Acceptance/Report of Gifts Received:

1. \$50.00 to the Thiensville Fire Department from Ellen Sheahan in Memory of Alejandro Lopez

MOTION by Trustee Lange, **SECONDED** by Trustee Kucharski to recommend to the Village Board to accept the Gift of \$50.00 to the Thiensville Fire Department from Ellen Sheahan in memory of Alejandro Lopez with Much Gratitude. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. Review meeting date schedule:

1. March 9, 2022 - Special Board of Trustees at 4:00 PM
2. March 28, 2022 - Board of Trustees at 6:00 PM
3. April 4, 2022 - Committee of the Whole at 6:00 PM
4. April 18, 2022 - Board of Trustees at 6:00 PM

MOTION by Trustee Lange, **SECONDED** by Trustee Holyoke to Recess the Meeting for a Brief Break at 7:22 PM. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

MOTION by Trustee Holyoke, **SECONDED** by Trustee Kucharski to Reconvene the Meeting at 7:25 PM. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VI. MOTION TO ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION

A. **MOTION** by Trustee Holyoke, **SECONDED** by Trustee Kucharski to adjourn to Closed Session at 7:25 PM deliberating about the investment of public funds in future Village properties requiring a Closed Session due to the competitive nature and bargaining positions at risk if conducted in a public meeting. Such Closed Session is authorized pursuant to Wis. Stats. Article 19.85(1)(e).

1. Roll Call Vote

Ayes: Trustees Apostolos, Eckert, Holyoke, Kucharski, Lange and President Mobley.

Naes: None

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION TO RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

1. Vote of Board to reconvene

MOTION by Trustee Lange, **SECONDED** by Trustee Kucharski to Reconvene the Meeting into Open Session at 7:49 PM. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Trustee Lange, **SECONDED** by Trustee Kucharski to adjourn the Meeting at 7:50 PM. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Submitted by,
Amy L. Langlois