

APPROVED MINUTES

VILLAGE OF ANTIOCH
BOARD OF TRUSTEES – REGULAR MEETING
Village of Antioch, Lake County, Illinois
Municipal Building: 935 Skidmore Drive, Antioch, IL 60002
March 11, 2026

I. Call to Order

Mayor Gartner called the March 11, 2026 regular meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 6:30 pm at the Antioch Municipal Building located at 935 Skidmore Drive, Antioch, IL and via Zoom.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Mayor and Board of Trustees led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Roll Call

Roll call indicated the following Trustees were present: Macek, Bluthardt, McNeill, Martinez and Pedersen. Also present were Mayor Gartner, Attorney Vasselli, Administrator Lichterman and Clerk Romine. Absent: Trustee Pierce.

IV. Absent Trustees Wishing to Attend Remotely

There were no Trustees attending remotely.

V. Mayoral Report

1. Acknowledgements – National Women’s History Month, Easter, International Women’s Day, Ramadan and Passover. Mayor Gartner recognized the aforementioned observations.

2. Appoint Michael Sheedy to the Historic Preservation Commission with a term ending 2029 - Trustee Bluthardt moved, seconded by Trustee Martinez, to confirm the appointment of Michael Sheedy to the Historic Preservation Commission with a term ending 2029. Upon roll call, the vote was:

YES: 5: Macek, Bluthardt, McNeill, Martinez and Pedersen.

NO: 0.

ABSENT: 1: Pierce.

THE MOTION CARRIED.

Following his appointment, Clerk Romine administered the Oath of Office to Commission member Sheedy.

VI. Public Comment

Ms. Jen Schwinn and Nick Barber addressed the board on behalf of the Brothers of Liberty and their special event liquor license permit applications. Ms. Schwinn said they made a mistake and were unaware of the need for a permit from the State of Illinois, and hopes that they will have a chance to learn from this mistake. She said they made their most recent event a dry event since they would be unable to obtain a state license. They requested to remove the March 14 item from the agenda, and asked the board to consider the permit for March 20. Mr. Barber said they want to work with Antioch and be a benefit to the community.

VII. Reports

1. Report and Recommendation of the Combined Planning Commission and Zoning Board regarding the Approval of a Site Plan and Variance at 657 Main Street (Main Street Townhomes – Mark Peterson) – Administrator Lichterman advised the Board that the attorney for the property owner requested that the review be delayed until sometime in May so that they may have an additional public hearing before the Planning and Zoning Commission for a proposed plat of subdivision.

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Trustee McNeill moved, seconded by Trustee Bluthardt, to continue this item to the May 27, 2026 Village Board meeting. Upon roll call, the vote was:

YES: 5: Macek, Bluthardt, McNeill, Martinez and Pedersen.

NO: 0.

ABSENT: 1: Pierce.

THE MOTION CARRIED.

2. Report and Recommendation of the Combined Planning Commission and Zoning Board regarding a Text Amendment and Variation to Section 10.18.8(c) of the Antioch Downtown Sign District for a Non-Illuminated Sign at 311 Depot Street (Pacific Plaza LLC) – Administrator Lichterman provided an overview of the item, and the recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Board for approval.

Trustee Bluthardt moved, seconded by Trustee McNeill, to accept the recommendation from the Combined Planning Commission and Zoning Board and authorize the attorney to draft the appropriate legislation. Upon roll call, the vote was:

YES: 5: Macek, Bluthardt, McNeill, Martinez and Pedersen.

NO: 0.

ABSENT: 1: Pierce.

THE MOTION CARRIED.

VII. Consent Agenda

Trustee Bluthardt moved, seconded by Trustee McNeill, to approve the following consent agenda items as presented:

1. Approval of the January 7, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes as presented
2. Approval of the January 8, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes as presented
3. Approval of a Resolution Authorizing and Approving the Annual 4th of July Parade to be held on Saturday, July 4, 2026, and the closure of a street in connection with the same on behalf of the Village of Antioch, Illinois – *Resolution No. 26-26*
4. Approval of a Resolution Granting a Class “G” Single Special Event Liquor License to Professional Beverage Services for the Village of Antioch Small Town Smokeout on September 19, 2026 – *Resolution No. 26-27*

YES: 5: Macek, Bluthardt, McNeill, Martinez and Pedersen.

NO: 0.

ABSENT: 1: Pierce.

THE MOTION CARRIED.

VIII. Regular Business

5. Approval of the February 25, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented - Trustee Bluthardt moved, seconded by Trustee McNeill, to approve the February 25, 2026 Regular meeting minutes as presented. Upon roll call, the vote was:

YES: 5: Macek, Bluthardt, McNeill, Martinez and Pedersen.

NO: 0.

ABSENT: 1: Pierce.

THE MOTION CARRIED.

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6. Consideration and approval of payment of accounts payable as prepared by staff in the amount of \$1,531,772.44 – Trustee McNeill moved, seconded by Trustee Martinez, to approve payment of accounts payable in the amount of \$1,531,772.44. Upon roll call, the vote was:
YES: 5: Macek, Bluthardt, McNeill, Martinez and Pedersen.
NO: 0.
ABSENT: 1: Pierce.
THE MOTION CARRIED.

7. Consideration and Approval of a Resolution Granting a Class G Single Special Event Liquor License to the Brothers of Liberty for its Meat Raffle event to be held on March 14, 2026; waiving all fees – This request was withdrawn by the petitioner.

8. Consideration and Approval of a Resolution Granting a Class G Single Special Event Liquor License to Brothers of Liberty for its Adult Dirty Bingo event to be held on March 20, 2026; waiving all fees – Trustee Pedersen moved, seconded by Trustee Martinez, to approve **Resolution No. 26-29**, Granting a Class G Single Special Event Liquor License to Brothers of Liberty for its Adult Dirty Bingo event to be held on March 20, 2026; waiving all fees.

Mayor Gartner said he has asked staff and the attorney to review the liquor code, and they will be able to come back after the revisions are made.

Mayor Gartner asked that organizations provide a copy of the state license on the Friday before the event along with proof of insurance.

Upon roll call, the vote was:
YES: 5: Macek, Bluthardt, McNeill, Martinez and Pedersen.
NO: 0.
ABSENT: 1: Pierce.
THE MOTION CARRIED.

9. Consideration and approval of a Resolution Authorizing and Approving an Agreement with Dixon Engineering, Inc. to Recondition and Paint a Water Tower for the Village of Antioch, Illinois - Trustee Pedersen moved, seconded by Trustee Martinez, to approve **Resolution No. 26-30**, Authorizing and Approving an Agreement with Dixon Engineering, Inc. to Recondition and Paint a Water Tower for the Village of Antioch, Illinois.

Trustee Bluthardt asked for an explanation of this item. Director Heimbrodt said Dixon will prepare bid packages, inspections on the work that the contractor does, and look at pay applications and recommend payment. An inspection of the tower was completed prior to this step.

Upon roll call, the vote was:
YES: 5: Macek, Bluthardt, McNeill, Martinez and Pedersen.
NO: 0.
ABSENT: 1: Pierce.
THE MOTION CARRIED.

X. Administrator's Report

Administrator Lichterman discussed meetings regarding the veteran's memorial to begin working toward the construction phase. The last payment for the eagle will be prepared for its delivery next week. He Met with School District 117 and the ComEd government affairs team. He reminded those present that the March 25 meeting is cancelled.

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Trustee Macek asked for a camera at the memorial in the event of vandalism. He also gave credit to Administrator Lichterman for placing a flock camera at the entrance to Pedersen park.

XI. Village Clerk's Report

Clerk Romine thanked Village staff, particularly Kelly Morris, Lori Konkel and Beckey Kijak, for all of their hard work in getting the golf cart renewals out through the new software system. Staff continues to identify and address concerns, but they have done a great job in using the new software for this purpose.

XII. Trustee Reports

None.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the Village Board of Trustees regular meeting adjourned at 6:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori K. Romine, RMC/CMC
Village Clerk

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**VILLAGE OF ANTIOCH BOARD OF TRUSTEES
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
Village of Antioch, Lake County, Illinois
Municipal Building: 935 Skidmore Drive, Antioch, IL 60002
March 11, 2026**

I. Call To Order

Mayor Gartner called the March 11, 2026 Committee of the Whole meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 6:53 pm at the Antioch Municipal Building located at 935 Skidmore Drive, Antioch, IL and via Zoom.

II. Roll Call

Roll call indicated the following Trustees were present: Macek, Bluthardt, McNeill, Martinez and Pedersen. Also present were Mayor Gartner, Attorney Vasselli, Administrator Lichterman and Clerk Romine. Absent: Trustee Pierce.

III. Absent Trustees Wishing to Attend Remotely

There were no Trustees attending remotely.

IV. Mayoral Report

No report.

V. Public Comment

None.

VI. Regular Business

1. Approval of the February 25, 2026 Committee of the Whole meeting minutes as presented - Trustee McNeill moved, seconded by Trustee Martinez, to approve the February 25, 2026 Committee of the Whole meeting minutes as presented.

Upon roll call, the vote was:

YES: 4: Macek, Bluthardt, McNeill and Martinez.

NO: 0.

ABSTAIN: 1: Pedersen.

ABSENT: 1: Pierce.

THE MOTION CARRIED.

2. Discussion regarding Electronic Message Board (EMB) Signs and Compliance –

Community Development Director Mark Janeck presented his findings on existing EMB signs in the Village. He said it appears as though there are more applicants for EMB signs that in the past. He said the existing EMB signs he is aware of do not currently meet the Village Code and asked the board if they are interested in amending the code related to EMB signs and if they have any recommendations on background, letter colors, images, duration, etc.

Trustee Macek discussed the cost to replace the signs.

Trustee Bluthardt asked how we got to the point that the signs were approved, built, and then operated against the code.

Trustee McNeill said she is fine adding colors and believes the sign code is currently too restrictive. She asked if the hold time was standard.

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Trustee Martinez agrees the need to modernize the code and be competitive.

Trustee Pedersen said previous discussions regarding EMB signs were influenced by nighttime and safety. She asked if there was a way to tone down the brightness, and said she would be comfortable allowing more colors. Administrator Lichterman said the code requires the sign to be 40% of the daytime brightness.

3. Discussion regarding the Fox Waterway Agency Watershed Resolution – Mayor Gartner introduced Holly Garvey and Pat Smarto from the Fox Waterway Agency. Mayor Gartner noted that there have been many discussions regarding the Cross Lake waterway.

Ms. Garvey explained that the watershed plan was commissioned for the entire Fox Waterway. She stated that, within the Village of Antioch, more than 1,000 acres are located within the waterway and approximately 24 acres are on Village-managed property. One of the high-priority projects identified in the plan was the dredging of Cross Lake. She also noted that one of the largest contributors affecting Cross Lake is located outside the State of Illinois.

Mayor Gartner asked how projects could be funded. Ms. Garvey suggested reviewing how smaller lakes and organizations are addressing funding and provided information on available resources, including grant opportunities. She explained that one reason for adopting the watershed resolution was to open additional funding and grant opportunities.

Trustee Pedersen asked whether all drainage issues would need to be corrected prior to dredging. It was explained that, generally, maintaining the waterway is important and that incremental improvements would be beneficial.

Mayor Gartner asked how project priorities were identified. Ms. Garvey responded that the watershed study was extensive, and priorities were determined based on study parameters, recommended timeframes, and projected impacts.

Trustee McNeill asked whether feasibility studies had been completed for water treatment. Ms. Smarto stated that Lake County is conducting a study for the unincorporated areas.

The resolution will be brought back to a future Village Board meeting for consideration.

4. Discussion regarding Window Signs and Compliance – Community Development Director Mark Janeck presented his findings regarding existing window signs throughout the Village. He reviewed the current code requirements, noting that signs may not cover more than 25% of windows in the downtown district and 35% in the remainder of the Village. He asked the Board whether it wished to begin enforcement of the current code or consider amending the code to allow a greater percentage of window coverage.

Mayor Gartner stated he could support an increase within reason, such as 50%.

Trustee Macek commented that many other communities allow 30% coverage and noted that some businesses can be excessive. He gave examples of situations in which privacy may be necessary, such as at a dentist office.

Trustee Bluthardt stated that he would like to review the code, involve stakeholders, and revise and update the regulations before enforcement. He emphasized the importance of stakeholder input and then enforcing the adopted rules.

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Trustee McNeill stated that she understood the safety concerns but was inclined to support increasing the allowable percentage.

Administrator Lichterman clarified that window signs applied directly to the glass are regulated differently from displays located behind the window. It was also noted that visibility into certain businesses may be addressed through the liquor code rather than the sign code, including prohibitions on curtains and requirements that the interior remain visible.

Trustee Martinez referenced an existing business sign and stated that he believed the Village should begin enforcing the 35% limit, with businesses unable to comply having the option to apply for a variance.

Trustee Pedersen stated that many product signs are simply provided to businesses and that removing some of them would not create a real hardship. She supported the 35% limit, commented that excessive signage can appear cluttered over time, and stated that enforcement would improve the appearance of the community. She also supported revisiting the code.

Director Janeck stated that enforcement would take time and would begin with letters to affected businesses.

5. Discussion regarding Building Permit Fees – Community Development Director Mark Janeck presented his findings regarding building permit fees in the Village. He referenced the memorandum previously provided in January comparing Village fees to those of surrounding municipalities. He stated that the most recent memo provided additional answers and recommendations for amending certain fees and the methods used to calculate them.

Director Janeck explained that some fees could be reduced to better align with neighboring communities and create a fairer structure overall. He asked the Board for direction on how it wished to proceed.

Mayor Gartner stated that he supports keeping the fees simple and favorable to the Village, as well as to the construction and business community and residents.

Those present generally agreed that building permit fees should be simple, straightforward, and resident- and business-friendly.

It was noted that more complex projects, including additions, remodels, and new construction, would likely see the greatest impact from any fee reductions.

Further review and recommendations will be brought back to the Board.

6. Discussion regarding the voluntary property tax levy reduction – Director Peterson presented information regarding the potential to lower property taxes for the upcoming fiscal year.

He reviewed the property tax levy process and noted that the levy worksheet is expected to be received at the end of March, leaving limited time for completion. He further explained that the County Board of Review has completed assessment appeals and continues to process exemption applications.

Director Peterson reviewed current exemptions, including the disabled veterans standard deduction, which increased by 50%, and stated that overall exemptions are expected to increase

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approximately 12% over the previous year. He noted that state-provided benefits to disabled veterans are effectively subsidized by other taxpayers in an approximate amount of \$550.

He reviewed the Village's tax levy history, including prior increases and decreases, and presented an example of what a property tax decrease could look like. He also presented a tax bill for an average Antioch home valued at \$334,475 and the Village's share of that bill.

Director Peterson discussed options for reducing property taxes, and repealing the vehicle tax, which would directly benefit residents. He also addressed police pension funding obligations, noting that levy increases are required in order to adequately fund the pension. He reviewed a summary of the fiscal year-end financial forecast and discussed key considerations as the Finance Department finalizes the FY27 budget. He noted that a key strategy in diversifying revenue was the recent sales tax increase, which places more of the tax burden on shoppers coming from outside Antioch. He requested direction from the Board so staff would know how to proceed once the levy worksheet is received.

Mayor Gartner discussed recent meetings with other taxing bodies and credited Assessor Lee Perry for helping illustrate the impact of increased taxes on residents.

Administrator Lichterman discussed police pension funding and the potential effect of levy increases on the average homeowner. He explained that a 3% levy increase could be used to fund the police pension, while a 5% increase could also support the General Fund.

Trustee Bluthardt discussed the Village's needs and the Board's responsibility to balance those needs with taxpayer impacts, while also remaining competitive in attracting and retaining businesses. He stated that he was not in favor of increasing the levy to the maximum amount possible and wanted to limit the increase as much as possible without harming the budget.

Trustee Bluthardt also asked how limiting the levy now would affect the Village in future years. Director Peterson stated that there would be an impact, but that the Village could later hold a public hearing and increase the levy if needed.

Trustee Bluthardt asked whether tax abatements were an option. Administrator Lichterman explained how taxes may be abated, and Director Peterson stated that the Village already abates certain taxes each year. Director Peterson added that he did not support a 0% increase if other taxing bodies do not do the same, as it would have minimal effect on taxpayers while the Village would still receive the criticism.

Attorney Vasselli explained the distinction between an abatement and a rebate.

Trustee McNeill discussed the increase in sales tax revenue and asked if it could help offset capital shortfalls. Director Peterson stated that he would be comfortable with a 3% increase based on the Village's financial forecast.

Trustee Martinez stated that the Board had previously decided to increase the sales tax in part to shift more of the tax burden to non-residents and generate additional revenue to cover expenses. He recommended moving forward with Option #4, reflecting a 3% increase, and also reviewing the potential elimination of the vehicle tax.

Trustee Pedersen stated that she would prefer a 0% increase in order to lessen the burden on taxpayers.

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Mayor Gartner stated that costs appear to increase by approximately 3% annually and that he was comfortable with a 3% increase. He also expressed concern about the possibility of home values declining.

Trustee Bluthardt suggested phasing down the vehicle tax, beginning the process of elimination while retaining the ability to bring it back if needed.

There was general consensus among those present to move forward with the option reflecting a 3% increase in the levy, with additional discussion to continue regarding the vehicle tax.

VII. Other Business

None.

VIII. Executive Session

Trustee Bluthardt moved, seconded by Trustee Pedersen to enter into executive session at 8:30 pm to discuss Personnel under 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)(2). Upon roll call, the vote was:

YES: 5: Macek, Bluthardt, McNeill, Martinez and Pedersen.

NO: 0.

ABSENT: 1: Pierce.

THE MOTION CARRIED.

Trustee Pedersen moved, seconded by Trustee Martinez, to return from executive session at 9:19 pm with no action taken. Upon roll call, the vote was:

YES: 5: Macek, Bluthardt, McNeill, Martinez and Pedersen.

NO: 0.

ABSENT: 1: Pierce.

THE MOTION CARRIED.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the Village Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting adjourned at 9:19pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori K. Romine, RMC/CMC
Village Clerk