

Village of Winthrop Harbor
President and Board of Trustees Meeting
November 17, 2020
Village Hall Council Chambers

ZOOM BOARD MEETING - MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Bruno at 7:00 PM

The following Elected Officials **Attended Remotely**:

Mayor: Dr. Michael Bruno

Trustees: Buddy Hargett, Robert Marabella, John Levin, Dana McCarthy, Hartmut "Fritz" Weiss, Alanna Whitmore

Also present:

Robert Long, Attorney
Greg Jackson, Village Administrator
Julie Rittenhouse, Village Clerk
Michael Sheedy, IT Director
Joel Brumlik, Police Chief
Justin Stried, Fire Chief
Pat DiPersio, Community Development Director
Ed Mohn, Deputy Chief-Police
Tim Nearing, Superintendent of Public Works

The Invocation was led by Mayor Bruno

ABSENT OFFICIALS WISHING TO ATTEND REMOTELY

All Officials attending remotely

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1 - A motion was made by Trustee Hargett and seconded by Trustee Weiss to approve the **November 4, 2020 Virtual Regular Board Meeting Minutes** as presented. Mayor Bruno declared the motion carried on the following roll call vote.

Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore
Nays: (0)
Absent: (0)
Passed: (0)

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor's Approval of Foreign Fire Insurance (2%) Treasurer's Bond

2 - A motion was made by Trustee Levin and Seconded by Trustee Weiss to approve **Mayor's Approval of Foreign Fire Insurance (2%) Treasurer's Bond** as submitted. Mayor Bruno declared the motion carried on the following roll call vote.

Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore
Nays: (0)
Absent: (0)
Passed: (0)

Mayor Bruno has gotten a lot of calls regarding leaf pick-up. On Thursday he contacted Groot and was informed they have a quite a few people out with illness. They are doing their best to cover the Village. They are trying to get as many people here to pick-up. They assured him, they would get then picked up and may have to go beyond November 30th to do that. Mayor Bruno did respond to all text messages, emails and phone calls. Just wanted everyone to know that they will get them picked up.

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- COVID remains an issue, including here locally. It's had it's impact on how we operate here in the Village Hall and other Departments. The Governor has directed the entire State to move to Tier 3 mitigation at 12:01am Friday.
- Transition in Finance and Human Resources continues. We had a Zoom Meeting with John Blackburn.
- Tomorrow meeting with Amazon about consolidation of our accounts. There will potential cost savings with that.
- We are on a conference call tomorrow regarding the deployment of the recycling program. An area for the bins have already been identified by Tim at the Public Works Facility.
- Still waiting for contact from some of the Board Members on their bio's and pictures for the web-site.
- Food Truck Ordinance is still on the radar. Once we get past the Tax Levy and additional transition training, we can have discussions about potential model ordinances and what we want this ordinance to look like, come Spring.
- The disposition on the CARES Grant, spoke to one of the members of the Board today who inquired about the status of that. There's probably about 2/3 of Government that have applied, that are still waiting for their grant approval.
- We've had some discussion about what to do with the Tree Lighting, Light Parade and Lunch with Santa. Deferred to Trustee Whitmore in unfinished business.

CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

None Reported

OLD BUSINESS

None Reported

NEW BUSINESS

Request to Proceed with Petitions to Annex 9689 W. Franklin Street and 41660 N. Park Avenue, both in Unincorporated Zion, by Directing the Village Attorney to Draft Ordinances Annexing the Properties to be Considered as a Future Meeting.

3 - A motion was made by Trustee Hargett and Seconded by Trustee Marabella to approve **Request to Proceed with Petitions to Annex 9689 W. Franklin Street and 41660 N. Park Avenue, both in Unincorporated Zion, by Directing the Village Attorney to Draft Ordinances Annexing the Properties to be Considered as a Future Meeting** as submitted. Mayor Bruno declared the motion carried on the following roll call vote.

Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore
Nays: (0)
Absent: (0)
Passed: (0)

Accounts Payable Warrant

4 - A motion was made by Trustee Weiss and seconded by Trustee Whitmore to approve **Accounts Payable Warrant W2020-12** in the amount of **\$148,161.07**. Mayor Bruno declared the motion carried on the following roll call vote.

Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore
Nays: (0)
Absent: (0)
Passed: (0)

Discussion – 2020 Tax Levy

Village Administrator, Jackson provided the Board with information on the Tax Levy via email. He explained that it's that time of the year that we have to make a decision on what the Property Tax Levy will be to support operations for the 2021/22 Fiscal year. He presented the Board with 4 options, 4.9%, which would give us about \$89,574.00, 2.5% at \$45,701.00, 2.3% at \$42,045.00 and 0 tax levy. Based on Tax Levy and the extensions that come afterwards, we generally receive, on average, 54% less than what the requested extension is. So, though we may be requesting \$89,000.00 as part of this Tax Levy, our actual amount would be around \$41,000.00. An extension history going back to 2013 was provided. We pretty much kept up with the Consumer Price Index for the rate of actual increase, with the exception of 2019. 2019 we did no increase to the Tax Levy, but as a result of the extension, we ended up losing \$20,184.00. Before deciding on what percentage, the Levy should be applied, anticipated expenditure increases have been listed out for the upcoming year. We are currently operating on a 3.09-million-dollar budget, which is significantly less than past years. We can expect a 10% increase in employee health insurance, 5% for Public Works, Worker's Compensation Insurance a 10%, Public Works, per the collective bargaining agreement, which is already in place, 2.5%, Police Department, per the collective bargaining agreement, 2%. We also have debt service for

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capital leases, which are non-descretionary spending items, on the books for the coming years. In addition, we can expect the Fire Department will request a minimum of \$71,000.00 for EMS support to keep our ambulance staffed 24/7 with another anticipated six figure capital purchase for fire equipment. Village staff, with the support of the Mayor and the Elected Board, took an aggressive approach to belt tightening, as a result of the challenges due to the COVID outbreak. HR, Finance, Treasury, AP/AR, Grant writing, Community Development, Economic Development, Code Enforcement as well as Village Administration, are now being managed and conducted by only 3 people. EMA has been dissolved. Community Service Officer has taken over Police Records with the resignation of the former incumbent. This has all but illuminated the CSO Program. The Police Department as a whole has reduced staff equiveillance by 4 FTE, Public Works by 1.5 FTE, Parks and Rec by 1 FTE. Ranges are from 50% to 17.7% reduction in staffing. On the subject of how much further can our Village Government reduce? The answer is simple, \$31.21 for the entire year. Average cost to the homeowner for all municipal services will be \$2.23 a day. That's for Police, Fire, Public Works, Recreation, that's for everything we do every day. The Village Property Tax rate is 11.97%. The only municipality that is lower that Winthrop Harbor is Wauconda. Greg Jackson will work with Attorney Long to draft the language once he hears from the Board.

Discussion – Winthrop Harbor Fire Department Staffing

Chief Stried said the Fire Department is at a crossroad of needing some help or decisions made by the Board on how to proceed with staffing, compensating. We absolutely have a dedicated group. There is a handful of employees that still live in the Village. There's a bigger group that live outside the Village and come to help the department as a part time job. Many of them are full-time firefighters/paramedics from other communities. We have stretches of times that we are unable to staff paramedics and we have to ask for help from our neighboring communities. It is time to consider the next step of adding some full-time personnel to ensure that we can always, at least, can get an ambulance out. Hopefully the staffing would allow for a fire engine as well. Chief Stried welcomes any comments and suggestions. Village Administrator, Jackson and Chief Stried will work on putting a package with options together to present to the Board during the budget cycle.

Accept Awarded Amount of \$1,987.50 from the Department of Justice as a Part of the Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership

5 - A motion was made by Trustee McCarthy and Seconded by Trustee Weiss to **Accept Awarded Amount of \$1,987.50 from the Department of Justice as a Part of the Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership** as submitted. Mayor Bruno declared the motion carried on the following roll call vote.

Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore
Nays: (0)
Absent: (0)
Passed: (0)

Request to Enter into a Contract with Westrec Marinas Related to Security Services for the 2021 Boating Season

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6 - A motion was made by Trustee McCarthy and seconded by Trustee Whitmore to approve **Request to Enter into a Contract with Westrec Marinas Related to Security Services for the 2021 Boating Season** as presented. Mayor Bruno declared the motion carried on the following roll call vote.

Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore
Nays: (0)
Absent: (0)
Passed: (0)

Request to Approve Design Services for Holdridge Avenue over Dead Dog Creek Culvert Repairs Contract for Additional Services with Baxter & Woodman Consulting Engineers

7 - A motion was made by Trustee Marabella and seconded by Trustee Hargett to approve **Request to Approve Design Services for Holdridge Avenue over Dead Dog Creek Culvert Repairs Contract for Additional Services with Baxter & Woodman Consulting Engineers** as presented. Mayor Bruno declared the motion carried on the following roll call vote.

Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore
Nays: (0)
Absent: (0)
Passed: (0)

PUBLIC COMMENT

None Reported

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Trustee Whitmore– Recreation Department

- We are looking to move forward with a social distanced Christmas event. Instead of the typical Tree Lighting, we are looking to do an in-your-car parade. We are working our final details as in what else we can incorporate.

Trustee McCarthy – Police Department

- Thanked Mayor Bruno, Trustee Marabella, Tim and any one who’s been fielding questions about the leaf pick-up. Every year there has been concerns, but every year it ends up working out. Groot has done well with us. It’s a struggle with the number of trucks. Appreciates all who have fielded the calls and responded. It will get done even if it goes into December.
- Thanked Greg for how he out-lined the Tax Levy. It helps to better understand what the different percentage options mean.

Trustee Hargett – Community Development Department

- We are looking at the Food Truck Ordinance. Greg and Pat will continue working on that, as the pandemic allows. A few residents have reached out to me expressing frustration that they thought we had created a ban on Food Trucks. Just wanted to clarify, there is not a ban on Food Trucks. We have a very prescriptive Ordinance that

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defined when and where they are allowed to be used. There is no ban and we are looking at the Ordinance to see where we need to make changes.

Trustee Weiss - Finance Department

- Thanked everybody for their passion on the Tax Levy. Looking forward to doing a very creative budget this year. Maybe Greg and I can get together and do some creative thinking, out of the box and get money from outside.
- Talked to Tim, and we both agreed that this year the leaves dropped all at one time. That’s why they’re having a difficult time picking them up. It doesn’t take long for the trucks to fill up.
- Looking forward to working with the Departments on the budget.
- Thanked Trustees and Greg for all of the hard work they do and the passion that they have.

Trustee Levin - Fire Department

- Thanked Chief Stried for putting the letter together about staffing and opening up all of our minds to better understand what’s going on. Thanked the Fire Department Personnel that are working non-stop to keep us going and make the Village look good.
- Look forward to the information that Chief Stried and Greg come up with to find some kind of resolution.
- Hope everybody stays safe.

Trustee Marabella – Public Works Department

- COVID is happening and is real.
- I was born and raised in Winthrop Harbor. Winthrop Harbor was born and bred by the Fire Department. Our community was built on the Fire Department. Life Safety is important. They save lives. We cannot afford to lose our Fire Department. Our Fire Department matters.

Mayor Bruno

- We do have a great Fire Department and an awesome Police Department and I respect everyone of the first responders. Always have, always will.
- Thanked Greg for all he does and the Department Heads. They work more now than 6-8 months ago because they are working with less people.
- Friday morning Tier 3 mitigation starts. I would ask every Trustee, every resident, to please, at least once a week, purchase something from a local restaurant and patronize out local businesses. We don’t want to lose them.

ADJOURNMENT

8 - A motion was made by Trustee Weiss and seconded by Trustee Levin to adjourn the meeting. Mayor Bruno declared the meeting adjourned at 8:33p.m. on the following roll call vote.

Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore
Nays: (0)
Absent: (0)
Passed: (0)

APPROVED:

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DR. MICHAEL BRUNO, MAYOR

ATTEST:

JULIE RITTENHOUSE, VILLAGE CLERK

Note: This is not a verbatim record.