

**MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD
TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2018**

The Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order by Village President Joan Frazier on Tuesday, January 16, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. Village Clerk Stacy Sigman called the roll as follows:

Committee Members Present:

Trustee Allan Kaplan
Trustee Greg Lungmus
Trustee John Goodwin
Trustee John Gregorio
Trustee Thomas Terrill

Absent:

Trustee Tom Roszak (arrived late)

Others Present:

Village Attorney Everette M. Hill, Jr., Village Manager Stacy Sigman, Finance Director Steve Noble, Community Development Director Steve Gutierrez, Public Works Director Mike Nystrand and Assistant to the Village Manager Melissa DeFeo

Approval of the December 5, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Trustee Gregorio made a motion, seconded by Trustee Lungmus to approve the December 5, 2017 meeting minutes.

Discussion on R2 right of way acquisition request

Village Manager Sigman indicated that after the October Board meeting which the PUD for Walden Lane was considered, staff received a request from the developer asking for the Village's consideration on the lease or sale of the right of way triangular parcel across the street from Chapel Hill. She has been working with Attorney Hill to figure out the process because there isn't anything in the Code about this. There were a number of issues that became evident, such as how the property was acquired and are there any limitations on the property. It became evident there was a lot of work to do on this and staff didn't want to go through that without direction from the Board. She was puzzled by the letter received from IDOT which didn't say they had approved it. As indicated in the petitioner's cover letter, IDOT indicated they would consider a partial access at that location. She spoke to the IDOT representative that reviewed it to clarify. They stated that a left turn out would be dangerous and any full new access from there, left out, does create additional conflicts. A left out would not be considered. IDOT said if the Village was okay with the lease of the property, they would consider a left in. However, they had a lot of concerns with the loss of the median because of the time and cost that went into it. They are willing to address a possible three way (right in, right out and possible left in). IDOT won't look at any of it until they have a formal letter from the Village stating that we support the plan. A left in would necessitate the

removal of the entire planted median that is over by Chapel Hill, to convert it to a turning lane.

VM Sigman said she wanted the Board to know the steps that this would have to go through and the potential challenges. If the Board wants to move it forward, it should be done sequentially. The first step is the Board's decision tonight. Then we would get an escrow to cover all out of pocket expenses for the review. The Village Attorney would look into how the property was acquired and whether there are any legal entanglements with that. Finally, the Village's traffic engineer would assess the potential impacts of right in, right out or left in at that location. VM Sigman said she has looked at the plan and is concerned about the left out based on IDOT. Movement could be limited and may not be possible to keep people from doing an illegal left out. For example, coming out of Starbucks you can only go right but people go left. Often, if you put a sign up "No Left Turn," how do you realistically enforce that? Ultimately, after getting past all of those hurdles, final approval would be up to the Board and IDOT.

Trustee Gregorio questioned the size of the parcel. VM Sigman said she didn't know, but once we find out its functional use, an appraisal would have to be done.

President Frazier said for those new to the group, CAG is the Corridor Advisory Group, which consisted of about 50 people from Northfield, Winnetka, Glenview and Northbrook that met for a period of two years, November 2009 through November 2011. The meetings were about contact sensitive solutions, trying to find roadways that would fit with the community, build the capacity and meets the needs of the regional transportation network and puts safety first. Their task was to determine what would be contact safety along Willow. The Village fought the widening of Willow Road for many years because nobody wanted it. The idea was to discuss it and see what could be hammered out with IDOT to make it palatable. One of the things the group decided along with IDOT and the Village was to put in planted medians. Willow Road was finished in the fall of 2015 and the medians were planted in June of 2016. She said she does not want to see the medians go. She doesn't think that's a good place to have a left turn lane and believes that the community would go nuts if the median were removed a year and a half after it going in. President Frazier has safety concerns being so close to Wagner and also with people taking a left out. She is not in favor of it but would like a discussion.

Trustee Goodwin agreed with President Frazier on the median aspect. As the plantings get more mature, motorists will slow down and realize they are in Northfield because it is a defining point. He said he does not think the access is needed, but it came up at the Plan & Zoning meetings. At the Board meeting, we heard loud and clear from our constituents that no one is interested in a PUD of this nature in the middle of town. They don't want to set a precedent for here or that property that is west of Bracken or north of the property. There are currently six driveways. If we were going to consider another proposal more modest in nature, he would like to start counting from the seven homes that are there now and maybe go up a little. He indicated it is not relevant at this point and the neighbors don't want it.

Trustee Gregorio missed the last meeting and asked what the current proposal is. Trustee Goodwin responded 19 and it started at 28. VM Sigman clarified that there isn't a current proposal and the proposal considered in October was rejected. Before they go back and redo a proposal, the developer wanted to know if they could secure this land. It is currently zoned R-1 so 7 units is the Code.

Trustee Lungmus indicated this has been a huge conundrum for him because he would like to see the parcel developed nicely. The developer put forth a good, honest effort with time and effort to do the water engineering and control and architectural aesthetics. He really likes the landscaped median. In pointed out in R2's design, they have a partially landscaped median there. He asked if this could be done. VM Sigman wasn't aware that they would be able to retain any landscaping. The green on the drawing may be just to differentiate from the pavement. Mr. David VerMeulen responded that it can be landscaped, it is 6 feet wide. VM Sigman said the minimum parking lot island would be 9' back to back, so that would not be big enough for trees. Lower level plantings maybe installed. Trustee Lungmus then asked if there is any utility that Northfield would ever gain from this or has gained with the ownership of this triangle. It is not connected in any way to the other right of ways in the area. VM Sigman replied that it is adjacent to the 100' right of way which has been talked about for detention. This piece wasn't contemplated in the storm water plan.

Trustee Goodwin asked if there is a storm water vault under that property. Public Works Director Mike Nystrand indicated the vault is a little further east at the end of Graemere where there used to be a berm. There's a big junction box there. Trustee Lungmus asked Attorney Hill whether there is any precedent of selling. Attorney Hill indicated it has been done, but not a lot. VM Sigman added that most of them have been done as license agreements, and if at any point in time the Village needs to reclaim the land to use for a public purpose, we have the right to revoke the license agreement. She doesn't think that would work here because they need it for a permanent access to the homes. Trustee Goodwin recalls Attorney Hill alluding that if we decide that the sale could happen, it would go through Plan & Zoning. Attorney Hill agreed a new proposal would go to Plan & Zoning, but not the sale of the property, only the revised PUD that would then include this parcel.

President Frazier explained that IDOT is deferring to the Board because they are aware of the amount of time and energy that has been put into it. In their letter, they note it was a substantial cost to put the median in. They are leaving it up to the Village to decide. She doesn't believe IDOT expects the Village to go ahead with it.

Trustee Gregorio asked if the triangle parcel is only needed if there is a left turn lane. Mr. VerMeulen responded yes and having that left turn access seemed like it was a must for safety so people don't do U-turns at Bracken. He said they were told through the meetings that there needs to be a left turn there. He also said that the Board said they wouldn't approve it without a left turn in.

Trustee Goodwin said that the neighborhood said they don't want that many houses, so if you don't do the houses, then you don't need the left hand turn lane. Mr. VerMeulen said that during the meeting it came down to 16 which was a decent number of houses.

Trustee Kaplan doesn't think this solves the problem for him in terms of getting in and out of the property. He suggested taking the street and bringing it down as a frontage all the way down to Wagner. That would have more practicality and safety for him. He doesn't care if Willow Road is broken up as long as the Village is not paying for it. Trustee Kaplan feels it wouldn't be safe. He said the solution is to have the entrance on Bracken. Mr. VerMeulen said they went to the people on Bracken but they said no. There is already a left hand turn lane at Bracken.

Trustee Goodwin said that curve is tricky and he has seen people barely make it across all the traffic. VM Sigman pointed out that the Village has not had a traffic engineer look at this proposal. IDOT has indicated that a left out is not possible but a left in may be. They would like to see additional work to back it up. A traffic engineer would need to weigh in on the safety. Mr. VerMeulen indicated the reason it came up was because of the Village's traffic engineer who suggested looking into it. Their traffic engineer put this together and presented it to IDOT. He went through the geometrics of the site. It wasn't loosely put together. With IDOT's submittal process, they had to go through this process first for them to consider it. Then, does it meet enough of the standards to go to the next step which is full engineering full drawings.

Trustee Terrill concurs with President Frazier. He would love to see something done to the property, but not as proposed.

Trustee Gregorio said to be consistent with the Village's plan for beautification improvement, he feels the property is not being utilized properly. His emphasis is on the landscaping and beautification of that area and he is open to discussion about density. He said the developer has to come back with different options. The landscaping along Willow Road will enhance the corridor and he is in favor of doing something with the property and is open to discussions with the group as to the number of units.

President Frazier asked Mr. VerMeulen if he has spoken to the people on Bracken about fewer units. Mr. VerMeulen said only one person has to say no, and it won't be approved. They will say no regardless of the number of units. George Hanley, the financier of the project from R2, said the people on Bracken, if it looks like there is a chance, for Village approval then they will want to talk to them. If there is no chance, like from the last meeting, then they don't want to talk at all. He said they have spoken to the residents about the different possibilities, but they are pretty much against it after the last meeting.

Trustee Gregorio indicated that even if they got the Bracken entrance, they would still need the east exit. VM Sigman said the difference is that the east end could be right in right out where Bracken would be for people going west or coming from the east to turn

in at Bracken. If they could get access at Bracken, then the triangular parcel wouldn't be needed. Mr. Hanley said coming in from Ingram makes the most sense to him.

Trustee Goodwin said he lives at the corner of Ingram and indicated that will never happen. Mr. Hanley asked him if he controls the Village Trustees. Trustee Goodwin indicated he is an influencer and a constituent with all of his neighbors and they are 100% opposed to that. There have been proposals in the past where people have tried to go down there and they packed the house. He said don't go there. Mr. Hanley said they don't have much choice, they are not going away. They would like to find a solution and take Willow Road completely out of the equation. Mr. Hanley asked Trustee Goodwin if he serves the Village or his own self-interest. Trustee Goodwin answered all of it; he is here from the Village. Mr. Hanley said if he is a fiduciary, he would think he should serve the Village's interest before his own self-interest. President Frazier told Mr. Hanley that they don't want them to go away and they would like to see something nice in that location, but literally how are we going to get there. There was so much time and effort to get Willow Road as nice looking as he wants his development to be. There are certain pieces that neither the Village nor the developer want to give up, but she said we need to work together. Mr. Hanley said they are willing to come into the Village and spend their money on a nice development. President Frazier pointed out that she was on the Preliminary Plan Review Committee and the density and the in and out issues have been around a long time. Mr. Hanley said they can work on a smaller development but they need to try and work on something that has a chance of passing. Everything they have been told has been no, or go do this or that, spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on studies but then are told it won't work. They would like to try a win win solution.

Trustee Gregorio asked if they can make it work without the left turn. Is the left turn a deal breaker? Mr. Hanley said if they had to, then with the smaller footprint which they have now. Mr. VerMeulen added that it is fully engineered and designed to work with a right in right out only. It was the Board's indication that we needed to have a left turn lane to alleviate traffic concerns. VM Sigman interjected saying she didn't remember it to be a Board direction, but during the hearing process for the Plan & Zoning Commission, there were a lot of neighborhood concern that if there was not a left turn access, the people would use Bracken and U-turn. It came out of discussions as to how you solve this and not negatively impact Bracken Lane. If they only had right in and right out to the development, people will use Bracken as a defacto U-turn around location and the Bracken residents raised that as an issue. Mr. VerMeulen believes there is some reference to that in the documents given to him. He said they are stuck. He thanked the Board for engaging with them and they are open to ideas. President Frazier asked if Mr. VerMeulen said that they were fully engineered as a smaller project for right in right out. Mr. Hanley said the project that was presented for the PUD was fully engineered with a right in right out. He said it was the request of staff for them to obtain a letter from IDOT before the Board would even consider listening to them.

Trustee Gregorio felt they need some direction on what the Board views as to the best way to go so we don't have to keep going around in circles. Mr. VerMeulen would like to finish the discussion about the left turn and asked if it is feasible to move to the next

step with it. President Frazier indicated she is not a developer and they bought the property which has always been a very difficult for people to turn in their driveways because there was no dedicated left hand turns. Mr. VerMeulen said IDOT will consider a left in, right out, right in. They are presenting it to the Board and asking the Board to go to the next step with this. He said they are coming up with answers and they have one in front of you and the Board needs to decide whether they are willing to spend a little more money to investigate this about the triangular piece, is that a possibility? The left turn lane will make it safe. Mr. VerMeulen asked again if the Board wanted to go to the next step or not.

Trustee Roszak joined the meeting.

President Frazier said she is not a developer. As Trustee Goodwin said before, the PUD was already protected and the community does not want it in that location. If they went to the people on Bracken and said they were willing to put in fewer homes, and make a financial incentive, maybe they would consider it. The Bracken residents do not want all kinds of traffic at the end of their street. 19 to 20 homes is a lot of traffic on their street. Mr. VerMeulen said they are down to 11 homes so it is a much smaller project. The Village has very little say so over Bracken Lane. The residents now think that the project is completely shut down. If there is any daylight, there might be some way to change things with Bracken potentially.

Trustee Lungmus said this is the first he's heard of the number being 10 to 12. He knows they own 5 of the 7 acres, the option on the other 2 acres expired in December, so he asked if they are thinking of 10 to 12 on the five acres. Mr. VerMeulen responded yes. Trustee Lungmus felt that was a huge game changer. Mr. VerMeulen said it is a little over 5 acres and they have roughly drawn 11 or 12 houses. Trustee Roszak asked if they are not including the 2 one acre lots and was told yes. Trustee Roszak then asked for an explanation of which lots because most of the trustees didn't know the density had changed. Mr. Hanley said it is the white house furthest west and one more down on Willow Road.

President Frazier suggested they take the new proposal to the Bracken residents. Mr. VerMeulen said if one person says no, they're done. That's the problem. He doesn't think that is realistic. Trustee Roszak believes that the use of Bracken Lane was never a consideration. Mr. VerMeulen indicated yes. Trustee Roszak thinks the triangular piece is a good idea but now that he sees the two lots that are not part of the deal, it is odd now. Trustee Gregorio felt that would affect the landscaping on Willow Road. Mr. VerMeulen said they had an opportunity but they had to keep paying the gentleman that owned those two houses and were 50% more than market value to get those two properties and the time ran out. Trustee Roszak thought they were redeveloping a dead part of Northfield, but now the one house on Willow is the worst part of the development. Mr. VerMeulen said that coming in off of Ingram makes the development work as far as zoning and restrictions. He said they are going to keep trying to find some way to develop the property.

President Frazier indicated the question before the Board is whether or not to move forward with the triangle parcel. There is a lot of work and money to be spent to go through the process leading up to an ultimate decision. She asked how many trustees wanted to go forward. Trustee Lungmus first wanted to know if the cost would be assumed by the Village or by the developer. VM Sigman said the staff recommendation is that the developer be required to post an escrow and the Village would draw down on that escrow for any costs associated with out of pocket expenses. Staff time won't be charged, but the Village Attorney, traffic engineer, appraisals would all be charged. Trustee Gregorio asked exactly what the Board is trying to determine. President Frazier answered that if you look at page 2(a) of the Memo, it lists the process the Village would have to go through. Attorney Hill's firm would have to do a significant amount of research, engineering work would need to be done, a second Committee of the Whole meeting for review of the engineering and legal, an appraiser, negotiation of a sales agreement and then it would be resubmitted to IDOT and go to Plan & Zoning.

President Frazier again asked the trustees who wanted to go forward with the study to see if it's feasible. Counting four, the majority says no.

Discussion on annual fee and fine review

VM Sigman began by saying that Assistant to the Village Manager Melissa DeFeo and Finance Director Steve Noble have done a tremendous amount of work on this. As discussed last year, our current fee and fine structure was based on being a non-home rule community. It is very out of date. Staff is trying to do an overhaul, not just on the rates, but how they are applied, so it is simpler and more transparent. Other communities are being looked at and we are researching options. The Board can expect to have it to them later this year. Staff is recommending no changes in fees and fines until that is done. All of the fees and fines are in line except for one. A resident raised concerns to President Frazier about the estate sale permit fee which is \$75.00 and said that Northfield is the only town that has this fee. We researched it and she was correct. Northfield is the only town in the area that charges a fee. Staff recommends we correct that and eliminate the fee. There really is not much staff time involved, but it is a good idea to have the permit. Trustee Terrill asked who pays for the fee, the resident or the company running the sale. VM Sigman indicated whoever comes in for the permit pays but how it ends up, she doesn't know. VM Sigman advised the Board that it can be changed right away and be on the agenda in February or it can be rolled into the rest of the fees and fines that will come later this year.

Trustee Lungmus asked if the Village has a fee for a real estate transfer. VM Sigman said no and as a home rule community, we can create that as a fee, but only after we hold a referendum on it.

Trustee Kaplan said there was a reason why we had the fee and his guess is the cost of issuing the permit. People will get the permit to obey the law, but he doesn't care what the other communities do. He doesn't know why you would give up a fee.

Trustee Terrill said these sales can cause havoc on the Village because of hundreds of people going to the sale and there will be traffic problems.

VM Sigman remembered historically that she was here when the Village first enacted the difference between an estate sale, a showcase home and a garage sale. They found that estate sales and showcase homes are very different than a garage sale as far as the traffic it generates. There are people that track estate sales and they want to be there way before the doors open. The thought was to know where the sales were so that traffic could be regulated and "No Parking" signs could be posted for narrower lanes. Most of the sales haven't been a problem, but there is some administrative time involved.

President Frazier suggested deferring it until all the fees and fines are discussed.

VM Sigman passed out a revised memo to the Board. On Friday, she received a memo from Winnetka that was referred to in the earlier memo regarding the increase in water rates. A contract was signed in 2003 with Winnetka as our provider of wholesale water. Both towns made commitments and improvements for infrastructure. It is a 30 year binding contract. There is no ability to get out or renegotiate the contract. The contract calls for a reset of the water rates in 2018 based on the average of the comparables specifically listed in the contract. The staff memo treated the two Wilmette rates the same at \$13.95. The way the contract reads, it designates Wilmette, Glenview and Wilmette American. The American rate is a utility run by Glenview. Their rate is not the same and is \$25.81. Therefore, on page 2, instead of a new wholesale rate of \$19.01, the actual proposed wholesale rate as of May 1st is \$21.00. Our current rate is \$12.94 for a 62.3% increase. Our wholesale water purchase is roughly 20 to 25% of the total water budget. If all we do is pass on this wholesale rate increase to the residents, she anticipates about a 12 to 15% increase in water rates.

VM Sigman continued saying there are a couple of different ways to explain this to residents. The contract has rates going up anyway by 4-1/2% or the CPIU, whatever is less. Over the past 10 years, the CPIU has been very low. We have had water rates that have not gone up very much over the 15 year contract but it's coming back to bite us with what seems like a large increase. If you flattened the total over the past 15 years, it is only slightly higher than the 4-1/2% rate in the contract. She will attempt to talk with Winnetka about modifying the Chicago portion or Wilmette to see if we could look at this differently. Attorney Hill, President Frazier and her husband have all looked at the contract and there is nothing that gives the Village a legal ability to reopen it. Even if we could, the only other town that could potentially sell us the water is the Village of Glencoe and they are getting out of the water business, even for themselves. She looked at other comparables, not in the contract and Northbrook was about \$30.00.

President Frazier asked what the wholesale rates are in other towns. Director Noble said Highland Park provides water to Deerfield and Lincolnshire at \$21.15. Northbrook charges \$32.99 to the unincorporated utilities that they sell water too. Glenview sells water to Golf and charges \$24.83.

Trustee Gregorio told the Board one of the biggest complaints he gets from residents is the cost of water. The people that provide the water could start a monopoly and it could be \$100 next time. He does not want to lay down to Winnetka and would like to find other options to battle it. The perception of the people in Northfield is that the water rates are too high. VM Sigman agreed and said that is her concern. Trustee Gregorio thought there was a backup for water. VM Sigman said it is Glencoe who is getting out of the water business and has a plant that is failing. We are still paying off the huge trunk main related to the 30 year contract which is part of the water rate. To get water from any other community, you would have to make a large investment for a trunk main that would service us. Highland Park and Glenview's rates are worse.

Trustee Terrill doesn't think this is a crucial situation at the moment. When he was a kid, Highland Park got their water from Lake Superior then changed to get the water from Lake Michigan. There is an aquifer underneath us. He would like to see if an engineer could tell us if we could dig a well. VM Sigman said in order to provide potable water you would have to meet EPA standards. Trustee Terrill said we have 30 years to work it out and with that threat you might be able to keep water rates lower. You also have the situation where a water company could be created.

Trustee Gregorio asked if there is any leverage with teaming up with the other people who are beholden to Winnetka. VM Sigman's response was it's only us and maybe Kenilworth. The contract is half way through, so there is another 15 years left. Staff is letting the Board know as an early warning because it will have to be adjusted in the budget and explained to the residents. At the end of 15 years, we have the ability to renegotiate and look at other options. For the next 15 years, the same CPIU limiting clause is in there. One thing being discussed in the region is that since Glencoe is trying to get out of the water business, a water district or consortium may make sense. Trustee Terrill said Kenilworth spent \$375,000 to put a pipe from Kenilworth to Winnetka Water Works. VM Sigman stated that we only have a connection with Glencoe. There is another with Glenview, but it is not sufficient to serve the town. Also, Glenview's rate is \$25.81, so they are not somewhere we want to go. Trustee Gregorio asked why it is going up 80%. Trustee Terrill said the CPIU is not going up. VM Sigman said all Winnetka is doing is selling us the raw water at the Village line. Our obligation is to get it to the residents. President Frazier wondered how much is left on the bonds. Director Noble said they were 20 years and issued in 2006 and were just refunded in 2015.

Trustee Roszak suggested a longer term, instead of having it 15 years, renegotiating now for 30 years so you stay on the 4% or CPIU. VM Sigman said if that's what the Board wants, she could try. Trustee Lungmus thinks that should be investigated and is a good idea.

Trustee Gregorio questioned the sewer component rate. Director Noble responded that they combined the funds a couple of years ago and combined the rate. Water is charged at \$5.44 for 100 cubic feet and the sewer rate is \$2.16, so the combined rate is \$7.60. Trustee Lungmus believes you can get a separate meter for watering so you don't pay sewer. VM Sigman said the sprinkler can be on a well also. Trustee Lungmus was told that Northfield wouldn't give him a permit to dig a well. Attorney Hill

indicated that is right because there are EPA issues with respect to prior gas stations leaching into the groundwater.

Discussion on auditor selection

Director Noble said that the audit completed in 2017 was the final one of our contract with Lauderbach and Amen. They have been the Village's auditors for 10 years (2 five year contracts) and staff is coming to the Board to get direction as to whether or not to negotiate with them for an extension of the contractor to seek proposals from other firms and either include or exclude them from those. Director Noble believes they have done a great job. He has worked with other auditors through the years and thinks they are really good at what they do. VM Sigman added that they are the least expensive.

Trustee Roszak asked if there is a legal reason why municipalities have to do this. VM Sigman thinks it's philosophical. Sometimes it's good to get a fresh set of eyes or different perspectives periodically. The opposite perspective is that the continuity may be more likely to find something wrong. They look at the books every year and something new might pop up. There are many municipalities that keep their auditors a long time. She said staff could probably get a good rate from Lauderbach, if the Board wants to stay with them. But if the Board wants to test the market, that can be done as well.

President Frazier said even if staff approaches them, they are still coming back to us with a price which will come before the Board. VM Sigman indicated that if the Board doesn't want Lauderbach, then we won't get a price from them. Director Noble stated that he spoke with Ron who indicated he would work with us for whatever needs to be done to keep Northfield. They have a lot of clients, but are highly selective. He welcomes working with us and will negotiate.

President Frazier thinks their pricing is good. Lake Bluff uses a different auditor that charged them \$35,000 and Lauderbach charged us \$29,000. Director Noble was informed by Ron to be careful with the survey that was done because some people say that's my audit fee. Our fee is everything they do for us – the Department of Insurance fee for the Police Pension Fund, whereas Northbrook didn't include their fee that they use for the police and fire pensions.

Trustee Terrill proposes to keep Lauderbach, but every auditor expects a certain amount of rotation for a certain period of time. This is because of the fiduciary concepts so that you can lock in some type of a fraud and keep it going. Arthur Anderson had some problems with using the same auditor. Director Noble indicated that Lauderbach rotates their staff out or can rotate partners.

Trustee Lungmus likes the continuity and feels that's important. Bringing someone new in would be a learning curve.

President Frazier is inclined to go forward and get a price from them. Trustee Gregorio agreed.

Other Business

Public Works Director Mike Nystrand said that every year they do an annual audit on the water system so we see how much water is coming in from our supplier, Winnetka, and he looks at what they can account for through billing and meter usage. Three years ago, the format was changed and there was a form for unaccountable water loss. In 2003, the AWWA changed it to non-revenue water because it's not really lost, it just hasn't been billed. We used to be in the 7.8 to 11.5% loss. There was a new system three years ago where the form filling can be done online and since we switched, we have been at 18.3% then 18.5% and now 18.7%.

President Frazier asked if there is something wrong and what should the Village be doing about it. Director Nystrand doesn't believe there is anything wrong. The non-revenue number is not billed for, so every time water is used from the hydrants for firefighting or take the truck out to dig up water mains or clean sewers, that's not metered water; it's used but not billed. Trustee Gregorio said it doesn't mean there is a leak in the pipe. Director Nystrand said they do leak detection annually. The AWWA recommends that you do a 30 year system every 3 years. But the audit could be done, and then right after, you get more leaks. Trustee Gregorio then asked is the lost water percentage more because of Village usage or leaking. Director Nystrand indicated when the old paper audit was used you had credits based on the age of the pipes in your system. That went away so they know that pipes have been in the ground 100 years. They changed the criteria, so the percentages have changed. VM Sigman added that the Village does leak detection on 100% of our system every year where only 1/3 of the system is recommended. Repairs are then done immediately. Director Nystrand explained that the water from Winnetka comes through three physical water mains, two on Willow Road and one on Winnetka Road and are metered. We know what is coming in – it's recorded daily. If the consumption numbers go way up, public works employees are then sent out to look for leaks. Winnetka will notice if there is more being pumped to us and will call us. There have been seven water main breaks since the first of the year. VM Sigman indicated that's part of what goes into our capital improvement program – what streets will we get to as far as replacement. We may see patterns in an area and then we'll escalate that construction. Director Noble noted that Northfield has bought less water from Winnetka over the last several years. Director Nystrand said the older meters in the system may not read accurately because they are not measuring at 100%. There could be water theft also.

Trustee Terrill questioned why water consumption has gone down. Trustee Gregorio responded it's primarily weather related in the summer. VM Sigman said it's getting more expensive. Director Noble said he spoke to water operators in other towns and Evanston said they are budgeting a quarter percent decline in the amount of water they sell to their customers every year because of changes in people's habits. There are toilets that use less water, showerheads use less water and people are watering their lawn less.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion or issues to come before the Board, Trustee Goodwin made a motion, seconded by Trustee Gregorio to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.