

**MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD
TUESDAY, February 15, 2022**

The Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order by Village President Greg Lungmus on Tuesday, February 15, 2022, at 5:30 PM. Village Clerk Stacy Sigman called the roll as follows:

Committee Members Present:	Absent:
Trustee Todd Fowler	
Trustee Barnaby Dinges	
Trustee Tom Whittaker	
Trustee Matt Galin	
Trustee Tracey Mendrek	
Trustee Charles Orth	

President Greg Lungmus

Others Present:
Village Attorney Buzz Hill

Approval of the January 18, 2022 Report of Proceedings

Trustee Whittaker made a motion, seconded by Trustee Dinges to approve the January 18, 2022 Report of Proceedings. Approval was unanimous.

Review and Discussion of the updated Tree Preservation Ordinance

Village Manager Sigman noted that at the December 7, 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting, the Board reviewed a draft amendment to the Village’s Tree Preservation code. Based on the direction from that meeting, a draft ordinance was amended to include the following:

- General. The amendment cleans up language, eliminates redundancies, and works to make it clearer and more user-friendly.
- Heritage Trees. A new category of “heritage trees” is created and defined as top-quality species which are 16” in caliper or greater. Heritage trees will only be regulated when they are located in the required front or side yard setbacks on a single-family residential parcel or anywhere on sites that are multi-family, commercial, non-single family, or part of a subdivision. Heritage trees may still be removed but would have to be replaced at a 2 to 1 ratio.
- Heritage Tree Credit. To encourage the planting of heritage trees, the code provides a 25% reduction in the required replacements if a non-heritage tree species is removed and replaced with a heritage tree species.
- Loosened Regulations. Regulations are changed to only regulate larger, more substantial trees and eliminate the difference between planted and naturalized areas. In the old code, 3” caliper or greater trees were regulated in “planted” areas and 6” or greater in “naturalized” areas. Now only trees 8” caliper or greater are trees are regulated.

- **Public Trees.** The amendment cleans up the language regarding trees on public parkways to clarify that these do not get replaced by the applicant, but are instead just subject to a fee if approved for removal.

Trustee Galin requested some minor revisions to the tree preservation code. He recommended that within the Code, 10-15 Tree Permit Process, Proposed B1 be modified to clarify that a tree inventory plan is not necessary if only tree removals are being done on a site. Under the replacement plan in 10-15-D.1, he suggested adding “in caliper”; Protected trees that have been approved for removal shall be replaced with one inch (1’’) “in caliper” of new tree for every one inch (1’’) “in caliper” of tree to be removed...

The Board was comfortable with the revised Tree Preservation Ordinance. A final draft will be sent to the Architectural Commission to review at their April meeting and hold a public meeting on the proposed changes. They will then make a recommendation to the Village Board as to what they believe should be incorporated into the final code amendment. The Architectural Commission is the entity charged with administering this code section and hearing any appeals.

Review and Discussion on FY 2022/23 Special Board Project Requests

Village Manager Sigman reported that as part of the annual budget preparation, Board members are asked if they have any special projects or initiatives they would like to see included. In the past, these were not incorporated in the initial draft budget but rather were discussed as part of the Budget Workshop and added in later. President Lungmus added the project requests to the agenda to provide time for more detailed consideration and to have those selected included in the draft budget that will be reviewed at the Budget Workshop.

A PowerPoint presentation was provided to give an overview of each project, a summary of the estimated costs, and possible funding sources.

The projected budget for FY2021/22 estimates a \$475,000 surplus and a \$7,030,000 reserve balance. The projected budget for FY 2022/23 estimates a \$70,000 surplus and a \$7,110,000 reserve balance. The reserve balances are equal to approximately 7.1 months of operating expenses. The proposed special Board projects are NOT included in any budget estimates and would need to be funded from reserves.

Council Chamber Renovation Overview - President Lungmus recommended a renovation of the Council Chambers to improve the visibility of presentations, provide space and plug-ins for iPads and screens, eliminate trip hazards, provide acoustic adjustments, apply fresh paint, and replace the carpet and furniture. The Village has been contemplating this work for about 8-10 years. Other parts of the Village Hall have been freshened but Council Chambers and its furnishings are over 30 years old. Some level of work is necessary for general safety and maintenance. The estimated cost would be \$150,000-\$250,000, depending on the project approach and finishes. Funding for the project would need to come from reserves.

Flashing Pedestrian Crossing – Trustees Whittaker and Fowler suggested a flashing pedestrian crossing be installed at the mid-block crossing on Winnetka Avenue and Lagoon. This was

originally suggested as a possible Safe Routes to School grant idea, but due to the Phase I and II requirements, a project of this size was determined to be unfeasible. This is a project that some parents at Avoca School have desired. The estimated cost would be \$40,000. Funding would come from reserves and/or a grant (Invest in Cook). If the Village received a grant, it would be a 50/50 split.

Business Support Program - Trustees Orth and Dinges have suggested the \$30,000 Business Support Program from last year be continued. In FY2021/22 a total of \$12,137 has been spent - \$11,409 on the Shop Local Facebook campaign and \$728 on banners. No specific projects for FY2022/23 have been identified. This would be a \$30,000 appropriation with the funding coming from reserves.

Chamber of Commerce - The Winnetka, Northfield, Glencoe Chamber requested extra funding to address shortfalls in their staffing and business model. They asked for \$30,000 from Winnetka and \$10,000 each from Northfield and Glencoe. The Chamber indicated that this is an annual need on top of regular membership dues/event support. The funds will support current programs and no new initiatives are contemplated. Winnetka elected not to provide additional funding and will continue their normal Chamber support. Glencoe allocated \$10,000 but only plans to disperse funds to support Glencoe-specific programs. This would be a \$10,000 annual appropriation and the funding would come from reserves.

Dangerous Animal Program - In FY2021/22, Trustee Whittaker requested and the Board approved \$10,000 in the Police Department budget to cull dangerous animals. To date, none of that money has been expended. This would be a \$10,000 annual supplement and the funding would come from reserves.

50/50 Parkway Tree Program - In FY2021/22, President Lungmus suggested that the normal \$5,000 allocation/cap for the 50/50 parkway tree program be eliminated. The Board approved this approach but it was not reflected in the numbers because the number of requests was unknown. This year, the Village's share was \$2,064 and in most years, the requests have not exceeded the allocation. **This would continue with no allocation cap and any funding would come from reserves.**

Village Center Sign Design - Trustee Dinges has requested that \$10,000 be allocated for the development of a Village Center gateway and way-finding signage packets. The funding would be for design only. The actual signs would be based on field conditions, existing gateway signs, branding plan, comprehensive plan, and State and County right of way restrictions. Funding for the actual signage could then be considered next fiscal year or in conjunction with the Happ Road improvements. This would be a \$10,000 appropriation and the funding would need to come from reserves. Signage funding may be eligible from an Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program grant.

Northfield Park District Special Events - Trustee Dinges requested the Northfield Park District be consulted to determine what financial support they need to sustain and/or expand their special events (i.e. Music and Market, 4th of July, Holiday Tree Lighting, and Ribfest). They indicated they are struggling to support the existing events and could not expand without additional

full-time staff. To continue to support the current programs, they have suggested the Village consider a \$20,000-\$25,000 appropriation. In past years, we have provided \$12,000-\$15,000 including \$10,000 for Music & Market, as well as sponsorships as requested. This would be a \$20,000-\$25,000 annual supplement which is an approximate \$8,000-\$10,000 increase and funding would come from reserves.

Web Page Update - Trustee Galin recommended that the Village's website be refreshed to make it better and easier to use. The Village did a whole new website in 2016 and has not done any substantive updates since. The Board could opt for a completely new web page if there are major issues or a web page refresh if there are more minor updates. Either is covered by our hosting contract and the only cost differential is the amount of staff time required. There would be no out-of-pocket costs, but just staff time. A new web page will take approximately a full year to complete, while a refresh would likely take a few months.

Due to timing, President Lungmus requested to reconvene the COW meeting at the conclusion of the Village Board meeting to complete the discussion on the FY 2022/23 Special Board Requests.

Trustee Orth made a motion, seconded by Trustee Whittaker to adjourn the meeting.

AYES: Fowler NAYS: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 ABSENT:
Dinges
Whittaker
Galin
Mendrek
Orth

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM.

Trustee Galin made a motion, seconded by Trustee Fowler to reconvene the February 15, 2022 Committee of the Whole meeting.

AYES: Fowler NAYS: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 ABSENT:
Dinges
Whittaker
Galin
Mendrek
Orth

The Board continued their discussions on the FY 2022/23 Special Board Project Requests. In summary, the Board decided to allocate \$250,000 to the Council Chamber Renovation. The Board chose to set aside \$60,000 for flashing pedestrian crossings; increasing from one to three locations including Bosworth and Wagner, the bridge at Northfield Road, and Winnetka Avenue and Lagoon. The Village will apply for the Invest in Cook grant in hopes of receiving the outstanding \$60,000 needed for these three flashing pedestrian crossings. The Board opted to decrease the allocation to \$15,000 for the Business Support Program and requested a detailed

outline of how this money will be spent. The Board declined the Chamber of Commerce's \$10,000 supplemental request, as well as the \$10,000 annual supplement for the Dangerous Animal Program. Village Manager Sigman stressed that if any animals presented a safety issue to humans, the Village would still address the problem. The Board decided to continue with no allocation cap for the 50/50 parkway tree program. The Board chose to allocate \$10,000 for the design of a Village Center gateway, as well as other way-finding signage within the Village. The Board opted for a \$20,000 appropriation to be used for the Park District's Special Events, increasing their annual supplement by \$8,000. The Board recommended a refresh of the Village's website with no additional out-of-pocket expenses.

Other Business

Public Comment

Trustee Whittaker made a motion, seconded by Trustee Dinges to adjourn the meeting.

AYES: Fowler NAYS: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 ABSENT:
Dinges
Whittaker
Galín
Mendrek
Orth

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.