

Village of Peoria Heights
Board of Trustees
July 19, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m.

Everyone stood for a moment of silence and the Pledge to the Flag.

Upon calling roll, the following Trustees were present: Sarah DeVore, Jeff Goett, Beth Khazzam, Mark Gauf, Matthew Wigginton, Brandon Wisenburg. Others present included Mayor Michael Phelan, Village Administrator and Chief of Police Dustin Sutton, Village Clerk Stephanie Turner, and Village Counsel Attorney Mark Walton.

Trustee Khazzam made a motion to approve minutes from June 21, 2022. Trustee Gauf seconded. The Board voted to approve the minutes 6-0.

Mayor Phelan announced that Ms. Jenny Bartley, a former Peoria Heights resident and wife of the Public Works Foreman, Mr. Jim Bartley, was battling cancer. There will be a benefit for Ms. Bartley on Saturday, July 23, and Mayor Phelan thanked Mr. Robbie Mathesin and Mr. Curtis Spence for their work organizing the benefit. Ms. Lindsey Faulkner, daughter of the Bartleys, came forward to speak about her family and the event. Mayor Phelan encouraged everyone to help the family in any way possible.

Mayor Phelan opened the meeting to public comment.

Mr. Kevin Lowery, 805 E Toledo Ave explained he frequently sees cars running the stop sign at Toledo and Illinois and driving too fast. He expressed concern for the children in the neighborhood and requested help from the Peoria Heights Police Department. Chief Sutton agreed stating he'd meet with Mr. Lowery to get more details. Trustee Wisenburg asked about placing temporary speed bumps to slow down traffic. Chief Sutton noted that had been discussed previously and both manpower and cost were concerns. He stated he would research and come up with a plan for the neighborhood.

Hearing no other public comment, Mayor Phelan closed the meeting to public comments.

Mayor Phelan invited Mr. Kevin Shields, Commissioner on the Metropolitan Airport Authority of Peoria, forward to provide an update on the airport. Mr. Shields shared the history of the airport authority including the make-up of its board. He noted it was a 9 member board with 5 members appointed by the State and the remaining seats appointed by each of the mayors of Peoria, Peoria Heights, Chillicothe, and Bartonville. He shared that the traffic was about 90% what it had been pre-pandemic, and most airports, including Peoria, are losing flight frequency. He stated a general labor shortage was the biggest factor impacting travel at the moment. He shared recent improvements included new parking and an air control tower. Trustee Wigginton thanked Mr. Shields for his work diligently reviewing the airport authority's budget to taxpayers' benefit. Mr. Shields spoke to the steep learning curve for members of the airport authority. He stressed the importance of institutional knowledge. Mayor Phelan asked if property taxes were the primary source of income. Mr. Shields replied that the tax levy, as well as passenger charges, were the largest sources of income, but there were additional revenues such as rental car fees. Mayor Phelan thanked Mr. Shields for his service to the community.

Mayor Phelan called for the Board to discuss old business.

Superintendent of Public Works, Mr. Chris Chandler, shared there had been 4 leaks repaired in the fountain. The contractors will reseal the plumbing again, and the Village is working on getting quotes for lighting. The fountain will be running again soon. Mayor Phelan noted he had a recent complaint of discolored water. Mr. Chandler replied there had been some issues recently due to hydrant flow testing in the Marietta area. He stated flushing water lines for 5 – 15 minutes typically removed any issues.

Hearing no additional old business, the Board moved on to new business.

Trustee Gauf made a motion to approve reimbursement to Pearl Companies for C & G Concrete bill in the amount of \$4,000. Trustee Gauf shared that when the Village had initially approved work in the area, Mr. Gary Pearl, came out to ask for additional repairs be made during construction. The contractors informed Mr. Pearl the work would need to be approved by the Village. Mr. Pearl stated he'd pay for the work and ask for reimbursement. Trustee Wisenburg seconded the motion. Trustee Wigginton expressed concern the work was done and permission was asked after the fact. He noted he would vote in favor but was worried about the precedent. Chief Sutton explained the property was the Village's, and Mr. Pearl was aware that the Village wasn't obligated to pay the charges. Chief Sutton noted Pearl Companies has previously completed work on the alley privately. The Board voted 6-0 to approve the reimbursement.

Trustee Wigginton made a motion to approve Ordinance 2022-1683; an Ordinance Amending Title 7, Chapter 2 of the Village Code of the Village of Peoria Heights to Regulate Portable Storage Units. Trustee DeVore seconded the motion. Trustee Wigginton explained the Board had previously discussed the issue and reached a consensus to address a timeline for residents to have portable storage on their property. The ordinance allows portable storage on a property no more than 30 days in a 1 year period. Chief Sutton stated he would support an amendment to 60 total days if the Board agreed. Attorney Walton suggested an alternative to allow the Village Administrator authority to extend the deadline for good cause. Chief Sutton agreed that could be a good compromise. Trustee Wisenburg made an amendment to paragraph (B)iii to change it from 30 days to 60 days. Trustee Goett seconded the amendment. Trustee DeVore expressed support for a process to ask for an extension but didn't support changing the allowable period to 60 days. Trustee Wisenburg noted if all requests for extensions would be granted, as Chief Sutton had indicated, it was an unnecessary step. Trustee Wigginton agreed and stated changing the number of days was better for clarity and ease. The amendment passed 6-0. Trustee Wisenburg asked if residents who currently had storage pods would be grandfathered in. Chief Sutton replied no. The Board voted 6-0 on Ordinance 2022-1683 as amended.

Trustee Wigginton opened discussion of the Peoria Heights Fire Department by noting that Chief Sutton had shared figures with the Board from the City of Peoria for fire coverage. Trustee Wigginton noted the City of Peoria had provided several options including in house service and call based service. Trustee Wigginton summarized the question for discussion was whether the Village should contract for service during the day or have a paid firefighter. Chief Sutton noted the quote included a response to EMS calls which the Village doesn't need. He stated that for a reasonable comparison the Village should look at the quote of \$365,000 for fire service. Chief Sutton praised Fire Chief Thompson for using his vacation time to cover the Village and arranging coverage until August 14. Trustee DeVore asked Fire Chief Thompson a variety of a questions regarding volunteers, call volume, and use of the MABAS box. After listening to his answers, Trustee DeVore stated she believes Fire Chief Thompson has done everything the Board has asked and has been put in a difficult position. She expressed it's in the Village's best interest to hire a paid firefighter. Trustee Wisenburg agreed noting most fire departments are structured similarly to the PHFD. Trustee Wisenburg stated he did not support hiring the City of Peoria.

Mayor Phelan asked Trustee Wisenburg for clarification if the Village should only hire one firefighter. Trustee Wisenburg agreed. Mayor Phelan asked Fire Chief Thompson if one firefighter could respond to a fire call. Fire Chief Thompson noted one firefighter can go into the structure if one person is inside or if they're unable to determine if someone is inside. The Board continued to discuss the use of the MABAS box to request mutual aid. Trustee Goett expressed most of the residents he spoke to wanted to keep the PHFD. Trustee Wigginton stated hiring a paid firefighter for the day shift was the most cost effective option but stressed adding more personnel wouldn't be cost effective. Chief Sutton stated the City of Peoria had provided numbers, at the request of the Village, to help the Village. He noted the Village has an outstanding working relationship with the City of Peoria citing the working relationship between the two police departments. Fire Chief Thompson also expressed thanks for the City of Peoria's cooperation with the Village. Trustee Wisenburg stated concern that the residents of the Village don't elect officials to the City of Peoria who control the City's fire service decisions. Mayor Phelan expressed concern over coverage when an employee took vacation. Fire Chief Thompson noted he would provide coverage as he had previously. Trustee Wigginton noted having paid staff would be an investment, but the Board did need to make a decision immediately. Trustee Gauf asked Chief Sutton for clarification on the finances. Chief Sutton explained the City of Peoria provided a cost estimate of \$367,000 for fire service response which is equal to the current PHFD budget without the additional costs of hiring personnel. Trustee Gauf stated he didn't understand the statements about hiring personnel being the most cost effective since it was more than the quoted fire service. He acknowledged concerns about representation with the City of Peoria while also noting his concern of delays while waiting for additional firefighters to respond to calls. Trustee Gauf noted the trustees are meant to represent the interests of residents both immediately and in the future. He concluded the issue required thought and there wasn't a lot of time. Trustee Wigginton asked about the volume of nonEMS calls. It was explained the about 80%-90% of call volume is EMS related. Trustee DeVore noted the Village was growing and had a balanced budget thanks to the hard work of Administration. She stated costs will continue to increase and expressed concern that the City of Peoria would pass large increases to the Village in the future. Mayor Phelan opined that the cheapest option wasn't always the best option. He stressed his concern one firefighter wasn't sufficient. Trustee DeVore agreed, but she was concerned about cost estimates. Fire Chief Thompson explained the difficulty in hiring firefighters currently. The Board began a discussion of response time to calls with Fire Chief Thompson explaining he uses reports from the PHPD to assess the status of the fire so he can request mutual aid quickly. Fire Chief Thompson praised the PHPD for their assistance and noted the PHPD has put out two fires within the last year. Trustee Wisenburg asked if there were regulations for response time, and Fire Chief Thompson explained the regulations for volunteer departments was 10 minutes. Trustee Wisenburg asked if the PHFD had ever fallen out of standard. And Fire Chief Thompson answered no. Trustee Wigginton noted as a public body the Village needs to advertise the position if the Village hires a full-time day shift coverage. Chief Sutton explained the process of advertising and hiring. Trustee Wisenburg asked if the Board could proceed, and Mayor Phelan noted they could reach a consensus. Attorney Walton explained the Village doesn't need to vote to advertise, but it needs to vote to approve the position. Trustee Goett and Trustee Wisenburg supported moving forward. Trustee Khazzam also supported moving forward while she gathers her thoughts. With a consensus, Administration will move forward with advertising the position.

The Board moved on to miscellaneous business.

Trustee Wigginton reminded the Board that the Village would celebrate its 125th anniversary in 2023. He noted he had suggestions for committee members, and previous celebrations had been community

lead. He encouraged the Board to pursue a celebration. Mayor Phelan noted the difficulty of securing volunteers, but he supported the idea.

Mr. Chandler explained the Village has advertised the job for construction of the water main on Lake, and bids will be opened soon. Trustee DeVore asked if that main could be contributing to brown water complaints. Mr. Chandler agreed it could be impacting the rest of the system.

Director of Community Development, Mr. Wayne Aldrich, updated the Board that the Village's consultants, Woodard and Curran, have submitted preliminary reports. Next the consultants will be reviewing financial information. Trustee Wisenburg asked if the consultants would be advising on the brown water, and Mr. Aldrich allowed it was a possibility. Trustee Wisenburg expressed the importance of addressing the issue. Mr. Chandler noted residents aren't contacting the Water office which makes the cause difficult to assess. Trustee Gauf agreed, and Mayor Phelan noted if residents contact the Water office then an employee will respond. Mr. Aldrich stated discolored water is frequently an issue of stagnant water, and Woodard and Curran can help identify possible areas of concern. Trustee Gauf explained how changes to the flow of water can cause discolored water. Trustee Wigginton asked if the brown water was toxic or a health hazard, and Mr. Chandler emphatically stated it wasn't. Trustee Gauf agreed stating it was an aesthetic issue. Mr. Chandler noted it was not what the Water company wanted to deliver to residents. Trustee Khazzam exited the meeting at 7:16 pm. Mr. Aldrich continued his updates by noting there's a substantial lead time for the equipment for the Together We Play project. Trustee Wigginton asked for an update regarding funds for the project held by Advocates for Access. Chief Sutton stated Advocates for Access will be sending the funds to the Village. Trustee Khazzam returned at 7:17 pm.

Hearing no additional miscellaneous business, the Board moved on to the finance reports.

Trustee Goett made a motion to approve payment of the bills. Trustee DeVore seconded the motion. There were no questions on the bills. The Board voted 6-0 to approve payment of the bills.

Clerk Turner read the Treasurer's Report. As of the end of June, there was \$6,070,422.55 in the Village controlled accounts and \$1,873,861.70 in the Water controlled accounts. Trustee Goett made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, and Trustee Gauf seconded. The Treasurer's report was approved 6-0. Trustee DeVore exited the meeting at 7:18 pm.

Trustee Wigginton made a motion to enter executive session under 5 ILCS 120/2(c)11 to discuss pending litigation. Trustee Wisenburg seconded the motion. The motion to enter into executive session passed 5-0, and the Board left open session at 7:19 pm.

Trustee DeVore returned to the meeting prior to the conveying of executive session. The Board of Trustees reconvened regular session at 7:40 pm.

Trustee Goett made a motion to adjourn, and Trustee Khazzam seconded the motion. The Board of Trustees voted 6-0 to adjourn at 7:40 pm.

Michael Phelan, Mayor

Stephanie Turner, Village Clerk