

Village of Peoria Heights
Board of Trustees
July 21, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

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

Upon calling roll, the following Trustees were present: Sherryl Carter, Beth Khazzam, Jeff Goett, Brandon Wisenburg, and Sarah DeVore. Trustee Diane Mariscal was absent. 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 Goett made a motion to approve the minutes from the Board of Trustees Meeting held on June 16, 2020 and the motion was seconded by Trustee Carter. The Board approved the minutes 5-0.

Mayor Phelan announced that the Village was erring on the side of caution since COVID cases are increasing and would be practicing social distancing of the Board of Trustees. Mayor Phelan invited Fire Chief Greg Walters to the podium to recognize Mr. Bob Hill and his family. Mayor Phelan thanked Mr. Hill for his 29 years of service to the Village citing his work as a trustee and volunteer firefighter on the Peoria Heights Fire Department. Mr. Hill retires as a Deputy Chief of the PHFD. Fire Chief Walters said that Mr. Hill has been the rock of the PHFD. He stated it was with sadness he said goodbye and thanked Mr. Hill. Mr. Hill said he'd enjoyed his time working with the Village and encouraged the Village to make the PHFD as good as it can be.

Mayor Phelan opened the meeting to public comment. Hearing no public comment, Mayor Phelan closed public comments. Mayor Phelan moved on to the trustees' reports.

Trustee Carter noted that the Village had received a lot of rain recently and encouraged residents to call the office to report problems even if it was after hours. Chief Sutton thanked Public Works for their work during the recent rain. He noted that the employees went above and beyond clearing out debris.

There was nothing to report for building maintenance.

Trustee Khazzam stated she wanted to address recent questions about the Village comprehensive plan. Trustee Khazzam noted that one of the concerns, interactivity, would be addressed in the coming meetings. She assured the trustees that all their concerns would be addressed.

Trustee Goett had nothing to report for Administration.

Trustee Wisenburg had nothing to report for the Fire Department. Fire Chief Walters mentioned that the PHFD had helped the VFW Hall get water out of the building after the recent rains. Mayor Phelan noted that Chief Sutton and Superintendent of Water, Mr. David Marfell, had visited the site as part of that incident.

Trustee DeVore reminded residents that solicitors must be registered and licensed by the Village. She shared that there were currently no licensed solicitors, and residents should call immediately if a solicitor was unable to produce a permit from the Village.

Mayor Phelan asked for old business. Hearing none, he moved on to new business.

Trustee Carter made a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-1630: an Ordinance Providing for the Vacation of Alley Between East Glen Avenue and East Samuel Avenue. Trustee Wisenburg seconded the motion. Trustee Carter explained that the alley was vacant, and the residents want access to it as it's not being used. Mayor Phelan asked Superintendent of Streets, Mr. Michael Casey, if Public Works had objections. Mr. Casey said they did not as it was being maintained by the owner, and Public Works simply needed to have easement access. Trustee Carter asked Attorney Walton if the ordinance ensured that, and Attorney Walton stated it did. Attorney Walton stated it was normal to request a monetary compensation for paperwork and attorney's fees. Attorney Walton noted that the ordinance could be approved contingent to attorney's fees. Ordinance 2020-1630 vacating the alley between Glen and Samuel passed 5-0 contingent on payment of attorney's fees.

Trustee Carter made a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-1631: an Ordinance Providing for the Vacation of Alley at 4615 North Prospect Road. Trustee Goett seconded the motion. Trustee Carter noted it was a similar situation. Attorney Walton agreed and stated it was a single owner, and the owner had paid for the platting. Trustee Carter recommended passage with a similar contingency. Ordinance 2020-1631 vacating the alley at 4615 Prospect passed 5-0 contingent on payment of attorney's fees.

Trustee Carter made a motion to approve a resolution to retroactively authorize \$5,888.34 of State MFT Funds for the overage amount spent on roadway salt. Trustee Khazzam seconded the motion. Trustee Carter noted the resolution must be passed as the Village had to pay for salt the Village needed. The motion to approve the resolution for retroactive authorization of MFT Funds passed 5-0.

Trustee Khazzam made a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-1632: an Ordinance Amending Title 3, Chapter 3 of the Village Code of the Village of Peoria Heights, for the Purpose of Amending the Hotel and Motel Room Renting Tax, and Trustee DeVore seconded the motion. Trustee Khazzam noted that the ordinance would commence in October 2020, and Attorney Walton noted that the ordinance wasn't a substantive change but was recommended by the Village's consultants at Azavar to help with collections. Trustee Wisenburg asked how the 5% hotel tax compares to other municipalities, and Attorney Walton stated it was similar in other areas. Ordinance 2020-1632 amending the Hotel and Motel Room Renting Tax was approved 5-0.

Trustee Khazzam made a motion to approve the site plan application filed by KDB Group, LLC and Atrium Hotel, LLC seeking approval of the site plan for development of a hotel on the property located at 4615 North Prospect Road. Trustee Goett seconded the motion. Trustee Khazzam noted that the Board had reviewed the site plan multiple times. The Board voted 5-0 to approve the site plan of the Atrium Hotel.

Trustee Khazzam made a motion to approve a Right-of-Way License for the Atrium Hotel, and Trustee Goett seconded. Trustee Khazzam noted that it was for a slight balcony overhang and a retaining wall. Attorney Walton stated that he wanted to legally document that the business had permission to use the public easement in these ways. Attorney Walton noted that the business owner would need to provide insurance for any incidents on their property within the easement. The right-of-way license passed 5-0.

Trustee Khazzam made a motion to approve the Peoria Heights Congregational Church Christian Concert on Saturday, August 29, 2020, and Trustee DeVore seconded the motion. Mayor Phelan invited Mr. Rick

Picl forward as a representative for the event. Mayor Phelan noted that the event had held annually for many years, but current situations necessitated additional measures for public safety. Mr. Picl stated rather than two bands they would only have one music set of no more than 90 minutes. He noted the church planned to provide sanitizing stations, and they would advertise social distance requirements. Mr. Picl explained that volunteers would be policing to ensure social distancing was respected although he noted that he wasn't certain how many people would attend. He stated that there would be overflow seating available on the church lawn. Trustee Wisenburg asked how many people might show up. Mr. Picl stated past attendance was between 200-500, but he didn't anticipate that many during the pandemic. He noted that there was space available to segregate family groups. Trustee Wisenburg asked about state guidance for events. Chief Sutton replied that the state had recommended less than 250 attendees. Mayor Phelan stressed to Mr. Picl that as the chairperson he would be responsible for ensuring that safety was respected. Trustee Wisenburg expressed discomfort with increasing COVID cases. Trustee Khazzam stated she believed with the attendees being seated during the concert would help mitigate concerns. She expressed her belief Mr. Picl had carefully considered public safety for the event. The event was approved 5-0.

Trustee Goett made a motion to approve non-union noncontractual employee raises, and Trustee Khazzam seconded the motion. Trustee Goett noted that the non-union employee raises had been discussed earlier, but there was concern about funds. He expressed support stating the Village had funds from the previous fiscal year's surplus. He asked Chief Sutton if the raises were retroactive to May 1, 2020. Chief Sutton stated they were. Chief Sutton said he had previously recommended the raises for the 6 non-union employees. He noted the staff was providing weekly financial updates. He stated there had been a decrease in sales tax revenues, but the Village was doing very well in spite of that. He noted that the Village expected to be at a surplus of \$97,000 at the end of the first quarter, and the Village's spending was down substantially. Chief stated the annual cost increase of the raises is \$9,615.65. Trustee Carter noted she was in favor of giving staff raises, but she was concerned police staff's raises had been delayed. She stated she couldn't support these raises until the officers' raises had been addressed. Chief Sutton said he appreciated Trustee Carter's support, but the police union contract would be reviewed next month. He cited the difference of a multiyear contract as opposed to the one time one year raise. He noted that half of the positions under discussion were also police positions which were administrative. Trustee Goett asked if the delay to the police contract was the police union's choice, and Chief Sutton replied it was. Trustee Wisenburg stated the Village's finances were encouraging, and he noted his concerns about increasing the property tax levy. Mayor Phelan noted he appreciated the trustees' caution, but that he and Chief Sutton would not make a recommendation that would endanger the Village's finances. The motion to approve non-union raises passed 4-1. Trustee Carter voted nay.

Trustee Goett made a motion to approve a one-time Water Department credit in the amount of \$20 for residential water utility accounts. Trustee Khazzam seconded. Trustee Goett credited Chief Sutton for coming up with a program for the residents after the Village had offered the business grants. He stated it was a great idea. Chief Sutton noted that the program was based off the RIPPLE program and modified the program in order to streamline it for the Village. By providing the credit directly to the water bill, rather than requiring receipts, it will reduce work for the residents and staff. He noted that the Water had a surplus, because residents have increased consumption while staying home, and the program will push funds back to those who are funding the surplus. Chief Sutton stated that the cost of the program was \$51,200, and the Water Company would still be at a surplus after the program costs. The water credit passed 5-0.

Trustee Wisenburg began the discussion of the Fire Department by explaining that the Village had a draft ordinance creating the office of Fire Chief to be appointed by the Mayor. He also noted that the Board had received cost estimates from the City of Peoria for services. Fire Chief Walters said he believed the Board didn't have adequate information. He offered to provide an update to the Board on the status of the Peoria Heights Fire Department as well as the possibility of a paid duty crew. Mayor Phelan suggested a special meeting to solely discuss the Fire Department. Fire Chief Walters agreed to the idea and agreed to work with Trustee Wisenburg on an agenda.

Mayor Phelan asked the trustees if there was any miscellaneous business to discuss. Trustee Khazzam stated she wanted to reassure the residents that the Village comprehensive plan is community driven. Trustee DeVore noted that the questionnaire hadn't changed and asked if it was going to be updated. Trustee Khazzam said the questionnaire hadn't changed, but there was a new website with updating information for the community to review and interact with. A link can be found on the Village's website at peoriaheights.org.

Clerk Turner read the Treasurer's Report. As of the end of June, there was \$3,081,796.69 in the Village controlled accounts and \$1,226,539.12 in the Water controlled accounts. Trustee Goett made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, and Trustee Wisenburg seconded the motion. Trustee DeVore asked if the BDD Fund balance was after all grants had been paid. Clerk Turner stated it was. The Board voted 5-0 to accept the report.

Trustee Goett made a motion to adjourn, and Trustee Wisenburg seconded. The Board voted 6-0 to adjourn the meeting at 6:49 pm.

Michael Phelan, Mayor

Stephanie Turner, Village Clerk