

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE  
VILLAGE OF STEGER, WILL & COOK  
COUNTIES, ILLINOIS

The Board of Trustees convened in regular session at 7:00 P.M. on this 1<sup>ST</sup> day of February, 2016 in the Municipal Building of the Village of Steger with the Deputy Village Clerk Sandra Mehrl attending and Mayor Peterson presiding.

Village Clerk Carmen S. Recupito, Jr. was absent. Deputy Village Clerk Sandra Mehrl called the roll and the following Trustees were present; Joyce, Perchinski, Sarek, Lopez, Skrezyna and Buxton. Also present were Fire Chief Nowell Fillion, Police Chief Ken Boehm, EMA Chief Tom Johnston, Human Resources Director Mary Jo Seehausen, Housing and Community Development Director Alice Peterson and Village Administrator Mike Tilton.

**AWARDS, HONORS, SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

None

**MINUTES**

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Board Meeting, as all members have copies. Trustee Lopez instructed the Deputy Village Clerk to review the January 4<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting Minutes regarding Discussion on Steger Days of Music. Trustee Lopez also asked that the review and ratification of the Minutes be added to the February 16<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting agenda. Trustee Lopez seconded the motion to approve the minutes of January 19<sup>th</sup>. Voice vote was called; all ayes. Motion carried.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

John Cashman approached the Board. Mr. Cashman asked Trustee Buxton to give his report regarding the Miller Woods de annexation from Metropolitan Water Reclamation District. Trustee Buxton met with an attorney who successfully represented Crawford Countryside. Trustee Buxton believes the attorney to reasonable and experienced in de annexation. The attorney provided an engagement letter. Trustee Buxton believes it is time to bring in the Miller Woods residents and make a decision. The costs are upward bound of \$5,000. Much work toward de annexation has been prepared and should help to keep down the legal costs. It is suggested that a surveyor be hired to complete a "boundary survey" that would be in addition to the legal fees. Miller Woods includes about 500 homes. A town hall meeting would be held to determine the next steps. There will be a 60 day court continuance during which time information would be shared and the money raised if the area decides to move forward. John Cashman explained that the Water Reclamation District is taxing residents of Miller Woods who receive no services from the Water Reclamation District. Trustee Buxton and Miller Woods resident Pete Dickett have been working on the de annexation, have filed the court case and have spent \$400 out of their own pockets not including travel downtown. Mr. Cashman suggested the Village pay the legal fees for the de annexation. Mayor Peterson spoke with Village attorneys who advised against using taxpayer money for private

matter under state law, they are de annexing from another governing body that has nothing to do with the Village of Steger. It is not permissible under state law. Mr. Cashman inquired about Mayor Peterson representing the Miller Woods group. Mayor Peterson explained that his law firm would not allow him to do so as he is mayor of this government and to take on representation of individuals of the Village in which he is mayor, would be an issue for his firm. Mayor Peterson stated that once a commitment from Miller Woods residents is reached discussion on collecting the funds can begin. Trustee Buxton explained the average resident is paying \$200-\$300 in taxes and some \$1,000 or more, to the Water Reclamation District. Collectively the area is paying well over \$100,000 annually. From the first meeting, the Water Reclamation District has agreed not to oppose de annexation. Mayor Peterson also explained that state statute is complex in regards to de annexation and there is a real need for legal representation.

Mr. Cashman commented on Trustee Lopez's concerns for the Steger Days of Music discussion in the January 4, 2016 minutes. Mr. Cashman believes a budget amount was discussed and was not reflected in the minutes.

Roger Wommack discussed with the Board the annual Drivin' the Dixie event. Mr. Wommack asked for permission to use the Kmart parking lot on June 18, 2016 for the event. Mr. Wommack will be attending the upcoming planning meetings. Trustee Lopez made a motion to allow the Drivin' the Dixie committee to use the Kmart parking lot on Saturday June 18<sup>th</sup> provided no other use has been scheduled there. Trustee Skrezyna seconded the motion. Voice vote was called; all ayes. Motion carried.

Layne Platopoulos, 3210 Sandy Ridge Drive discussed the need for police protection in the village, especially for detectives. Mayor Peterson shared with Ms. Platopoulos the steps that are taken by the Fire & Police Board when hiring for the Police Department. The process including testing and screening process that takes 3 ½ months to complete. Ms. Platopoulos suggested sharing the information in the village's quarterly newsletter so residents can understand the process. She also suggested residents may be willing to pay 2-3% more in property taxes for better police coverage. Mayor Peterson explained that the Fire & Police Board cannot hire new candidates for positions until all the candidates on the current list have been exhausted. By law, the list expires after two years or when all candidates have been exhausted. Staffing is part of the Police Chief's 5 year Strategic Plan.

Meredith Horn of 22805 State Street inquired about drainage issues in Miller Woods. Ms. Horn asked if any Board members have taken a look at issues. Ms. Horn inquired about K-5's proposal. Mr. Tilton explained that a second proposal was received Friday afternoon. He hopes to have both proposals on next agenda for discussion. Ms. Horn asked what specifically is planned for the Miller Woods area. Ms. Horn has prepared a 45 page pdf including photos of the area she lives in and its drainage needs. Ms. Horn stated that municipal storm water is being dumped into backyards. Public Infrastructure Director Dave Toepper intends to address the drainage issue, according to his 5 year Strategic Plan in 2016. Mayor Peterson explained that the village has systematic issues that must be solved as a community.

The engineers' proposals are to address the entire village and not just Miller Woods. Some problems when solved have created other problems. Ms. Horn reported that the area is not on municipal infrastructure. It is all surface percolation and ditches. Mr. Tilton explained that two engineers' proposals will be on the February 16<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

## **REPORTS**

**Village Administrator Mike Tilton** reported that in Springfield, Representative Jim Durkin introduced HR 4521 which would allow the Governor to “sweep” appropriated funds. Illinois Municipal League and South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association are opposed to the bill. Mr. Tilton will prepare a letter in opposition to HR 4521. IML and SSMMA are asking that each village's mayor and manager submit letters in opposition.

Mr. Tilton met with Sherry Newquist and discussed some possibilities to keep Amici's open or get another business into the location sooner rather than later.

Mr. Tilton attended several meetings recently regarding the closing of St. James Hospital. Mr. Tilton asked the mayors and managers at SSMMA meeting to attend all St. James meetings. Mr. Tilton's biggest concern is potential loss of the emergency room. Last year 40,000 emergency room visits at Chicago Heights hospital and 30,000 at Olympia Fields. On February 9<sup>th</sup> a meeting will be held at Bloom Township High School to discuss hospital closing and its impact on residents. Mr. Tilton invited and encouraged all to attend. Mayor Peterson reported on the village's January meeting regarding the closing. The CEO of St. James attended and stated that they would file in February. It was later learned that they had filed prior to the meeting. The most recent proposal from St. James is to add outpatient and administrative services on the south end of the current structure while removing the rest of the hospital and replacing it with additional parking. Chief Fillion explained that the road goes down to one way each way near the Olympia Fields hospital. Additional traffic will further restrict the traffic flow there. Chief Fillion's believes the “turn around” time will be an hour or more. When the ambulance is out of town with a patient, additional patients will have to be serviced by neighboring towns. Trustee Perchinski stated the Franciscans are “nonprofit” yet every year make over a million dollars. Mr. Tilton explained the Franciscans hold over 1.5 billion in assets. Mayor Peterson explained that most of the money the Franciscans are offering to spend at Chicago Heights location is for demolition and construction of the parking lot. Mayor Peterson said that the Hospital has to get approval from the State of Illinois. Steger is actively trying to discourage the action, writing letters, holding hearings, attending meetings, contacting state representatives and trying to get a political movement going.

**Director of Public Infrastructure Dave Toepper** was absent.

**Fire Chief Nowell Fillion** reported in January the Fire Department had 112 emergency callouts. Chief Fillion continues to work on ISO paper work and set a date in April. Infrastructure Director Toepper provided the Fire Department with a map of water lines and hydrants that will be helpful. The Fire Department will use the newly acquired 40 E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street for training that will include Mutual Aid companies.

Mayor Peterson asked Mr. Tilton what acquiring of 40 E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street meant to the Quiet Zone Study. Mr. Tilton explained next work with the 34<sup>th</sup> Street alleyways then move forward from there.

**Police Chief Ken Boehm** shared his 5 Year Strategic Plan.

**EMA Chief Tom Johnston** shared his 5 Year Strategic Plan. Chief Johnston hoped that grants for EMA buildings and communications become more available. The Mobile Command Unit is having some repairs done. When complete it will be used at all working fires and MABAS will ask that the Mobile Command Unit deploy to designated zones as needed.

**Community Center Director Diane Rossi** was absent.

**HR Director Mary Jo Seehausen** had no report.

**Housing and Community Development Director Alice Peterson** had no report.

**Village Attorney Kurt Asprooth** was absent.

### **TRUSTEES' REPORTS**

**Trustee Buxton** Treasurer's Report is attached.

**Trustee Skrezyna** had no report.

**Trustee Lopez** had no report.

**Trustee Sarek** met with Recreation Board and Administrator Tilton and HR Director Seehausen to go over procedures. Trustee Sarek is also looking into ComEd bills for the baseball and softball fields. He will be looking into setting fees for each sport either by the season or by the game.

**Trustee Perchinski** had no report.

**Trustee Joyce** had no report.

**CLERK'S REPORT** The next Village Board meeting will be Tuesday, February 16, 2016

The Village Hall will be closed Monday, February 15th in observance of the Presidents Day Holiday

**PRESIDENT PETERSON** had no report.

## **BILLS**

Trustee Skrezyna made a motion to pay the bills as listed, with the following changes; remove the Paul Conway Shields Invoice and the Cylinder Maintenance Invoice and change the James Herr bill from Police to Corporate. Trustee Perchinski seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Joyce, Perchinski, Sarek, Lopez, Skrezyna and Buxton. Mayor Peterson voted aye. Motion carried.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

A letter from the Steger Area Chamber of Commerce for use of Veterans Park July 19<sup>th</sup> through 25<sup>th</sup> for Steger Fest 2016 and for a temporary liquor license from July 21<sup>st</sup> through 24<sup>th</sup> from Frank Elton, Steger Area Chamber of Commerce President was read. Trustee Perchinski commented that the village is now aware of costs associated with events such as Steger Fest and the Chamber must be made aware of these costs. Trustee Skrezyna asked that the scheduled events for Steger Fest be shared with the Board. Mayor Peterson asked Administrator Tilton to contact Mr. Elton and ask him to meet with Mr. Tilton, Fire Chief Fillion, Police Chief Boehm and EMA Chief Johnston to discuss. Trustee Lopez made a motion to table. Trustee Skrezyna seconded the motion. Voice vote was called; all ayes. Motion carried.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

Trustee Sarek asked for an update on the Village Hall. Mayor Peterson explained he's been in contact with the School Board. The School Board asked if the Mayor would meet with them the second week of this month. Eric Diehl will provide a meeting time to the Mayor. Mayor Peterson and Administrator Tilton had a conference call today with Piper Jaffrey Investment Firm that has agreed to help with financing. Piper Jaffrey should have an engagement letter and scope of work together by the 16<sup>th</sup> of this month. Mayor needs to speak with the School, talk with architects, get financing in place. Another conference call is scheduled for Thursday. In next month or two meetings with residents will be scheduled to share plans.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 1116 AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A CERTAIN GRANT OF EASEMENT FOR THE VILLAGE OF STEGER, ILLINOIS. Trustee Sarek seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Joyce, Perchinski, Sarek, Lopez, Skrezyna and Buxton. Mayor Peterson voted aye. Motion carried.

With the Police Chief's recommendation, Trustee Perchinski made a motion to approve an Intergovernmental Agreement between the Will County Sheriff and the Village of Steger. The \$3,000 annual fee is in the Police Department's budget. Trustee Lopez seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Joyce, Perchinski, Sarek, Lopez, Skrezyna and Buxton. Mayor Peterson voted aye. Motion carried.

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to approve Police Chief Boehm's request to hire part time Community Service Officer. Trustee Lopez seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Joyce, Perchinski, Sarek, Lopez, Skrezyna and Buxton. Mayor Peterson voted aye. Motion carried.

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to ratify the contract by and between the Village of Steger and FM Entertainment, Inc. HR Director Seehausen explained to Trustee Buxton the \$6,000 generator and manpower that was more last year are included in the \$25,000 contract. Trustee Skrezyna seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Joyce, Perchinski, Sarek, Skrezyna and Buxton. Trustee Lopez voted no. Mayor Peterson voted aye. Motion carried.

There being no further business to discuss, Trustee Perchinski made a motion to adjourn. Trustee Lopez seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:05 pm**

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Kenneth A. Peterson, Jr., Village President

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Carmen S. Recupito, Jr., Village Clerk