

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 4th day of November 2024 in the Municipal Building of the Village of Steger (Firehouse Bay), Illinois. Village Clerk Zagone led all in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

The roll was called. The following Trustees were present; Thurmond, Lopez, Stewart, Trotier, Joyce and Perchinski.

Clerk Zagone: In the absence of a chair, is there any objection to me, as clerk, proceeding with this process as I have done in the past when the mayor was not present?

With no objection:

We are now at the point in our meeting for nominations from the floor to fill the vacancy in the office of President for the Village of Steger, Illinois. This, of course, is due to the untimely passing of our Village President Ken Peterson, Jr. The Village has a population of over 5,000 people, this is an important factor in the filling of this vacancy. This structured process is established by the Illinois Municipal Code. The process is established in such a manner to ensure that all voices are heard, and every nomination is considered in accordance with the law. It is customary for the Village, and permitted under Robert's Rules of Order, that when a new Chair is being selected in the absence of an existing Chair, the Clerk presides over the nomination and election process. This, for example, was done at the last meeting.

Additionally, we will begin with Trustee Stewart, who will have the opportunity to make the first nomination. Following that, the floor will be open to all other members called in the order of reverse seniority. Trustee Stewart, do you have a nomination to make?

Trustee Stewart nominated himself, Gerald Stewart.

Clerk Zagone thanked Trustee Stewart and stated that Trustee Stewart has been nominated. As a reminder, because the Village of Steger has a population over 5,000 people, we must confirm the nominee's willingness to serve in this capacity. (this process is in affect for all nominations moving forward) Clerk Zagone asked if Trustee Stewart is willing to serve in this capacity. Trustee Stewart confirmed, Yes, I accept the nomination.

Gerald Stewart has accepted the nomination. We will next move on.

Trustee Thurmond, do you have a nomination to make?

Trustee Thurmond: For the last four weeks, we have been pondering the idea of what the right thing to do is. I don't necessarily think there is a real right thing to do, we are in an unfortunate position. I would trade this decision to still have Mayor Peterson still with us. I don't take this decision lightly. In my short time here on the board I have always

done what I thought was right for the citizens of Steger, the residents. I always put Steger first, myself second. The nomination for this position I believe should be someone that is at the meetings, participating in discussions, participating in point of order, participating in executive session and working hand in hand with everyone on the board. Not just a few. I believe Bill Joyce is that person.

Trustee Thurmond nominated Trustee Joyce.

Does Trustee Joyce accept the nomination?

Trustee Joyce: yes

William Joyce has accepted the nomination. I will ask for further.

Trustee Trotier, do you have a nomination to make?

Trustee Trotier nominated Trustee Lopez.

I would also like to make a comment here: In the past several years when Mayor Peterson was not here, Trustee Lopez with everyone's agreement here on this board, has always stepped up and was nominated to be Pro-tem. Therefore, I nominate Ernie Lopez because we all have relied on him, we've counted on him and he's done a great job to lead us.

Does Ernie Lopez accept the nomination?

Trustee Lopez: I do.

Ernie Lopez has accepted the nomination. Are there any other nominations?

Trustee Joyce, No nomination. Are there any other nominations?

Trustee Perchinski, No nomination. Are there any other nominations?

Trustee Lopez, I do not have a nomination to make.

Clerk Zagone: We will now move on to the voting process. Each Trustee will have the opportunity to cast their vote for the nominated candidates. I will call your name, and you may respond with the name of the nominee you wish to vote for.

Trustee Stewart:	Gerald Stewart
Trustee Thurmond:	William Joyce
Trustee Trotier:	Ernie Lopez
Trustee Joyce:	William Joyce
Trustee Perchinski:	Ernie Lopez
Trustee Lopez:	Ernie Lopez

We have 1 vote for Trustee Stewart, 2 votes for William Joyce and 3 votes for Ernie Lopez.

Clerk Zagone: In order to fill the vacancy, this vote requires a minimum of 4 votes for an individual. With the vote as it is, I will ask if you wish to go through the process again.

Trustee Perchinski: no

Trustee Thurmond: Before we go through the process again, I really don'twe're all struggling with the right thing. I understand. I really believe that this board cannot really come to an agreement who should fill that vacancy.

Trustee Perchinski: We've done it how many other times Steve? How many times have you voted for Ernie to run the meetings in the Village?

Trustee Thurmond: One of the things I have been thinking about with this process, and it's been timely thought, I have had a lot of time to think about it, and one of the things that is bothering me about this appointment is anyone who is appointed that is running for the Mayor in April would potentially get an unfair advantage.

Trustee Perchinski: I would say that Trustee Trotier stepped up and offered her services at our last meeting.

Trustee Thurmond: So, I would like to make a proposal before we agree to do this process again. I would like to see if the candidates that are running in April would abstain from nomination, put the remaining three trustees names in a tie that you draw from. Have Village Clerk Zagone officiate it, we draw one of the remaining trustees, we offer the nomination, we accept or reject the nomination with some conditions. One of the conditions would be that the appointment would work with this board hand in hand, work with the administration, work with the board to potentially nominate an appointment for the next Trustee to fill the vacancy, and pledge not to use public assets to promote anybody that is running for office in print such as the newsletter.

Trustee Perchinski: You are saying to exclude the three people running for mayor, right? And, then put names in a hat to choose?

Trustee Thurmond: You flip a coin when you are tied as a trustee for the vote. It's no different.

Clerk Zagone interrupted: We need to go back; the state statute is written and requires us to nominate from amongst the six trustees. I mean, your idea is fine, all you have to do is not nominate one of the three trustees running for Mayor in April if that's how you want to do it.

Attorney Vasselli: The idea ends up evolving back to one of the people being named and voted upon. It is an unconventional, unprecedented way to make the selection of the Chief Executive Officer of a Village. I am not saying I have a full history of what has gone on before in Illinois Law governing municipalities, but I have never heard that before. The analogy between a trustees race where there is a flip of a coin or casting of lots, is not analogous. While the idea is novel, it is unprecedented as we have discussed. The one thing I want to make very clear, and I am sure the board agrees with me, and staff knows, there will be no promotion of any mayoral candidate or any expenditure of funds in governmental literature for any office, mayor or trustee. I want to make sure that is clear. We all know that you cannot spend any governmental money to promote a candidate.

Trustee Perchinski: We could also not nominate anybody that is running for Village President and take it that way and vote on it from there.

Attorney Vasselli: It all goes back to the same thing, just by nomination rather than by drawing of lots. It goes back to the same legal process. The name is up there and it is voted on.

Trustee Trotier: I want to make a comment first, that we are going through difficult times. When you go through difficult times, you want to stay down the same road. Don't make a lot of changes. Don't go against the grain, especially during this time until we get to the elections. Stay with the road map that we have, not veer off, not have any tensions within us. That is the best way to go with what we are doing. If we didn't select someone who is running for mayor in April, we have to consider how we all work together as a board. Are we working against the grain, are we coming to decisions or respecting each other's opinions and doing what is best for the Village. To continue on until we can select a president/mayor. That is what we need to do. Just think about when we go back four years, two years, we were all going through a different election. At the beginning, yes, there was tension and how are we going to get along, but really even at times when we had disagreements, we all had to come together, at least most of us did to reach a consensus and do what is best for everyone, not just because it's somebody's opinion. That's what I propose, is for our board to think about what the best way is to move forward in the most amicable way, but what is best for the Village. I ask everyone to review the past and make your decision that way.

Clerk Zagone: For my part, I can count on one hand how many times this board did not have a near if not 100% agreement on issues. To not be able to work together now is a very big disappointment to me. Thank you.

Clerk Zagone: So the question is: do you wish to go through the voting process one more time this evening?

Trustee Thurmond: I think going through the voting process again we will have the same answer.

Clerk Zagone: If you nominate the same people, yes, I am guessing you are probably right. With that I would entertain a motion for Chairman Pro-tem for the meeting.

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to appoint Trustee Lopez Chairman Pro-tem for the meeting. Trustee Trotier seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Lopez, Stewart, Trotier and Perchinski. Trustees Thurmond and Joyce voted no. Motion carried.

Also present: Village Administrator Mary Jo Seehausen, Director of Public Infrastructure Dave Toepper, Fire Chief Mike Long, Police Chief Greg Smith, EMA Chief Jason Stevenson, Community Center Director Diana Rossi and Village Attorney James Vasselli.

AWARDS, HONORS AND SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Awards for Halloween Home Decorating Contest:

Chairperson Alice Peterson asked her son Cameron to make the presentation.

3rd Place: Alexander Family at 3005 Phillips

2nd Place: Jonas Family at 3221 Florence

1st Place: Mata Family at 3245 Butler

Steger Fire Chief Mike Long presented a Lifesaving Award to Johnnie Mitchell on behalf of the Steger Fire Department for showing bravery when a fire broke out in their home in August. He guided family members to safety.

Chief Long went on to promote Bailey Stevenson to Lieutenant of Steger Fire Department. Lt. Stevenson was given her oath of office by Clerk Zagone following the meeting.

MINUTES

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 7th Village Board meeting as all members have copies. Trustee Stewart seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Thurmond, Lopez, Stewart, Trotier, Joyce and Perchinski. Motion carried.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Ryan Buxton of 23016 Oakland Drive came before the board: Good evening members of the board. It's great to be with you tonight. I realize these are incredibly difficult times we are in. Obviously, losing a distinguished mayor like Ken has put us in a difficult spot, my condolences to you. I think it was good discussion tonight for the most part, but I think this board need to do the right thing and move on. I know what Ken would have wanted, I know what I would have wanted and that is Ernie Lopez to serve for continuity as Trustee Trotier said so well. We need to move forward, no one is going to have any advantage out of this. Everyone is going to have to run, there will be no advantage what so ever. We need to show support for each other as a board, come together in solidarity and take the next step. That's what I am asking, that's what we need, Ernie has served this village admirably for years. He has always stepped up as Mayor Pro-tem and done the right thing. Please let's do the right thing and put this behind us. We need to move forward, we need to heal as a village, we need to take-on other decisions. Thanks.

Maureen Lopez of 3221 Morgan St. came before the board: I want to reiterate I was really disappointed at the last meeting when no one could make a decision. Our town, we have been a town for 128 years. Built from the ground up, a grassroots community. In 128 years, we have only had 21 mayors. That says a lot about how we all serve, we all work together. The people in the community come together and they do the right thing for one another. We can't run a community with a different person in charge every week. We just can't do it. With the way the world is now, we're coming from one crazy race right now going on tomorrow. The communities people laugh at because their towns can't do what they are supposed to do. We elected all of you to do the things that are right for Steger. Sometimes our egos and our pride get in the way. We just have to compromise sometimes, even in our households we have to compromise to make them work. We just need to come together and make a decision. I just hope that you see how important it is, and I know Trustee Thurmond said someone not running for mayor

should be picked, but he keeps nominating someone who is running for mayor. I applaud Trustee Trotier for stepping up last week when she volunteered to run. No one took that opportunity to appoint her. This week she spoke up again, but that was not realized. I just ask that you look back at the last three elections and look at the number of votes that people have gotten. Go by the person who got the second most votes after Ken. That's who the Village's voice wanted. You cannot come to a decision on the board, just do that.

John Kopulos of 266 E. 34th St. came before the board as a follow-up to the last meeting. I want to thank Dave for coming out right away with a crew to check our sewer system. Mr. Kopulos had questions regarding issues at a house that had been rehabbed at 248 E 34th St. Mr. Toepper offered to meet with Mr. Kopulos after the meeting to discuss further, the options of moving toward a solution to the issues in his neighborhood.

REPORTS

Village Administrator Mary Jo Seehausen The 33rd Street drainage project is probably about two weeks from being completed. There were a couple underground snags with utilities, but we were able to get them out on site sooner than we expected, so everything is going good with that. The board had approved us to go out to bid for the Susan Lane part of the drainage project. We had applied for Will County funds in the amount of \$400,000. We did go out to bid on that. I have passed out the bid tabulation sheet in front of you. They can start work as early as next week. It would give us the opportunity to get this next component of the drainage project in the books before year's end. I am asking for approval to go ahead with the work, with the decision to be ratified at our next meeting. All trustees gave no objection to proceeding with the work.

Director of Public Infrastructure Dave Toepper No Report.

Chief Michael Long Fire Department Pancake Breakfast with Santa will take place on December 1st from 7 am – Noon. There will be some difference to our raffle tickets this year. Residents should have a flyer in their mail in the next week.

Police Chief Greg Smith No Report.

EMA Chief Jason Stevenson No Report.

Community Center Director Diana Rossi No Report.

Village Attorney No report.

Treasurer No report.

MAYORS REPORT No Report.

VILLAGE CLERK No Report.

TRUSTEES REPORTS

Trustee Trotier: Electronic Recycling Event

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Electronic Recycling Event held on Sat., Sept. 28, 2024. As part of the program, old medication, and paper shredding (off-site) were offered. We appreciate the Cook County Sherriff's Department of Recycling, the Village of Steger, and Southland Voice Newspaper for sponsoring the event. Our volunteers consisted of great people from Steger, Crete, Chicago Heights, Genoa, IL, Boy Scout Troop 100, Marian Catholic High School & more. Our volunteers greeted incoming guests with a beautiful smile and all participants appreciated the opportunity to dispose of waste responsibly.

Here is a summary of what volunteers collected:

· 30 pounds of unused prescriptions

51 TVs

11 Printers / 7 Laptops / 13 Computers / 8 Monitors

look forward to the opportunity of hosting another successful event.

We

Sunflower Project

Thank you to everyone who participated in beautifying our town with Sunflowers! It was a pleasure to connect with old friends and to meet new ones. Also, I am glad to report we will not need to purchase sunflower seeds next year. Participants are saving the seeds and sharing them with others.

Thank you everyone!

Trustee Lopez added: Street sweeping will occur this Thursday and Friday. Thursday will be on the north side of Steger Road and south side will be on Friday weather permitting. Yard waste season is coming to an end. Our last day for yard waste will be November 27th.

BILLS

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to ratify the bills paid on October 25, 2024. Trustee Trotier seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Thurmond, Lopez, Stewart, Trotier, Joyce and Perchinski. Motion carried.

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to pay all bills when funds become available. Trustee Thurmond seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Thurmond, Lopez, Stewart, Trotier, Joyce and Perchinski. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS:

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to approve a settlement agreement and general release between the Village of Steger and Ronald Woodson as recommended by Village attorneys. Trustee Thurmond seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Thurmond, Lopez, Stewart, Trotier, Joyce and Perchinski. Motion carried.

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to approve the ICRMT Liability and Worker's Compensation Package in the amount of \$546,647.00. Trustee Trotier seconded the motion.

Discussion: Trustee Perchinski stated that he reviewed the policy: the over all renewal is up just under 7%. Our payroll is up 3% and there is an increase for our property coverage as well, so that is about a 3% true increase. Our 5 year loss ratio with reserves included is 3.2 million dollars, so I believe this is a fair renewal.

Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Thurmond, Lopez, Stewart, Trotier, Joyce and Perchinski. Motion carried.

Trustee Joyce made a motion to adopt ORDINANCE NO. 1326: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS PROPERTY FOR THE VILLAGE OF STEGER, MINUS THE WOODCHIPPER. Trustee Perchinski seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Thurmond, Lopez, Stewart, Trotier, Joyce and Perchinski. Motion carried.

Trustee Thurmond made a motion to adopt RESOLUTION NO. 1187: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A RIGHT OF USE AGREEMENT FOR BROADBAND INTERNET WITH SURF AIR WIRELESS, LLC FOR THE VILLAGE OF STEGER, ILLINOIS. Trustee Stewart seconded the motion.

Discussion: Trustee Perchinski raised some questions that were addressed by a representative with Surf Air Wireless. He explained how the system will distribute to homes. He added that most all questions will be handled at a preconstruction meeting with the village. Trustee Joyce also offered several questions that will also be covered at

preconstruction meetings. Trustee Joyce also asked if they have asked what the response from residents would be and whether it is needed or wanted. The response was no, we have built to some of your neighboring communities. We do our own feasibilities and move forward on assumptions. Trustee Perchinski questioned how it will tax our streets workers. Surf claims they keep the Village contribution to a minimum. Trustee Perchinski questioned cost. The response was that depending on speeds, 100 meg, 500 meg, 1 gig, 2 gig, anywhere from \$55 a month to \$110 a month with a lifetime price lock, although you can cancel at any time. Dave Toepper added that the installation part of it will consume a lot of our resources. Someone will probably have to monitor their work. Surf interjected that they will be working one area at a time as not to minimize stress on the Village. Trustee Stewart: Surf bears the cost of Julie for all utilities except the Village water system, which the Village must mark and monitor. Trustee Perchinski: I think we need to look a little bit further into the cost to our village and how our community feels about this before we move forward. Attorney Visselli pointed out that the contractor would absorb all costs and expenses. Because of changes in the law in Illinois, we are limited in permitting on these. They would be on the hook for expenses that we incur going forward. I am not saying that this does not merit more public comment, I am not advocating one way or the other for this agreement. What I am saying is, we have contemplated this and they have agreed to cover costs related to this if we do enter into this contract. I assume there is no objection to that (to Surf)? Trustee Perchinski: how do we figure out what those costs are? Attorney Vasselli: based on the contract, Surf is going to be on the hook. Trustee Joyce: barring anymore technical questions, I am good with moving forward at this point. We need a lot more details. Surf: moving forward, we want to be careful too. We want to be careful too. If we can be moving into the permitting and agreement phase, we can get into the details. Trustee Joyce moved to table this to the next meeting so Surf could set up a meeting to go over the details. Village Administrator pointed out that this needed to be passed to move on to the preconstruction meetings. Trustee Joyce rescinded his motion to table. Clerk Zagone pointed out that we have a motion and a second on the floor to approve Resolution No. 1187. The motion was made by Trustee Thurmond and seconded by Trustee Stewart.

Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Thurmond, Trotier, Joyce and Perchinski. Trustees Lopez and Stewart voted no. Motion carried.

Trustee Joyce made a motion to adopt RESOLUTION NO. 1188: A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE UPDATE OF THE COOK COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN. Trustee Perchinski seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Thurmond, Lopez, Stewart, Trotier, Joyce and Perchinski. Motion carried.

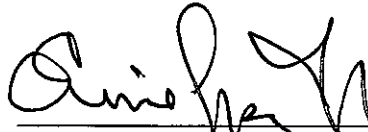
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Being no further business:


Trustee Perchinski made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Trustee Joyce seconded the motion to adjourn. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm.



Ernie Lopez, Jr. Chairman Pro-tem



Joseph M. Zagone, Jr., Village Clerk