

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MEETING FOR THE
VILLAGE OF STEGER, WILL & COOK
COUNTIES, ILLINOIS

The Board of Trustees convened in Committee of the Whole Meeting at 7:36 P.M. on this 19th day of May 2025 in the Municipal Building of the Village of Steger, Illinois. Mayor Joyce led all in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

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

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.

Mayor Joyce opened the meeting: Since this is our first Committee of the Whole meeting, in the future, if anyone would like to add things to the Committee of the Whole meeting, to be discussed or be considered, the Wednesday before the next meeting, which will be the third Monday of every month following the board meeting, that request needs to be submitted to the Village Administrator's office the Wednesday before the Committee of the Whole meeting. From there, it will be added to the agenda.

Trustee Perchinski: I think this is great to have all this back and forth, the communication is huge. The only thing is, we have specific businesses on this one, I understand that might not be true in the future, but would it make more sense to have this meeting prior to the Village Board meeting?

Mayor Joyce: Once, we talk about it at the Committee of the Whole, if it is moved to go to the regular board meeting, we cannot put it on the agenda for that day. It has to be posted for 48 hours.

Trustee Perchinski: Here are a couple of businesses that are trying to come in our town and we are putting them off for a month and a half. I don't know if you guys have noticed, but we have more vacant retail space in town then we have rented retail space in town. Unfortunately, the taxes are going up and the rents are suppressed. We are trying to get these businesses to clean up after themselves when they don't have renters, it is very difficult. I would build a building if I wasn't afraid my taxes would be more than the rent I am paying. It's an issue.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Discussion on Business License Application for Up in Smoke at 3502 Chicago Road: Partners of the previously licensed business came before the board and gave a description of their business plan. The owners described maintenance and upgrades to the building they own at 35th and Chicago Road.

Trustee Perchinski: I would also say that you and your family have done a wonderful job on the upkeep of that building. It's one of the nicer looking commercial buildings that we have in town.

Trustee Trotier: I would just reiterate what Trustee Perchinski said, the property is well kept, it doesn't look in disarray. I think the Village appreciates businesses that take care of their businesses and don't just plant themselves there. So, we appreciate that.

Trustee Perchinski: I don't know of any issues we had with Up in Smoke.

Audience member asked how many Vape/Smoke shops we have in Steger.

Mayor Joyce: We have two currently, if we add two tonight there will be four.

Trustee Trotier: I want to say again, Thank You for the upkeep of the buildings, but it's not just that, it's all the surrounding buildings too. It can be hard to search for a place for a new business, when current businesses do not maintain their properties. Businesses and residents need to step up maintenance on their properties.

Trustee Stewart made a motion to move approval of the Business License for Up in Smoke to the next regular Board Meeting for further consideration. Trustee Perchinski seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

Discussion on Business License Application for Blue Smoke at 14 E. 33rd Place:

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to move approval of the Business License for Blue Smoke to the next regular Board Meeting for further consideration. Trustee Kaminski seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes except for Trustee Thurmond who voted no. Motion carried.

Discussion on Statewide Non-Home rule Motor Fuel Tax Authority in Cook County only: Mayor Joyce explained that the Illinois Legislature passed a law saying that Non-Home Rule Communities could instill a Motor Fuel Tax of up to 3 cents per gallon to be used directly to help with roads. Currently, this is only in Cook County. While Steger does not currently have any gas stations in Cook County, there is always potential to get new ones. This will not affect anything today, but it could affect in the future that we have the ability to charge this tax, if we need.

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to move approval of Motor Fuel Tax Authority to the next regular Village Board Meeting for further consideration. Trustee Stewart seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

Discussion on Locally imposed Grocery Sales Tax:

Mayor Joyce: The State of Illinois has announced that they are going to cancel the 1% Grocery Tax. This 1% is a portion that goes directly to municipalities. This grocery sales tax would be collected on behalf of the Village of Steger so as not to reduce what we are currently getting from this tax. This is not a new tax, it is just a continuation of what we already pay in Steger. We need to look to the future and the needs of our community.

Trustee Perchinski: I would say again, this is another good reason to go to Home Rule.

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to move approval of Grocery Sales Tax to the next regular Village Board Meeting for further consideration. Trustee Stewart seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

Discussion on Celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence: Mayor Joyce: The Federal government has announced that they are doing a bunch of events nationwide for the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. State of Illinois is on board with this and supporting this. They reached out to ask if the Village of Steger is doing anything. We are putting a committee together for this. It will be going up on the website with a special email address: usa250@villageofsteger.org. We are looking for volunteers to work on the committee. It will be next year in 2026, we are looking for ideas and workers.

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to take no action regarding the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Trustee Thurmond seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

Discussion on a Farmers Market in the parking lot of 3231 Chicago Road: A group of produce sellers have proposed that Steger have a Farmers Market that they would participate in. This group would not be overseeing the market. Mayor Joyce asked Trustee Stewart to investigate the feasibility of starting a Farmer's Market and what it would entail.

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to take no action regarding the Farmer's Market. Trustee Trotier seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

Discussion on a Pop-up Food Distribution in the parking lot of 3231 Chicago Road: Trustee Perchinski: I think this is a great idea as long as the Village of Steger is named as additional insured on their insurance. Mayor Joyce stated that had already been discussed with the interested party and that we have already had a conversation about not leaving things out there after the end of the day. Trustee Stewart: Would this be like during our open market time, or do they just want rights to the parking lot? Mayor Joyce: They want to be able to do the food distribution when we allow them to. It will be a scheduled event. Trustee Thurmond asked if this is distribution of expired goods. Response: They are not necessarily expired goods. Mayor Joyce: Here in lies the question: Are they expired goods? I do not know. I have never attended one to take anything. I would hope that we are not going to pass out rotten food to anybody. This was just an open discussion to see where everybody felt on the issue. Do we want to allow a food pop-up to operate in the K-Mart parking lot. Currently it has been at Parkview school, but as most of you should know, Parkview school is being torn down in July. They have insurance and they are a 501C3. Trustee Perchinski: Make sure the Village is named as additional insured.

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to move the request regarding Pop-up Food Distribution to the Village Board for consideration. Trustee Stewart seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

Trustee Trotier: Going back to the Farmer's Market, this is still in discussion when naming Trustee Stewart to investigate this.

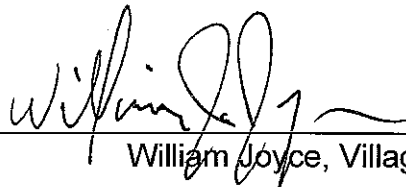
Mayor Joyce: Trustee Stewart is going to take the lead, and anyone else on the board is welcome to assist. We will not move forward until we have a plan.

Being no further business:

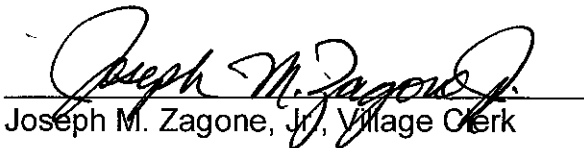
Trustee Perchinski made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm.



William Joyce, Village President



Joseph M. Zagone, Jr., Village Clerk