

# Minutes Of The Regular Meeting Of The Board Of Trustees For The Village Of University Park, Will And Cook Counties Illinois, Held Tuesday, April 12, 2011 At #90 Town Center Drive In The Village Of University Park.

## A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor McCowan called this regular meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 8:06 pm.

## B. ROLL CALL

Mayor:	Alvin R. McCowan	Present
Trustees:	Sharon A. McGuire	Present
	Oscar H. Brown, Jr.	Absent
	Vivian E. Covington	Present
	Keith J. Griffin	Absent (arrived @ 8:15)
	Joseph E. Roudez, III	Present
	Larry B. Brown	Present

Also present were Interim Village Manager/Finance Director David Sevier, Village Treasurer James Ellis, Executive Liaison Johnna Townsend, Deputy Police Chief Gregory Box, Public Works Director Jerry Townsend, Golf Club General Manager Paul Blockoms, Parks & Recreation Director Keely Childress, Deputy Fire Chief Brian Chellios, and Village Clerk Dorothy R. Jones.

## C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor McCowan led the audience in the pledge of allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

## D. READING OF MINUTES

Trustee Covington moved, Trustee Roudez seconded a motion that the Board approves minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees held Tuesday, March 22, 2011 as presented.

Ayes:	Trustees McGuire, Covington, Roudez, and Larry Brown.
Nays:	None.
Absent:	Trustees Oscar Brown, and Griffin.

***Motion To Approve Carried.***

## **E. NON-DISCUSSION AGENDA**

### **E-1: Village Manager's Report**

Village Manager Sevier reported that the Village of University Park lost a seat on the School Board of Crete-Monee School District 201-U at the election of April 5, 2011, and he asked that the residents of University Park keep an eye on the projects already in progress, especially the finishing of the road work on Will-Center Road. He also reported that the village tax rate is in at another decrease to village residents, noting that the tax rate is 3.9583%, which is even lower than last year's rate. He also reported that for the seventh year in a row, University Park has not increased the village portions of taxes.

Trustee Roudez asked to know how much rent is collected from tenants in the Town Center.

Manager Sevier responded that for the past few months the rents collected have remained around \$4,000.00 per month. He also noted that during the past year we lost CTF which was our most profitable tenant.

### **E-2: Mayors Report**

Mayor McCowan offered his condolences to Manager Sevier in the passing of his brother, and to Trustee Oscar Brown in the loss of his mother.

Relating to the elections, Mayor McCowan congratulated the obvious winners, Trustee candidates Milton Payton, Elizabeth Williams, and to Trustee Oscar Brown in his re-election. He also stated that he hopes that this community can heal after some of hurtful and mistruths that's were said during the campaign by some of the candidates; He reported that the Director of Aviation for Illinois had informed them that the FFA has approved the traffic forecast sent to them for the third airport; relating to past due rents owned the village from tenants in the Town Center he stated that he wants the Village Manager to pursue the issue and have all tenants pay back rents and come into compliance; Relating to the loss of a seat on the School Board, Mayor McCowan voiced his disappointment that after million of dollars spent by the village pursuing the law suit that gave the Village of University Park two seats on the school board that it was given back to Monee, and relating to the tax rate, he stated that contrary to what some individuals wants to portray to the public, the tax rate for University Park is the lowest in the history of the Village of University Park.

**Mayor's Report – continued:**

**Swearing In of Police Officer:**

Accompanied by Mayor McCowan, Trustee Liaison Larry Brown, Fire & Police Commissioners Theo Brooks and Terrance Mitchell and Deputy Police Chief Gregory Box, Village Clerk Dorothy R. Jones administered the Oath of Office to newly appointed Police Officer David Gentile.

**E-3: Committee & Commission Reports**

No verbal reports given.

**E-4: Reports Of Other Officers**

Public Works Director Jerry Townsend reported that branch pick-up has now begun, and public works will be picking up branches every Monday morning. Additional information is available by contacting his office at (708) 534-4823.

Parks & Recreation Director Keely Childress reported on the success of the 5k run held April 9, 2011 at Coretta Scott-King Magnet School, and introduced Ms. Erin DeBarpolo the Principal of Coretta Scott-King Magnet School.

Ms. Erin DeBarpolo addressed the Board and public and thanked the Village Board and the Village of University Park for all the assistance given to them in the 5K Run that was had on last Saturday with more than 200 participants. She gave special thanks to Manager Sevier, Public Works, Police and Fire Departments and Keely Childress, Neva Jenkins, and the staff of Parks & Recreation. She noted that this 5K run is in response to First Lady Michelle Obama request to promote physical fitness, and stated that this was the first of many more fitness events to come.

Trustee Covington reported that the University Park Library had a Bond Burning ceremony last Saturday.

**F. DISCUSSION AGENDA**

***F-1: UNFINISHED BUSINESS***

None.

## **F-2: NEW BUSINESS**

**F-2a: Resolution Approving The WUPC-TV Programming Policy And Operational Procedures**

Trustee Covington moved, Trustee Griffin seconded a motion that the Board approves a table of this item.

Ayes: Trustees McGuire, Covington, Griffin, Roudez, and Larry Brown.  
Nays: None.  
Absent: Trustee Oscar Brown.

***Motion To Table Carried.***

**F-2b: Resolution Accepting And Approving The Annual Audit Report For The Fiscal Year Ending April 30, 2008**

Trustee Covington moved, Trustee Roudez seconded a motion that the Board approves this resolution.

Trustee Griffin referred to page 17 of the audit which shows a deficit of \$11,255,851.00 and asked Manager Sevier how much is the total governmental fund.

Mr. Sevier referred to page 90 and responded that what is referred to by Trustee Griffin refers to taxes that are financed by the TIF Districts, with no cost to village tax payers, and that the governmental fund is +\$4,121,000.00.

Trustee Larry Brown commented that this is a lot to digest in the amount of time that the Board received this document and asked if there are any changes.

Manager Sevier responded that there have been no changes in the document, that it is the same as the draft document that was presented to them in the meeting with the auditors.

Trustee Covington commented that the summary was not included in this document, and stated that she wants to see the summary, the settlement agreement with the restitution from the three individuals convicted.

Manager Sevier responded that the summary letter was not included because there were no overall changes since the 2007 Audit. He stated that Village finances are not in a negative status; that we operate in the black; and we were able to once again reduce taxes. He stated that the overall fund balance is in the positive. Relating to the three individuals indicted, he stated that for the most part, village funds were not compromised, and that most of the losses were at the Co-Op.

**F-2b – continued:**

Mayor McCowan noted that he was the one who contacted the States Attorney's Office and requested an investigation..

Ayes: Trustees McGuire, Covington, Roudez, and Larry Brown.  
Nays: Trustee Griffin.  
Absent: Trustee Oscar Brown.

***Motion to Approve Carried***

**Resolution Number R2011-11.**

***F-2c: Bills Payable***

Trustee Covington moved, Trustee Roudez seconded a motion that the Board approves the listing of the General Operating Expenses that the Village of University Park has incurred for the last three (3) weeks from March 23, 2011 to April 12, 2011. The following funds will be charged for these expenses:

General Operation Fund	\$ 967,861.44
Road and Bridge Fund	\$ 36,554.72
Town Center Operations	\$ 3,528.75
University Golf Club	\$ 55,902.76
Capital Project Fund	\$ 7,992.60
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$1,071,840.27</u></b>

Trustee Covington referred to the payment to McGladrey & Pullen in the amount of \$18,000.00 and asked if this is the total owed that firm.

Manager Sevier responded that this payment represents 2008 audit cost and a portion of 2009. .

Trustee Griffin referred to check #72884 and check #72958, and asked for clarity.

Manager Sevier responded that check #72884 is for a ball picker for the Golf Club, because a review of the lease, as previously approved by the Board appears to be more cost effective to purchase rather than lease; and check #72958 is for a device for the Driving Range to keep track of revenue and reduce staff at that facility.

Trustee Griffin referred to check #72861 payable to Barnes & Thornburg and stated he would like to have this item voted separately.

**Motion To Consider Separately Check #72861**

Trustee Griffin moved, Trustee Larry Brown seconded a motion that the Board approves to consider separately check #72861 payable to Barnes & Thornburg.

**Bills Payable – continued:**

Trustee McGuire asked if this line item could be removed from the upcoming new budget, as a way to deal with the controversy surrounding this firm.

Ayes: Trustees Covington, Griffin, and Larry Brown.  
Nays: Trustees McGuire, Roudez, and Mayor McCowan.  
Absent: Trustee Oscar Brown.

***Motion to Approve Failed To Carry.***

**Roll Call On Main Bills Payable Motion,**

Ayes: Trustees McGuire, Covington, and Roudez ..  
Nays: Trustees Griffin, and Larry Brown.  
Absent: Trustee Oscar Brown.

***Motion to Approve Carried.***

Trustees Griffin and Larry Brown noted that they voted against bills payable because they disagree with the payment to Barnes & Thornburg.

## **G. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Robert Travis addressed the Board and stated that one of the topics the Golf Course Advisory Committees discussed during the meeting of April 6, 2011 was the partnerships that Governor State University has with restaurants in the neighboring communities. Governor State University offers discount price coupons to these restaurants when tickets are purchased to events performed at the Center for the Performing Art auditorium. I would appreciate it if someone would tell me if University Park is part of this partnership and if not why? Also I would like to know what is the status of our relationship with Governor State University.

Ms. Marilois Green stated that she disagrees that the taxes in University Park are lower than ever, because the taxes on her home now are much higher than they were when she moved here approximately twenty years ago; she asked why would Congressman Jesse Jackson called residents in University Park to attempt to get their vote for a particular mayoral candidate; and she commented that she does not agree that we have to demolish the CityScape property if Harris Bank does not take title to it, and asked for a figure of how the village finances are.

Mr. Derrick Johnson addressed the Board and asked if we could have Christian Programming returned to WUPCTv4, and if residents could know the dollar amount that the Village is in the Black. He also asked if Street Teams could be formed to work with our Police Department for the safety of our youths in area near the schools.

**General Public Comments Continued:**

Mr. Curtis McMullen asked Mayor McCowan if there is a special ordinance that allows the Mayor to park in a fire lane. After repeated request for Order with no compliance from Mr. McMullen, Mayor McCowan asked to have Mr. McMullen removed from the meeting.

Mrs. Mary Truss congratulated winners in the election held April 5<sup>th</sup> and stated that the League of Women Voters Park Forest Area, of which she is President made it possible for residents in University Park to be informed by putting on Candidate Forums. She commented that elected officials must know that there is no dirty laundry in government, only in politics, and that we need transparency.

Pastor Brenda K. Mitchell commented that it is time to remove the issues of separation, and come together as a Unit; she stated that she lost the election to a beautiful lady Elizabeth Williams, and they have become neighbors again. She commended Ms. Williams and her daughter on the race that they ran and stated that we all need to take a look at some of the damaging things that were said during the campaign and try to heal and move this village forward.

Ms. Sandra Heard, Monee Township Assessor addressed the Board and congratulated those winners in the election and asked those who were not elected to continue to work for the betterment of this village. She also commented on workshops that are on-going in her office, and announced that a workshop would be held Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup> at the Township Office, #46 Town Center Drive from 5 – 6 pm, and on May 12, 2011 she would host a workshop relating to assessments and understanding your tax dollars.

Ms. Druuada Henry offered condolences to Trustee Oscar Brown and his family in the loss of his mother; she congratulated those winners in the election and thanked those Trustees and Clerk Dee Jones for the assistance that they gave her during her campaign, and stated that she is committed to continue to work with the village to help it grow. She also commented that she hopes this Board and Village can work together as a unit.

Ms. Chere'se Williams, accompanied by her mother Elizabeth Williams addressed the Board and commented on a celebration that was given to Mayor McCowan during the election and thanked him for his leadership and dedication to this community during his tenure, and presented Mayor McCowan with a plaque of appreciation.

Ms. Patti Guinn stated that the Lobbyist should be paid out of pocket by those officials who want him.

**General Public Comments Continued:**

Mr. Williams addressed the Board and stated that wanted to shake the hand of Mayor McCowan because he had heard a lot of misleading and disgusting things about him, but now realizes that he is not the bad guy as he was portrayed. He also stated that with all the things that were said during the campaign, he hopes that all candidates realize that the election is over and now we must move forward.

Ms. Cynthia Hudson welcomed incoming officials and offered best wishes for those outgoing officials. She commented that there is a mandatory 8<sup>th</sup> grade parent's meeting on May 11, 2011 and stated that she does not agree with the new process of no caps and gowns for the graduates. She noted planned events and stated that she feels that the School made the cost prohibitive for most students to attend the Washington D.C. Trip.

## **H. BOARD CAUCUS**

Mayor McCowan suspended the meeting from 9:20 p.m. to 9:29 p.m. to allow the Board to caucus. He reconvened the Board meeting and the following responses were given to concerns raised by residents under general comments:

Mayor McCowan responded to comments made by Ms. Guinn relating to paying the Lobbyist out of pocket by those officials who want him noting that that there is a definite need for a lobbyist, and that the firm has brought 45 million dollars for an interchange, and over a 100 million dollars for land purchase for the third airport. Responding to comments of Mr. Travis he stated that Mr. Travis is a member of the Golf Club Advisory Committee and that was the proper forum for presenting his concern, prior to bringing it to the Board. However, he stated that Mr. Blockoms is in communications with GSU.

Village Manager Sevier responded to concerns voiced by Ms. Green relating to her assertion that taxes are not lower, stating that at the time she purchased her home the assessed valuation was lower, but the Village taxes are lower than when she moved here. He also stated that the increases in her taxes are from the other eleven taxing districts, with the school district with the highest increases, not the Village portion; Relating to her concerns about CityScape he stated that the property is in foreclosure with approximately one million dollars in mechanic liens on the property, that the Village does not hold any interest in that development, but have taken action on the Letter of Credit deposited as surety, and demolishing the property would be the last option if no one takes title.

Responding to question and concerns raised by Mr. Johnson and Ms. Green, Manager Sevier stated that as of March 31, 2011 the Village finances were \$313,000.00 in the black, and that these issues are discussed in the monthly meetings of the finance committee and that his doors and the books are always open for anyone. He referred Mr. Johnson to Deputy Chief Box relating to his concept of Street Teams.

**Board Response to Public Comments:**

Mayor McCowan responded to concerns from Ms. Green relating to Congressman Jackson endorsement of a particular stating that she should ask that of Congressman Jackson; relating to concerns of Mr. Johnson he stated that he would look into bringing Christian programming back to WUPCTv4; He thanked Ms. Williams for the appreciation plaque, and stated that Mr. McMullen left him no choice but to have him removed, because as the Mayor it is his responsibility to keep order, and that he will not be disrespected.

**I. ANNOUNCEMENT OF SCHEDULED MEETINGS**

**J. BOARD & MANAGER' COMMENTS**

**K. ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Roudez moved, Trustee Covington seconded a motion to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees at 9:52 p.m.

***Motion to Adjourn Carried By Voice Vote.***

*Respectfully Submitted,*

---

*Dorothy R. Jones, CMC  
Village Clerk*