

Minutes Of The Regular Meeting Of The Board Of Trustees For The Village Of University Park, Will And Cook Counties Illinois, Held Tuesday, December 10, 2013 At #90 Town Center Drive In The Village Of University Park

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Covington called this regular meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 7:39 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Mayor:	Vivian E. Covington	Present
Trustees:	Elizabeth Williams	Present
	Oscar H. Brown, Jr.	Present
	Milton C. Payton	Present
	Keith J. Griffin	Present
	Joseph E. Roudez, III	Present
	Larry B. Brown	Absent

Also present were Village Manager Linear, Village Attorney Steward Diamond, Village Treasurer Devon Dilworth, Police Chief Ed Bradley, Parks & Recreation Director Keely Childress, Finance Director Joe Jones, Executive Liaison Johnna Townsend, Golf Club General Manager/PGA Paul Blockoms, Public Works Director Ross Burgess, Deputy Fire Chief Brian Chellios, and Village Clerk Dorothy R Jones.

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Griffin moved, Trustee Roudez seconded a motion that the Board approves minutes of a regular meeting held October 8, 2013.

Ayes:	Trustees Williams, Oscar Brown, Payton, Griffin, Roudez and Mayor Covington.
Nays:	None.
Absent:	Larry Brown.

Motion To Approve Carried.

Reading Of The Minutes Continued:

Trustee Roudez moved, Trustee Griffin seconded a motion that the Board approves minutes of a regular meeting held October 22, 2013.

Ayes: Trustees Williams, Oscar Brown, Payton, Griffin, Roudez and Mayor Covington.
Nays: None.
Absent: Larry Brown.

Motion To Approve Carried.

Motion To Add Item To The Agenda And Consider Legislative Changes To The Agenda:

Trustee Oscar Brown moved, Trustee Roudez seconded a motion to consider agenda items G-1a through G-1c under unfinished business as a single item for vote; and to add to the agenda after item G-2c, An Ordinance Establishing A University Park Village Board Liaison And Committee With Governors State University for discussion only.

Ayes: Trustees Williams, Oscar Brown, Payton, Griffin, Roudez and Mayor Covington.
Nays: None.
Absent: Larry Brown.

Motion To Approve Carried.

E. REPORTS OF ELECTED & APPOINTED OFFICIALS

E-1a: Elected Officials Report

Trustee Williams shared concerns of rumors being circulated within the village that four Trustees were closing GED classes; she stated that this is untrue, and that she feels someone is attempting to sabotage the GED program. She further stated that the program is running as scheduled, but some participants did not attend the last class based on those rumors.

Village Clerk Dee Jones reported on efforts that the Municipal Clerks Of The South And West Suburbs were doing in an effort to bring relief to residents devastated by the recent tornadoes in Washington, Coal City, Diamond and Manhattan. She asked residents to remember these victims and if they wanted to make contributions and did not know where to send it they could contact her and she would give them the information.

E-1b: Village Manager's Report

Village Manager Linear wished everyone happy holidays, and noted that The Village Hall would be closed on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, half-day New Year's Eve, and all day New Year's day.

Trustee Oscar Brown asked if the snow removal could be more efficient.

Public Works Director Ross responded that the original weather report did not indicate snow and the amounts as it turned out to be; however, they did pre-salting, and noted that the village does not have sufficient deicing solution.

Village Treasurer Dilworth thanked everyone for the condolences Sent in the death of his sister.

E - 2: Mayor's Report

Mayor Covington reported that she had donated soaps and body care products at an event at St. James Hospital where they were collecting for homeless women; she reported that she attended a meeting with the Department of Transportation that she will share with the Board in the future; she further stated that she was able to save \$7 million in funding for the I-57 interchange; that she will be meeting with a group of people who are interested in the area near the Metra station, and that she has been asked to deliver a speech to young high school women at Bloom and Rich Central High Schools.

E-3: Committee & Commission Reports

Trustee Roudez reported that the annual tree lighting was great and thanked the Parks and Recreation Department for their efforts in making this a success.

Trustee Payton thanked all of those who contributed to the Thanksgiving dinner, noting that the Mayor donated turkeys and funds. Asked Human Services And Special Events Chair Robert Travis, and Subcommittee Chair Bobbie Greer to report on the coat drive held on December 7, 2013 and the Thanksgiving dinner held on November 21, 2013,

Mrs. Bobbie Greer thanked D&S, Applied Systems, Deer Creek Christian School, and Board members who contributed in the coat giveaway noting that at least 50 people received coats and other outer-wear. Special thanks to Trustee Larry Brown who volunteered from 8 AM until 2 PM. She also reported that she contacted CD Cleaners who cleaned all of the coats that needed to be cleaned for free. She also stated that she was told that this was the last year that the Human Services And Special Events Committee would be hosting this event, so they wanted to make sure everything is done right.

Mr. Robert Travis reported that the Thanksgiving dinner was great, and thanked Attorney Diamond and Mayor Covington for their donations. He stated that he hopes next year funds will be allocated in the budget for this needed event.

Mayor Covington reported that they delivered food to some residents on Thanksgiving day who were ashamed or unable to come out to pick them up, and she thanked Bobbie Greer for washing those coats that were washable.

Trustee Payton reported that the December 18, 2013 finance committee meeting was canceled due to the fact that the financial report was given tonight. He also announced that on December 14, 2013 Concerned Citizens Committee would be holding a meeting at God's All Nation Church In Merchants Plaza beginning at 11:30 PM.

E-4: Reports of Other Officers

Police Chief Ed Bradley reported that the Police Department had received the 2 new squad cars, and that they have now been added to the fleet; he also congratulated Commander Stroud for his appointment To the Law Enforcement Training Board for the State of Illinois.

Parks And Recreation Director Keely Childress reported that the Crete Monee Lady Warriors would be traveling to Detroit on December 26 returning on December 30, 2013 and she asked for prayers for the team; December 13, 2013 is female night for ages 6 through 9 at the middle school, cost is \$3 per person and she asked for volunteers; the senior fun casino trip this year would be to Tunica Mississippi February 23 and 24, 2014.

Village Treasurer Dilworth commented that he thinks it is important that the village Treasurer is the 1st to sign checks and have information for the public if there are questions related to finances of the village.

E-5: Attorney's Report

No report at this time..

E-6: Department Updates

None

F. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Attorney Diamond reminded the public of the 30 minutes maximum allowed for public comments, and asked that they be mindful of the time limit. However, anyone who has signed in and not allowed to speak tonight would be 1st on the list for comments at the next meeting.

General public comments continued:

Mr. Stephen Allen asked to know the reason why we do not have funds for coats and to help those residents in need rather than have the clerk asked for help for other communities affected by disaster when we have needs in our own town.

Mr. Sidney Cooper thanked Mayor Covington for bringing him food on Thanksgiving and stated that the village needs a recreation center.

Ms. Debbie Stroud commented that she applauds all volunteers, and thanked the Mayor and the Board of Trustees for all the assistance that they render to the senior citizens committee.

Mr. Robert Travis commented that he feels the village should allocate funds to fix the PA system, and asked if there are plans for re-vamping committee and commission. He also asked when the bulletin board would be erected.

Trustee Oscar Brown responded to Mr. Travis stating that there needs to be more research into the areas of the committees and commissions and he hopes that this will be done within the next 60 days.

Village Manager Linear responded that there is no immediate plan to erect the bulletin board because there were some problems with the mounting apparatus.

Mr. Keith Rouse commented that he spoke with Treasurer Dilworth and Trustee Payton regarding attorney fees that went from \$52,927 by the former attorney to \$350,000 with the current attorney; he feels that the GED program is an excellent program but that the services are available online at the library and a Prairie State College, therefore he does not see the need to spend taxpayer dollars for the program here in the village; he also stated that there is too much funding for seminars that bring nothing back to the village.

Mrs. Mildred Morgan asked Mayor Covington why she spent \$2281.31 in November 2012 at a florist on Christmas stuff and have the supplies billed and shipped to an address on Mission Drive, and why were funds spent at Tiffany's.

Mayor Covington responded to Mrs. Morgan stating that in the past the village customarily sent flowers when there were deaths and illness. However, the Christmas decorations were purchased, picked up, and are displayed here in number 90 Town Center and throughout the village. She asked Johnna Townsend to explain the process now being followed.

Executive liaison Johnna Townsend responded that previously floors were used to send flowers to residents and their family members in the event of illness or death; however, looking at the cost the process has now been changed and the village sends get well and sympathy cards.

Village Manager Linear responded to Mrs. Morgan noting that no funds were spent at Tiffany's, however someone attempted to make fraudulent charges against the village's account but that was handled through American Express notified the village of these fraudulent charges.

G-1: UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Trustee Griffin moved, Trustee Roudez seconded a motion that the board combines the reading and voting of the following 3 ordinances in one action;

G-1a: - An Ordinance Approving A Redevelopment Plan And Project For Town Center Redevelopment Project Area

G-1b: – An Ordinance Designating The Town Center Redevelopment Project Area Pursuant To The Tax Increment Allocation Redevelopment Act

G-1c– An Ordinance Adopting Tax Increment Allocation Financing For Town Center Redevelopment Project Area None

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

**Motion To Approve Carried; G-1a - Ordinance Number O 2013 – 44;
G- 1b- Ordinance Number O 2013 – 45;
G- 1c - Ordinance Number O 2013 – 46.**

G-2: NEW BUSINESS

G-2a: First, Second And Third Readings - Ordinance Levying Taxes For Corporate Purposes Of The Village Of University Park, Illinois, For The Fiscal Year Commencing On The First Day Of May 2014, And Ending On The Thirtieth Day Of April 2015

Trustee Roudez moved, Trustee Griffin seconded a motion that the Board approves first, second, and third readings of this ordinance.

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

Motion To Approve Carried Ordinance Number O 2013 – 47.

G-2b: Discussion Item: Fees And Rental Inspections

Trustee Payton distributed to the Board information that he had gathered that showed rates charged by other communities as compared to rates charged in the Village of University Park, and voiced his concerns with the amounts charged by this Village.

Village Manager Linear commented that these inspection fees revenues for the village.

Trustee Oscar Brown commented that we need to examine our revenue sources, and that most of the owners of rental properties are not village residents, and that we need to centralize or consolidate where fees are located in our codified ordinances.

Village Attorney Diamond suggested that Manager Linear look at and present an analysis of the practicality of these fees.

Mayor Covington asked Manager Linear and Village Clerk Dee Jones to do a research and report back to the board whether or not these rental fees should be increased, decreased, or remain the same.

G-2c: Discussion Regarding Parking Restrictions

The board held a brief discussion on request from some residents relating to relaxing parking restrictions within the village.

Mayor Covington asked Police Chief Bradley to work with Village Manager Linear and Clerk Jones and report back to the Board of Trustees.

G-2d: Discussion - An Ordinance Establishing A University Park Village Board Liaison And Committee With Governors State University.

Village Attorney Diamond explained the essence of the proposed ordinance, noting that this should open a viable dialogue between the Village and Governors State University that would be beneficial to the growth and development of this community.

Trustee Payton stated that he thinks this is a horrible idea and an attempt to usurp the powers of the Mayor by those running for office in the upcoming election, and that he is appalled at the attorney for counseling board members to take such action.

Trustee Oscar Brown commented that he thinks this is a great idea, and that he serves on committees with the National League Of Cities and knows that we learn from each other. He further stated that he looks forward to having this item on the January agenda.

Trustee Payton read from a letter prepared by Attorney Diamond that was addressed to President Maimon of Governors State University under the signature of the Chair of the Legislative And Operations Committee.

Mayor Covington directed Attorney Diamond to reveal who directed him to write such an ordinance and letter.

Village Attorney Diamond stated that he was asked by Trustee Roudez, and that he is proud of the letter because there has been no effort to have this Board enter into any Intergovernmental Agreements between the Village Of University Park And Governors State University.

Mayor Covington voiced her discontent with this proposed ordinance and the letter, noting that because of her relationship with Dr. Maimon GSU is becoming a 4 year college, thereby making University Park a college town. She asked Manager Linear and Executive Liaison Townsend to inform the board and the public of how often and the predictability of the meetings that she has with Dr. Maimon.

Johnna Townsend responded that Mayor Covington had been meeting with Dr. Maimon on a bimonthly basis.

Village Manager Linear responded that he has attended meetings with the Mayor and Dr. Maimon; however, he cannot comment on whether the meetings were productive or not.

Mayor Covington stated that she feels this is an attempt to usurp her powers to communicate with GSU, that she has direct contact with President Maimon, and that GSU works with and supports the village through our Parks and Recreation Department. She further stated that she is the CEO of University Park and feels that she is being disrespected because she is a woman and a leader.

Trustee Payton commented that the village has had a long-standing relationship with GSU and President Maimon. He expounded on his association with GSU, and noted that in the past we have had interns for the cable studio from GSU at no cost to the village, and that he feels it would be professional courtesy to have discussed this item with Mayor Covington prior to sending the letter to Dr. Maimon.

Trustee Oscar Brown began stated that he feels the letter drafted was good, and that he would also like to discuss the amenities of pine Lake with GSU.

G2e: Bills Payable

Trustee Payton moved, Trustee Roudez seconded a motion that the Board approves the listing of the General Operating Expenses that the Village of University Park as incurred for the last two (2) weeks from November 27, 2013 to December 10, 2013.

J. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

K. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Covington adjourned the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees at 10:19 PM.

There was no motion or Voice Vote taken.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Dorothy R. Jones, CMC, RMC
Village Clerk*

/drj