

MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING

DOWNERS GROVE, ILLINOIS

NOVEMBER 27, 2007

Mayor Sandack called the Workshop meeting of the Village Council of the Village of Downers Grove to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Village Hall. The Mayor led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Present: Mayor Ron Sandack; Commissioners Marilyn Schnell, Martin Tully, William Waldack, Sean P. Durkin, Geoff Neustadt, Bruce Beckman; Village Manager Cara Pavlicek; Village Attorney Enza Petrarca; Deputy Village Clerk Linda Brown

Absent: Village Clerk April Holden

Visitors: **Press:** Eva McKendrick, The Sun

Residents: Andy Clark, Downers Grove Watch, 1226 62nd Street; Steve Harrison, 1918 Bending Oaks Court; Frank Falesch, 820 Prairie Avenue; Bill Wrobel, Downers Grove Watch, 7800 Queens Court; Greg Bedalov, Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation, 2001 Butterfield Road; John Debelevich, AM Regional Taxi, 6804 Hobson Valley Drive, Woodridge

Staff: Wes Morgan, Director, Human Resources; Liangfu Wu, Director, Information Services; Robin Weaver, Interim Director, Public Works; Bob Porter, Police Chief; Dave Fieldman, Deputy Village Manager; Phil Ruscetti, Fire Chief; Mike Baker, Assistant Village Manager; Andy Matejcek, Director, Counseling and Social Services; Doug Kozlowski, Director, Communications; Tom Dabareiner, Director, Community Development; Megan Bourke, Management Analyst; Mike Millette, Assistant Director, Public Works; Judy Buttny, Director, Finance

Mayor Sandack explained that Council Workshop meetings are held the second and fourth Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. The meetings are video taped live and for later cable-cast over cable channel 6.

The Workshop meeting is intended to provide Council and the public with an appropriate forum for informal discussion of any items intended for future Council consideration or just for general information. No formal action is taken at Workshop meetings.

The public is invited to attend and encouraged to comment or ask questions in an informal manner on any of the items being discussed or on any other subject. The agenda is created to provide a guideline for discussion.

MANAGER

1. Active Agenda and Informational Items

Manager Pavlicek reviewed the items on the Active Agenda for questions and comments from the Council or public.

- a. **Recommended FY08 Municipal Budget.** The Manager said this will be presented for adoption next week. There are three issues that may be outstanding which require Council direction. She referred to \$35,000 in the general fund, which can be used for a six-week leaf collection program, which costs \$135,000. The remaining \$100,000 for the leaf program would be the unused subsidy budgeted for garbage removal. The second issue concerns the Stormwater Improvement Fund. The third item related to the projected EAV growth which Downers Grove Township staff believed will be about 8% after protests.

The Mayor stated that there has been a series of meetings held on the Village budget for 2008. He asked if anyone from the public wished to speak on this issue.

Steve Harrison, 1918 Bending Oaks Court, discussed the problem this year with gypsy moth infestation. He said Village staff has been out, as have representatives of the County. Mr. Harrison said he was told that the County is under quarantine. Mr. Harrison said that his neighborhood is close to Maple Woods, and he asked that the Council assist in some way to prevent further infestation. The Mayor responded that he would have someone from staff get back to him on this issue.

Robin Weaver, Interim Director, Public Works, said that a few years ago the State did some minor spraying, however that was unsuccessful. The gypsy moths go for oak trees first. The spraying was done by the State was in May, and then the State stopped applications due to budget constraints and the limited effectiveness of the sprays. She said the Village does not have anything budgeted for spraying, but does have discretion. She said that staff will look at it.

Mayor Sandack reiterated that staff would follow up on this issue with Mr. Harrison, although he doubted there was anything they could do about it at this time. Council has the discretion to authorize funds for this in future years, if some effective solution is available.

Commissioner Tully commented that staff has asked for direction with respect to the three budget issues the Manager mentioned. Various aspects of the budget have been discussed on multiple occasions. A mix of revenue streams for the Stormwater Improvement Fund has been proposed. He explained that this fund is being established and dedicated toward watershed improvement, stormwater operations and the stormwater infrastructure improvements, and a number of different funding possibilities have been discussed. He said the current mix of funding includes a debt service of about \$4 million to be funded by a .25% increase in the Home Rule Sales Tax, and a \$2 million property tax levy increase, which translates to \$.09 increase per \$100 of EAV. This funding will address near term stormwater projects as well as adding one more high priority stormwater project in FY08. He noted there would be no surcharge on the water bill. He believes that the projected increase in the EAV will more likely be around 8%, and he asked what affect that would have.

The Manager said they actually levy the dollar amount of \$11.1 million, which will come in at a property tax rate of about \$.46 per \$100 of EAV.

Commissioner Tully said that the dollar amount will remain the same, and the Manager said that was correct. Commissioner Tully then addressed the leaf collection project, by which some people meant raking leaves to the curb. We don't have the infrastructure for that. This program would be a subsidized bag it/tag it leaf program at a cost of \$135,000. He said that his view continues to be that a subsidized leaf program is unfair because those who do not have leaves will

share the costs. If an individual has a lawn service, they would be paying twice. He is reluctant to subsidize this program when he sees the Village having higher priority projects to address.

Commissioner Schnell said she spoke with a resident who expressed concern about the 46% increase in the tax levy. She thinks the Council needs to do a good job in clearly defining for the public what the proposed increases are, and what they are being used for. The Manager said there is an increase of \$400,000 in the stormwater improvement fund from the property tax levy for the stormwater system maintenance.

Commissioner Schnell said her concern is that they have to be very upfront and honest with the public. She noted that they are trying to do this as quickly as possible and do the right thing for the community. The bond issue will allow more projects to be accomplished. She said that the public understands it is not 46%. The Village is trying to address the infrastructure. She indicated that she would prefer a half-cent increase in the Home Rule Sales Tax, however understands that will not happen. Like Commissioner Tully she is happy that there will be no additional fees placed on the water service, and she also thinks subsidizing leaf removal is not the best use of funds. It is important for people to understand what they will be getting. People tend to throw out more things if it's free. She said that she does a lot of mulching, and she believes the \$135,000 could be better used elsewhere.

Commissioner Beckman said he shared the views expressed by Commissioners Tully and Schnell, except for the leaf pickup. He enjoys Heritage Festival, but not everyone shares that feeling, yet the Village subsidizes it. He has heard individuals asking for a leaf pickup program.

Commissioner Durkin said he supports his colleagues in most of what has been said, but he said he will not repeat himself on the leaf program. He pointed out, however, that currently the Village has contracts with street sweepers to sweep the streets. If possible, he would like to get data on the amount of debris picked up in the fall. He would like to see the leaf program tried for three years and see how it works. He said the area in which he lives, El Sierra, looks like a war zone with leaves and debris. For just \$35,000 added to the \$100,000 already available, the Village will have a leaf pickup program. He recognizes there are higher priorities to be addressed, but if that's the approach they intend to take, then he thinks he should have gone through the budget more carefully. Surrounding communities have leaf programs, which are subsidized. He thinks people are not putting leaves into bags, but are blowing leaves onto the street. If they put something besides leaves into the bags, the garbage employees can red-tag those customers. Heavy rains and leaves are a bad combination. He thinks once a subsidized program is implemented, there will be greater enforceability on the part of staff. His concern is the flooding. In last fall's heavy rains, leaves blocked the sewer grates and caused flooding.

Commissioner Neustadt said this was his first budget process and he's learned a lot. The entire budget keeps the core services strong and well funded. Staff did a great job in listening to the Council. He is comfortable with the revenue proposals, and is happy that the water surcharge has been eliminated. He asked if the leaf program is one year or three years. The Manager said it renews annually, and would be determined year to year. Commissioner Neustadt said he would definitely be in favor of doing the leaf program for at least a year to see whether it succeeds.

Commissioner Waldack said regarding the 30-year bond, he would prefer not to go with the \$4 million debt service; however, it appears that the consensus is otherwise. He supports the \$.09 tax levy increase, and the elimination of the water surcharge. He noted that the benefit of the Home Rule Sales Tax is that it provides many options. Commissioner Waldack said he struggles with the leaf program. He would do it for \$35,000 but he's not sure about \$135,000. He would

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go along with the one year to start. He thinks the process for leaf pickup needs to be made easier with wider bags rather than taller bags. It's labor-intensive. He thinks the process needs to be improved, and he would rather avoid spending \$135,000 for leaf pickup.

The Mayor said there have been numerous budget meetings, and his annual plea is to get folks involved. People have commented to him and staff has collated diverse opinions expressed by the public. He thinks the \$.09 increase in the property tax is appropriate and less than staff originally put forward. It's more than the Council wants to do, but it is a stabilizing force to pay for Village services. Mayor Sandack noted that compared to neighboring communities, property taxes have been very low. Previous Councils have not been as focused as this Council on capital needs. The community is 175 years old and the infrastructure needs work. The citizen survey showed that residents want the Council to focus on long-term capital needs. An increase of 0.25% in the Home Rule sales tax is appropriate as well as the bond issues, which will get projects completed sooner. The Mayor said that the Village has been subsidizing garbage pickup for years, and maybe it is time to subsidize leaf pickup on an experimental basis. He noted that this is a tree community, which means we have to deal with the leaves. He doesn't ever see Downers Grove pushing leaves into the street for pickup. He has been told from a worker in another community that leaf pickup from the streets is an albatross. He also agrees with Commissioner Schnell that education and publicizing of the budget is important. This is the residents' budget and they have to know what is being done.

Commissioner Schnell stated that if the leaf program comes, the Village needs to educate the public.

Commissioner Tully said that his concern is that if they have to go back to a sticker program for leaves, it will be very difficult. People who blow leaves into streets won't change their ways. He pointed out that Heritage Festival doesn't cost the Village \$135,000 a year. It breaks even most years.

- b. **Annexation of 4513 Cross Street.** The Manager said the residents have petitioned for annexation to the Village.

Commissioner Beckman noted that there appears to be only one other lot that is unincorporated. The Manager said it is the opposite; there is only one that is incorporated.

- c. **Taxi Stand Parking at the Main Street Train Station.** The Manager said on September 25 the Council discussed this item. Staff has spoken with the taxicab companies and the north side area of the bus turnaround will be the designated taxicab area.

John Debelevich, 6804 Hobson Valley Drive, Woodridge, is with AM Regional Taxi and said he spoke to the Public Works staff who indicated there would be four taxi spots on each side of the tracks. With two main cab companies in the Village, four slots are not enough to accommodate the people getting off Metra as well as the seniors at Oak Tree Towers and Immanuel Residences. The cabs need somewhere near the center of town to wait for calls, but not necessarily at the Main Street train station. He said if they could have some spots on the south side of the Fairview Station that would help. He also said having spots on both sides of the train tracks would help the situation. He indicated there might be a fare increase next year.

The Mayor said he appreciates staff's diligence on this, but it is not really a policy item. He supports this, and understands that they have to make sure the taxicabs can get around the Village.

Commissioner Waldack thanked staff for addressing this. He is pleased that parking on the north side is now allowed. Drivers have told him that 99% of pick-ups are on the north side of the station. He sees this as a good resolution to the problem. He reminded people that at 5:30 p.m. there will only be four cabs at the station, so residents that need a taxi should be patient.

Commissioner Schnell asked how this would be enforced, and the Manager said through observation and feedback.

Commissioner Schnell said that based on Mr. Debelevich's comments, taxicabs obviously need to be close to Oak Tree Towers, etc, and she asked whether there were some less "prime" spot where the cabs could wait.

- d. **Parking Modifications on Rogers Street at Douglas Avenue.** The Manager said the ordinance would provide on-street employee parking. She said staff has provided a map for the area.

2. Consent Agenda Items

- a. **Fee Waiver Request for St. Joseph Church Facility Located at 4801 Main Street.** The Manager said they are doing remodeling of the property and are requesting a waiver of the fee.

Commissioner Waldack recused himself from any discussion on this issue as he is a parishioner and a member of the parish council of St. Joseph Parish.

- b. **DuPage County Stormwater Quality Best Management Practices (BMPs).** The Manager said a request was made by the Village's Stormwater and Flood Plain Oversight Committee for the Mayor to submit a letter to DuPage County recommending modifications be made to the proposed stormwater quality best management practice (BMP) ordinance revisions prior to adoption.

Commissioner Tully said the point has been made very clearly that this is a thinly veiled revenue source for the County.

- c. **DuPage County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan.** The Manager said funding is available from FEMA for a number of projects of the Village, and to qualify it is necessary to adopt this Mitigation Plan.

Commissioner Tully noted that this is nonbinding. The Manager said that staff is attempting to be expeditious in this matter.

- d. **Authorization to Execute an Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village and Illinois DOT for the Central Corridor Bikeway Project.** The Manager said that in 1999 a consultant proposed a bikeway path after several public meetings. Since then the Village has been seeking funding which appears to be forthcoming.

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Commissioner Waldack said he supports bike paths in the community and sees this as a step in the right direction. He thinks the Village should look for opportunities to improve the paths, particularly with the price of gas increasing. He suggested that the plans for the bike paths consider Segways as well.

Commissioner Schnell said there was a lot of discussion on this topic with a good amount of public input. She sees this as worthwhile. She thanked staff for hanging in all of this time and doing a good job in that this may actually happen.

Commissioner Beckman said he has done a lot of cycling and is pleased to see this come about. Public thoroughfares accommodate both cars and bicycles and he thinks the Village should shoulder part of this load.

The Mayor said that the bike club in Downers Grove has 200 members.

- e. **Class A Scavenger License Renewal.** The Manager said that Allied currently has a Class A license which will have to be reissued until March 31, 2008. A Class A license will then also have to be issued for ARC, which currently has a Class B license.
- f. **2007 Computer Replacements.** The Manager said that Dell was the low bidder for computer replacements for the Police Department.
- g. **Purchase of Telemetry System for Outdoor Warning Sirens.** The Manager said staff has recommended approving \$33,100 for purchase of the system.
- h. **New Fire Communications Channel/Frequency.** The Manager said this is for a state bid for Motorola radios for the Fire Department, which shares one channel with other communities.
- i. **Update to Village Council Policy – Compensation Plan.** The Manager said this update establishes grades and salary ranges as part of the municipal budget adoption. She said that positions which have been vacant have been eliminated, and some minor typographical errors have been corrected.
- j. **Community Investment Program (CIP).** The Manager said this final document should be adopted before the end of the year.
- k. **Strategic Planning Documents.** The Manager said this relates to the documents received from Lyle Sumek Associates, Inc.

Commissioner Waldack said he has gone through the documents and sees it as a useful tool. There has been a lot of citizen input. He said for the last couple of weeks of Workshop and Council meetings, there was discussion regarding employee compensation and some policy issues. It occurs to him that the Strategic Plan promotes respect for residents, customer service and accountability of staff. However, there is nothing in the documents regarding making this an exceptional workplace for Village employees. He would like to language added calling for an exceptional work place for employees and calling for good policies that help retain good people. He would like some feedback from his fellow Commissioners.

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Commissioner Schnell said this is the culmination of time spent with Lyle Sumek and gives staff direction. She is happy that it includes rules for self-governing, and likes that it reinforces what the Council and staff were talking about.

Commissioner Tully said that the materials received include what eventually led up to the Strategic Plan itself. With respect to Commissioner Waldack's comments, Commissioner Tully said that he believes that the policy level pronouncement is what staff and management do on a day-to-day basis.

Mayor Sandack said he thought that the Strategic Planning Documents were very inclusive. He indicated he would think about the "great place to work" concept, though he thinks it is there implicitly. He wonders if that might be invading the territory of management.

1. **Home Rule Sales Tax – Public Hearing.** The Manager said a Public Hearing will be held on December 4 on the Home Rule Sales Tax, with a vote scheduled for December 18. She said that the telecommunications tax will be Workshopped on December 11, 2007. A public hearing is not required under the State statute.

3. Manager's and Directors' Reports

a. **Monthly Statistical Report – October 2007.**

Mayor Sandack said these are great reports, and though they are time consuming to staff, they contain useful information and allow the public to know what is happening in their government.

Commissioner Tully agreed, saying that because there is so much rich data, in addition to charts he would like to see the trends over the months for which there is data.

Commissioner Durkin questioned information on Public Works on Page 14 regarding handling of domestic animals. The Manager said domestic animals include dogs and cats and wildlife inquiries would be raccoons, skunks, etc. Commissioner Durkin said there appears to be almost double the wildlife inquiries from 2006 to 2007. He also asked about Traffic Signs fabricated and installed and whether they were replaced for vandalism, or new signs. The Manager said it is a combination of replacing old signs with newer materials, and installing new signs.

Mayor Sandack said that this is a lot of work on the part of staff, and serves as a great source of information. He encouraged residents as taxpayers to read this data and see what is being done by the staff.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Village Attorney Enza Petrarca said she was presenting nine items to the Council: 1) An ordinance adopting the fiscal year 2008 budget in lieu of passage of an appropriation ordinance; 2) An ordinance annexing 4513 Cross Street to the Village of Downers Grove, Illinois; 3) An ordinance establishing taxi cab and Grove Shuttle parking zones; 4) An ordinance amending parking provisions on Douglas Road; 5) A resolution amending the Downers Grove compensation plan by adopting a revised plan effective January 1, 2008; 6) A resolution adopting the DuPage County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan; 7) A resolution authorizing execution of an intergovernmental agreement between the Village of Downers Grove and the Illinois Department of Transportation for the central corridor bikeway; 8) An ordinance providing for the settlement and closing of the property known as the Belmont/Burlington Grade Separation and

Transportation Safety Project/Han Project; and 9) An ordinance authorizing the acquisition of property known as the Belmont/Burlington Grade Separation and Transportation Safety Project/Han Parcel.

Attorney Petrarca asked the Council to consider waiving the traditional one-week waiting period to consider a Motion to award a contract for the Wilson and Pershing Storm Sewer Realignment Project in the amount of \$97,501.50 to Vian Construction Company.

Commissioner Tully moved to waive the one-week waiting period to consider new business. Commissioner Durkin seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES: Commissioners Tully, Durkin, Beckman, Neustadt, Waldack, Schnell; Mayor Sandack

NAYS: None

Mayor Sandack declared the Motion passed.

Commissioner Tully moved to award a contract for the Wilson and Pershing Storm Sewer Realignment Project in the amount of \$97,501.50 to Vian Construction Company.

VOTE: AYES: Commissioners Tully, Schnell, Beckman, Neustadt, Durkin, Waldack; Mayor Sandack

NAYS: None

Mayor Sandack declared the Motion passed.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Commissioner Waldack thanked staff, Downtown Management, and everyone involved in the Tree Lighting ceremony on Sunday. He said there is good reason to believe that everything people need to purchase is available right in Downers Grove this season. He also announced that the CATO (Chicago Area Theatre Organ) enthusiasts will have a performance at the Tivoli Theater on Saturday, December 1 at 10:00 a.m. In addition, the Tivoli Theater will have a showing Saturday at 2:00 p.m. of the movie *It's a Wonderful Life* for a \$5.00 donation. The donation benefits the Sharing Connection, a Downers Grove organization that helps disadvantaged people with furniture and clothing.

Commissioner Durkin added he is a Board member of Sharing Connections, and that the movie, *It's a Wonderful Life* will be shown both on Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. for a \$5.00 donation.

Commissioner Beckman said he participated in the Bonfield Express on Thanksgiving morning. It was his first time and it was a tremendous experience. His brother-in-law remarked "what a great community!" He commended everyone who participated in this charitable event.

The Mayor said that Thanksgiving weekend is a time for everyone to reflect, and the Bonfield Express was an excellent opportunity for everyone to participate in a charitable event. He said many youngsters participated. He thanked Downtown Management for the Parade on Sunday, which was well attended, and for the great tree-lighting ceremony.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the Workshop meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Linda Brown
Deputy Village Clerk

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