

MINUTES

VILLAGE OF LA GRANGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING
Village Hall Auditorium
53 South La Grange Road
La Grange, IL 60525

Monday, February 23, 2015 - 7:30 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board of Trustees of the Village of La Grange regular meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by President Livingston. On roll call, as read by Village Clerk John Burns, the following were present:

PRESENT: Trustees Kuchler, Langan, and McCarty, with President Livingston presiding.

ABSENT: Trustees Palermo, Nowak, and Holder

OTHERS: Village Manager Robert Pilipiszyn
Village Attorney Mark Burkland
Assistant Village Manager Andrianna Peterson
Finance Director Lou Cipparrone
Community Development Director Patrick Benjamin
Public Works Director Ryan Gillingham
Fire Chief Don Gay
Deputy Police Chief Renee Strasser

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Livingston noted successful efforts by staff to negotiate affordable employee health insurance rates. These savings on behalf of tax payers will be discussed at the upcoming budget workshop on March 14.

Announcing that the Hanson Quarry has resumed blasting activities, President Livingston provided contact information for any inquiries or concerns residents may have. President Livingston communicated to the public that prior tremors were found to be natural occurrences.

President Livingston noted the Village has been recognized for its municipal transparency by the Illinois Policy Institute's Sunshine Award. Expressing thanks to Trustee Palermo for suggesting the Village apply and Assistant Village Manager Andri

Peterson for achieving a high score of 92.8%, President Livingston noted the importance of transparency in good government.

Congratulating the Davis Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Church for their 120 years of service to the community, President Livingston noted their upcoming Founder's Day Celebration.

Announcing that the next regular Village Board meeting would be on March 9, President Livingston indicated meetings earlier this evening included the Board of Fire and Police Commission and the Emergency Telephone System Board. Acknowledging the attendance of former Village Trustee Ken Eastman and Library Trustee Tim Kelpsas, President Livingston commented on public service offered by them as well as the members of the La Grange 2020 Task Force in strategic planning for the Village.

Indicating the daunting financial challenges faced in Springfield, President Livingston provided discouraging news that local government distribution of revenue funds may be drastically reduced. President Livingston noted communication with legislators for assistance in opposition to the proposed reductions.

A. Meeting and Workshop on Community Safety

President Livingston indicated the purpose of this evening's workshop is to work toward making La Grange a better place to live. Referencing the recent shooting, President Livingston feels communication and community involvement are critical paths in making La Grange better. Addressing the audience, President Livingston instructed groups share information on three questions as follows:

1. What do you see as the threats to public safety in our community?
2. What would you like to see the Village do in response to those threats?
3. Building and strengthening a neighborhood also requires citizen involvement. What would you like to see the neighborhood do on its own to become more cohesive? What are obstacles to those opportunities?

Prior to group discussions, President Livingston requested the Acting Police Chief and Community Development Director to provide some history and background information of their department relevant community safety.

Acting Police Chief Strasser provided detailed information on the mission and proactive approach the Police Department undertakes in solving crimes and ensuring public safety. Chief Strasser noted that the investigation of the recent shooting is on-going and reiterated that this was not a random shooting but a targeted victim.

Community Development Director Patrick Benjamin explained the many areas of his department including but not limited to plan review; permits; certificate of occupancy; and code enforcement.

At 7:55 p.m. President Livingston requested the audience form groups to discuss the questions posed; appoint a spokesperson; and after approximately 30 minutes to share the

information gathered. President Livingston noted that he and members of the Board would join some of the groups to gather insight on their discussions in preparation of budgetary development.

At 8:30 p.m. President Livingston requested each group spokesperson provide a summary of their group discussion.

Representing individuals at the first table, Mr. Al Banks noted gun violence as one of the predominant concerns and suggested the formation of a public safety task force. There is a need for additional youth activities as well as additional police presence possibly the use of cameras. The group feels that interaction with local officials along with involvement in the community are important and would like to see more sensitivity training with surrounding municipalities and participation with local churches.

Representing individuals at the second table, Mr. Al Morales indicated that communication is not consistent or complete. The group does not feel that the Park District offers enough affordable programs for youth. Concerns were expressed that isolating the area would have a negative effect and suggested the Village establish a task force of all ethnic representatives to ensure resident ownership. Referencing adequate resources as obstacles, the group feels youth and after school activities would have a positive effect.

Representing individuals at the third table, a male spokesperson noted areas of concern are geographic relating to overcrowding and inappropriate behavior at public facilities. Safety concerns across the entire community regarding overpopulation and less police protection were also advocated. This group suggested employing local youth; monthly neighborhood meetings; reinstating the D.A.R.E. (Drug Awareness Resistance Education) program; and to network with other areas of the community.

Representing individuals at the fourth table, a female spokesperson stated the group acknowledges that after school programs are critical. It was noted that Nazareth Academy had ceased their volunteer tutoring program at the Community Center. Suggestions for additional police presence; gun control; community watch groups; and the need for volunteers were expressed by the group.

Representing individuals at the fifth table, Ms. Bessie Boyd explained the perception of fear in the neighborhood as well as the public library was of great concern. The group believes that policing; communication; honest transparency; and a public relations contact may lessen those fears. Notification to local schools of any violent incidences is also important for public safety.

Representing individuals at the sixth table, a female spokesperson noted agreement with previous comments. Inconsistency of data and lack of trust are of concern to this group. Interaction within the entire community and neighborhood gatherings to form positive relationships were suggested. Being cost effective the group believes hiring additional public safety personnel locally would prevail over the purchase of cameras.

President Livingston thanked everyone for their thoughtful comments; suggestions; and ideas. Noting that the Village would synthesize the information provided to further work together as a community for public safety.

Addressing the importance in budget planning and funding for an additional public safety officer; sewer and infrastructure improvements; as well as general operations, President Livingston provided information on the referendum question which will be presented to voters on the upcoming April 7 consolidated election for an increase in the Village's sales tax and a roll back of the food and beverage tax. President Livingston noted the accessibility of the Board for continued open communication.

Trustee Kuchler expressed his thanks to those in attendance and suggested more may wish to be involved in the Citizen's Council.

Trustee McCarty added his appreciation for those in attendance and feels ownership in the community is as important as ownership of property.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING AGENDA ITEMS

None

4. OMNIBUS AGENDA AND VOTE

A. Consolidated Voucher 150223 – (\$949,565.84)

It was moved by Trustee Langan to approve item A of the Omnibus Agenda, seconded by Trustee McCarty

Approved by roll call vote.

Ayes: Trustees Kuchler, Langan, McCarty, and President Livingston

Nays: None

Absent: Trustee Holder, Nowak and Palermo

5. CURRENT BUSINESS

None

6. MANAGER'S REPORT

None

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING MATTERS NOT ON AGENDA

Reverend Moran invited the audience to an open meeting on Monday at 6:00 p.m. at the Davis Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Church located at 320 East Calendar.

Tim Kelsas as a Trustee of the La Grange Public Library spoke positively of the Library and feels the negative comments are unwarranted. Mr. Kelsas does not believe any reference to the programs that support homeless individuals are relevant to the public library. Mr. Kelsas added that the La Grange Public Library takes great pride in the security offered to the public and works closely with the Police for any disturbances.

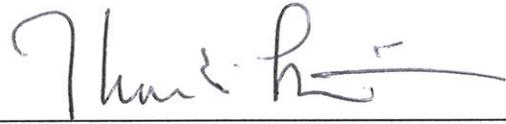
8. EXECUTIVE SESSION

9. TRUSTEE COMMENTS

None

10. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:10 p.m. Trustee Langan moved to adjourn, seconded by Trustee McCarty. Approved by voice vote.



Thomas E. Livingston, Village President

ATTEST:



John Burns, Village Clerk

Approved Date: 3/9/15