

**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE MEETING OF THE PRESIDENT  
AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF  
WILMETTE HELD IN THE SECOND FLOOR TRAINING ROOM OF  
SAID VILLAGE HALL, 1200 WILMETTE AVENUE, WILMETTE,  
ILLINOIS ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2007.**

---

**1. Call to Order**

President Canning called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Present: Village President Christopher S. Canning  
Trustee Michael Basil  
Trustee Karen Spillers  
Trustee Alan Swanson  
Trustee Mari Terman  
Trustee Lali Watt

Absent: Trustee John Levin

Staff Present: Michael J. Earl, Village Manager  
Maureen Barry, Assistant Village Manager  
Joe McRae, Assistant to the Village Manager  
Robert Amoruso, Finance Director  
Kathleen Gargano, Special Assistant to Finance and  
Administration  
Blythe Trilling, Assistant Finance Director

**Housing Commission**

John Thomason, Chair of the Housing Commission, and Kara Breems, Staff Planner, presented the Commission's budget and summarized the programs for 2008 including the Housing Assistance Program (HAP) which is currently serving 25 residents. The Commission plans to remarket the program.

President Canning asked Mr. Thomason why the program has not been better marketed. Mr. Thomason stated that the program is being marketed through New Trier Township, churches and synagogues. He stated that the applicants are prescreened.

Kara Breems stated that as of January 1, 2007 the lien program now applies to all home-owner participants and requires participants to pay funds back when their home is sold. This is a change from the grant that was formerly given.

Trustee Watt asked what type of people the program serves. Mr. Thomason stated that the majority of the participants are elderly.

**Community Relations Commission (CRC)**

Shahid Siddiqui, Chair of the Commission and Joe McRae, Assistant to the Village Manager summarized the Commission's activities over the past year noting that the CRC is planning to present the same programs in the 2008 with the same total budget, but will reallocate program funding levels based on 2007 actual costs.

**Fine Arts Commission (FAC)**

Joe McRae, Assistant to the Village Manager, presented the FAC's proposed budget. He stated that the Commission is requesting the same amount for their budget as the previous year. Mr. McRae summarized the Commission's activities including the concert series and Arts Awareness Month. The FAC would like to reapportion their funding from Arts Awareness Month to the concert series.

**Historical Society/Museum**

The Historical Society/Museum budget was presented by Museum Director Kathy Hussey-Arnston, Historical Museum Board Member Cathy Pratt, and Historical Museum President John Textor.

President Canning asked that the group summarize the history of the museum, the staff and their respective duties and museum operations and programs. Ms. Hussey-Arnston summarized the department operations including the following positions:

- Museum Director – Full time position, 100% funded by the Village
- Museum Assistant/Curator – Part time position, 50% funded by Village, 50% funded by Historical Society
- Museum Assistant – Part-time position, funded 100% by Historical Society

President Canning asked if the appraisal of the Museum contents could be deferred.

Mr. Textor stated a separate policy is needed to insure the Museum collection.

Mr. Textor asked that the Village Board reconsider a potential reduction of the Director's hours. He expressed the Historical Society's willingness to review the support received from the Village as compared to that of the Historical Society, stating that reductions could possibly be made elsewhere if necessary.

President Canning stated that no decision had yet been made about reductions to museum staff.

**Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)**

Erika Fabisch, staff liaison to the HPC, presented the Commission's budget and reviewed the Commission's activities for the year. The budget remains flat from 2007.

President Canning asked how much staff time it took to adequately serve the needs of this commission. Ms. Fabisch estimated that she spends on average 7 days a month working on HPC related activities.

### **Youth Commission**

Joe Feldman, Chair of the Youth Commission, presented the proposed budget and reviewed the Commission's activities for the year. Mr. Feldman asked the Village Board to reconsider the proposed one third reduction in the grant program and highlighted the programs he felt would suffer as a result of the reduced funding levels.

Trustee Watt and President Canning thanked Mr. Feldman for the good work he had done as Youth Commission Chair as his tenure will soon expire.

### **Information Services Department**

Peter Skiles, Director of Information Services, reviewed the proposed 2008 budget, focusing on additional requests such as the GIS Consortium, website enhancement project, PC replacement program and the Microsoft software subscription.

President Canning asked if a portion of the \$30,000 budgeted for PC replacement could be deferred until 2009. Mr. Skiles stated that a certain portion could be deferred but that action would impact the existing replacement schedule.

Trustee Watt, Trustee Terman, and Trustee Swanson inquired about the computer replacement program schedule. Mr. Skiles addressed the questions stating that computer replacement is based on age, user needs and other issues.

### **Community Development Department**

Lisa Roberts, Director of Community Development, reviewed the Department's proposed 2008 budget and stated that a review of the building permit review process was underway and the Board could expect a report with recommendations in early 2008.

President Canning asked Ms. Roberts about the decrease in Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) cases and building permits as shown in the Department's activity measures.

Ms. Roberts explained that the decrease in building permits shown was probably not totally accurate and is due to incomplete data retrieved from the Cornerstone software program utilized by the Community Development Department.

Members of the Village Board expressed concerns with incorrect data being used for the Department's record keeping functions.

Ms. Roberts stated that the department is currently working with IS to transition to a new permit tracking system in the Village's MUNIS database. However, the purpose of Cornerstone was not

to track steps of permit review. Once all of the data in MUNIS is updated, record keeping is expected to be more precise than in the past.

Ms. Roberts discussed with the Committee the staffing level of the Department as it relates to the Additional Request for funding for a part-time Plumbing Inspector.

### **Engineering Department**

Brigitte Mayerhofer, Director of Engineering, Jorge Cruz, Assistant Director of Engineering, and Ray Ames, Water Plant Superintendent, and Assistant Water Plant Superintendent Nabil Quafisheh presented the 2008 Engineering Department budget.

Ms. Mayerhofer discussed the consequences of the proposed budget reductions on the alley maintenance program, sidewalk replacement program, curb program, brick street program and traffic calming activities.

Trustee Swanson asked if the Village had promised street repairs to a particular area.

Ms. Mayerhofer stated that Washington Street residents had been told their street would be repaired in 2008, but staff would inform the residents that the work has been deferred due to budget constraints.

President Canning asked if additional staff would impact the permit process or if any of the ordinances impede the Engineering Department's productivity.

Ms. Mayerhofer said that the ordinances were helpful to the Village. However before adding additional personnel she would like the opportunity to review the process to determine whether the delays in the permit process are structural or could be improved with additional staff.

Mr. Cruz discussed the grading permit process in conjunction with the building permit process. The new permit tracking program will require the applicant to submit all necessary information before it is reviewed by Engineering, which will prevent delays in permit review.

### **Water Plant**

Mr. Ames discussed the Water Plant budget highlighting several Additional Requests such as tuckpointing and filter repairs. Mr. Ames stressed the need for roof repairs at the Water Plant.

President Canning stated that a back-up emergency generator at the Storm Water Pump Station would be discussed at a future meeting.

Trustee Watt mentioned some green ways to reduce storm water and said she would distribute information from the Sustainable Cities Symposium in Elgin.

Mr. Earl pointed out that the budget reflects an \$8,000 reduction in the membership account due to elimination of the membership in the American Water Works Association Research Foundation.

Mr. Ames reviewed the status of the interconnection project with Evanston noting that the project cost for design services has been reduced from \$225,000 to \$144,000.

### **Public Works Department**

Ken Kennedy, Assistant Director of Public Works, Guy Lam, Street Superintendent, and Brad Enright, Utility Superintendent, presented the proposed 2008 Public Works budget.

President Canning thanked the Public Works staff for all their hard work during and after the August 23<sup>rd</sup> storm. President Canning asked the staff about the need for the pick up trucks and dump trucks included as recommended in the Department's budget request.

Mr. Kennedy reviewed the vehicle replacement program for the pick up trucks and the dump trucks stressing that deferring the replacement of these vehicles could increase maintenance costs. Mr. Kennedy stated that the pick up trucks are used daily.

President Canning asked if a utility grapple is a necessity. Mr. Kennedy stated that outside contractors used this piece of equipment during the storm removal process and the Department found that it would be beneficial for the Department. Trustee Terman asked whether the Department in its regular activities would use the grapple attachment. Mr. Kennedy responded that this piece of equipment would be used on a regular basis.

President Canning asked if there was anything from the Budget Reductions Memo that the Department would strongly prefer not be deferred. Mr. Kennedy stated that the Department would prefer that cuts not be made to the tree planting program given the storm damage and the demand for the program by Village residents.

Trustee Basil inquired about the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) budget. President Canning stated that the 2008 EAB budget had been reduced and discussed the status of the program. Trustee Watt suggested that the Village look into chemical treatments to save the ash trees rather than cutting them down. President Canning stated that to date there is no pesticide proven to prevent EAB from killing ash trees.

Trustee Spillers asked if the Automated External Defibrillators (AED) request would be for residents or staff. Mr. Kennedy stated it was intended for employees primarily, but could be used on residents if the employee encountered someone in need.

### **Police Department**

George Carpenter, Police Chief, Deputy Chief Kyle Perkins and Communications Supervisor Eric Peterson presented the Police Department's proposed 2008 budget.

President Canning inquired about the reduction of one officer position proposed in the Budget Reduction Memo and its impact on the Department. Chief Carpenter stated that the Department has been down a position in the past and would find a way to adjust if the position is not funded. Chief Carpenter stated that out of the positions put forth, if he had to make a recommendation for a cut, the Crime Prevention Officer would be his pick. The Research and Development Officer oversees the accreditation process.

President Canning asked about the reduction in local fines and circuit court fees. Chief Carpenter stated that the some of the decrease is attributed to the compliance with local ordinances due to the enforcement efforts of the additional Parking Control Officer.

The Board discussed the funding and staffing of the Village Crossing Guards.

President Canning asked if the Additional Requests for the replacement of squad cars were absolutely necessary. Deputy Chief Perkins stated that the squad cars are used 24 hours a day every day. He stated that the replacement schedule was changed a few years ago to every 3 years as opposed to every 2 years for marked squad cars. However, deferring the unmarked staff vehicle would be acceptable if the Public Works Department agreed with the suggestion.

President Canning asked if the funding of the squad car video cameras is something that would be eligible for a grant. Deputy Chief Perkins stated that the Department applies for grants to fund equipment purchases when possible; these items are needed to complete the replacement program currently underway.

## **Fire Department**

Jim Dominik, Fire Chief, presented the Fire Department's proposed 2008 budget.

President Canning asked about deferring the two Fire Inspector positions. Chief Dominik stated that it was a matter of priority and that the Fire Inspectors positions were a new program. However, without the inspectors, the Fire Department would find it difficult to follow up on initial inspections to see that critical issues have been addressed. Currently, when Fire personnel conduct inspections they take an engine staffed with three Firefighters on each inspection.

Trustee Watt asked why there needed to be three firefighters on the engine. Chief Dominik stated that three was standard in case they needed to respond to a call during the inspection. Chief Dominik went on to explain the Fire Department staffing levels.

President Canning reviewed the Fire Department's request for the Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) noting that the Fire Department has repeatedly applied for grant funding for this request but has not received it. Chief Dominik stated that the replacement of the SCBA needs to occur next year as the air bottles have a 2008 expiration date.

President Canning asked about the intergovernmental agency, MABAS. Chief Dominik explained that participation in MABAS allows the Village to utilize trained Fire Department staff from neighboring communities in necessary situations.

President Canning inquired about dispatch service costs with FireComm. Chief Dominik explained the Department's recommendation to move fire and emergency medical dispatching services to Red Center. It is anticipated that the move to RED Center will be more cost effective and efficient than the FireComm arrangement. Chief Dominik also stated that the move would allow for more coordinated assistance with other RED Center communities.

Trustee Watt stated that Wilmette appears to assist Winnetka six times more than they help the Village and expressed concern about the fairness of this relationship.

President Canning asked about the Budget Reduction Memo recommendation regarding the possibility of two part-time secretaries as opposed to one full-time secretary. Chief Dominik suggested that the concept of two part time secretaries could possibly provide more specialized administrative assistance.

### **Legislative and Administration**

Mr. Earl presented the Legislative and Administration Budgets.

President Canning inquired if the proposed cuts in the curb and sidewalk maintenance programs will impact the Village's general liability insurance.

Ms. Barry stated that the Village must show its insurance carrier it has a regular maintenance program, but deferring some repairs for a short time should not adversely impact the Village's liability, as long as immediate issues continue to be addressed.

Trustee Terman inquired about reducing the amount spent on ICMA memberships for the administrative staff. Mr. Earl responded that these memberships are important for professional development and are common place for career city management professionals.

### **Finance Department**

Mr. Amoruso presented the Department's 2008 proposed budget. President Canning asked about the number of vehicle licenses issued to date. Mr. Amoruso stated that the license numbers presented were as of July 1, 2007 and that the Village is on track to meet historical averages.

### **Law Department**

Mr. Earl stated that there were no significant changes in the Law budget from 2007.

### **Cable Department**

Mr. Earl reviewed the additional materials presented to the Committee regarding potential budget reductions related to Museum staffing and the Cable Production Assistant.

President Canning spoke about the long-term issues facing cable including the statewide franchise agreement with AT&T and the need to update Channel 6 equipment from analog to digital. Trustee Watt commented that WCTV is a primary source of Village information for residents and that it is critical to maintain this communication medium.

Mr. Earl spoke about recent staff efforts to research funding options for an equipment upgrade from analog to digital.

President Canning inquired about use of bond funding for this project. Mr. Amoruso stated that the life span of the equipment being purchased as part of this proposed project was long enough that it could be funded using bond monies.

Trustee Watt suggested researching cost sharing options with the other users of WCTV such as the Library, Park District and School District to help fund the equipment upgrade.

### **Health Department**

Trustee Watt expressed her concern over having public tax dollars fund nursing services for private parochial schools. She stated that there should be some cost sharing negotiated with the private schools for the nursing.

### **Other Matters**

The Board discussed how best to present and review the additional requests for the next Committee of the Whole budget meeting. The Board requested that the additional requests, Budget Decisions Memo and the Budget Reduction Memo be incorporated into one document.

The Committee discussed matters related to determining the tax levy and funding the \$1.1 million in storm related expenses.

### **Adjournment**

President Canning adjourned the meeting at 1:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe McRae  
Assistant to the Village Manager