

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRESIDENT  
AND THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF MORTON GROVE  
RICHARD T. FLICKINGER MUNICIPAL CENTER COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
SEPTEMBER 27, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER**

- I. Village President Dan DiMaria convened the Regular Meeting of the Village Board at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Village Hall and led the Board and assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- II. Village Clerk Eileen Harford called the roll. Present were Trustees Bill Grear, Saba Khan, Rita Minx, John Thill, Connie Travis, and Janine Witko.

III.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Trustee Minx moved to accept the Minutes of the September 13, 2021 Village Board meeting as presented, seconded by Trustee Khan. **Motion passed unanimously via voice vote.**

IV.

**SPECIAL REPORTS**

1. **Summer Photo Contest Winners**
  - a. Mayor DiMaria introduced Community Relations Commissioner Patrick Baldwin to present the winners of the Commission's quarterly photo contest, themed "Summer in Morton Grove."
  - b. Mr. Baldwin explained that the mission of the Community Relations Commission (CRC) is to foster, encourage, and promote positive relations among all Morton Grove residents of all ages, genders, races, creeds, national origins, and economic and educational levels.
  - c. Mr. Baldwin said there were many photos submitted for this quarter's contest, and the judges had a difficult time determining the winners. The winning entries came from Jocelyn De Jesus, Christopher Noel, Vijay Shah, Sidra Ahmed, and Jean Goldrosen. Vijay Shah was also named the "Overall Winner" of the contest. He invited Mayor DiMaria and Trustee Travis to take a photo with the winners who were present.
  - d. Mr. Baldwin said the Fall photo contest begins today but is open to high school students only. The contest runs through December 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - e. Mr. Baldwin noted that the Commission is always looking for new members. The CRC meets the second Tuesday every month at 6:30 p.m. Meetings are held at Village Hall in the second floor conference room. The next meeting is October 12, 2021, and all are welcome.

V.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Mayor DiMaria opened the Public Hearing at 7:04 p.m.

- a. Village Administrator Czerwinski began by summarizing the public notices that the Village had issued in conformance to the TIF Act. He reported that a Joint Review Board had been formed and had met on August 26, 2021. All public taxing bodies related to the area to be included in the proposed TIF attended and supported the idea of a Lincoln Avenue-Lehigh Avenue TIF District. These include the Morton Grove Park District, Parkview School District 70, Niles Township Government, Niles Township High School District 219, and Cook County.
- b. Mr. Czerwinski noted that written comments had been received from several residents: Frank Wang, Gia Schultz, and Kim Connelly. These will be read a little later in this hearing.
- c. Mr. Czerwinski then introduced the Village's TIF consultant, Bob Rychlicki, to provide an overview and summary of the TIF Plan.
- d. Mr. Rychlicki said tonight's Public Hearing is part of a TIF's legal process. No action will be taken by the Board tonight. After hearing the public comments tonight, the Board must wait a minimum of 14 days and no longer than 90 days to adopt an ordinance creating this new TIF. He explained that a TIF is a financing tool the Village can use to achieve its planning objectives. The Village has or is currently utilizing TIF Districts to improve the area of Dempster and Waukegan Road, Lincoln and Ferris Avenues, and Waukegan Road.
- e. Mr. Rychlicki said the proposed Redevelopment Project Area is strategically important to the Village. It's anchored by the Metra station and includes property within one of the Village's oldest mixed-use neighborhoods. It also incorporates an industrial area facing increasing obsolescence, underuse, and vacancy. The TIF area first needs to be identified, then a budget needs to be determined, and finally, the general land uses would be identified. Mr. Rychlicki stressed that any redevelopment agreements with private developers must come before the Village Board, and any proposed developments must comply with the Village's zoning requirements. The Board would consider any proposed developments within the area on a case-by-case basis; the proposed development would also need to go through the full Procedural Control process.
- f. Mr. Rychlicki noted that a TIF is not a new tax. What a TIF does is split property tax revenue generated from properties within the TIF District into two components: basic revenue and incremental revenue. Basic revenue is the current tax revenue being generated in the specified area. The property tax revenue goes to the various taxing bodies that are currently receiving it, such as school districts, the park district, the County, and the municipality. This is currently about \$5 million annually. Incremental revenue results from taxes on new developments or redeveloped property within the TIF District. The incremental revenue is funneled back into the TIF Fund for use within the TIF. The typical lifespan of a TIF District is 23 years.
- g. Mr. Rychlicki stated that, under Illinois law, the proposed redevelopment area needs to qualify to become a TIF District. This proposed area qualifies for designation as a "Conservation Area." That means that 50% or more of the building have to be 35 years old or older.

V. **PUBLIC HEARINGS** (continued)

- h. Additionally, at least three of the qualifying factors must be present. The proposed TIF District meets at least six of the thirteen qualifying factors. The six factors are: Obsolescence, Deterioration, Lack of Community Planning, Deleterious Land Use or Layout, Inadequate Utilities, and Decline in EAV in comparison to the Village and CPI. (This last factor may be withdrawn.) Mr. Rychlicki added that this TIF would be capped at \$46 million over its 23-year life. The Village Board will approve all TIF expenditures, and the TIF funds must be there. The Village is not obligated to use the entire amount. The budget has some flexibility in that funds budgeted for one line item could be used for another, if necessary. Initial assumptions and projections based on market data show that the proposed TIF could increase in value from its current \$5 million to \$45–\$50 million.
- i. The general goals and objectives of this TIF are to:
  - Encourage redevelopment of obsolete and/or under-utilized buildings or sites
  - Reduce or eliminate impediments to private development within the area
  - Coordinate redevelopment activities within the proposed TIF to provide a positive market signal to private investors
  - Accomplish redevelopment over a reasonable time period
  - Create an attractive overall appearance for the area
  - Further the goals and objectives of the Village’s comprehensive planning efforts
- j. Mr. Rychlicki said the Village plans to promote improvement and enhancement of viable existing commercial buildings, including facades, signage, and structural repairs. The Village plans to improve roadway characteristics in the corridor in order to improve traffic capacity, as well as improve the commuter train station facilities, including the supply and distribution of parking. The Village plans to improve the image and appearance of the corridor, where space permits, via streetscape, sidewalk improvements, signage, and gateway features. The Village will promote redevelopment of marginal, deteriorated, and obsolete building to new retail/commercial, residential, and mixed uses.
- k. Mr. Rychlicki noted that a Housing Impact Study of the area was included in the TIF Plan, as were Land Use maps showing current uses and proposed uses. He said the Village had originally looked at a larger area, but had decided to go with this more compact area because they felt it would have the best chance of being developed in this time period.
- l. Mr. Rychlicki added, at this point, this process is nearly complete. All the proper notices have been given, the proper authorities have indicated their support, and now the Village can reflect on the public comments and take action by adopting or not adopting the appropriate Ordinances after a 14-day period.
- m. Mr. Czerwinski said the Village had looked at an area from Oakton Street north to Austin Avenue east but decided it would be both time-consuming and inappropriate. It might be more feasible if one of the area’s major manufacturers (i.e., Crane or Xylem) was considering moving out, but fortunately, they’re both prospering.

V.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS** (continued)

Mr. Czerwinski then asked the residents who provided written comments if they'd like to speak.

- n. **Gia Schultz** said she resides and owns a home on Elm Street within the proposed TIF District. She has attended all the meetings regarding this and has some concerns about plans for the area that have been "floated" during those meetings. Ms. Schultz said she is not here to complain about development in Morton Grove or to dissuade the Board from approving the TIF. She is asking, however, that further considerations on planning be given to those proposals already before the Board, and asking the Board to adopt ordinance that would guard further development.
- o. Ms. Schultz said she would like to see Morton Grove take a stronger stand for environmental planning provisions, such as requiring developers to submit environmental impact reports. She said the Village should also approve ordinances requiring complete streets. She felt the Village needed better ordinances in place, so there would be a guide for developers that reflects the Village's Sustainability Plan, and are inclusive of walking and biking paths, access to public transit, and comprehensive planning for crosswalks and dark sky-certified traffic signals and street lights.
- p. Ms. Schultz stated she had a "deep concern" about traffic related to the proposal for 350+ units in an area that is already poorly laid out for traffic flow and is congested multiple times per day due to Metra and other commuters. Three different developments have been proposed: a 250-unit development, a 90-unit development, and a 60-unit mixed use development, with apartments above and businesses below. This is a lot of new housing in an area not designed for residential traffic.
- q. Ms. Schultz said that, during the planning and approval process for Sawmill Station, she was part of a group of residents who called on the Village to require developers to include fair housing. At the time, the Village responded that such a requirement would have had to be implemented earlier, adding that Sawmill Station was already too far along to require fair housing for the development that is still being built today. Given the timing of this new TIF approval, and the fact that developers are already sending in proposals for the area that include many units of housing, Ms. Schultz said she's once again asking that the Village put in place a requirement for fair housing in any new development that would be created in this new TIF. She said, "Fair housing is important to the development of the Village, and we should be maintaining and growing our fair housing options." She felt that any new developments need to have a requirement to include fair housing.
- r. At the Joint Review Board meeting of August 26, 2021, Ms. Schultz noted that the current District 70 superintendent indicated that the school building is not able to accommodate any more students. As the parent of three children who attended/currently attend Parkview School, Ms. Schultz said she could speak firsthand about the overcrowding. One son has been in overcrowded classrooms since 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Another child had electives cut because there was no rooms available in which to hold those classes. Parents have repeatedly asked the District 70 school board to reduce class sizes, but they're told there is no more classroom space available and there will be no reduction in class size.

V. **PUBLIC HEARINGS** (continued)

- s. While Parkview School has always been considered a top school and is often a reason for families to move to this area, with continued overcrowding and lack of classroom space, Ms. Schultz feared the school will quickly decline. She felt it was imperative, not only for our children's education, but also for our property values, to keep Parkview a top-performing school that isn't overcrowded or forced to cut programming due to lack of classroom space. With the new housing units proposed for this TIF, the overcrowding issues in the school district will only increase. She thanked the Board for their time and consideration of these urgent matters.
- t. **Kim Connelly** had submitted written comments, but declined to speak, noting that Ms. Schultz had covered everything she would have said.
- u. **Frank Wang** who lives on Linder echoed Ms. Schultz' comments. He grew up in Skokie and has recently moved to Morton Grove, in part, because of Parkview School. He reiterated that many District 70 parents are very, very concerned about the overcrowding in the school. He emphasized the importance of getting a good education, and wanted to let the Village Board appreciate that more families moving into the area will mean the overcrowding will continue.
- v. Mr. Wang said he works for a Fortune 100 company. He feels the land in the proposed TIF would be well suited for commercial endeavors, rather than residential units. Commercial enterprise would also bring in more tax revenue as well as opportunities for employment. He thanked the Board for their time this evening.
- w. Mr. Czerwinski commented that the Village is not against any level of office building or manufacturing; we just need to see who's going to pick up the property and the TIF will help with that. He said that, yes, individuals have approached the Village with proposals for townhomes, apartments, and mixed use developments, and staff will be looking at all of them and bring them back to the Board for consideration. Forming the TIF will help the infrastructure in the area and will help the area move forward, instead of having vacant sites and under-utilized sites. Mr. Czerwinski said that Village staff appreciates the Board's support and the consultants' expertise, and will be looking for approval of a TIF Ordinance that will be coming before the Board soon.

Mayor DiMaria declared the Public Hearing closed at 7:30 p.m. He thanked Mr. Rychlicki and Mr. Czerwinski, as well as those who had submitted public comments and spoke.

VI. **PLAN COMMISSION REPORTS**

NONE

VII. **RESIDENTS' COMMENTS (Agenda Items Only)**

NONE

VIII.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Mayor DiMaria proclaimed the week of October 3–9, 2021 as “Fire Prevention Week” in the Village. He noted that fire is a serious public safety concern and homes are the locations where people are at greatest risk from fire. Working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in reported home fires in half, and Morton Grove residents should be sure everyone in the home understands the sounds of the alarms and knows how to respond. Mayor DiMaria said that residents who have planned and practiced a home fire escape plan are more prepared, and therefore more likely to survive a fire. The theme of the 2021 Fire Prevention Week is “Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety.” The goal is to remind us the importance of learning the different sounds of smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Mayor DiMaria urged everyone in the Village to “learn the sounds of fire safety” and to support the many public safety activities and efforts of Morton Grove’s fire and emergency services.

IX.

**CLERK'S REPORT**

Clerk Harford had no report this evening.

X.

**STAFF REPORTS**A. Village Administrator:

Mr. Czerwinski had no report this evening.

B. Corporation Counsel:

Corporation Counsel Liston was absent with notice—no report.

XI.

**TRUSTEES' REPORTS**A. Trustee Gear:

1. Trustee Gear presented **Ordinance 21-07, Approving a Final Plat of Subdivision and Accepting Certain Improvements for the Beckwith Crossing Subdivision at 6729 and 6733 Beckwith Road in Morton Grove, Illinois.**

This is the second reading of this Ordinance.

- a. Trustee Gear explained that the property commonly known as 6729 and 6733 Beckwith Road, located on the south side of Beckwith between Oak Park Avenue and Lehigh Avenue has a combined land area of 1.71 acres and is located within the R-1 Single Family Residence zoning district. It is currently improved with one single family residence and stormwater management facilities.

XI. **TRUSTEES' REPORTS** (continued)

A. **Trustee Gear**: (continued)

- b. In July 2019, the Village Board passed Ordinance 19-10 pursuant to the Subdivision Application submitted by the Developer, Zubair Patel, which approved a Preliminary Plat of Subdivision for the property to create five (5) new lots of record. Subsequently the Developer submitted a Final Plat of Subdivision prepared by Heritage Land Consultants LLC. The Building Commissioner, Plan Commission Chair, Village Administrator, and Corporation Counsel reviewed the Final Plat of Subdivision and unanimously found it to be in substantial compliance with the approved Preliminary Plat of Subdivision, and recommend approval of the Final Plat to the Board of Trustees. Trustee Gear said that passage of this Ordinance will essentially create five new lots of record in the Village.

Trustee Gear moved to adopt Ordinance 21-07, seconded by Trustee Minx.

- c. Trustee Thill had several questions. He asked if Cook County has signed off on this yet. Mr. Czerwinski responded that the Subdivision Plat will be given to the Country for their records. They will then record it, and there is a section they will sign off on, but this Board has to accept it first.
- d. Trustee Thill asked if all the service lines (electric, gas) are in yet. Mr. Czerwinski said they are not onto the lots because there's no final plans for those lots. The lot that has been improved with a house does have the service lines installed. Without any plans for any proposed structures on the other lots, the utilities can't come in until they know where in the structure the connections should be. Once there are structures on the lots, the utilities will be able to establish the connections.
- e. Trustee Thill also wondered why there are only three addresses for four lots. Mr. Czerwinski explained that the addresses conform to what is currently there. There is an address plan that includes four addresses (6727, 6729, 6731, and 6733 Beckwith). 6733 is already built. There is a sub-lot detention and storm water management area that will be maintained jointly by the Homeowners' Association.
- f. Trustee Thill asked if the developer has complied with the Village's requirements. Mr. Czerwinski said yes, he has.
- g. Trustee Gear said, for clarification, that the detention area is considered the fifth lot, while the other four lots are for residential development. Mr. Czerwinski said that is correct.

Mayor DiMaria called for the vote on Ordinance 21-07.

**Motion passed: 6 ayes, 0 nays.**

Tr. Gear      aye  
Tr. Thill      aye

Tr. Khan      aye  
Tr. Travis    aye

Tr. Minx      aye  
Tr. Witko     aye

XI. **TRUSTEES' REPORTS** (continued)

A. Trustee Gear: (continued)

2. Next, Trustee Gear presented **Resolution 21-60, Authorizing a Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the Village of Morton Grove and the Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge #135, For January 1, 2020 Through December 31, 2023.**
- a. Trustee Gear said this approves a four-year collective bargaining agreement between the Village and its patrol officers. He moved to approve Resolution 21-60, seconded by Trustee Minx.

**Motion passed: 6 ayes, 0 nays.**

Tr. Gear	<u>aye</u>	Tr. Khan	<u>aye</u>	Tr. Minx	<u>aye</u>
Tr. Thill	<u>aye</u>	Tr. Travis	<u>aye</u>	Tr. Witko	<u>aye</u>

3. Lastly, Trustee Gear wished Zoe Heidorn a very happy birthday from him and the rest of the Village Board!

B. Trustee Khan:

Trustee Khan had no report this evening.

C. Trustee Minx:

Trustee Minx had no report this evening.

D. Trustee Thill:

Trustee Thill had no report this evening.

E. Trustee Travis:

1. Trustee Travis noted that the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Community Relations Commission-sponsored Community Artists Performance is scheduled for Saturday, October 30 from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. It will feature high school performers showing their talents "live on stage" at the Civic Center, depending on what the COVID guidelines at the time.
- a. All performers are asked to develop and provide virtual presentations. Submissions must be made by September 24, 2021, by noon to [www.identityperformingarts.org/projects.aspx](http://www.identityperformingarts.org/projects.aspx). Questions should be directed to [ginny@identityperformingarts.org](mailto:ginny@identityperformingarts.org).



XI. **TRUSTEES' REPORTS** (continued)

F. **Trustee Witko:**

1. Trustee Witko presented **Resolution 21-61, Authorizing a Contract With Design Dwellings, LLC for Living Space and Kitchen Renovation at Fire Station #4.**
  - a. She explained that the kitchen and living area of Fire Station #4 were last remodeled in 1996. Village staff has determined these areas do not meet the needs of the employees working at the facility. Public Works developed a project plan and bid the renovation in conformance with the Village's procurement requirements. Staff determined the lowest responsible bidder to be Design Dwellings, LLC of Chicago in the amount of \$164,225. Staff then "value engineered" the project, negotiated with the bidder, and agreed upon a project cost of \$143,759.48. This contract must conform to the requirements of the Prevailing Wage Act.

Trustee Witko moved to approve Resolution 21-55, seconded by Trustee Grear.

- b. Trustee Thill said that he noticed someone had FOIA'd this project, and he wondered why that would happen. Mr. Czerwinski said some contractors probably wanted to see the breakdown of the bids that had been received, and since it's public information, it can be FOIA'd.

Mayor DiMaria called for the vote on Resolution 21-61.

**Motion passed: 6 ayes, 0 nays.**

Tr. Grear	<u>aye</u>	Tr. Khan	<u>aye</u>	Tr. Minx	<u>aye</u>
Tr. Thill	<u>aye</u>	Tr. Travis	<u>aye</u>	Tr. Witko	<u>aye</u>

2. Trustee Witko announced that on Saturday, November 6, the Village will hold its first Pumpkin Smash at the north end of Harrer Park. A Pumpkin Smash is an effort by communities to divert pumpkins from landfills by providing residents a location to drop off jack-o-lanterns to be composted. She said she hoped everyone would take advantage of this; it should be a lot of fun!

XII. **OTHER BUSINESS**

Trustee Thill, who is the Village's representative on the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC) Board, noted that, due to the recycling efforts of the residents, Morton Grove had received a rebate over the last three months from SWANCC of \$13,025.42. He said he brought it up because he wants to encourage people to continue to recycle, and asked that people encourage others to recycle as well. Trustee Thill said that a ton of aluminum has less value than a ton of plastic milk gallon containers!

XIII.

**WARRANTS**

1. Trustee Minx presented the Warrant Register for September 27, 2021 in the amount of \$820,140.27. She moved to approve this evening's Warrant Register as presented, seconded by Trustee Thill.
- a. Trustee Grear commented, because of being on the Morton Grove Days Commission's Board, that when you see the line item on the Warrants for Morton Grove Days in the amount of \$9,498.41, that's money that comes into the Village, but then it goes back to the Commission.

Mayor DiMaria called for the vote on the Warrant Register of September 27, 2021.

**Motion passed: 6 ayes, 0 nays.**

Tr. Grear      aye  
Tr. Thill      aye

Tr. Khan      aye  
Tr. Travis      aye

Tr. Minx      aye  
Tr. Witko      aye

XIV.

**RESIDENTS' COMMENTS**

1. **Joe Hedrick**, American Legion Post #134's liaison to the Village Board, addressed the Board to let them know that the Legion has an important birthday celebration coming up: John Slater, who has always been very active in the Village, the Scouts, Friends of the Forest, etc. is reaching age 100. He is a former commander of American Legion Post #134, and is actually responsible for the name "American Legion Memorial Civic Center." There will be a celebration on October 10, 2021, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Mr. Hedrick invited the Board members and any other residents who'd like to honor Mr. Slater to attend. He said that Mr. Slater is in failing health and doesn't go out much anymore, but Mr. Slater's son assured Mr. Hedrick that he'd get his dad there.
- a. Mr. Hedrick also noted that Veterans' Day this year will be celebrated on November 14 because it's the Sunday closest to November 11. The Legion is planning to do its normal Veterans' Day parade and presentations. The Legion is trying hard to get post 9/11 veterans to attend. Many of them have a lot of problems and aren't doing well; the Legion would like to get them the proper help.
2. **Rudolf Vilk** appeared before the Board claiming he still has not received answers to his questions in spite of his many efforts. He said he has provided the Village with information about his case, but the answers he receives don't align with the questions he asked. He said he's been told that answers have been provided to him; he said that's not true.
- a. Mr. Vilk said he understands if residents do something wrong, there is a penalty/punishment, but he wanted to know who punishes the Village Administrator, Corporation Counsel, or the Mayor, if any of them make a mistake. He reminded the Board that they should respect people and that they are elected to be of service to people.

XIV.

**RESIDENTS' COMMENTS** (continued)

- b. Mayor DiMaria commented that he has met with Mr. Vilks on more than one occasion and has provided verbal responses to his written questions. He said, "I respect all my residents; I work for all my residents; my door is always open." He said Mr. Vilks asks the same questions over and over again. The Village has provided him answers but he doesn't like the answers. Mayor DiMaria told Mr. Vilks that he would continue to answer his questions.

XV.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Board, Trustee Minx moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Trustee Witko.

**Motion passed: 6 ayes, 0 nays.**

Tr. Grear      aye  
Tr. Thill      aye

Tr. Khan      aye  
Tr. Travis    aye

Tr. Minx      aye  
Tr. Witko     aye

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

PASSED this 11th day of October, 2021.

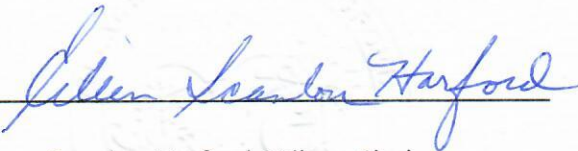
Trustee Grear	<u>Aye</u>
Trustee Khan	<u>Aye</u>
Trustee Minx	<u>Aye</u>
Trustee Thill	<u>Aye</u>
Trustee Travis	<u>Aye</u>
Trustee Witko	<u>Aye</u>

APPROVED by me this 11th day of October, 2021.



Daniel P. DiMaria, Village President  
Board of Trustees, Morton Grove, Illinois

APPROVED and FILED in my office this 12th day of October, 2021.



Eileen Scanlon Harford, Village Clerk  
Village of Morton Grove, Cook County, Illinois

Minutes by Teresa Cousar