

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRESIDENT
AND THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF MORTON GROVE
MORTON GROVE AMERICAN LEGION POST #134 CIVIC CENTER
MAY 10, 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, Rita Minx, John Thill, Connie Travis, and Janine Witko. Trustee Ed Ramos was absent with notice.

III.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor DiMaria asked for an approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of April 26, 2021. Trustee Minx moved to accept the Minutes as presented, seconded by Trustee Grear. **Motion passed unanimously (with 1 absent) via voice vote.**

IV.

SPECIAL REPORTS

1. Passport to a Greener Morton Grove: Announcement of Winners
 - a. Mayor DiMaria said it was his honor to announce the winners of the Village's Passport to a Greener Morton Grove Contest. He thanked everyone who participated in this challenge to conserve energy. The Village received 80 entries and randomly selected five (5) winners:
 - First prize: Estefania Sanchez, who wins a \$200 Google Smart Home Thermostat donated by ComEd

Additionally, the following four residents won their choice of either an Eastern Red Bud tree, a Magnolia Ann tree, a Norway Spruce tree, or a Colorado Blue Spruce tree. These trees were donated by Nicor and Ranieri's Landscaping Solutions.

- Mamoona Omer
- Lee A. Bowman
- Janice Goldader
- Danita Cherny

Mayor DiMaria thanked the sponsors of this contest and congratulated all the winners.

IV. **SPECIAL REPORTS** (continued)

2. Next, Mayor DiMaria proclaimed the week of May 22–28, 2021 as “National Safe Boating Week.” He noted that, on average, 600 people die each year in boating-related accidents in the U.S., with 79% of those fatalities caused by drowning. He added that a significant number of boaters who lose their lives by drowning each year would be alive today had they worn life jackets. The mayor encouraged all those who boat to practice safe boating habits and wear a life jacket at all times while boating.

V. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

NONE

VI. **PLAN COMMISSION REPORTS**

NONE

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

NONE

VIII. **PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

Mayor DiMaria had no report this evening.

IX. **CLERK’S REPORT**

Clerk Harford presented **Resolution 21-32, Accepting the Canvass Results and Proclamation for the April 6, 2021 Consolidated Election.**

- a. Clerk Harford said this resolution will formally accept, confirm, announce, and record the results of the April 6, 2021 Consolidated Election. The election was held for the office of Village President for a four-year term, Village Clerk for a four-year term, and three offices of Village Trustee, each for a four-year term. Three candidates ran for three offices for Library Trustee, each for a six-year term. All seats in this election were uncontested.
- b. Daniel P. DiMaria was re-elected as Village President with 1,147 votes; Eileen Scanlon Harford was re-elected as Village Clerk with 1,110 votes; William “Bill” Grear was re-elected as Village Trustee with 1,037 votes; Saba M. Khan was elected as Village Trustee with 1,016 votes; and Constance J. “Connie” Travis was re-elected as Village Trustee with 1,010 votes.
- c. Laima Puzzo was elected to the office of Library Trustee with 955 votes; Tamara Jost was elected as Library Trustee with 1,007 votes; and Erich Monzon was elected Library Trustee with 937 votes.

IX. CLERK'S REPORT (continued)

- d. Clerk Harford stated that the Board of Elections of Cook County, Illinois has proclaimed, and this Resolution confirms, the certification of these newly elected officials:
- Daniel P. DiMaria, Village President
 - Eileen Scanlon Harford, Village Clerk
 - William "Bill" Gear, Village Trustee
 - Saba M. Khan, Village Trustee
 - Constance J. "Connie" Travis, Village Trustee
 - Laima Puzzo, Library Trustee
 - Tamara Jost, Library Trustee
 - Erich Monzon, Library Trustee

Mayor DiMaria asked for a motion to approve this Resolution. Trustee Minx moved to approve Resolution 21-32, seconded by Trustee Witko.

Motion passed: 5 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent.

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

X. STAFF REPORTSA. Village Administrator:

Mr. Czerwinski had no report this evening.

B. Corporation Counsel:

Corporation Counsel Liston had no report this evening.

XI. TRUSTEES' REPORTSA. Trustee Gear:

Trustee Gear had no report this evening.

B. Trustee Minx:

Trustee Minx had no report this evening.

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

C. Trustee Ramos:

Trustee Ramos was absent—no report.

D. Trustee Thill:

Trustee Thill had no report this evening.

XI. Trustee Travis:

E. Trustee Travis had no report this evening.

F. Trustee Witko:

1. Trustee Witko provided an update from the Environment and Natural Resources Commission (ENRC).
 - a. She reminded the assemblage that the ENRC is hosting the “Kids for a Greener Morton Grove” challenge during the month of May for 1st to 8th graders to design reusable bags. A winning design will be chosen from three groups: 1st to 3rd grades, 4th to 6th grades, and 7th and 8th grades. The Village will produce these bags and sell them at community events, with the proceeds going to support environmental projects. More information on this can be found on the Village’s website.

XII. **OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Mayor DiMaria introduced his favorite Cook County Commissioner, Larry Suffredin, present this evening to swear in the new Village officials. Mayor DiMaria noted that Commissioner Suffredin was kind enough to be in Morton Grove this evening, even though his own son is being sworn in tonight as an alderman in the City of Evanston.
 - a. Commissioner Suffredin said it was a privilege to be here in Morton Grove. He swore in each of the three Village Trustees, Connie Travis, Saba Khan, and Bill Grear, respectively, followed by Village Clerk Eileen Harford and Village President Dan DiMaria.
 - b. Mayor DiMaria said that he was both humbled and excited to begin his third term in office as the Mayor of “this incredible Village.” He said, together, we’ve faced unprecedented challenges, especially dealing with the negative impacts of COVID-19, and together, we’ve all worked hard and made tough decisions to improve the quality of life for Morton Grove residents, both now and in the future. “Together, we’ve achieved a level of success for which we can all be proud.”

XII.

OTHER BUSINESS (continued)

- c. Mayor DiMaria noted that, “Eight years ago, we started by completing the Village’s first strategic plan. We listened to residents from all neighborhoods and groups in the Village. You told us you loved living in Morton Grove, but had concerns about the Village’s financial security, increased fees (especially water costs), and aging infrastructure. You asked us to attract more businesses, especially restaurants, and host more programs, events, and opportunities for community engagement. You spoke, we listened, and we took action.”
- d. Mayor DiMaria went on list a few of the things that have been accomplished:
 - Establishing a solid staff leadership team to provide high caliber services with excellent customer service; a staff that works together with elected officials to set a course for long-term success;
 - Rebranding of the Village’s logo and tagline to proclaim to our neighbors, visitors, and local businesses that Morton Grove is truly “Incredibly Close and Amazingly Open;”
 - Holding town hall and neighborhood outreach meetings, and listening to all residents on both sides of controversial issues;
 - Partnering with Mather Lifeways and reinvigorating citizen Boards and Commissions, like the Community Relations Commission, Special Events Commission, and our new Environment and Natural Resource Commission, to bring our community together through positive programs and events, including enhancing senior programming, hiring a Village social worker, our Farmers’ Market, which is now French Market, our Adopt-A-Planter program, Community Artists Performance, Community Garage Sale, National Night Out, Citizens’ Police Academy, Outstanding Neighbor recognition program, and of course, our renowned Morton Grove Days.
 - Protecting our environment became a priority, and by negotiating a long-term solid waste contract with stable fees, we had more opportunities for composting and recycling; we created a special Earth Month newsletter; we’re retrofitting our aging equipment to be more energy-efficient; and we’re hosting sustainability contests, programs, and events.
 - Partnering with the Village of Niles to construct a new water main system to buy water from Evanston, resulting in 3.5 miles of new water main and 20 blocks of newly paved streets. The project is expected to stabilize water rates and save taxpayers \$100 million dollars over 40 years—money that will be reinvested in improving our aging infrastructure.
 - Improving economic development was another priority, which resulted in new shopping and dining opportunities, such as McGrath Audi, Moretti’s, Coopers Hawk, Raising Cane, and the Sawmill Station shopping center, which, when complete, will include over 200,000 square feet of retail development, 250 new luxury apartments, and yes, a grocery store.
- e. Mayor DiMaria said that all of this has been accomplished in addition to establishing a long-term plan to increase pension funding, improving the Village’s financial position, replacing aging infrastructure, and stabilizing the Village’s bond rating, all with minimal tax increases.
- f. Mayor DiMaria said, “Although we’ve accomplished many of our goals, there is still more to do. That’s why I ran for election again.” He went on to list his goals for the next four years:

XII.

OTHER BUSINESS (continued)

- g.
 - Address the obsolete conditions at Village Hall and the Police Station. We're at the point where it is neither safe nor fair for our employees to work in the poor conditions of these facilities.
 - Reengage the community to update the Village's Strategic Plan.
 - Continue to provide high levels of service.
 - Continue to embrace diversity and promote community pride.
 - Support our local businesses and attract new businesses to improve the quality of life and produce new taxes to provide tax relief to Village homeowners.
 - h. Mayor DiMaria said his promise is that, if we continue to work together, we will exceed expectations to make More Grove all that it can be today, tomorrow, in the future, and forever.
 - i. He thanked his team, including new Trustee Saba Khan, all members of the current Board of Trustees and former Board members, including Trustee Ed Ramos, who is retiring this evening, Trustee John Pietron, Trustee Shel Marcus, and Trustee Maria Toth; the entire Village staff, and most importantly, the residents of Morton Grove.
 - j. Mayor DiMaria said, on the night he was first sworn in as Village President, he shared one of his favorite quotes from Henry Ford, and felt it was worth repeating tonight: "Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success." He said he believes that the Board, for the last eight years and the next four years, will continue to work together, along with the Park District Board, to make Morton Grove a better place to live.
 - k. Mayor DiMaria congratulated and thanked everyone for our success, and gave credit to the residents who gave the Board input when it was needed; who let the Board know when there were problems, and who told the Board what they wanted. He said "We didn't do this alone, the residents did it—this is a team effort, and the residents are part of our amazing team."
 - l. Mayor DiMaria closed by saying, "Let's stay together and keep moving Morton Grove forward!"
2. Mayor DiMaria noted that a presentation had been planned for retiring Trustee Ed Ramos, but since he's ill tonight, that will take place later.
 3. Mayor DiMaria said he'd like to go around the table and give his fellow newly-elected Board members the opportunity to make some comments.
 4. Trustee Grear thanked Commissioner Suffredin and said it was an honor for him and his colleagues to be sworn in by him. Trustee Grear said he was reminded earlier this evening that this will be the start of his fourth term as Trustee—he could hardly believe it. He said his colleagues are super, the residents are even better, and the Village staff was unbelievable. Led by Village Administrator Ralph Czerwinski, Trustee Grear said the Village's amazing staff makes all of the Board members look good. He said he was born and raised in Morton Grove and is now 63. The Village is in his blood, and he's happy to spend 16 years as a trustee. Lastly, he thanked his family and friends.

XII. **OTHER BUSINESS** (continued)

5. Trustee Khan thanked everyone here tonight for trusting her. She thanked her family, including those present and other family members in Washington, DC and in Canada.
 - a. Trustee Khan gave some background on herself for those who don't know her well, noting that she has served eight years on the Village's Plan Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals. Her profession is Periodontist and Implant Surgeon. Her belief is that, if you are passionate about something, nothing is too hard for you. She felt the time was right for her to run. She comes from a family of immigrants and wants to make her family, and this Village, proud of her. She thanked her husband Mazhar and said he "grounds" her. She introduced two of her children, and said her children are her "why." She thanked her parents, saying that her dad installed the value of community work in her and her siblings. "You have got to give back to the community," he always told her. She wants to instill those same values in her children. She thanked Trustee Ed Ramos for his time serving the Village, and said she hoped he will still participate in the Village in some role.
 - b. Trustee Khan said she is looking forward to continuing to serve the Village as a member of this esteemed team.
6. Clerk Harford congratulated her fellow Board members and thanked all the residents who cast a vote for her. She thanked her husband and children for their love and support, and thanked her father, the late Mayor Dan Scanlon, and her grandfather, the late Leo Dumont, for being such wonderful role models.
7. Trustee Travis said it's an honor to be re-elected, and she appreciates all those who voted for her. She said she's excited and energized by what has already been accomplished, and wants to continue the progress we've made. She thanked her husband, son, and fellow Board members for all of their support.

XIII. **WARRANTS**

Trustee Minx presented the Warrant Register for May 10, 2021 in the amount of \$1,082,392.55. She moved to approve the Warrant Register as presented, seconded by Trustee Witko.

Motion passed: 5 ayes, 0 nays. 1 abstain.

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

XIV. **RESIDENTS' COMMENTS**

1. Mr. Czerwinski noted that he had not received any residents' comments electronically for tonight's meeting.

XIV.

RESIDENTS' COMMENTS (continued)

2. **Rudy Vilk** congratulated the Board members on being re-elected. He said he is unhappy with Trustee Gear because he feels Trustee Gear is disrespectful towards him.
3. **Ahkter Sadiq, 5736 Main Street**, a 32-year resident, congratulated the Board. He was requesting that the Board send a message of condemnation to our national and state representatives regarding the grim situation in Jerusalem, with the military going into the mosque and trying to evacuate people from their homes.

XV.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Motion passed: 6 ayes, 0 nays.

Tr. Gear aye
Tr. Thill aye

Tr. Khan aye
Tr. Travis aye

Tr. Minx aye
Tr. Witko aye

The meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

PASSED this 14th day of June, 2021.

Trustee Gear	<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 14th day of June, 2021.



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

APPROVED and FILED in my office this 15th day of June, 2021.



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

Minutes by Teresa Cousar