

**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
OCTOBER 24, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER

- I. In the absence of Village President Dan DiMaria (absent with notice), Village Clerk Eileen Harford & II. called the Regular Meeting of the Village Board to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Village Hall and led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance. She then asked the Board for a motion to approve one of their colleagues to serve as President pro-tem for tonight's meeting.

Trustee Travis moved to name Trustee Witko as President pro-tem for this meeting, seconded by Trustee Khan. Clerk Harford called the vote:

Motion passed: 6 ayes, 0 nays.

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

Village Clerk Eileen Harford called the roll. Present were Trustees Saba Khan, Rita Minx, Ashur Shiba, John Thill, Connie Travis, and Janine Witko.

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Trustee Minx moved to approve the Minutes of the October 10, 2023 Village Board Meeting as presented. Trustee Khan seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously via voice vote.**

IV. **SPECIAL REPORTS**

1. **Saved By the Belt Awards**

- a. These awards are being presented by Chief Simo and Sgt. Anderson of the Morton Grove Police Department. Chief Simo explained these are awards given to those who survived very serious vehicle accidents because they were wearing their seat belt. The awards are presented jointly on behalf of the local police department and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). The program is meant to highlight seatbelt "success stories" as a way to encourage the motoring public to wear their seat belts.

Chief Simo called to the podium Baldemar Esquivel-Orozco and Philip Whittles.

IV.

SPECIAL REPORTS (continued)

- b. Chief Simo said that Mr. Esquivel-Orozco's vehicle was traveling east on Oakton on April 9, 2023, when a vehicle traveling west on Oakton veered into his lane and struck Mr. Esquivel-Orozco's car. Fortunately, he was wearing his seat belt, which prevented him from being ejected from the car. Sgt. Anderson presented Mr. Esquivel-Orozco with a certificate.
- c. On August 27, 2023, Philip Whittles was traveling southbound on Harlem Avenue at Beckwith when a vehicle traveling on Beckwith failed to stop at the stop sign and struck Mr. Whittles' car. His vehicle rolled over. His injuries were substantially less than what they could have been, had he not been wearing his seat belt. He, too, was not ejected from his car thanks to his seat belt. The intoxicated driver of the vehicle that struck Mr. Whittles' car fled the scene, but was later arrested.
- d. Chief Simo said the MGPD and IDOT are pleased to present these awards to two people who have demonstrated the value of using a seat belt. He thanked them both for sharing their stories, and said these are powerful positive examples of the benefits of seat belt use.

2. **Illinois Traffic Safety Challenge for 2022-23 Award**

- a. President pro-tem Witko introduced Paul Rizzo, Illinois Traffic Safety Challenge Law Enforcement Liaison, to present this award.
- b. Mr. Rizzo explained the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, in conjunction with IDOT, sponsor a program called the Traffic Safety Challenge. Friendly competitions are conducted between departments of similar sizes. Morton Grove is in the 35–50 officers range. Awards are based on the policies that are in place, the training officers receive, enforcement, public engagement, and effectiveness. Mr. Rizzo said, as a result of their efforts in 2022, the Morton Grove PD took first place in their size category. Additionally, there is a special award for Railroad Crossing Enforcement; the Morton Grove PD won that as well. Mr. Rizzo complimented the MGPD. The Board and assemblage applauded the Department. Chief Simo added that Sgt. Anderson was instrumental in putting the required paperwork together to qualify for these awards. The Board and assemblage applauded Sgt. Anderson for a job well done.

V.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

NONE

VI.

PLAN COMMISSION REPORTS

NONE

VII.

RESIDENTS' COMMENTS (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)

NONE

VIII.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT1. **Fall Leaf Collection**

- a. The Public Works Department has begun the annual Fall Leaf Collection Service. It started on October 16 and runs to December 1. The Village is requesting that residents place leaves in the street by the curb and away from parked cars the day before their regularly scheduled street sweeping and refuse pick-up day. As a reminder, residents should NOT include other landscaping debris, such as grass clippings, bushes, flowers, or branches in leaf piles. These items damage equipment and cause delays in completing leaf collection.
- b. The Village will only pick up leaves. Residents are cautioned not to park on top of leaf piles. Many parts on the underside of a vehicle, specifically the exhaust system, generate a great amount of heat, which could ignite the leaves.
- c. If residents choose to place leaves in containers for collection with their regular Groot trash pickup, the following procedures should be followed: A dedicated 34-gallon can or biodegradable yard wastepaper bag must be used. Please DO NOT use plastic bags for yard waste. Also, each container or branch bundle must have a yard waste sticker attached to it.

2. **Halloween Trick-or-Treat Hours**

- a. 2023 Trick or Treat hours in the Village will be from 3:30 to 7:00pm on Tuesday, October 31. Household participating in trick or treating are asked to turn on their porch or outdoor lights during the authorized hours.

Households not interested in participating should turn off their porch lights and minimize exterior lighting. Trick or treaters should only visit homes that have their porch/outdoor lights on.

3. **Veterans Day Ceremony**

- a. Morton Grove's American Legion Post 134 will have their annual Veterans Day Ceremony at the Legion Post, 6144 Dempster Street, on Sunday, November 5 beginning at 1:30 pm. The Legion has advised that there will not be a parade this year.

IX.

CLERK'S REPORT

- 1. Clerk Harford noted that the November Senior luncheon will be at the Civic Center on November 3 with the theme "Thanksgiving." Seniors should reserve a spot by calling 847-868-5928.

IX. **CLERK'S REPORT** (continued)

2. Senior Programming has recently engaged with Oak Street Health (a division of CVS Health) to offer blood sugar and cholesterol screenings to local seniors. Health professionals will be at the Civic Center on the 3rd Thursday of every month at 10am to provide the service. No appointment is necessary and the screenings are free.
3. Also, as a reminder, the Morton Grove Senior Ride Share Program is supported by funds through the SafeLIGHT Foundation and private donors. The program offers free Lyft ride to registered residents who are at least 65 years old. A total of 60 MG senior "households" are currently registered and receiving services. As of the end of August, a total of 228 rides have been provided since the program's inception in late 2022. Scheduled rides are provided to grocery stores, pharmacies, and medical appointments within MG. Rides are also available to medical appointments at most area hospitals and medical buildings. The Program will continue as long as funds are available.

X. **STAFF REPORTS**A. **Village Administrator:**

Village Administrator Czerwinski had no formal report this evening.

B. **Corporation Counsel:**

Corporation Counsel Liston had no formal report this evening.

XI. **TRUSTEES' REPORTS**A. **Trustee Khan:**

Trustee Khan had no formal report this evening.

B. **Trustee Minx:**

Trustee Minx had no formal report this evening.

XI.

TRUSTEES' REPORTS (continued)C. Trustee Shiba:

- a. Trustee Shiba announced that the Environment & Natural Resources Commission invites residents to attend the annual Pumpkin Smash event on Saturday, November 4, from 9:00am to noon at the north end of Harrer Park. People should bring their used pumpkins and jack o'lanterns to the park for this fun and sustainable event. Donated pumpkins will be turned into compost for a greener Halloween. Last year, the Pumpkin Smash diverted over two tons of pumpkins to composting rather than to a landfill with thought being to "Green Your Halloween."

D. Trustee Thill:

- 1. Trustee Thill presented **Resolution 23-40, Authorizing a Contract With Hoerr Construction, Inc. for the 2023 Sewer Lining Program.**
 - a. The Village has an annual program to rehabilitate older sanitary, storm, and combined sewer pipes to maintain flow capacity and eliminate groundwater infiltration and inflow into the Village's sewer infrastructure. The Public Works Department developed bid and construction documents to line sewer segments on or near Palma Lane, Osceola Avenue, Lake Street, Oleander Avenue, Belleforte Avenue, and Main Street. The work required for this project was competitively bid by the City of Lake Forest, IL through the Municipal Partnering Initiative Cooperative Purchasing Group (MPI), an intergovernmental cooperative procurement program authorized by the Village's Municipal Code. Hoerr Construction, Inc. submitted the low bid. The qualifications of Hoerr Construction have been evaluated and they were determined to be qualified to perform the work. The bid amount is based on unit pricing proposed by the contractor for the number of units estimated by the Village. This contract must conform to the requirements of the Prevailing Wage Act.
 - b. The financial impact of this Resolution is not to exceed \$140,000. Since this is a unit price contract, the final contract amount will be based on the actual quantity of work performed.

Trustee Thill moved to approve Resolution 23-40, seconded by Trustee Minx.

Motion passed: 6 ayes, 0 nays.

Tr. Khan aye
Tr. Thill aye

Tr. Minx aye
Tr. Travis aye

Tr. Shiba aye
Tr. Witko aye

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

E. Trustee Travis:

1. Trustee Travis announced that the Community Relations Commission (CRC) has rolled out the Winter Adopt-a-Planter program, and they're hoping all Village residents and businesses will participate by signing up to decorate and care for the large Village planters located at the train station, Civic Center, and along Dempster Street and Waukegan Road. This program provides residents an opportunity to show pride in our community by adopting a planter to decorate and care for over the season.
- a. Trustee Travis said that the majority of planters will include a 4-foot tall live evergreen tree for residents to decorate. And, new this year, some of the planters on Waukegan Road will have Red Twig Dogwood bushes planted in them as a permanent display. There will also be a few planters in various locations with a unique winter plant display. Instructions will be provided on how to decorate these planters. Online registration ends on November 10, 2023, or when all the planters have been adopted. For more information, please call 847-663-3007 or email CRC@mortongrovel.org.

F. Trustee Witko:

Trustee Witko had no formal report this evening, but commented that, last Wednesday, she and Trustee Travis attended the Interfaith Justice Prayer hosted by the MCC. Considering the recent darkness in the world, it was heartening to be part of the light that illuminated from the gathering of people of many faiths, comforting and supporting each other. Trustee Witko said she and Trustee Travis are grateful to represent a community of good humans, and they appreciate the MCC for bringing people together.

Trustee Travis echoed Trustee Witko's remarks, adding that she felt honored to have been a part of the compassion, understanding, and support coming out of the MCC's interfaith event, and she thanked the MCC for the opportunity to be there.

XII. **OTHER BUSINESS**

Trustee Thill noted, as reported earlier, that leaf collection has begun, and the Village has asked residents to put their leaves to be picked up in a pile at the curb. He noted that for the last two weeks, Public Works reports they're primarily picking up grass. He asked that residents who use landscaping contractors ensure that those contractors are responsible for hauling away grass, branches, and floral decorations. None of those items belong in the leaf piles. Trustee Thill said that last year, 1,200 tons of leaves were picked up. \$81,000 was spent to haul those leaves to the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County. \$40,000 was spent on a contractor to support Public Works. All told, the Village spent about \$200,000 for leaf collecting. He pointed out that it's not fair to the people who "follow the rules" regarding leaf pick-up, and felt that those who don't follow the rules should pay some kind of price.

XII.

OTHER BUSINESS (continued)

Therefore, Trustee Thill requested that Village Administrator Czerwinski provide a report of how leaf collection is handled in other surrounding municipalities. He said he was aware of at least one community that won't pick up leaves unless they've been bagged by the homeowner first.

Mr. Czerwinski said he would look into it.

XIII.

WARRANTS

Trustee Khan presented the Warrant Register for October 24, 2023 in the amount of \$412,058.75. She moved to approve the Warrant Register as presented, seconded by Trustee Minx.

Motion passed: 6 ayes, 0 nays.

Tr. Khan aye
Tr. Thill aye

Tr. Minx aye
Tr. Travis aye

Tr. Shiba aye
Tr. Witko aye

XIV.

RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

1. **Ashfaq Nagori, 7101 Emerson**, said he knows Mayor DiMaria isn't here tonight, but he wanted to address the one-sided statement of sympathy issued by the mayor at a recent Board meeting. He understands there was something posted on the website offering sympathy to the Palestinians.
 - a. Mr. Nagori said he is here tonight to speak for the Palestinian people who are suffering in the world's largest Nazi-like concentration camps of Gaza and West Bank in the land which prior to 1948 was known as Palestine.
 - b. This area, with the collusion of the imperialist colonialist governments of the United Kingdom and our own US government, was decided to be unrightfully and unjustly taken from the Palestinian people and given to the racist Zionist apartheid regime of what is now Israel. Since that year, the Palestinian people who gave refuge to the Jewish families who were being driven out by Europeans during WWII have been living under oppression, injustice, and lack of freedom. Their land and properties have been and continue to be stolen from them. In addition, on a daily basis, the Palestinian people in the concentration camps of Gaza and West Bank have been denied their human rights. They have been living under the racist apartheid occupation of their homeland for over seven decades.
 - c. The Palestinian people have been deprived of their livelihoods, their food, water, electricity and movements have been blockaded and controlled. Their crops are destroyed, and many other atrocities have been and are continuing to be committed against them on a daily basis. Innocent women, children, and men are being killed indiscriminately, daily, for decades. Since the latest mass bombing campaign by Israel, over 5,000 children have been indiscriminately massacred by the Israel government, which is besides the daily atrocities committed by the Israeli government and its settlers against the native Palestinian people.

XIV.

RESIDENTS' COMMENTS (continued)

- d. All this is being hidden purposefully by our US government and media, and the powerful monied interests. Mr. Nagori requested we all open our eyes, our minds, and our hearts, and provide our sympathies, our voices, and our help in ending these atrocities against the Palestinian people, and the restoration of equality, freedom, and peace in the area and in the world. All lives matter.
2. **Asrar Ahmed, 5531 Church Street.** Mr. Ahmed said he was here to document a conversation held with trustees last week, and also wanted to piggyback on the comments of the previous speaker.
- a. He said, "It's clear that this matter matters." We're not in a world anymore where we can say, "this is happening 5,000 miles away and it doesn't affect us." It does affect us. And education about what Muslims feel, how they feel so misunderstood, judged, and under-represented, even though in education, as professionals, and in family values, Muslims feel like they are over-represented. When it comes to somehow assimilating into America, Mr. Ahmed said, we feel like we're still "the other". He brought his children with him here tonight, to show them that their father, their mother, their community, all value democracy and value the ability to be able to speak our truth, how we feel inside.
 - b. Mr. Ahmed said his daughter Hania hasn't been able to sleep for 2 weeks; his son has been inconsolable in the face of the imagery that they try not to let their kids see, because they're young, impressionable, and emotional. As parents, Mr. Ahmed said, we are struggling. We're cognizant; we care about our children and don't want to expose them to things that may not be age-appropriate. This is the world we live in—it's information overload. They hear things from other students, they see things happening in the world today.
 - c. In teaching his children about how to operate inside a democracy, and teaching others about who Muslims are by living their values, and appearing here and showing this assemblage that this is what Muslims teach their children, standing in front of the Board today. It's not true to say we teach our kids to kill. Mr. Ahmed said, "I'm Muslim, as are my children, we raise them in a family household, we are residents of Morton Grove, and we want to bring our values here with you because we love our neighbors, we participate in civic engagement, and we want to be productive members of society."
 - d. Mr. Ahmed said Hania wrote a letter to President Biden and he wanted her to read it tonight before it goes in the mail tomorrow. He added that he had spoken with Chief Simo, who was very nice and said he'd visit the MCC. For that matter, Mayor DiMaria also said he would spend time at the MCC to listen to their concerns. Mr. Ahmed said, "Developing partnerships like these will help make big strides in understanding one another." Hannia stated reading her letter but became too emotional to finish it. She wrote how it breaks her heart that children are losing their parents, and parents are losing their children. She asked the President to stop the war in Gaza and closed with, "We're counting on you."

XIV. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS (continued)

3. **Rudolf Vilk, 7508 Emerson.** Mr. Vilk said has a problem with several of the trustees and feels they have not been honest with him. He also felt the other speakers were given more time tonight than he had been given.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business being brought before the Board, Trustee Minx moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Trustee Khan. **Motion passed unanimously via voice vote.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

PASSED this 14th day of November, 2023.

Trustee Khan	<u>Aye</u>
Trustee Minx	<u>Aye</u>
Trustee Shiba	<u>Aye</u>
Trustee Thill	<u>Absent</u>
Trustee Travis	<u>Aye</u>
Trustee Witko	<u>Aye</u>

APPROVED by me this 14th day of November, 2023.



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

APPROVED and FILED in my office this 15th day of November, 2023.



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

