

**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  
NOVEMBER 14, 2023**

**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.
- II. Village Clerk Eileen Harford called the roll. Present were Trustees Saba Khan, Rita Minx, Ashur Shiba, Connie Travis, and Janine Witko. Trustee John Thill was absent with notice.

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. Mayor DiMaria asked for a motion to approve the Special Meeting, Budget Workshop Minutes of October 16, 2023 and October 18, 2023. Trustee Minx moved to approve these Special Meeting Minutes, seconded by Trustee Travis. **Motion passed unanimously via voice vote (with 1 absent.)**
2. Trustee Minx then moved to approve the Minutes of the October 24, 2023 Village Board Meeting as presented. Trustee Khan seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously via voice vote (with 1 absent).**
3. Mayor DiMaria thanked Trustee Witko for filling in for him at the October 24<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

IV. **SPECIAL REPORTS**

NONE

V. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

1. 2024 Village Budget for the Village of Morton Grove and the Morton Grove Public Library
  - a. Mayor DiMaria opened the Public Hearing on the 2025 Proposed Budget and turned it over to Village Administrator Czerwinski.
  - b. Mr. Czerwinski noted that there had been two Budget Workshops held to discuss this budget, on October 16 and October 18.

V. **PUBLIC HEARINGS** (continued)

- c. The total budget for the Village is \$84.48M, which is \$6.3M (or 8.11%) higher than the 2023 Budget. The major increases are in the funds budgeted for:
  - the Lincoln-Lehigh TIF projects (\$2.9M),
  - General Fund increases (\$2.46M) caused by pension fund and health insurance increases, as well as increased personnel costs to keep the Village competitive with its staffing needs, and
  - increases in capital projects and infrastructure (\$500,000) mainly for new water mains and sewers.
- d. The proposed 2024 Budget is characterized as a "Reactionary Managed Budget," as the Village needs to react to increased costs due to inflation and increased health insurance costs, which are fixed costs the Village must pay.
- e. Mr. Czerwinski said the Village's funding priorities are keeping the bond rating stable, capital projects development, appropriate personnel costs, meeting inflationary pressures, marketing impact and recruitment, economic development, maintenance of public facilities, and systematic replacement of operational equipment.
- f. The General Fund (which pays for the Village's normal, everyday operating costs) is proposed to be \$37.92M, an 8.02% increase over 2023's General Fund budget. Contributing to this increase:
  - increased pension contributions (\$654,000 higher than 2023);
  - increased health insurance costs (\$400,000 higher);
  - increased personnel costs (\$950,000 higher);
  - increased technology costs (\$150,000 higher to have cloud-based Village software plus higher licensing costs); and
  - increased street improvement and public building costs (\$200,000 higher).
- g. Due to these increased costs, Mr. Czerwinski is recommending a 9% increase in property taxes, which comes to an annual increase of \$114.61 to homeowners with a \$400,000 residence. Mr. Czerwinski is also recommending a 3% increase in the Village's water rates, a 5% increase in the trash fees, a 1% increase in the Food & Beverage tax, and a one-cent/gallon increase in the local gas tax. Certain other charges, such as ambulance fees, will also be higher, but residents of Morton Grove do not pay any ambulance fee. The higher water rate, for a homeowner with a \$400,000 home, would be \$19.80 annually, and the higher trash fees (which have not gone up in several years) would be \$11.88. All told, the owner of a \$400,000 home would see his taxes increase annually by \$146.29, or about \$12.19/month.
- h. Mr. Czerwinski said that staff is comfortable presenting the Board with this Budget. He said the first reading of the Budget Ordinance and Tax Levy Ordinance would be this evening, with the second reading and vote on each occurring on November 28. A tax levy public hearing will also take place on November 28.

V. **PUBLIC HEARINGS** (continued)

- i. Mayor DiMaria invited public comments. He cautioned speakers about repeating topics and asked that they refrain from doing so.
- j. **Bob Burkhardt** said he appreciates the Village's funding priorities. He noted that the Village has lost many ash trees in previous years. He has spent some time speaking with Bill Burns, formerly the Village arborist, about the Tree Replacement Program and how fantastic it is. Mr. Burkhardt said he'd like to see the amount budgeted for tree replacement doubled.
- k. **Andrew Hoffman**, a 30 year resident, was also concerned about the decreased amount budgeted for tree planting. He talked about how beneficial a healthy tree canopy can be.
- l. **Jon Cole**, a 32-year resident, noted that, on pages 32-34 of the Public Works budget, it states that 251 trees were planted in 2023, but only 100 trees are forecast to be planted in 2024. He was concerned especially because "Environmental Sustainability" is one of the four pillars of the updated Strategic Plan. He felt that neighboring towns were focusing far more intently on planting more trees than Morton Grove is.
- m. **Ahktar Sadiq**, 5736 Main Street, said he supports the previous speakers and hopes the Village will work on keeping Morton Grove Green.
- n. **Bill Page** noted that the numbers in the first slide of the budget presentation didn't line up, but they were corrected in later slides. He suggested to Mr. Czerwinski that the first slide be corrected accordingly. He will speak with Mr. Czerwinski once tonight's Board Meeting has adjourned.

Mayor DiMaria asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing. Trustee Minx so moved, seconded by Trustee Witko.

**Motion passed: 5 ayes, 1 absent.**

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

VI. **PLAN COMMISSION REPORTS**

- 1. PC 23-16, Requesting Approval of a Text Amendment to Sections 12-2-5, 12-4-2, 12-4-3, 12-4-4, 12-5-5, 12-7-3, 12-12-1, and 12-17-1 to Establish and Modify Regulations Relating to Accessory Uses and Structures, Off-Street Parking, Massage Establishments, Truck-Related Uses, Truck Parking Requirements, Automotive and Truck Repair Uses, and Design Standards.
- 2. PC 23-17, Requesting Approval of a Preliminary Plat of Subdivision, Final Plat of Subdivision, and Special Use Permits for a Subdivision and Consolidation of the Subject Property into Two Lots and the Development of a Mixed-Use Development with Ground-Floor Commercial Uses and 36 (thirty-six) Residential Units.

## VI.

**PLAN COMMISSION REPORTS** (continued)

Mayor DiMaria invited Community Development Administrator Zoe Heidorn to the podium to present these two Plan Commission cases.

- 1a. Ms. Heidorn said that PC 23-16 is a request by the Village for a Text Amendment to various sections of Title 12 to modify regulations relating to accessory uses and structures, massage establishments, select industrial uses, truck parking, automotive and truck repair uses, and exterior building modifications, only in the Commercial district.
- 1b. The Plan Commission considered this case at its August 15 and October 17 meetings, and on October 17, voted unanimously to recommend approval of the Text Amendment as presented, with the exception of proposed regulations relating to short-term rental units, which are still under consideration.
- 2a. PC 23-17 is a request by MHDC SLF LLC for approval of a subdivision and special use permit authorizing the construction of a 36-unit mixed use development with ground floor restaurant and bar uses, 126 accessory parking spaces, and a pedestrian plaza at 8500–8550 Lehigh Avenue, which is currently Village-owned property. Nine of the thirty-six units will be affordable to households earning no more than 60% of the area median income. A 24-unit mixed use development previously proposed by the Applicant was approved under Ordinance 22-03, but it did not move forward due to increased construction costs and a lag in funding.
- 2b. The Traffic Safety Commission and Appearance Commission chairperson waived review of this application, and on October 17, the Plan Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval with conditions.

Ms. Heidorn noted the developer was in attendance this evening and said that he would be happy to answer any questions from the Board, as would she.

- 2c. Trustee Minx said she had some questions on behalf of Trustee Thill regarding Case PC 23-17. First, the street will be vacated, but who will own it? Ms. Heidorn responded, that is correct, the street will be vacated. She felt that  $\frac{3}{4}$  of it would be dedicated to the developer and  $\frac{1}{4}$  to the Moose. Trustee Thill's next question was, will the developer and the Moose then be responsible for the maintenance of the street because it would now be part of their property? Ms. Heidorn said yes, but she expects that easements will be established which the Village would then maintain. It hasn't all been worked out yet. Trustee Thill's next question was, will the new street have a name, and if so, what? Ms. Heidorn said, for clarification, it's not really a new street, it's really more like a private two-way driveway. She doubted that it would be named, but said that a name could be considered. Trustee Thill's last question had to do with snow removal/storage, noting that snow can no longer be pushed into the Forest Preserve. Ms. Heidorn responded that the approved site plans has 9 parking spaces dedicated to snow storage.
- 2d. Trustee Minx had one question of her own. She noted that the Moose currently has a Chestnut Street address, and wondering if the address would be changing. Ms. Heidorn said it would likely be changing because there won't be a Chestnut Street anymore, but she wasn't sure what it would be changing to.

VII.

**RESIDENTS' COMMENTS (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)**

NONE

VIII.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

1. Mayor DiMaria announced that Santa Claus would be coming to town on Saturday, December 2. He encouraged everyone to mark their calendars for the Santa Comes to Town Parade which will begin at Greenwood and Waukegan at 11:00 a.m. on December 2. His trip will end at Main Street and Austin Avenue between 1:15 and 1:30 p.m. Santa will then reappear at the Prairieview Community Center, 6834 Dempster, to greet families and give gifts to children receiving specially marked candy from the parade. Gift redemption is from 1:00–4:00 p.m. For a detailed map of Santa's route through town, please go to [www.mortongroveil.org/santa](http://www.mortongroveil.org/santa).
2. Mayor DiMaria encouraged the community to support the Morton Grove Police Department's annual Toys for Tots drive. The MGPD's drive is affiliated with the US Marines Toys for Tots drive. New, unwrapped toys can be placed in the Toy Donation Box at the following locations until December 11:
  - MG Police Department: 6101 Capulina Avenue
  - MG Fire Department #4, 6250 Lincoln Avenue
  - MG Village Hall, 6101 Capulina Avenue
  - MG Park District, 6834 Dempster Street
  - MG Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Avenue
3. Mayor DiMaria also urged residents to participate in the Morton Grove Fire Department's annual Food and Gift Drive. The Firefighters' Association is collecting monetary donations to purchase gift cards, toys, and holiday meals for families in need until December 15. Checks should be made payable to Firefighters Association of Morton Grove. People can mail their donation to the address below or drop your check off. Any questions, please contact the MGFD at 847-470-5226.

Morton Grove Fire Station 4  
 Attention: Food Drive  
 6250 Lincoln Avenue  
 Morton Grove, IL 60053

IX.

**CLERK'S REPORT**

Clerk Harford had no formal report this evening.

X. **STAFF REPORTS**

A. **Village Administrator:**

1. Village Administrator Czerwinski announced the holiday hours for Village Hall and Public Works:
  - November 23 and 24: Village Hall and Public Works are closed.
  - December 25: Village Hall and Public Works are closed.
  - January 1, 2024: Village Hall and Public Works are closed.
2. Mr. Czerwinski said the Village will offer “holiday lights recycling” through February 1, 2024. There will be a bin in the lobby of Village Hall for people to place their non-working or unwanted holiday lights. He emphasized that it should be strings of lights **ONLY**—no garland or other adornment. This program is being brought to the Village by the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC) and Elgin Recycling. Mr. Czerwinski said residents should **NOT** place holiday lights in their home recycling containers.

B. **Corporation Counsel:**

Corporation Counsel Liston had no formal report this evening.

XI. **TRUSTEES' REPORTS**

A. **Trustee Khan:**

Trustee Khan presented two ordinances this evening, both for a first reading. She thanked Village staff for their hard work on both of these ordinances.

Ordinance 23-21, An Ordinance Adopting the Budgets for all Corporate Purposes of the Village of Morton Grove and the Morton Grove Library, Cook County, Illinois, for the Calendar Year Effective January 1, 2024 and Ending December 31, 2024.

Ordinance 23-22, An Ordinance Levying and Assessing Taxes for the Village of Morton Grove, Cook County, Illinois for 2023 to be Collected in the Fiscal Year Beginning January 1, 2024 and Ending December 31, 2024.

B. **Trustee Minx:**

1. Trustee Minx presented **Resolution 23-41, Authorizing the Execution of a Contract for Ambulance Billing Services.**

XI.

**TRUSTEES' REPORTS** (continued)B. Trustee Minx: (continued)

- a. Trustee Minx explained that the Village has used a third-party vendor to bill for ambulance services for decades. The contract with the Village's current vendor, Paramedic Billing Services, Inc. has not been modified since 2010. The Fire Department has investigated companies that provide ambulance billing services for other fire service agencies in our area and received and evaluated proposals from two such vendors.
- b. Based on this research, the Village Administrator and Fire Chief have determined that EMS Management & Consultants, Inc. can provide better service, offer access to staff for additional funding opportunities, allow access to a much broader data base, and provide better analytics, all at less expense to the Village.
- c. EMS Management & Consultants, Inc. will charge a fee of 3.75% of all monies collected through ambulance billing. The Village's prior vendor charged a fee of 5%. The Village currently waives any portion of its ambulance fee not covered by insurance for Morton Grove residents, and that practice will remain in place.

Trustee Minx moved to approve Resolution 23-41, seconded by Trustee Travis.

**Motion passed: 5 ayes, 1 absent.**

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

2. Next, Trustee Minx presented **Resolution 23-42, Authorizing the Purchase of Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Equipment.**
  - a. She explained that self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) is essential equipment used by firefighters to protect their airways from toxic gas and harmful particulates in smoke and hazardous atmospheres. The Village's current SCBA equipment is over 13 years old and needs replacement.
  - b. The MGFD investigated and field-tested SCBA equipment manufactured by various companies and has determined that Mine Safety Appliances (MSA) SCBA equipment, currently used by the Village and many nearby fire service agencies, has proven to be reliable, of high-quality, cost-effective, and best meets the department's needs. Air One Equipment Inc. of South Elgin, IL is the sole source distributor of MSA SCBA in this area. The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Cooperative Purchasing Program is a cooperative procurement program pursuant to Village Code, and has negotiated a group purchasing contract with Air One Equipment Inc. for MSA SCBA equipment. This Resolution will authorize the purchase of 34 MSA G1 Fire Service SCBA units, 61 45-minute carbon fiber cylinders, buddy breathing capability with rescue hose, heads-up display system, and integrated voice amplification with a 15-year warranty on the equipment for the purchase price of \$292,580.

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

B. **Trustee Minx: (continued)**

Trustee Minx moved to approve Resolution 23-42, seconded by Trustee Khan.

**Motion passed: 5 ayes, 1 absent.**

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

3. Mayor DiMaria wished Trustee Minx' husband Paul a very speedy recovery.

C. **Trustee Shiba:**

Trustee Shiba had no formal report this evening.

D. **Trustee Thill:**

In light of Trustee Thill's absence, Trustee Minx will be presenting his legislative items as per tonight's Agenda.

1. Trustee Minx presented **Resolution 23-43, Authorizing a Contract with United Door and Dock, LLC for Fire Station Garage Doors.**
  - a. The Fire Department staff at Fire Station #4, located at 6250 Lincoln Avenue, utilizes six garage doors to respond to emergency calls twenty-four hours per day. The proper function of the garage doors is vital for the efficient response of emergency vehicles. The existing garage doors at Fire Station #4 are nearly 30 years old; frequently require repairs; and are near the end of their useful service life. Replacing the garage doors now is recommended to prevent disruption to emergency response by Fire Department staff. The contract was bid through a public process in accordance with Village requirements. Two sealed bids were received, with United Door and Dock, LLC submitting the low bid in the amount of \$75,587. References were provided by United Door and Dock and investigated and found favorable. This contract must conform to the requirements of the Prevailing Wage Act.

Trustee Minx moved, seconded by Trustee Witko, to approve Resolution 23-43.

**Motion passed: 5 ayes, 1 absent.**

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



XI.

**TRUSTEES' REPORTS** (continued)D. Trustee Thill: (continued)

2. Next, Trustee Minx presented **Resolution 23-44, Guaranteeing Municipal Work Performed on State of Illinois Rights-of-Way Within the Village of Morton Grove.**
  - a. She explained this this Resolution will provide a guarantee to the State of Illinois that all work performed by the Village within the State's rights-of-way in 2024 and 2025 will conform to the conditions on the permit granted by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).
  - b. The Village maintains its utilities within State rights-of-way on a regular basis and needs permission from IDOT to do so. IDOT requires a permit and financial security, in the form of a bond, for work performed within State rights-of-way. This is a routine guarantee and is similar to the Village's permit requirement for work performed within the Village's own rights-of-way. Municipalities can either provide a bond for each maintenance activity or a written guarantee that all work performed by the Village within the State right-of-way will conform to IDOT's requirements for the work. Providing this guarantee will eliminate the time and cost of procuring a bond for each permit, and also holds the State of Illinois harmless with respect to the permitted work. There is no cost associated with this guarantee.

Trustee Minx moved to approve Resolution 23-44, seconded by Trustee Khan.

**Motion passed: 5 ayes, 1 absent.**

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

3. Trustee Minx then brought forward **Resolution 23-45, Authorizing an Agreement with the Illinois Department of Transportation for the Improvement of Oakton Street Over Edens Expressway.**
  - a. She explained that IDOT plans to replace the Oakton Street bridge over the Edens Expressway, add an eastbound right turn lane to Gross Point Road, replace traffic signals, improve curb ramps, widen the sidewalk on the north side of Oakton Street and replace the sidewalk on the south side of Oakton Street with a shared-use path. IDOT is the lead agency for the development and completion of this project. The current traffic signals include an emergency vehicle preemption system, which allows emergency vehicles to interrupt the traffic signal cycle to provide a green signal when responding to an emergency. This valuable safety traffic signal feature is the sole financial responsibility of the Village. This Resolution will authorize an agreement with IDOT that requires the Village to approve the Project plans and appropriate sufficient funds for the Village's share of the Project. The Village will pay a lump sum to the State equal to 80% of its obligation incurred under this Agreement and will pay to the State of Illinois the remainder of the obligation in a lump sum upon completion of the project based on final costs. The estimated contract value is \$17,825.

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

D. **Trustee Thill: (continued)**

Trustee Minx moved, seconded by Trustee Witko, to approve Resolution 23-45.

**Motion passed: 5 ayes, 1 absent.**

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

4. Then Trustee Minx presented **Resolution 23-46, Authorizing an Exclusive Franchise Agreement with Wastenot, Inc. for Food Scrap Composting Services in the Village of Morton Grove.**

- a. She explained that 19 million tons of waste is landfilled in Illinois every year. Food waste accounts for as much as 20% of this waste, which is more than any other single waste stream found in landfills. To help keep food waste out of landfills, in 2020, the Village initiated a year-round food scrap collection program and entered into a 3-year contract with Collective Resource, Inc. of Evanston, IL to offer residents year-round subscription-based food scrap collection services. As this contract has expired, the Village solicited proposals for year-round food scrap collection services and received 2 proposals from qualified contractors. After reviewing these proposals, and verifying each contractor's availability to provide efficient food scrap collection along with the lowest cost to Village residents and small businesses, the Director of Public Works has recommended the Village enter into a three-year food scrap collection franchise agreement with Wastenot, Inc. of Chicago, IL. This Agreement may be renewed at the sole option of the Village annually for up to five (5) additional years. Food scrap collection services shall be provided to Village residents and small businesses on a voluntary subscription contract with monthly, quarterly, or annual fees to be paid by the customer directly to Wastenot, Inc. at no cost to the Village. Wastenot, Inc. will also offer a Winter Gap Program during the period that is off-season for Groot's Landscape Waste/Food Scrap program (December 15 through March 15). This program will run at no cost to the Village.

Trustee Minx moved to approve Resolution 23-46, seconded by Trustee Travis.

**Motion passed: 5 ayes, 1 absent.**

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

5. Lastly, Trustee Minx presented **Resolution 23-47, Authorizing the Purchase of Two (2) New 2023 Ford Explorers From Bredemann Ford of Glenview, IL.**

- a. She explained that the Public Works Department, as part of its annual procurement of vehicles and equipment, typically obtains utility vehicles through the Northwest Municipal Conference (NWMC) Suburban Purchasing Cooperative or the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Program.

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

D. **Trustee Thill: (continued)**

- b. Trustee Minx said, during research of the vehicle purchase from both procurement programs, it was determined that the production and availability of utility vehicles through either purchasing cooperative would be suspended until late 2024. The Public Works Vehicle Maintenance Division researched dealerships participating in the cooperative program for available utility vehicles. Bredemann Ford in Glenview, IL has two (2) 2023 Ford Explorers that satisfy the requirements of the Public Works and Fire Departments. The Vehicle Maintenance Division inspected the vehicles, and Bredemann Ford submitted a proposal for a total price to include the processing fees of \$81,480.19. Although code requirements for competitive bidding for contracts over \$25,000 were not met, the Village Administrator recommends the Board waive the requirements due to vehicle supply chain conditions.

Trustee Minx moved to approve Resolution 23-47, seconded by Trustee Khan.

**Motion passed: 5 ayes, 1 absent.**

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

E. **Trustee Travis:**

Trustee Travis had no formal report this evening.

F. **Trustee Witko:**

Trustee Witko presented two Ordinances this evening, both for a first reading. Each was based on Plan Commission Cases reported out earlier this evening by Community Development Administrator Zoe Heidorn. Because these are first readings, no action will be taken this evening.

1. **Ordinance 23-23, Approving a Text Amendment to Modify and Establish Regulations Relating to Accessory Uses and Structures, Off-Street Parking, Massage Establishments, Truck-Related Uses, Truck Parking, Automotive and Truck Repair Uses, and Design Standards in Morton Grove, IL.**
  - a. She explained that the Text Amendment authorizes temporary accessory uses, provides greater control over detached accessory structures on residential lots, prohibits new massage establishments, limits parking and storage activities for contractors' offices in the commercial districts, improves regulation of heavy industrial, truck repair, and car wash uses in the manufacturing districts, regulates truck parking as an accessory use, and cleans up existing regulations to improve clarity and eliminate redundancy.

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

F. Trustee Witko: (continued)

2. **Ordinance 23-24, Approving Special Use Permits with Associated Waivers for a 36-Unit Mixed-Use Development and a Preliminary and Final Plat of Subdivision for Property Commonly Known as 8500–8550 Lehigh Avenue and a 0.531-Acre Portion of Chestnut Street Right-of-Way Approved for Vacation in Morton Grove, Illinois.**

XII. **OTHER BUSINESS**

Trustee Khan requested and received permission to read a statement for the record. She said, "This upcoming weekend, Americans will be celebrating the Thanksgiving holiday—a time for us to give thanks for the harvest and other blessings of the past year, and a time to spend with family and friends. However, this Thanksgiving will be difficult for American Arab, Muslim, and Jewish families. Celebrating family togetherness over a lavish meal feels sinful while families are being starved and slaughtered in Gaza. Over 1,500 people have been killed in Israel by Hamas militants. As of today, over 15,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli attacks in Gaza since October 7, 2023, and more than 4,000 of these are children. 600 foreign nationals are stranded in Gaza by the illegal Israeli blockade, of which 400 are American citizens with their families. The loss of these lives is tragic and an unfolding catastrophe. This is collective punishment, and it is immoral. As a person of faith, I call for peace at this time through a ceasefire. At the current rate of Palestinian deaths per day, we are headed toward an impending genocide. I reject the killing of civilians and the taking of hostage, whether by Hamas militant groups or the State of Israel.

And for those of you who may think this is an overseas issue, you should know that we are directly and adversely being affected every single day. Less than a month ago, Wadea, a 6-year old Palestinian Muslim American, was murdered, stabbed 26 times in Plainfield, Illinois. In Skokie, at a pro-Palestine Rally, a violent protester shot fire in the air and pepper-sprayed the police. We are seeing a steady increase in bigotry at our local schools, parks, and towns. This cannot happen on our watch and not with our dimes. This atrocity must stop, as every life is important. As an American Muslim, I stand with the innocent and I condemn Hamas' attack on settlers in Israel, and I condemn Israel's attack on civilians in Palestine. The Village of Morton Grove and its residents stand united behind a core value we all share: the undisputed denunciation of ALL acts of hate. During these times of strife, we are more committed than ever to safeguarding our communities from the widespread increase in anti-Semitic and Islamophobic language, imagery, or behavior.

XIII. **WARRANTS**

Trustee Khan presented the Warrant Register for November 14, 2023 in the amount of \$2,103,097.39. She moved to approve the Warrant Register as presented, seconded by Trustee Minx. **Motion passed: 5 ayes, 1 absent.**

Tr. Khan     aye  
Tr. Thill     absent

Tr. Minx     aye  
Tr. Travis   aye

Tr. Shiba     aye  
Tr. Witko     aye

## XIV.

**RESIDENTS' COMMENTS**

1. **Devesh Pandit, 9036 Oconto Avenue.** Mr. Devesh said he has lived in Morton Grove for over 35 years. He pointed out that today starts a New Year (Diwali) and wished everyone a Happy New Year. He pointed out that there is an organization called Sewa Diwali–2023 (Chicago) currently holding a food drive for those less fortunate. The food drive is going on now but ends on Nov. 20. People can donate food items that are non-perishable and that have not expired, and not in a glass container. Donations of canned vegetables, fruits, and soup; cereals; pasta; pasta sauce; cake mixes, peanut butter; and coffee would be best. There are 7 collection areas in the Chicago suburbs: Buffalo Grove, Schaumburg, Hoffman Estates, Naperville, and Lombard. More information can be found on the website [www.SewaDiwali.org](http://www.SewaDiwali.org). He thanked Mayor DiMaria for giving him the opportunity to speak.

Mayor DiMaria said there are 13 people who've signed up to speak. He asked them to please be respectful of everyone's time and not be redundant.

2. **Fatima Khan, 8511 Mango.** Ms. Khan said she previously lived on Georgiana near St. Martha's but now lives on Mango Avenue near the mosque. She said when she lived on Georgiana, there was no permit parking on either side of the street related to the church; there is permit parking for two hours in the morning to dissuade commuters from parking there. With the many events (weekend Masses, funerals, weddings, religious education classes) and other functions St. Martha's hosts, parking was often difficult. On Mango Avenue, however, one side of the street is fully permit parking only. Several other streets in the area of the mosque also have permit parking on one side of the street. She said she'd like the Village to do a thorough assessment to see where all the houses of worship are and which ones have this type of restrictive parking in place. She would like to see equitable parking for all the Village's houses of worship. Ms. Khan said she was proud to live in a Village that is "Incredibly Close. Amazingly Open." but she wants it to be equitable too.
3. **Saba Kaiseruddin, 5913 Washington Street.** Ms. Kaiseruddin said she wanted to add her comments to what Trustee Khan had said. She said the reason why what's happening in the world is pertinent is because "our hearts are bleeding. We are in a lot of pain and we want you to care. We want help—we would like you to help us reach out to state and federal legislators and help us to communicate with them better, because they are not listening to us. We really want to push for an end to the suffering." She said she felt like everyone's losing right now—no one is winning. "The constant bombing in Gaza is not going to bring home the hostages... it's just killing more and more people. The people who are living without food, water, electricity, and medical are mostly children. We need to work together; there must be a time when we all can come together." Ms. Kaiseruddin requested that the Mayor and the Board work to "strengthen relationships in the community, to help strengthen the relationship between constituents and state and national legislators, and to issue a proclamation stating that Morton Grove stands for a cease fire."

XIV.

**RESIDENTS' COMMENTS** (continued)

4. **Anisa Laliwala, 5835 Crain Street.** Ms. Laliwala is a 10+ year resident and has served on the Community Relations Commission. She's very proud of being part of this town. She thanked Mayor DiMaria for coming out recently to address the community, and thanked Trustees Travis and Witko for attending their Interfaith event. Ms. Laliwala wanted to add her voice to Saba Kaiseruddin's and Trustee Khan's. She said it's unimaginable to see the suffering going on in Gaza, and she's sure the Board has seen some of the images from there. She requested the Village add its voice to a request for a cease fire—it's the humane thing to do. Ms. Laliwala felt strongly that the U.S. should not send any more unconditional military aid to Israel. She said she is all for Israel's right to exist peacefully, but over the years, millions of dollars in aid has been sent there and it isn't improving anything; it's just making the situation worse. It's not contributing to a long-term peaceful solution.
  
5. **Ashfaq Nagori, 7101 Emerson** spoke of Allah, and of the messengers and prophets of Allah—Moses, Jesus, and Muhammed. He spoke of how they referred in their various languages to "God." He quoted from the Qur'an about the creation of mankind by Allah via Adam and Eve, and quoted from Muhammed's last sermon about superiority of one race over another and one tribe over another. He stated, "Scientific research has proven that all human beings have 23 pairs of chromosomes. If you were to sample the cells of the Palestinian people, you would find they have the same number of pairs of chromosomes as do Americans, Europeans, or any other people in the world. Based on this, the dehumanization which is being conducted against the Palestinian people by the U.S. government and the terrorist apartheid colonialist Israeli regime is contrary to what Allah has decreed. The indiscriminate bombing, killing, and maiming of tens of thousands of humans is a clear genocidal action being taken with the support of our U.S. government." Mr. Nagori urged the Village to provide its support in whatever capacity to stop this genocide being conducted against the people of Palestine, and to request those in authority for a cease fire. He further urged the Board to request those in authority to stop the funding and supplying of weapons to the terrorist state of Israel, and to request that all humans be treated equally and allowed to live dignified lives in Palestine and all over the world.
  
6. **Manaar Muzammil, 7205 Beckwith Road** urged the Board to request an immediate cease fire. A cease fire would mean medical care, clean water, and food for thousands of people—the basic needs of a human.
  
7. **Akhter Sadiq, 5736 Main Street,** said he has been a resident for nearly 33 years. He said, "As much as I am proud to be an American, I'm standing ashamed to be an American here. Most of the world, including the United Nations, has condemned the systematic genocide of the Palestinian children, women, and elders—more than 12,000 lives, including 4,000 children—by our so-called strong ally, Israel. That's roughly one-half the population of Morton Grove. Disgracefully, the USA has fully funded this operation. Most of us here have children, parents, grandchildren, spouses, and relatives. Put yourself in the shoes of those Palestinians who have been butchered. The bombardment of the cities, schools, hospitals, has been going on continuously."

## XIV.

**RESIDENTS' COMMENTS** (continued)

- a. Mr. Sadiq felt it was intolerable that Congress voted to give to Israel another \$14.5 billion dollars in addition to \$3.8 billion of our hard-earned tax dollars to slaughter more civilians and children. If the U.S. was to invest that \$14.5 billion dollars domestically, it could hire 158,000 new teachers, completely eliminate homelessness, provide child healthcare to five million children, and forgive student loans for 380,000 students. These should be the priorities of the U.S. rather than blind, unwavering support of Israel.
- b. Mr. Sadiq said, in 1981, Morton Grove became the first community in the nation to ban handguns in order to reduce handgun-related accidents and crimes. The war crimes being committed in Palestine now are exponentially higher than that. He told the Mayor and Board, "You are wise and brave to stand up for justice and humanity. Our voices deserve representation and you are our leaders and our voice. Many of your Morton Grove residents and I request all of you take the bold step of requesting the White House for a humanitarian cease fire now, in Palestine. Morton Grove will make history again." Mr. Sadiq thanked the Mayor and the Board.
8. **Safiya Hedayat, 5913 Washington Street** told the Board she would like to second the motion for a cease-fire in Gaza.
9. **Dr. Rashe Ali, 8601 Menard Avenue**, said she reserves the right not to speak due to redundancy.
10. **Naznin Mizzo** said it's been very painful to watch the suffering of all the people in Gaza and Israel. The faces of children being pulled from rubble paint a picture of suffering we can't imagine. The children in Gaza are being robbed of their families, their childhood, their rights to an education, and their smiles have been stolen. As a mother of three, this is heart-wrenching to watch. She added her voice to the others calling for an immediate cease-fire in Gaza and to provide basic human needs (water, food, electricity, medical supplies). She's also requesting that the U.S. cease sending unconditional military aid to Israel. This is a call for peace and unity. It's taking the side of humanity.
11. **Maryam Ahmed** said she was here tonight to humbly request a cease-fire in Gaza. The Israel-Palestine conflict has already claimed tens of thousands of innocent lives. Many children have been orphaned; they don't have access to food, water, or proper medical care. Preserving innocent lives should be a top priority. She urged the Board to call for a cease-fire. This is a request for basic humanity.
12. **Asrar Ahmed, 5531 Church Street** thanked the Board for their time this evening, and thanked Trustee Khan for her wonderful words. He said the Board might be wondering why they're receiving all these comments—after all, Morton Grove is not the United Nations. He said he's hoping the Board will do something with these comments. First, he said, this is a call to action.

## XIV.

**RESIDENTS' COMMENTS** (continued)

- a. Mr. Ahmed said he would like to see the Board go on the record and vote for a non-binding cease-fire statement. Second, he would like the Board to work on getting state legislators to take the Muslim community more seriously—he asked the Board to “be our voice because we are not heard.” Third, he asked the Board to consider creating an environment where we can meet and talk to each other. A Board of Trustees meeting isn’t really the proper venue, but possibly some type of forum or townhall type of thing—a safe environment for a diverse community.
13. **Aleena Atif** also joined others in voicing her support of a cease-fire. She, too, mentioned feeling “very unheard” and felt it was the Board’s duty to “hear us and be our voice.” The average age of people being killed in Gaza is five years old. Mothers are trying to identify their children by pieces of their bodies or bits of their hair. This is about being human.
  14. **Kim Moldofsky** said she was speaking off the cuff tonight because she hadn’t thought she’d be speaking. First, she commented that she is very pro-choice. Second, she asked if an ordinance regarding composting that passed this evening meant that the Village was no longer working with Collective for composting needs. That is the case.
    - a. Third, she said she had hosted a group of Jewish and Muslim women this past Sunday, all of whom are horrified by what’s happening in the world. It wasn’t about one person’s pain being greater than another’s. Ms. Moldofsky said she believes people **are** getting through to our legislators, because our State Senators, including Jan Schakowsky, have been leaders in approaching the White House to ask for a cease fire or for pauses in the fighting. She felt that was due to our State legislators hearing their constituents. She’s not hearing this about other states. Ms. Moldofsky said she knows that we can’t solve the world’s problems from where we’re at, but we **can** build understanding—even if it doesn’t always lead to agreement. We can all be united in some things; for example, we can agree that the horrors happening in Gaza and Israel should not be happening. She said she believes that it’s within all of us to find things with which we can all support and agree upon. She urged everyone to use their own power to build community and create the kind of world we want to see.
  16. **Devesh Pandit** spoke again, saying he is offering prayers to heal the wounded and for the violence to end, so people can live in peace and harmony.
  17. Mayor DiMaria thanked everyone for coming out, and promised that he would reach out to the Village’s State and Federal legislators, saying “I will encourage them to reach out to your community, and if they aren’t representing you, don’t reelect them.” He assured the assemblage that he and the Board would make sure the speakers would be contacted.



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 8:19 p.m.

PASSED this 28th day of November, 2023.

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

APPROVED by me this 28th day of November, 2023.

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

ATTESTED and FILED in my office this 29th day of November, 2023.

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

Minutes by Teresa Cousar

