

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 12, 2026
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION MEETING
VILLAGE OF MORTON GROVE – 6101 CAPULINA AVE
MORTON GROVE, IL 60053**

Pursuant to proper notice in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Theresa Polyak who led the assemblage in the pledge of allegiance. In attendance were:

Members: Theresa Polyak, Laurie Katz, Robert Burkhart, Janice Cha, Lisa Khabeer, Gladys Rosas, Ginny Ching-Yin Lo, Kristey Chalabi, Patrick Baldwin, Rosemarie Alioto and Peggy Borg

Absent: Mohammed Farooqui, Katherine Yi,

Village Staff : Corporation Counsel Teresa Hoffman Liston

Chairperson Polyak asked for approval of minutes for November 17, 2025. Motion made by Commissioner Cha and seconded by Commissioner Lo. Minutes approved unanimously via voice vote.

Chair Polyak thanked all who contributed to the **2026 Resident Handbook which will be available** online and in paper copy by request. Commissioner Burkhart submitted additional suggestions for the handbook which will be incorporated in upcoming editions.

Chair Polyak reported that 108 of the 113 planters were adopted during the 2025 Winter Adopt A planter program. Staff decorated 30 planters that were either not adopted, not decorated by participants, or participant asked for assistance. or participants requesting assistance. Marketing for the evergreen tree giveaway will begin March of this year, by first inviting participants, and then residents at large. Public Works will deliver the tree to the resident's home. In April. The number of trees given away is based on the number of trees that survive the winter. The trees are 3 to 4 feet tall but can grow to 30+ feet. The Village has requested that all decorations be removed from the trees by January 31.

Chair Polyak reported that the next Neighborhood Outreach will be February 19, 2026, at 6:00 pm at Melzer school. Commissioners Aliota, Khabeer, Cha, Katz, Polyak and Borg volunteered to serve as hosts at the welcome table and were asked to arrive at the school about 10 minutes early. Commissioner Baldwin volunteered to organize the scouts to do a flag presentation ceremony.

Chair Polyak announced we had not received any new Outstanding Neighbor applications. The program is designed to honor a person who has done something special for their neighbor. The honoree is recognized at A Village Board meeting and given a gift certificate and other small tokens of appreciation. Commissioner Aliota praised the program.

The Commission then discussed the Summer 2026 Adopt a Planter Program and chose Saturday June 6, 2026, as plant pick up day. The consensus was to use the same or a similar plant assortment as used in 2025 which included a large "statement plant" (the thriller) in the center, several potato vines (the spillers) and an assortment of coleuses, marigold and other plants (the fillers). The marketing and sign up for the program would follow the same process as in 2025 with participants choosing their own planter online, but this year, instead of printing signs for each plant, each participant would be given a sign approximately 5" x 7" and would name and decorate it as desired. Additional signage would be limited to 5" x 7" to not distract from the planters. The Village will need to follow its competitive bidding procedure, but for the past several years has used Patyk Farms and has been pleased with the quality of their plants. A discussion then

ensued about relocating planters from Waukegan Road to Lincoln Avenue, the Library and/or the fire station. Ms. Liston agreed to check with staff on this suggestion.

Chair Polyak then confirmed that dates for the 2026 Community Garage Sale weekend to be June 12-14. Sign pick up would occur concurrently with Plant pick up on June 6, and the process would be the same as 2025. The Village will prepare and disseminate maps of all garage sale locations as part of marketing the program. Commissioner Borg asked if condominiums could participate, and Ms. Liston advised her that the homeowner's association would need to approve participation in the program. Two years ago, the Village tried a program where people could reserve a table in the Village Hall parking lot so people in condos could participate even if their HOA would not allow sales to occur on their site, but due to traffic, manning, attendance and other issues, the program was not renewed.

Chair Polyak then announced that the Annual photo contest would occur in 2026 from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Chair Polyak announced that the Winter Adopt a Planter Program would be similar to last year in that all planters would have trees to decorate – the evergreen kits will no longer be available. Participants will select their planters online (same process as the Summer Adopt A Planter Program) Trees would be available for participants to begin decorating on November 23, 2026; the Monday before Thanksgiving. Participants will be asked to complete their decorating by no later than December 5, 2026.

Under old business, Commissioner Cha reported she, Commissioner Khabeer and Commissioner Lo came up with an indoor activity. to create some sort of artwork, community-created artwork, to go into the new village hall. The CRC would get people together on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon from two to four, in late April or early May, probably at the civic center and give each person a little board or a mini canvas, about six by six, and given some instructions and materials, paint, glue, collage materials. People would then create art, based on theme ideas, such as *Together we are strong, Multicultural, Morton Grove, United We Stand* to be assembled into one larger piece, which could be shaped to fit whatever wall it needs to go on, although now Ginny's going to be out of town. Budget is TBD but not expensive. We would also invite local musicians to come in and provide a little background music and then invite a local photographer, possibly a high school student or group, to come in and capture, you know, the action. We would also offer food from a local Morton Grove business for purchase and the village can provide coffee and tea

Terry Liston then stated, the concept was discussed with staff. The new Civic Center will probably not be open to the public until 2028. A discussion ensued about having the collage be placed at the current Civic Center, or Prairie View. A general discussion then ensued, One commissioner suggested using ceramic tiles instead of canvas. Another indicated that art and beauty are subjective. Various suggestions were raised and discussed. Commission Lo stated she preferred the project as outlined by commissioner Cha and Khabeer. It supports our mission of bringing everyone together. The project does not have to be permanent and can be displayed at the library or other agreed places.

Commissioner Burkhardt announced he was retiring from the CRC as he and his wife were moving to a senior community in Glenview. All members thanked him for his service.

Chair Polyak note the next CRC meeting would be Monday March 16 2026 @ 6:30 pm Scanlon Conference Room.

There being no further business, Commissioner Baldwin moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Khabeer and approved unanimously by a voice vote at 7:50 p.m.

Minutes By

Teresa Hoffman Liston