

*MINUTES OF MAYOR NELSON AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE VILLAGE OF FLOSSMOOR, ILLINOIS HELD ON JULY 18, 2022*

VILLAGE HALL / ZOOM MEETING

JULY 18, 2022

7:30 pm

Mayor Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm.

Village Clerk Gina A. LoGalbo took roll.

PRESENT: Mayor Nelson, Trustees Bradley-Scott, Daggett, Driscoll, Lofton, Mustafa

ALSO PRESENT: Village Manager Bridget Wachtel; Fire Chief Bob Kopec; Chief of Police Tod Kamleiter; Public Works Director John Brunke; Building and Zoning Administrator Scott Bugner; Commander Keith Taylor; Communications Manager Amy Kent; Program and Event Coordinator Stephanie Wright; Assistant Finance Director Ann Novoa; Village Attorney Kathi Orr; Village Clerk Gina A. LoGalbo; 182 residents

Mayor Nelson called the meeting to order. Mayor Nelson noted that the meeting was being held in person and via Zoom, which is permitted by Public Act 101-0640. Mayor Nelson noted that the public was invited to monitor the meeting via Zoom or attend the meeting in person. Public participation would be permitted only in person during the citizen comment portion of the agenda. Members of the public could submit comments on items on the agenda by emailing info@flossmoor.org, which would be shared with the Village Board.

Mayor Nelson thanked the attendees of the meeting for being present. She stated that the Village is transparent and will continue to operate openly. She stated that our community experienced a tragedy on Sunday, July 10, and her thoughts and condolences are with everyone involved. Members of the Flossmoor Police Department are dedicated to our community and put their lives on the line every day to serve and protect. Our officers go beyond crime fighting, working to improve the quality of life in our Village. Through various programs, the Village has built trusted relationships between our community members and members of our police department. Per policy, the Illinois State Police Public Integrity Task Force is conducting an investigation of the incident and the Village is cooperating fully. Mayor Nelson stated that the Village Board was present to conduct the business of the Village, and public comments were welcomed. She asked that the attendees observe Board policies for public comment, which include a five (5) minute limit on speaking-time per person, public decorum, and if attendees were part of a group to consider designating a single speaker so that the Board could hear from as many people as possible. Per Board policy, there would be a maximum public comment time of thirty (30) minutes. She stated that the Board was unable to comment on or discuss any further details because of the ongoing investigation but were present to listen to attendees' concerns. The most current information is available on www.flossmoor.org and will continue to be updated with additional information as it becomes available. She stated that attendees who signed in would be called upon to comment in the order in which they signed in. If the list was exhausted in the allotted thirty (30) minutes, the Board would take comments from those who didn't sign in. Names would be called three (3) at a time to approach the microphone. An electronic timer would be started at the beginning of each person's comments, and she requested that people respect the time limit to permit others to speak. If people weren't able to comment, they could send comments to info@flossmoor.org. She stated that if decorum wasn't maintained, the Board would call for a recess or adjourn the meeting.

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Citizens Present Wishing to Address the Board:

Gigi Gummerson stated that she was a sixty-year resident of the Village and has known the Village police force and fire force, who have been exemplary throughout the entire time she's lived in the community. She stated that the Village government and town are diverse. She applauded and thanked the police for saving the lives of the two women who were saved in the home. There hasn't been a comment about that situation, but there was a ninety-year-old woman and another woman who were being terrorized.

Mark Clements stated that he was with the Chicago Torture Justice Center, a center that addresses the type of behavior that the Mayor and staff don't want addressed. He stated that the agency works within the Chicago Police Department and addresses torture. He stated that the Mayor can make sure that the Police Department represents the true interests of the citizens. He stated that African-Americans have been legally lynched, and if it's ignored, it's going to continue. He stated that he understands that the Mayor's job is to represent the interests of the Village and that the Village could conduct their own investigation. He stated that Dr. King lost his life for standing for the integrity of Black people. He stated that he's seen the video.

Rachel Harden-Maddox stated that she is a licensed professional counselor in Flossmoor and a certified mental health first-aid trainer. She stated that she wasn't present to judge but wanted to be solution-focused and offer her services to the community and police department. She brought materials to share with the Mayor and Chief of Police because this can't continue to happen. She stated that it was the second fatality that's taken place in the south suburbs. She knew the family of the other victim in Oak Forest. She asked that the Board take this very seriously.

Camiella Williams stated that she met Mayor Nelson after a tragic event in Ballantrae and discussed policing. She discussed how the Mayor in Dolton didn't launch an investigation because that mayor wanted to wait on the Illinois State Police ("ISP"), and that it's been a year and the ISP hasn't concluded their investigation. She stated that since 2005, the ISP has ruled over 117 police killings in south suburban Cook County as justified. She asked how we could have faith in the system, so she asked that the Mayor launch her own internal investigation into the case because the residents deserve answers and the victim deserved a chance. Now the trust has been broken and she will never call the police as a Black woman because she doesn't want to die like the other women she named. She stated that she is tired of building relationships with different Mayors, Trustees, and Commissioners to tell them how to hold the police accountable. She told the Mayor to not let the officers resign without holding them accountable if there was any wrongdoing and to give the family and community justice. She stated that she told the Mayor she would work with her to have something different for Flossmoor and she meant it.

Dr. La'Shawn Littrice stated that she's been a resident of Flossmoor for over sixteen years. She heard comments from another speaker about her interactions with the Flossmoor Police Department ("FPD") and how wonderful they were, but her experiences haven't been like that. When she found out what happened that Sunday, she was receiving correspondence letting her know about events in Flossmoor. But no one acknowledged that the lady had lost her life to police, and she was appalled. She stated that she works in the non-profit world and social justice. Her organization is called Make Noise for Change, which fights racial improprieties that exist in communities. She requested that an administrative investigation occurs into the FPD, and that traffic stops, use of force tactics, and ticketing among different racial groups be looked at. She demanded that the FPD get training on crisis intervention. She stated that she is a

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community psychologist and that de-escalation and mental health training needs to occur. She stated that money for the training is in the budget. She also demanded that the Mayor demand that the FPD follow the Cahoots program, which is the Community Emergency Services and Support Act - HB5009 and SB3449 – mobile response for mental and behavioral health emergencies.

Jenny Curtis stated that to ensure public safety, she was calling for the police department and Mayor Nelson to implement the Cahoots program, the Community Emergency Services and Support Act - HB5009 and SB3449. She stated that according to the guiding principles of diversity and inclusion on Flossmoor's website it states that the Village will encourage and facilitate or work with community partners to facilitate communication within neighborhoods. She stated that the lack of communication the past week didn't foster understanding, unity, or inclusion. She stated that there wasn't clear communication from Mayor Nelson until today. She stated that the Flossmoor website states the Village's programs and services should operate in a way that is fair and equitable, services and community resources should be easily accessible and that the Village will take concerns of discrimination seriously and will encourage other government agencies in Flossmoor to promote those principles in their services and programs. She stated that she's calling for Mayor Nelson to commit to completing an administrative investigation with the FPD, focused on racial disparities in policing with pulling people over, ticketing, harassment, and use of force by each member of the FPD. She stated that she's calling for Mayor Nelson and the FPD to commit to crisis prevention, de-escalation, and mental health training with continual re-training. She called for budget adjustments to be made to make it a priority. She stated that according to the overview of the FPD, it states that officers are well trained and equipped to work with the residents of Flossmoor, the FPD is committed to protecting life and property and providing the highest quality of services to the community, and that is not what she saw. She stated that according to the Village's annual operating budget from 2022-2023, a fiscal year goal is to review, develop, and implement action items that will further demonstrate the adherence to the ten shared principles of the NAACP and the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police. She quoted from the shared principles and stated that she demands accountability including continual training. She stated that one of the fiscal year 2022 achievements included hosting coffee with a cop and that trust wouldn't be built by five years of coffee with a cop.

Leslie Bolser stated that she is a Homewood resident and that her children attend schools in Flossmoor and she attends church in Flossmoor. She stated that crisis prevention intervention ("CPI") is integral to preventing future incidents of police use of force. She stated that she worked in a south suburban day program for disabled adults for five years as a supervisor and was trained in CPI and then trained her staff in CPI techniques. She worked with individuals who couldn't express how upset they were and would instead exhibit behaviors that could potentially and did become violent. She stated that CPI's trauma-sensitive, person-centered, non-violent crisis intervention training focuses on prevention and de-escalation techniques and other alternatives to the use of restraint. She stated that CPI techniques are designed to deescalate anxious, hostile, and violent behaviors at the earliest stages and that in her five years using CPI, she was always able to defuse and deescalate a situation. She stated that if someone has been effectively trained in CPI and de-escalation, it becomes part of one's initial response. She demanded that the FPD become trained in CPI if they aren't already and re-trained if they have already been CPI trained. She also worked as a court advocate coordinator for Anew, and she trained the Homewood Police on domestic violence. It's her understanding that local police are no longer having this training, and if correct, she wants the police to have on-going domestic violence training. She stated that it's her understanding that

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domestic violence police calls are seen as the most dangerous so having ongoing training to understand and deescalate the situations is imperative for the safety of community members.

Iown Fields stated that she was from California, arrived Sunday and that Flossmoor was a beautiful place with beautiful people. She stated that it was her sister [Madeline Miller] who she changed the diapers of and taught to walk, and that she was the oldest of eight children. She stated that she wanted the Board to know that Ms. Miller had a family and that she was a human being. She stated that she left Chicago to go into the military and that Ms. Miller lived with her for forty years but wanted to come back home to see her family.

Mayor Nelson thanked people for coming and for their comments and stated that her thoughts and prayers are with Ms. Fields and her family.

Recognitions and Appointments

There were no recognitions or appointments for this meeting.

Mayor Nelson referred to the Consent Agenda (which encompassed Agenda Items 1-4):

- 1. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting Held on June 20, 2022*
- 2. Ratification of Bills for Approval and Payment as Approved by the Finance Committee (July 5, 2022)*
- 3. Presentation of Bills for Approval and Payment as Approved by the Finance Committee (July 18, 2022)*
- 4. Consideration of a Motion to Approve Tag Days for Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign – November 1 – December 24, 2022*

Mayor Nelson called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Trustee Daggett so moved, seconded by Trustee Lofton. Mayor Nelson called for a vote on the motion as presented. Motion passed by a roll call vote.

AYES: Trustees Bradley-Scott, Daggett, Driscoll, Lofton, and Mustafa.

ABSENT: Trustee Mitros

ABSTAIN: None

NAYS: None

Reports of Committees, Commissions and Boards

Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #5 – Presentation of a Grant Awarded to the Village of Flossmoor from the Chicago Region Tree Initiative and Morton Arboretum (CRTI). Program & Event Coordinator Stephanie Wright stated that Trinity Pearce and Mia Howerton from CRTI were present. Ms. Pearce is CRTI's Stewardship Manager and collaborates with communities to foster awareness about the importance of trees. Ms. Howerton is a CRTI Steward. Ms. Wright stated that the Village was awarded a grant by CRTI Morton Arboretum and that the Village caught the attention of CRTI due in part to the Hidden Gem Half Marathon. The Hidden Gem successfully mobilized a large number of volunteers throughout the community to work on a single shared task, and because of that success, the CRTI saw the opportunity to try and achieve one of the largest tree plantings done by volunteers based on distance covering the 13.1

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miles of the Hidden Gem Half Marathon route in a single day. The grant award is worth \$30,000 and the infrastructure that the trees will provide to the Village will be invaluable. She stated that the Green Commission would work with Village Arborist Dave Becker to determine which species and how many trees should be planted along the route, and the Green Commission will work with the Hidden Gem Half Marathon team to Plant the Gem.

Trinity Pearce discussed urban forests, the importance and benefits of trees, Flossmoor's unique canopy, the Hidden Gem's community engagement and trees. She stated that all of the trees in a community make up the urban forest and that there is a way for everyone to get involved in their care.

Mia Howerton stated that she and Ms. Pearce work across seven counties of Chicagoland to spread awareness of the value of trees, and talk about care and maintenance, and increase the urban tree canopy cover. They want to increase tree canopies in a way that is equitable and sustainable, and trees benefit people in many ways including mental and physical well-being, filtering the air, creating shade on homes, reducing energy costs, and beautifying neighborhoods. Trees help with other issues like climate change through stormwater retention, temperature regulation, and habitats for animals. She stated that oak trees are very important in this region and that many have been lost, so one of CRTI's missions is to help recreate a healthy oak ecosystem. She showed graphs that visualized the benefits of trees. She stated that urban forests have more stressors than if they were in an open forest, for instance, more pollution due to cars and buildings.

Ms. Pearce stated that they're better able to understand communities like Flossmoor by urban canopy summaries. They have them for every municipality in the seven-county region, and they allow them to get a status of the forest where they're located. In Flossmoor, there is an exceptional 42% canopy coverage, whereas Cook County overall has 28%. She said that they're trying to help communities get to 40% if feasible. For Flossmoor, that means maintaining the canopy, including replanting and caring for existing trees. She stated that many elm trees were lost to Dutch elm disease, and ash trees have been dying due to emerald ash bore. Ms. Pearce stated that it's important to embrace and maintain the key corridors of oak trees because oak trees are keystones. They planted trees in Flossmoor in the fall of 2021 at various locations in residential parkways, which are the best locations due to their benefits like counteracting cars, for people walking, and an increase in property value. They partnered with Tristan Shaw from Possibility Place, which had exceptional species diversity and were able to plant different species of trees. There were many volunteers, and she noted that not everyone has the volunteerism that Flossmoor does, so they know they can scale up to plant more trees this fall. She stated that Flossmoor uniquely has three key pieces – the local community leadership, the exuberant community involvement, and the excellent source for trees which is fantastic to help enrich Flossmoor and to be used as a model for other communities. She stated that she and Mia can be used as a resource for information, and noted that Tristan Shaw brought trees this evening as a giveaway.

Trustee Bradley-Scott asked how many trees they anticipate that the Village will be able to receive per year.

Ms. Pearce stated that for the grant they've spoken about, three hundred trees can be planted this fall.

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Trustee Driscoll asked if the three hundred trees would be mainly planted on the Gem route, which Ms. Pearce confirmed.

Trustee Mustafa asked how many volunteers were needed to plant the three hundred trees, what guidance volunteers would receive to plant the trees, and whether property owners would receive instruction on tree care. She stated that she has received four trees from the Village and there is a hefty commitment to water them. She also asked who would be providing the mulch for the trees.

Ms. Pearce stated that they were aiming for one to two volunteers per tree, and that they would bring all of the supplies, be present with other planting experts to help, and that no prior experience was needed. She stated that they have tree owner manuals, watering buckets, and that Tristan Shaw can also do supplemental watering. She stated that watering is a critical aspect for trees.

Public Works Director John Brunke stated that the Village would be providing the mulch.

Trustee Lofton asked where the trees would be placed.

Ms. Pearce stated that they would be placed in the right of ways in residential areas.

Trustee Daggett noted that Morton Arboretum is a great resource.

Mayor Nelson stated that there is an opt-out option if a resident doesn't want a tree. She pointed out and thanked the directors of the Hidden Gem Half Marathon, who were present including Tom Dobrez, Betsy and Sam Cutrara, and Brent and Maggie Bacchus. Mayor Nelson thanked volunteers who were present and noted how people throughout the southland have helped with planting trees.

Attendees were encouraged to take a tree.

Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #6 – Consideration of an Ordinance Annexing Territory to the Village of Flossmoor, Cook County, Illinois (19810-12 Governors Highway). Mayor Nelson called for a motion for Consideration of an Ordinance Annexing Territory to the Village of Flossmoor, Cook County, Illinois (19810-12 Governors Highway). Trustee Mustafa so moved, seconded by Trustee Bradley-Scott. Building and Zoning Administrator Scott Bugner stated that the parties involved met with the Board in the spring to discuss their project, Oasis House of Refuge. The Plan Commission has approved a rezoning, a plat of consolidation, a preliminary plan and a special use for the properties. He noted that the Plan Commission had some concerns, which were all addressed by the applicant. The parties were present to answer questions.

Mayor Nelson noted that the parties were previously before the Board and asked the Trustees if they had any questions.

Trustee Driscoll noted that their previous presentation was excellent and answered all of his questions.

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Paul Braun stated that they're excited about the project, that it will be a great addition to the community, and that it will provide a needed service that the community doesn't currently have, which will be an inpatient hospice hospital.

Mayor Nelson called for a vote on the motion as presented. Motion passed by a roll call vote.

AYES: Trustees Bradley-Scott, Daggett, Driscoll, Lofton, and Mustafa.

ABSENT: Trustee Mitros

ABSTAIN: None

NAYS: None

Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #7 – Consideration of an Ordinance of the Village of Flossmoor, Cook County, Illinois, Approving a Rezoning, a Plat of Consolidation, Approval of a Preliminary Plan for a Planned Unit Development and a Special Use – 19810-12 Governors Highway (Oasis House of Refuge, LLC). Mayor Nelson called for a motion for Consideration of an Ordinance of the Village of Flossmoor, Cook County, Illinois, Approving a Rezoning, a Plat of Consolidation, Approval of a Preliminary Plan for a Planned Unit Development and a Special Use – 19810-12 Governors Highway (Oasis House of Refuge, LLC). Trustee Daggett so moved, seconded by Trustee Lofton. Building and Zoning Administrator Scott Bugner stated they would be happy to answer any questions from the Board.

Trustee Lofton noted that it would be a good opportunity for trees, which Mr. Bugner confirmed are in the plan.

Trustee Daggett asked how long the construction will take, to which Mr. Bugner answered that they are looking to be built by spring 2023 with a groundbreaking this fall.

Trustee Mustafa asked whether green technology was being considered for the construction, to which Mr. Bugner answered that they don't have all of the details for the building plans yet, but he's sure they are working on some green technologies due to energy codes.

Mr. Braun stated that there would be a robust landscaping plan for the project. He also commended the Board, Village Attorney, and Village staff for how they've handled a difficult situation during the citizen comment of the meeting. He noted how it's important to share information with the public but that it can also be difficult to get that information out.

Mayor Nelson called for a vote on the motion as presented. Motion passed by a roll call vote.

AYES: Trustees Bradley-Scott, Daggett, Driscoll, Lofton, and Mustafa.

ABSENT: Trustee Mitros

ABSTAIN: None

NAYS: None

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Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #8 – Discussion of a Request for a Resolution of Support for a Class 8 Property Tax Incentive for 3950 Vollmer Road – BP Gas Station. Building and Zoning Administrator Scott Bugner stated that Windy Property Investments is currently in negotiations with the owner of 3950 Vollmer Road (Cross America Partners) to purchase the property with the intent to invest in improvements to the gas station and car wash which has recently become vacant as well as the restaurant component which hasn't been operational for several years. Windy Property Investments has budgeted approximately \$350,000 for the renovations and anticipate hiring thirteen employees to operate the gas station and restaurant. They currently operate several retail locations and gas stations in the area, with gas stations located in Bellwood, Country Club Hills and South Chicago Heights. Due to the current tax assessment, the investment in the property wouldn't be a viable endeavor without a Class 8 Tax Incentive, as the current annual property taxes are approximately \$219,203.00. With a Class 8, the taxes would be approximately \$87,681.00, which would be much more sustainable relative to the projected revenues following renovation. He stated that Windy Property Investments LLC is requesting consideration of a Resolution of Support for a Class 8 Tax Incentive. Should the Board of Trustees be amenable to a Class 8, a Resolution of Support will be drafted and placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting. He stated that lawyer Adam Dotson for Windy Property Investments and the owner of Windy Property Investments, Sam Hussein, were in attendance at the meeting.

Adam Dodson stated that Mr. Hussein was interested in the property because he has other stations. The station in Flossmoor has a large footprint, and in Cook County, property owners are penalized in taxes for having a large footprint. Gas stations in Chicago can sell as much as suburban stations, but their footprints are a lot smaller and have different tax breaks. In the south suburbs, those stations are affected by the tax rate and the size of their station. They're looking for support of a Class 8 to have the taxes reduced and have an operation that is profitable.

Mr. Hussein stated that his other locations are doing well, and that in regard to the Vollmer Road location, they couldn't survive with the taxes as they are now.

Trustee Driscoll stated that a few years ago, the prior owner wanted a liquor license and the Board wasn't able to accommodate that request, but he likes how Mr. Hussein plans to invest and expand the business. He would be in favor of granting the tax incentive.

Trustee Mustafa asked about the design and vision for the restaurant.

Mr. Hussein stated that they plan to hire people to run it and bring products like fast food (wings, burgers), dine-in, and cash and carry, and that it depends on the number of employees he can hire. He hopes to have a lot of employees from the community. Food would be prepared on-site.

Trustee Lofton asked whether his company was associated with any of the previous owners and inquired about nearby competition.

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Mr. Hussein stated that he wasn't associated with previous owners and that he wanted to make a profit to pay the property taxes. He stated that what the previous owner sold in gas didn't cover the property taxes and that's why their gas was higher priced.

Trustee Daggett inquired when they would be operating the business if everything was approved.

Mr. Hussein stated that he has a quote to replace the pumps and signs. For the carwash, they're going to change the equipment.

Trustee Bradley-Scott inquired about the items to be sold at the gas station, noted how sometimes there are items sold at gas stations that diminish the quality of the footprint, and inquired about hours of operation.

Mr. Hussein stated that they would sell groceries and household needs, i.e. laundry items. They plan to have the gas station open twenty-four hours and the restaurant for more limited hours.

Village Attorney Kathi Orr stated that the Board was very amenable to the Class 8 request, but the Village has a history of being made whole on the Village share of the tax bill. While there is no burden on the schools, park district and library, the Village will continue to be responsible for police and fire response to the gas station. The applicant acknowledged being agreeable to a "make whole" agreement. Village Attorney Kathi Orr noted that she and the applicant's attorney would be in touch to discuss an agreement.

Mayor Nelson inquired about how long he's been in business and whether he planned to sell alcohol. She noted that she liked his programs for customers like military discounts, senior citizen discounts, and free meals for the homeless. She also requested that he consider selling street tacos like in Texas and noted that the Board is supportive of his request for the Class 8.

Mr. Hussein said that he's been in business since 2017, and that he will not sell alcohol.

No vote was required.

Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #9 – A Motion to go into Executive Session to Discuss the Employment of Specific Individuals, Property Acquisition and Litigation. Mayor Nelson called for a motion to go into Executive Session to Discuss the Employment of Specific Individuals, Property Acquisition and Potential Litigation. Trustee Mustafa so moved, seconded by Trustee Bradley-Scott and passed by a roll call vote.

AYES: Trustees Bradley-Scott, Daggett, Driscoll, Lofton, and Mustafa

ABSENT: Trustee Mitros

ABSTAIN: None

NAYS: None

The Board entered executive session at 8:53 p.m.

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The Board returned to open session at 9:01 p.m.

As there were no other items to discuss, Mayor Nelson called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Bradley-Scott so moved, seconded by Trustee Daggett and passed by a voice vote.

AYES: Trustees Bradley-Scott, Daggett, Driscoll, Lofton, and Mustafa.

ABSENT: Trustee Mitros

ABSTAIN: None

NAYS: None

The Regular Meeting was adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Gina A. LoGalbo
Village Clerk