

MINUTES OF MAYOR NELSON AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
VILLAGE OF FLOSSMOOR, ILLINOIS HELD ON MARCH 27, 2023

VILLAGE HALL / ZOOM MEETING

MARCH 27, 2023

7:30 pm

Mayor Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm.

Village Clerk Gina A. LoGalbo took roll.

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

ALSO PRESENT: Village Manager Bridget Wachtel; Deputy Chief of Police Keith Taylor; Fire Chief Bob Kopec; Assistant Fire Chief Matthew Berk; Finance Director Scott Bordui; Director of Public Works John Brunke; Program & Event Coordinator Stephanie Wright; Village Attorney Kathi Orr; Village Clerk Gina A. LoGalbo; 98 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. Emailed comments would be shared with the Village Board.

Recognitions and Appointments:

Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #1 – Consideration of the Appointment of Jerel Jones as Police Chief. Mayor Nelson called for a motion for Consideration of the Appointment of Jerel Jones as Police Chief. Trustee Lofton so moved, seconded by Trustee Bradley-Scott.

Mayor Nelson explained that although the Police Chief position is a mayoral appointment, the process does not happen in a vacuum. She thanked Kenny Winslow with the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police for his assistance with obtaining diverse candidates from across the country; Village staff for working tirelessly through the holidays and budget season on the Police Chief hiring process; Village Trustees for their support and confidence during the process; and she thanked the residents and business owners who served on focus groups for the Village which helped the Mayor produce a framework for what the Village wanted and needed for the next Chief of Police. She also thanked Acting Chief Taylor, Acting Commander Filkins, and the entire Flossmoor Police Department, who serve the Village with integrity and pride.

Mayor Nelson stated that Jerel Jones stood out amongst eighteen (18) candidates from throughout the country because of his extensive detective work, his commitment to 21st century community policing, his commitment to the NAACP's shared principles, his extensive youth engagement, and his communication skills with residents and media which are superb. Jones has had great recruiting success, and his leadership and reputation throughout the state are at the highest level. Chief Jerel Jones is Mayor Nelson's choice as the next Chief of Police for the Village of Flossmoor.

The Village Board expressed their support for the appointment of Jerel Jones as the Chief of Police for the Village of Flossmoor. They thanked the Flossmoor Police Department for their work and leadership of Deputy Chief Taylor and Commander Filkins in the absence of a Chief. The Board welcomed Chief Jones to the Village of Flossmoor and thanked him for taking the position.

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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, Mitros and Mustafa.

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

NAYS: None

Village Clerk LoGalbo administered the oath of office to Chief Jerel Jones.

Chief Jones stated that he was honored and humbled to serve as Chief of Police for the Village of Flossmoor. He was Chief of Police prior to his Flossmoor position, and working in law enforcement and being a Chief in today's society is very challenging. The Police Department staff and administrative team make the Police Chief position successful, and he looks forward to working and serving with the Flossmoor Department. Chief Jones thanked his family and the other police officials in the room who helped him during his career. Chief Jones stated that a top priority for him is the recruitment and retention of quality law enforcement personnel. Chief Jones thanked the Mayor, Trustees, and Village Manager for their confidence, and stated that the Flossmoor Police Department will provide the Village and surrounding communities with an unbiased, professional police response.

Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #2 – A Proclamation Declaring the First Saturday in April as New Resident Day. Mayor Nelson invited members of the Community Relations Commission to join her for the reading of the Proclamation. She explained that the Community Relations Commission is involved in programming throughout the community all year long, including the New Resident Event. The New Resident Event would be held on April 1, 2023, at the Flossmoor Library and is for residents who moved into the Village of Flossmoor during the last calendar year. Mayor Nelson read the Proclamation, which declared the First Saturday in April as New Resident Day.

Mayor Nelson referred to the Consent Agenda (which encompassed Agenda Items 3-4):

3. Consideration of an Ordinance of the Village of Flossmoor, Cook County, Illinois, Amending Chapter 150, Article 10 of the Village of Flossmoor Municipal Code (Combination Licenses and A-1 Class Fee)
4. Consideration of an Ordinance of the Village of Flossmoor, Cook County, Illinois, Amending Chapter 285, Article 20 of the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Flossmoor, Illinois (Other Standards for Planned Unit Developments)

Mayor Nelson called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Trustee Mustafa so moved, seconded by Trustee Bradley-Scott.

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, Mitros and Mustafa.

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

NAYS: None

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Reports of Committees, Commissions and Boards:

None.

Action Items:

Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #5 – Consideration of a Resolution Endorsing the Mayor's Monarch Pledge. Mayor Nelson called for a motion for Consideration of a Resolution Endorsing the Mayor's Monarch Pledge. Trustee Mitros so moved, seconded by Trustee Daggett.

Flossmoor Green Commissioner Tristan Shaw joined Mayor Nelson for the reading of the Mayor's Monarch Pledge, which directs the Green Commission, Village staff, and community members to work toward implementing the (24) action items outlined by the National Wildlife Federation in order to preserve the monarch butterfly for generations of Flossmoor residents to come. Mayor Nelson stated that Commissioner Shaw was the main reason that the Village of Flossmoor received a grant for 300 trees, which were planted in Flossmoor last Fall during Plant the Gem. She stated that the Village appreciates his and his family's work and his nursery, Possibility Place, for their contributions to the Village.

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, Mitros, and Mustafa.

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

NAYS: None

Discussion Items:

Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #6 – Discussion of the Fiscal Year 2024 Finance and Facilities Plan. Village Manager Bridget Wachtel explained that included in the agenda packet is the Capital Improvement Plan, which discusses projects and shows the Village's investments for the past thirty (30) years, planned projects, and possible future projects. The Village tries to use fund balances within the Village's existing funds to be able to support the projects. They also look to other sources of funding like grants and low interest loans, and staff work hard to support the save and spend philosophy. Wachtel explained that staff are looking for feedback and direction from the Village Board regarding the Capital Plan to be included in the appendix of the budget.

Public Works Director John Brunke presented information on the bigger projects, including the residential water meter replacement project. The Village found out that ARPA funds can be used for water meter projects, which is good news and will provide relief to the Village's General Fund. Another project is the water distribution supply improvements, which is a big project to improve the operation of the Village's water system. Another project is the demolition of the water tower on Sterling Avenue; the tower cannot be modified to meet the compliance requirements of the IEPA. Improvements will need to be made to the Sterling Avenue pump station as a result of the Sterling Avenue water tower removal. The last water system project in the program is the Vollmer Road reservoir and pump station upgrades and rehabilitation.

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Brunke explained some other projects going on and noted that the Village is currently working on phase two (2) of the Flossmoor Road viaduct project, which is a very large project. Phase one (1) of the streets and sidewalks project from the bond funds was completed last summer. No other street projects are slated for replacement this year due to the viaduct project. There is a plan and grant for the Brumley Drive reconstruction in Fiscal Year 2024. He stated that no MFT street resurfacing was planned, but the Village is saving funds in the meantime. The crack sealing project will be getting underway in the Spring or Summer. Brunke described the projects and possible funding sources, including the Brookwood Bridge project, Dartmouth bike bridge, central business district projects, and the public works salt storage reconstruction.

Mayor Nelson noted the sound financial planning by Village staff, Department Directors, the Village Board, and the support of the community. She mentioned how grants are so important for the Village of Flossmoor because they allow the Village to do more and spend less money. The Village will continue to pursue grants for the presented projects.

Trustee Driscoll noted how years ago, the Board had to make some tough choices regarding bond funds when they had competing interests, including street resurfacing, and noted that they did not have to make those kinds of choices this time.

Trustee Daggett noted how wonderful the Village staff is and thanked them for their hard work, especially because infrastructure work is hard – it's expensive and needs constant work. Trustee Daggett inquired about the water meter replacement and how many meters will be replaced with the grant funds.

Brunke answered that the Village has approximately 3,800 meters, and the project will replace about 2,600 meters and put a radio reader on all 3,800. About 1,000 meters have been replaced by Village staff over time during routine calls.

Trustee Bradley-Scott thanked Brunke, Wachtel, and Finance Director Scott Bordui for their work. Trustee Bradley-Scott noted how with infrastructure, one does not normally see the improvements to appreciate, but they are expected. Trustee Bradley-Scott appreciates the Village's save and spend approach.

Trustee Mustafa stated that the topic of infrastructure was exciting to her and thanked Brunke and his team for their work. She inquired about the amount of underperforming water meters and whether they would be replaced with the planned project. She inquired whether it will be about ten (10) years for a return on investment for the water meter project. Trustee Mustafa asked about the demolition of the water tower and what will happen with the materials from it. She also inquired about the status of the Heather Hill retention basin project.

Brunke responded that he did not recall the final number of underperforming meters and that the underperforming ones would be replaced. He agreed with the approximated ten (10) years for the return on investment and noted that the batteries in the meters should last about twenty (20) years. Brunke stated that the scrap materials would be scrapped by the contractor and could help bring the cost of the project down. Brunke stated that the proposed Heather Hill retention basin location provides the best storage

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option for the viaduct. The Village looked at another storage option for the viaduct down Flossmoor Road at the Flossmoor Country Club, but the Village could not obtain an agreement with the owners to proceed. If the Village cannot obtain approval from the Park District or School District for the retention basin in Heather Hill, the Village may have to install a large pipe down Flossmoor Road. He explained that there would not be much storage in the pipe and the MWRD would probably not fund that option since the MWRD's goal is to get more storage in the watershed.

Trustee Lofton complimented Brunke on his presentation and the amount of grants he has been able to acquire for the projects, which are a great help to the Village. He also applauded Brunke for his work on opening up the bid process for work to minority-owned engineering companies, which demonstrates inclusion. Trustee Lofton inquired about replacing residents' dual water meters.

Brunke responded that yes, the Village is replacing all of the meters, even if a resident or business has multiple meters.

Mayor Nelson confirmed the Board's support for the Fiscal Year 2024 Finance and Facilities Plan which should be included in the final draft of the FY 24 budget as presented.

Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #7 – Discussion of Water & Sewer Rates and Stormwater Utility Fee Rate. Finance Director Scott Bordui explained that as part of the budget process, there is a yearly review of the water and sewer rates. He noted that this would be the first rate increase consideration under the Village's new contract with Hammond, Chicago Heights and Homewood for water. Bordui stated that in FY 22, the Village finished the fiscal year with a net unrestricted asset deficit which left the Village below the Village's reserve level. The Board addressed that with a budget amendment during the fiscal year, where the third quarter administrative transfer was canceled. The FY 23 projections show that the Village will be above reserve level. The FY 24 budget is also projecting an operating surplus, which does two (2) things: It leaves the Village projected to be above the reserve level at the end of FY 24, and it allowed the Village to allocate \$300,000 of the water meter project in the Water & Sewer Fund, which is where they want those costs to end up. Bordui pointed out that the Village's budget is on a cash basis, but the financial statements are on an accrual basis. He noted that staff and the Board have talked a lot about the bill to purchase ratio, and that even a 1% improvement in that ratio is worth about \$49,000 a year in revenue. So, if the Village goes from 76% in calendar year 2022 to 80% (which is still not ideal) it is worth about \$200,000 in revenue.

Bordui explained the options for the Board's consideration: 1) 0% option; 2) accrual-based option, which essentially funds depreciation, would fund for future capital replacement, and would be a \$1.66 per 1,000 gallons or 10% increase; 3) a simple pass through of the contract costs, which amounts to 19 cents per 1,000 gallons or 1.1% increase; and 4) a pass-through plus option for the funding of the \$300,000 water meters. Bordui recommended option (3), the simple pass through option, because the net unrestricted asset approach provides the Village a good match to the operating position in the fund. This option represents coverage of the initial rate and the first increase, it's sufficient to cover the FY 24 budgeted operating

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expenses on a cash basis, and it will keep the Village from trending down to the reserve levels, which the Village wants to avoid.

Bordui's submitted memo provides a description of the storm water utility fee. There is a small deficit in the Storm Sewer Fund's FY 24 budget, so Bordui is recommending a 25-cent increase to cover that deficit. The Village has not increased those rates since 2020, but inflation is also affecting the Storm Sewer Fund. If the Board concurs with the option (3) recommendation for water and sewer rates and the recommendation for the stormwater utility fee increase, the Board would direct the Village Attorney to prepare an ordinance for the next Board meeting.

Mayor Nelson stated that she appreciates Bordui's preparation and presentation of options. She noted that during an inflationary time period like what's happening now, she does not think that residents would appreciate an 8-10% increase in their water bill. She does think that the Village should cover its costs, so she agrees with his recommendation for option (3). She also agrees with the storm sewer and stormwater utility fee increase recommendation of 25 cents. She discussed the issue of not increasing the rates with the Village Manager, but the only alternatives were to reduce the amount of culvert projects and street sweeping done in the Village, which are projects and services that the residents appreciate.

Trustee Daggett stated that he agreed that a significant rate increase could be very difficult for some residents and agreed that the pass through option was the most responsible one.

Trustee Bradley-Scott agreed that option (3) made the most sense.

Trustee Mustafa stated that she agreed that option (3) was the best approach and that breaking it down as to what it means for the average bill would be helpful for residents to visualize once the announcement is made to residents.

Bordui stated that the increases will amount to about a \$5.00 average increase on the 19 cents and an average increase of \$6.00 on the storm water fee.

Trustee Lofton inquired about the amount of water that was used for the estimated bill increases.

Bordui answered that they used 25,000 gallons as the basis to determine the estimated bill increases.

Trustee Driscoll stated that he agreed with the pass-through option (3) and that it was a sound position to improve the fund with the least cost to the residents. He thanked Wachtel and the Village Attorney for facilitating the water supply agreement with Hammond, Chicago Heights, and Homewood because the Village would be experiencing more increases if the Village would have stayed with Harvey.

Trustee Bradley-Scott stated that the Village should probably explain how the water rate increases will transition along with the new water meters and all the issues should be married so that everyone is on the same page.

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Citizens Present Wishing to Address the Board:

Citizens Present Wishing to Address the Board on a Non-Agenda Item

(It should be noted that in reporting these comments, the Village has not researched the accuracy of any comments.):

Warren Engelberg's comments, in summary, were about worker co-ops and the impact on education, and capitalism's impact on the US education system.

Pastor Derrick Roberts' comments, in summary, were that he applauded the Flossmoor Public Works Department, the Village, and the Village Board for doing an excellent job and taking care of the Village's infrastructure and keeping costs down. He lives next to Berry Lane and was experiencing a lot of flooding issues near his home, so he really appreciates the work that was done. He stated that a lot of villages cannot boast about their infrastructure work like Flossmoor and noted that the work done by the Village will benefit generations to come. He stated that when he first met Mayor Nelson, infrastructure concerns were at the top of his list. The Village has done a great job of expediting attention to those issues, and he thanked the Village.

Citizens Present Wishing to Address the Board on an Agenda Item

(It should be noted that in reporting these comments, the Village has not researched the accuracy of any comments.): No residents wished to speak on an Agenda Item.

Other Business:

Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #8 – A Motion to go into Executive Session to Discuss the Employment of Specific Individuals, Property Acquisition and Litigation.

There was no need to enter into Executive Session.

Trustee Bradley-Scott stated how she felt great at the end of this Village Board meeting where they swore in the first African-American Police Chief in Flossmoor, and she was proud of the infrastructure and other improvements being made in the Village. She appreciates the work of the Village staff and Village Board to continue to make the Village outstanding.

Trustee Mustafa noted the Strong Town competition and how the description of Flossmoor paled in comparison to the other town that it was up against. She added that no one should take the Village for granted because we have a strong community.

Trustee Mitros echoed what Trustee Bradley-Scott stated and thanked Pastor Roberts for his comments. Trustee Mitros noted that the Board is only successful because of the residents and their support and trust.

Trustee Lofton stated that he felt very proud of the Police Chief and Deputy Police Chief.

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Trustee Driscoll echoed the Board's sentiments and added a thank you to Mayor Nelson, who was a big part of the water transition project to Hammond, Chicago Heights, and Homewood water.

Trustee Daggett stated that the day of the meeting was his move-in day to Flossmoor thirteen (13) years ago, and that he felt prouder than ever to live in Flossmoor. He stated that with bringing in Chief Jones and the hard work that the staff is constantly doing, he is very proud to be a Flossmoor resident.

Clerk LoGalbo congratulated and welcomed Chief Jones and his family, and added that she is very proud to be a part of the Village Board and bare witness to all of the great things being done by the Village.

Village Attorney Kathi Orr stated that she was also proud to serve the Village.

Village Manager Bridget Wachtel echoed everyone's comments and stated that she was also proud to work alongside the Village's department directors. Wachtel welcomed Chief Jones, and thanked Deputy Chief Taylor for his service the last couple of months. Wachtel thanked Bordui, Brunke, and the other directors for their work on the budget process, especially when they moved the Village Board meeting up one (1) week. She also thanked the Village Board for being appreciative and supportive of the work that the Village staff does, for the Board's work, their willingness to allow the staff to carry out policies without interference, their dedication to the community, and the Board's vision for the community.

Mayor Nelson stated that she was also proud to be a part of the Village Board and work with everyone in the room.

Mayor Nelson noted that the next Village Board meeting would be April 17, 2023.

She stated that there would be a new resident event on April 1, 2023, at the Flossmoor Library, and there will be a community cleanup on April 8, 2023. Residents should sign up on the Village's website. Also, the Village is in the elite (8) of the Strong Towns competition, which is good timing with the Village also being featured in a business article for Business View Magazine.

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

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

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

NAYS: None

The Special Meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Gina A. LoGalbo
Village Clerk