

MINUTES OF MAYOR NELSON AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE VILLAGE OF FLOSSMOOR, ILLINOIS HELD ON FEBRUARY 3, 2025

VILLAGE HALL

FEBRUARY 3, 2025

7:00 PM

Mayor Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Village Clerk LoGalbo took roll.

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

ALSO PRESENT: Village Manager Bridget Wachtel; Assistant Village Manager Jonathan Bogue; Finance Director Ann Novoa; Director of Police Services Carl Estelle; Fire Chief Bob Kopec; Director of Public Works John Brunke; Director of Building & Zoning Scott Bugner; Community Engagement Manager Stephanie Wright; Acting Village Attorney Karl Ottosen; 39 community members, media, and others.

Mayor Nelson wished everyone a Happy Black History Month and explained that every year, the Village recognizes history makers who live and work in the Village. This year, the Village will recognize Black leaders in not-for-profit organizations. Mayor Nelson was wearing a You Matter 2 shirt in support of Destiny Watson, who has done a lot of good for the community. To nominate someone to be featured for Black History Month, they could contact Community Engagement Manager Stephanie Wright or fill out the form on the Village's website.

Mayor Nelson reminded everyone that the Village Board meeting was being streamed via Zoom for the convenience of those unable to attend the meeting in person. Mayor Nelson requested that commentators abide by the Village's public comment policy, which includes, but is not limited to, stating their name and address after they approach the podium, acting with decorum, and addressing the comments to the public body as a whole and not a single member of staff. Mayor Nelson asked that speakers limit their comments to five minutes or less per person for a maximum of thirty minutes of public comment time.

Citizens Present Wishing to Address the Board:

*Citizens Present Wishing to Address the Board on an Agenda Item & Non-Agenda Item
(It should be noted that in reporting these comments, the Village has not researched the accuracy of any comments.):*

Flossmoor resident Jenny Curtis' comments, in summary, were regarding the last Village Board meeting being held on an unusual date with little notice and poor advertising for the meeting. She noted that one of the items on the agenda from the last Village Board meeting was a policy regarding the ability of the Mayor to call a state of emergency in the Village and discussed her questions regarding the agenda item. Curtis discussed her concern about oversight of the Mayor's decision-making in emergency situations. Curtis also questioned what the Village was doing to proactively protect the community and visitors from ICE, such as how local schools have implemented protocols of how to deal with ICE showing up at schools. She discussed her opinions on people making statements regarding ICE coming to the Village and encouraged residents to question what the Village was doing regarding the current issues.

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Flossmoor resident Andrea Perry's comments, in summary, were regarding former Police Chief Jerel Jones, his lawsuit against the Village, the resolution of the lawsuit, his new job as Deputy Police Chief in Richton Park, his swearing-in ceremony with Flossmoor residents in attendance and positive comments from some of Jones' friends and colleagues. Perry also read quotes from Trustees Mustafa and Bradley-Scott about their support for Jones.

Recognitions and Appointments:

None.

Mayor Nelson referred to the Consent Agenda (which encompassed Agenda Items 1-2):

1. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting Held on January 22, 2025
2. Presentation of Bills for Approval and Payment as Approved by the Finance Committee (February 3, 2025)

Mayor Nelson called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Trustee Mitros so moved, seconded by Trustee Daggett.

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

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

ABSENT: Trustee Lofton

ABSTAIN: None

NAYS: None

Reports of Committees, Commissions and Boards:

Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #3 – Presentation of the Recap of the 2025 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service.

Mayor Nelson thanked the Community Relations Commission for their work, including with the Lunar New Year event, which was a great success.

Chair of the Community Relations Commission, Phillippa Leon-Thompson and Vice-Chair Jackie Riffice gave a presentation on the Village's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service. Riffice noted the HF Chronicle's recent positive news story about the MLK Day of Service. She noted that it was the Village's 10th year for the MLK Day of Service and acknowledged the Village Departments, staff (especially Jonathan Bogue, Stephanie Wright, and Nicole Castagna), partner organizations that served as host locations, and other Community Relations Commissioners. Riffice discussed the benefits of volunteerism, and she highlighted some of the activities that took place on the 2025 MLK Day of Service, including Jack & Jill's South Suburban and Monarch Cities chapters' collections and activities, the Divine Nine's blood drive, the HF Wrestling Team's Readers are Leaders program and book collection, Girl Scout Service Unit #627's blanket making initiative to support local organizations, Girl Scout Service Unit #60194 collection of

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hygiene products for Open Access, and You Matter 2's lunch making and blanket making projects. Riffice also highlighted Infant Jesus of Prague School's Junior National Honor Society collection of baby items for Aid for Women, the HF High School's National Honor Society scholars who helped wherever there was a need, and Plan for Success' sock drive for those experiencing homelessness and a baked goods collection for delivery to south suburban police and fire departments. Riffice noted that CBS News reporter Sharda Gray did a story on the Village's MLK Day of Service, which featured Plan for Success and Village Clerk LoGalbo's collection of 150 new LEGO sets for the Bricks of Hope organization and hospitalized children. Riffice also highlighted Mayor Nelson's classical music concert featuring four musicians from the Music Institute of Chicago, which raised over \$2,500.00 to benefit the Center for Food Equity and Medicine. Riffice noted the Community Relations Commission's project to prepare kits to benefit unhoused and at-risk individuals through Respond Now, thanks to the support of the Flossmoor Fire Department Fund and the Flossmoor Service League. Riffice also noted Flossmoor and Olympia Fields Sunrise Senior Living's blanket-making initiative, pop tab collection for the Ronald McDonald House, cards for staff, and a soup kit-making initiative. Riffice highlighted the bird seed ball project at Irons Oaks, the litter collection at the Sand Ridge Nature Center, the bird project sponsored by the Green Commission to address the issue of migratory birds crashing into windows and the used sports equipment collection by the Flossmoor Firebirds Baseball Team to donate to Leveling the Playing Field organization to benefit communities with special needs.

Riffice noted the Community Relations Commission's thankfulness for the volunteers who participated in the MLK Day of Service.

Mayor Nelson recognized MLK Day of Service project hosts present at the Village Board meeting.

Chair of the Community Relations Commission Phillippa Leon-Thompson read a letter regarding Vice-Chair Jackie Riffice and her contributions and impact on the Village while serving as a CRC Commissioner. Leon-Thompson noted Riffice's efforts with the MLK Day of Service and her work as a relationship builder. Leon-Thompson thanked Riffice for her contributions.

Leon-Thompson recognized Flossmoor staff Stephanie Wright and Nicole Castagna for their efforts with the MLK Day of Service and noted that the Village has the best staff working in the south suburbs.

Mayor Nelson also thanked Jackie Riffice for her work as a CRC Commissioner.

The Board thanked and complimented the Community Relations Commission and Jackie Riffice for their good works and positive contributions in the community. The Board noted the success of the MLK Day of Service and staff members' contributions to the MLK Day of Service.

Action Items:

Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #4 – Adoption of the Community Relations Commission Purpose and Intent. Mayor Nelson called for a motion to Adopt the Community Relations Commission's Purpose and Intent. Trustee Mustafa so moved, seconded by Trustee Bradley-Scott.

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Assistant Village Manager Jonathan Bogue described the process for the development of the revised Community Relations Commission Purpose and Intent and complimented how CRC Chair Phillippa Leon-Thompson and Vice Chair Jackie Riffice handled the process.

CRC Chair Phillippa Leon-Thompson explained the importance of a clear and relevant purpose and intent statement and noted that over time, the CRC's current Purpose and Intent became outdated. She noted that the CRC's Purpose and Intent was updated to better reflect the mission of the Village and ensure consistency with the Village's regulations. Leon-Thompson described the process used to update the document, including receiving input from all CRC Commissioners, residents Trustee Mustafa, Troy Holmes, Cecil Porter, and Eric O'Brien, and assistance from Assistant Village Manager Jonathan Bogue,

Mayor Nelson thanked CRC Chair Phillippa Leon-Thompson for her and the CRC's work on the Purpose and Intent and noted its importance.

Trustee Bradley-Scott inquired about the tracking of events and engagement that the CRC is involved with.

Leon-Thompson explained that the CRC doesn't count numbers of attendees but evaluates attendees' comments about an event. She explained how the first Lunar New Year had a small group attend, but it wasn't canceled and instead had growth.

Assistant Village Manager Bogue explained that for some events the Village tracks attendees such as the new resident event, and staff evaluates how to improve events.

The Board thanked Leon-Thompson, Riffice, and the CRC for their work, including the Purpose and Intent and the importance of the CRC's contributions to the community.

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

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

ABSENT: Trustee Lofton

ABSTAIN: None

NAYS: None

Discussion Items:

Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #5 – Presentation from Retail Coach on Retail Recruitment.

Mayor Nelson introduced Kaleb Wilson from Retail Coach. Wilson discussed Retail Coach and the goals of the partnership with the Village, and he described Retail Coach's methods to attract businesses and developers, including the use of data and metrics for trade areas and advertisements. Wilson noted the benefit of the Village acquiring vacant land over the years when it comes to development, as the Village can then tailor new development in the right way. Wilson described the benefits of the Village's fifty acres along Volmer Road near Meijer that could be used for a mixed-use project, and some of the challenges with finding the right development. Wilson noted the interest in some of the Village's property along Vollmer Road and discussed the next steps. He also discussed Flossmoor Commons and a space in the

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downtown and some possible options for them. Wilson discussed the importance of trade shows and their representation of Flossmoor at them.

Mayor Nelson discussed her experiences with economic development since becoming Mayor, including the goal of finding quality businesses for Flossmoor. She encouraged people to check out the Village's economic development web page, which has helped attract discussions with retailers and developers. She also noted the importance of listing the Village's properties on LoopNet, and the ability to sell the ease of working with Village staff to developers. Mayor Nelson noted her enthusiasm for developments on Vollmer Road that are in the works.

The Board appreciated Wilson's presentation, understood that it was a process in order to get the right retailers instead of a business that would be an easier and faster transaction, and were looking forward to upcoming developments.

Trustee Bradley-Scott inquired about the outlook for small towns like Flossmoor.

Wilson responded that as the Village is trying to build a legacy with businesses that will be present for decades to come, the groundwork has been/ is being made, including the Village acquiring property and having easy-to-work-with staff.

Trustee Mustafa noted the nationwide challenges with retail and asked Wilson's opinion on whether the Village should focus on creating a destination for medical or professional services. She also inquired about Flossmoor Commons and the different approaches for filling those spaces versus the vacant land on Vollmer Road.

Wilson responded that he envisions a mixed-use development for the southwest portion of Flossmoor. He provided the example of a medical user who wanted to revisit the location when other developments started there, and he thinks the Village is on the cusp of starting there. Wilson explained that as it pertains to Flossmoor Commons, the intention is not to forget about it, and it would provide an opportunity when a brand cannot pay for new construction rent.

Trustee Mitros inquired about the property mentioned near Flossmoor Station Brewery & Restaurant, and Wilson clarified that it was regarding the property across the street from it.

Trustee Daggett suggested clarification regarding Wilson's reference to a letter of intent (LOI) with a brand or developer. Wilson explained that it was the first major step for a brand or developer to commit to considering a site. Wilson noted that the Village is expecting an LOI soon and wants to have one to two more LOIs to move forward with the Village's property off of Vollmer Road.

Mayor Nelson referred to Agenda Item #6 – 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.

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Trustee Mustafa sought input from the Board and Village Manager Wachtel, at Wachtel's suggestion, about how the Village will respond if ICE arrives in Flossmoor to execute warrants or make collateral arrests and noted that she had received inquiries from residents. Trustee Mustafa shared Wachtel's input on the subject from an earlier inquiry, her discussions with Trustee Daggett, and Village Attorney Kathi Orr's opinion on the matter that under Illinois law, the Village may assist ICE only if presented with a federal criminal warrant per the Illinois Trust Act. Trustee Mustafa inquired about sharing information and resources with residents regarding the aforementioned issues.

Acting Village Attorney Karl Ottosen explained that the Village's role has not changed regarding ICE and that the Village Board cannot pass anything that would conflict with the federal government. He referenced the Illinois Trust Act that prohibits law enforcement from enforcing immigration laws unless there is a criminal warrant and that there are already policies in the Flossmoor Police Department regarding what to do in these situations if there is a request for assistance. Ottosen noted how some organizations are putting out references for immigrants regarding this issue and that the Board could put out references to sources on the topic.

Director Estelle and Village Manager Wachtel noted that they had not received any calls of concern regarding ICE. Wachtel also noted that after the school districts issued memos to parents and guardians regarding the ICE issue, she and Director Estelle met with school leadership to make sure they understood what the Village's role was and what the Village could and could not do.

Trustee Mitros was not in favor of using resources to share information about ICE.

Trustee Bradley-Scott inquired about posting information on the Village's website, including Orr's advisory memo on the issue, and Ottosen responded that he did not know of any client municipality that had posted the information. Ottosen also noted that there would not be an issue with the Village posting Orr's memo on the issue as an educational reference.

Trustee Daggett noted that a couple of residents inquired with him about the Village's involvement with ICE and he found the Illinois Attorney General's Office posted information about the Illinois Trust Act to be very helpful. He opined that he would be in favor of the Village sharing the Illinois Attorney General's Office posted information or Orr's advisory memo on the issue.

Trustee Driscoll opined that the topic should have been on the agenda as a discussion item or action item for residents to have notice about and listen to it. Driscoll was not in favor of posting information shared by local schools but was in favor of sharing Orr's memo.

Trustee Mitros stated that he would not be in favor of posting Orr's memo unless her firm agreed to hold the Village harmless for publishing the document.

Ottosen explained that it would be safer to share information directly from the Illinois Attorney General's Office, as the State's lawyers, who adopted the Illinois Trust Act.

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The Board shared that they would be in favor of the Village sharing information from the Illinois Attorney General's Office about the Illinois Trust Act.

Trustee Mustafa shared information about an upcoming movie screening on February 12th of Alice's Ordinary People at the Flossmoor Public Library, including an introduction and questions and answers session with the director. The documentary is in regard to a unique history in civil rights history.

Trustee Bradley-Scott inquired about the process for Board members bringing forth items on the agenda.

Mayor Nelson explained the circumstances regarding Trustee Mustafa's item being a discussion item and noted that he believes there is an ordinance regarding bringing forth agenda items.

Trustee Mitros inquired about obtaining a hard copy of the ordinances, and Village Manager Wachtel explained they have very few hard copies of the Municipal Code and have shifted to staff and the public relying on the online version to ensure it is always up-to-date. The online Code of Ordinances was better than a hard copy since copy holders were not updating their hard copies of the ordinances in the past which led to incorrect citations/ references of the Code.

Village Clerk LoGalbo thanked everyone for their donations to the Bricks of Hope LEGO drive, including Fire Chief Bob Kopec, the Flossmoor Fire Department, and the Flossmoor Volunteer Fire Department Corporation for their donations. She also thanked the HF Chronicle for the feature on the MLK Day of Service.

Acting Village Attorney explained that the emergency declaration powers of municipal presidents or mayors have been on the books for many decades in the State of Illinois, like in other forms of government, and in certain circumstances they have the ability to declare something to be a disaster or an emergency in certain circumstances. The only thing that the Board acted on in the last Board meeting was to mirror the language in state law.

Mayor Nelson apologized for any inconvenience and thanked everyone for their flexibility with moving the last Board meeting from Tuesday to Wednesday and noted that she had a personal family emergency out of state to attend to, which was meaningful for her to be present.

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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 Driscoll, and passed by a voice vote.

AYES: Trustees Bradley-Scott, Daggett, Driscoll, Mitros, and Mustafa.
ABSENT: Trustee Lofton
ABSTAIN: None
NAYS: None

The Regular Meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Gina A. LoGalbo
Village Clerk