

MINUTES OF MAYOR BRAUN AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
VILLAGE OF FLOSSMOOR, ILLINOIS HELD ON JANUARY 19, 2021

VILLAGE HALL/ZOOM

JANUARY 19, 2021

7:30 pm

Mayor Braun called the meeting to order at 7:36pm.

Village Clerk Ananda Billings took roll.

PRESENT: Mayor Braun, Trustees Bradley-Scott, Driscoll, Hoag, Lofton, Mitros, Williams  
and Village Clerk Ananda Billings

ALSO PRESENT: Village Manager Bridget Wachtel, Assistant Village Manager Allison Matson,  
Finance Director Scott Bordui; Police Chief Tod Kamleiter, Fire Chief Greg Berk;  
Public Works Director John Brunke, Village Attorney Kathi Orr

CITIZENS PRESENT: Mayor Braun requested that any citizens who wished to identify themselves do so,  
along with their address for the Village Clerk.

Nancy Burrows, Bill Jones, Dr. Lakshmi Emory, and Michelle Nelson identified themselves on the call.

Introductory Comments

Mayor Braun stated that in order to mitigate the transmission of the virus and reduce risk of COVID-19 illness, the Village has been advised and directed by the State pursuant to Public Act 2020-0640, the requirement of the members of the public body to be physically present has been suspended so long as it is not practical or prudent due to the state of emergency in Illinois and the outbreak of COVID-19. Mayor Braun believes it is not practical or prudent to allow in person gatherings due to the coronavirus pandemic, however Village Manager Wachtel is present at the Village Hall for the meeting this evening. All citizens are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely. Citizens were informed of this decision in advance and invited to submit comments and questions ahead of the Board meeting.

This meeting along with all subsequent remotely held Board meetings will be recorded. He then noted that public comment will be only available during the portion of the meeting during which the public is invited to address the Board. As communicated to the public earlier, those questions that were submitted to staff in advance of the meeting would also be addressed during this time.

Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting Held on December 21, 2020

Mayor Braun asked the Board if they had any further changes or comments. He called for a motion to approve the minutes of December 21, 2020. Trustee Lofton so moved, seconded by Trustee Bradley-Scott and passed by a roll call vote.

AYES: Trustees Bradley-Scott, Driscoll, Hoag, Lofton, and Mitros  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: Trustee Williams  
NAYS: None

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Citizens Present Wishing to Address the Board

Nancy Burrows, Chair of Public Art Commission addressed the Board. The cost of engraved brick pavers to support the public art program is going up in February. Therefore, the commission has decided to promote the sale of bricks at \$100.00 until the price increase to \$125.00 on February 12<sup>th</sup>. Thus far during the campaign, the commission has sold ten bricks. The goal is to sell 30 bricks which would pay for a leased sculpture. She encourages people to participate as this will allow people to create a lasting memory in the community. The donation form is available at [artflossmoor.com](http://artflossmoor.com).

Mayor Braun asked Assistant Village Manager Matson if any citizens submitted comments or questions prior to the meeting.

No comments were submitted prior to the meeting.

Mayor Braun referred to Agenda Item #1: Discussion of Five Year Financial Projections (FY 2021-FY 2026)

Village Manager Bridget Wachtel presented the five year financial projections to the Board. This projection considers Fiscal Year 2021 through Fiscal Year 2026. The analysis was led by Finance Director Scott Bordui.

Despite the mid-year good news of a FY 21 budgeted deficit of \$912,659 projecting to finish with an operating surplus of \$186,665, the Five-Year Projections show continuing and accelerating use of fund balance to support operations. A large operating deficit of \$918,465 is projected for FY 22 which grows to \$1,229,984 by FY 26. If this scenario comes to fruition, the Village will be barely above its Reserve Policy level by FY 23 and below it by FY 24. Operating expenses have steadily increased in recent years, growing from about \$8.9M in FY 14 to \$11.2M in the FY 21 budget, driven by operating needs and some expansion of services. Our employee count has gone up through restructuring or adding positions. Four of those positions have accompanying police and fire pension benefits. At the same time, we are seeing flat or declining revenues. The major non-property tax revenue outside of sales tax has been flat over time. Over time, we anticipate public safety pensions to grow by 40%, which is not unlike what we projected in 2018, while property tax is expected to grow by 24%. After five years of EAV decline, we saw an increase followed by a 6% decrease in 2019, which is the level of the EAV in 2012 and 2005. The assumptions do not include any additional economic development projects, not because it is not a priority, but because we don't have any approved developments at this point; therefore, conservatively, we don't build any assumptions into the analysis.

Village Manager Wachtel summarized potential options for the Board including additional revenues, although the biggest revenue source would be a utility tax on water, which would be unpopular. The other is a places for eating tax. We have taken advantage of the major revenue opportunities, most recently the non-home rule sales tax. Other options include reviewing service modifications, reviewing financial policies such as our pension funding policy, or a referendum for a property tax increase or home rule which would remove the tax cap.

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*Mayor Braun suggested that the future Board not focus on Home Rule as it has never been well received in the community. Pension costs are astronomical at this point, and therefore the new Board and Mayor will need to focus on this and try to affect some change when it comes to pension funding.*

*Trustee Williams commended the team for doing a great job, as they always have done. She noted that these meetings are very sobering as we look at our options. We do not want to tax our citizens out of Flossmoor. At some point, the taxes become a high percentage of a family's income. She also agrees that home rule is likely not the right thing to pursue. She also knows that we do find solutions along the way, and we will work through this somehow. The Vollmer Road and Flossmoor Road opportunities are key. We need to focus on economic development before looking at taxes.*

*Trustee Mitros noted his agreement with the Mayor and Trustee Williams. He also said that he doesn't believe home rule would ever pass. Economic development is key. The pension fund issue is hurting all communities, and we need to affect change and engage with our politicians to make some forward movement.*

*Trustee Driscoll added that we need to add some hard timelines to our goals so that we can make necessary changes before we hit a crisis. Economic growth is key, and he also agreed that Home Rule would be dead on arrival.*

*Trustee Hoag believes we have some opportunity to save by delaying some of the hires in the short term during the pandemic, delaying drastic actions until the end of the pandemic, and also we will need to avoid Home Rule as it would not pass.*

*Trustee Bradley-Scott agreed with the earlier comments and noted that we are in a similar situation with all cities in Illinois with regard to pension funding. We will have to be diligent to take advantage of the unique opportunities to grow and attract the right business and focus on economic development.*

*Trustee Lofton agreed with the other Trustees and believes that economic development is our best path forward. We need to do more analysis and dreaming on what is possible. There are companies that might be willing to relocate and expand but we will need a game plan in place to make this happen.*

*No vote was required.*

*Mayor Braun referred to Agenda Item #2: Consideration of an Ordinance Granting Emergency Powers to the Mayor of the Village of Flossmoor, Cook County, Illinois*

*Mayor Braun asked the Board if they had any further questions or comments. As there were none he called for a motion to approve Consideration of an Ordinance Granting Emergency Powers to the Mayor of the Village of Flossmoor, Cook County, Illinois. Trustee Mitros so moved, seconded by Trustee Driscoll and passed by a roll call vote.*

AYES: Trustees Bradley-Scott, Driscoll, Hoag, Lofton, Mitros, and Williams  
ABSENT: None

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ABSTAIN: None  
NAYS: None

Finance Committee:

Ratification of Bills for Payment (January 4, 2021)

Trustee Williams made a motion to ratify the payment of hand checks in the amount of \$4,458.71 and invoices in the amount of \$508,841.49 for a total of \$513,300.20. The motion was seconded by Trustee Mitros and passed by a roll call vote.

AYES: Trustees Bradley-Scott, Driscoll, Hoag, Lofton, Mitros, and Williams  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
NAYS: None

Presentation of Bills for Approval and Payment (January 19<sup>th</sup> 2021)

Trustee Williams made a motion to approve hand checks in the amount of \$5,033.21 and invoices in the amount of \$330,293.93 for a total of \$335,327.14. The motion was seconded by Trustee Mitros and passed by a roll call vote.

AYES: Trustees Bradley-Scott, Driscoll, Hoag, Lofton, Mitros, and Williams  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
NAYS: None

Other Business:

Mayor Braun reported on the Metropolitan Mayors COVID Task Force. The Illinois Board of Health is adding a vaccination dashboard on [dph.illinois.gov](http://dph.illinois.gov). They had also asked for grants to be made available by the State. They were informed that this is in the works and will be updated and finalized after President Biden's COVID task force plan is released.

Cook County is also unveiling multiple vaccination sites that will be operating soon in Robbins and Ford Heights. You can register your name and information on the Cook County Department of Health to sign up for the vaccine and the Department of Health will notify you when the vaccine is available for you.

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*The Ballantrae Homeowners Association sent masks to the Board and the Board expressed their appreciation.*

*Village Manager Bridget Wachtel said that the Village Hall and Public Works will be open to the public starting January 21<sup>st</sup>. She also extended a huge thank you to the Community Relations Committee and to Staff for coordinating the MLK Day of Service. Despite the pandemic, the community was still able to participate on this important day.*

*Mayor Braun referred to Agenda Item #3 on the Agenda: A Motion to go into Executive Session to Discuss the Employment of Specific Individuals, Property Acquisition, and Litigation.*

*There was no need to go into Executive Session.*

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

AYES: Trustees Bradley-Scott, Driscoll, Hoag, Lofton, Mitros, and Williams  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
NAYS: None

*The Regular Meeting ended at 8:26 pm.*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Ananda Billings*

Ananda Billings  
Village Clerk