

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE
AUGUST 27, 2018**

APPROVED MINUTES OF MEETING

The Village of Lake Bluff Board of Trustees met as a Committee-of-the-Whole (“COW”) in the Village Hall Board Room (40 East Center Avenue) on Monday, August 27, 2018. Village President O’Hara called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Village Clerk Joy Markee called the roll.

The following were present:

Village President:	Kathleen O’Hara
Trustees:	Barbara Ankenman Mark Dewart Eric Grenier Paul Lemieux Aaron Towle
Absent:	William Meyer
Also Present:	Joy Markee, Village Clerk Drew Irvin, Village Administrator Peter Friedman, Village Attorney Glen Cole, Assistant to the Village Administrator

Non-Agenda Items and Visitors

President O’Hara stated the COW allocates 15 minutes for those individuals who would like the opportunity to address the COW on any matter not listed on the agenda. There were no requests to address the COW.

Consideration of the Minutes from the March 12, 2018 Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting

Trustee Grenier moved to approve the March 12, 2018 COW minutes as presented. Trustee Towle seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Discussion Regarding Parking Regulations East of Moffett Road

Village President O’Hara introduced the agenda item. She stated that this discussion is a process; that good government must be thoughtful, inclusive, and engaged in a study of all facets of an issue; and must ultimately make a decision in the interests of the community as a whole. She stated that, if changes will be made, they will be done with respect to everyone participating in the process. She stated that this process will take time and will not be resolved immediately. She read aloud the introductory section of Village Administrator Irvin’s memorandum, which describes possible restrictions that could be implemented east of Moffett Road to reduce parking impacts created by Lake Bluff Park and Beach.

After doing so, Village President O’Hara stated that this issue has previously been a subject of discussion. She stated that she intends to appoint a special committee consisting of all stakeholders to look at all options, including options other than those examined to-date. She stated that the committee would be advisory in nature, as only the Board had authority to change parking regulations.

The Trustees discussed this idea briefly and their consensus was to support this course of action.

Village President O’Hara asked for comments from the public.

Bob Mullenbach, resident, came forward to address the Board. He stated that part of the concept of “good government” is the exercise of common sense. He stated that it is common sense for the residents of the affected houses to know they purchased in an area that already had parking problems. He believes that restricting parking in this area will deny Villagers enjoyment of the beach. As an example, he said that the parishioners of the Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Community Church (which conducts religious services on the beach) might be forced to park west of Moffett and walk. He believes this would be an undue burden, especially for the elderly. He reiterated that the Board should make decisions for the good of the general population, and that public streets are intended for use by the public. He concluded by saying that these streets must be kept available for parking.

Tom Coyle, resident, came forward to address the Board. He said that he has lived in this area for many years and that he has only had one negative incident with a non-resident. He understands the concerns of his neighbors. He stated that he has many visiting friends who are not Lake Bluff residents, and he objects to forcing visitors to his home to walk multiple blocks. He said that the Village could issue temporary parking permits for affected residents that could be used for these guests.

John Palizza, resident, came forward to address the Board. He identified himself as the Commodore of the Lake Bluff Yacht Club, a beach tenant. He described his decision in choosing to retire to Lake Bluff, and said that the lakefront and Lake Bluff’s sense of inclusive community are assets to the Village. He believes that putting restrictions on parking that would get in the way of using this jewel is contrary to everything that Lake Bluff is all about. He stated that he polled the members of the Yacht Club and that the overwhelming reaction ranges from outrage to incredulity at the parking restriction proposals. He stated that nothing has changed for the purchasers of these homes, as there have been parking issues in this neighborhood for years. He stated that these buyers knew what they were purchasing, and they are now lobbying to change it for the benefit of a small minority. He concluded by saying that the Village is not about excluding people.

Christine DeYoung, resident, came forward to address the Board. Initially, she directed her remarks to Mr. Palizza saying she assumes that he would find her proposal to implement resident-only parking an acceptable solution. Mr. Palizza protested aloud. Village President O’Hara asked that Ms. DeYoung address her comments to the Board. Ms. DeYoung identified herself as the person who contacted Village Administrator Irvin to convey the neighborhood’s parking concerns. She feels overwhelmed by the increase in beach attendance from previous years. She stated that her family are members of the yacht club and community church but that, when she purchased her home 19 years ago, there was not the same traffic as has occurred over the last two to three years. She stated that her neighbors have kept data on these changes and, in the past, have felt ignored by the Village. Their data shows that less than 15% of on-street parking users appear to be Village residents. As an example, the previous weekend, she observed 142 cars of whom 10 were from Lake Bluff. She stated that the neighbors’ intent is not to be different from the rest of Lake Bluff, but to restore their sense of community. She asserted that no other North Shore community allows on-street parking near their beach, and that her children no longer recognize anyone when they visit the beach. She did not recognize anyone at the beach last weekend. In her conversations with residents, the critical issue is seeing people they know on the beach and not people they do not know who do not pay taxes to live in Lake Bluff. In her view, the rise of social media means the word’s out that the only place to go is Lake Bluff. She continued to reiterate her previous points. Her intent is not to negate the efforts invested in building assets like the Community Church and Yacht Club, but to make space for these assets to be enjoyed. If no action is taken, the Village will regret it when a child is hurt, or when a stroller is hit by a vehicle; that is when people will realize there is a problem.

Mary (“Mickey”) Collins, resident, came forward to address the Board. She stated that, now that her children

are in college, she does not recognize many people in Lake Bluff anymore. Not recognizing someone does not mean that they are not a resident. She was unsure how many members of the public had read Village Administrator Irvin's memorandum, including the assertion that 93% of beach users tracked by the Park District are residents. Village Administrator Irvin, responding to a question from Ms. Collins, stated the data provided by the Lake Bluff Park District was not perfect but were good indicators. Ms. Collins, continuing, stated that these figures are more reliable than anecdotes or counting vehicle stickers on cars. This is Lake Bluff's beach, and she believes that regulations will either push people three blocks west or discourage them from using the beach. She believes neither outcome is desirable. As a resident of Scranton venue, she frequently has people parking in front of her house for special events that probably are not residents. She believes that this is a good thing, and that if it is something that is good for Lake Bluff, it is something that she should be willing to put up with.

Victoria Lidstrom, resident, came forward to address the Board. She stated that she chose to build in Lake Bluff because of its positive atmosphere. She uses the beach daily and is surprised when no one is there. She wants her 13-year-old child to have the experience of walking to the beach and meeting diverse people there. She said that more police patrol may be appropriate on the weekends if people are fearful, but she would be very sad if the Village lost the limited diversity at the beach every day. (She noted that, per Village Administrator Irvin's memorandum, this would be 7% or less.) She stated that it is not crowded except perhaps for Center Avenue on the weekends.

Kathy Shepard, resident, came forward to address the Board. She stated that her concern, after 40 years of living in Lake Bluff, is not feeling frightened. Rather, she is worried that there is a fear that does not exist that is being used to hide feelings of intolerance. She described seeing people at the beach such as landscapers and stated that she wishes more people would be open and not close the Village to outsiders.

Chris Baldwin, resident, came forward to address the Board. Mr. Baldwin stated that he lives at the epicenter of beach activity, and finds it interesting that much of the discussion is from people who do not live immediately adjacent to the beach. He described young children being frightened by the traffic, as well as evenings where parking fills the street. He stated that the vehicle stickers he observes are from nowhere close to Lake Bluff. He supports the idea of parking restrictions because he feels that he is being gamed by residents of outlying communities who feel like Lake Bluff is the place to come raise hell. He feels it is out of control on weekends, crowded, creates too much parking, and increases the risk of theft on the east side of Lake Bluff. He applauds Christine DeYoung for raising this issue, and believes that it should be addressed even if there are no easy solutions.

Richard Hegg, resident, came forward to address the Board. He stated that he has lived in the community for quite a while, and remembers 40 years ago when the beach was only used by local citizens. In the last eight years or so, he has noticed a huge increase in the number of cars. In his surveys, he finds that at most 12-15% of these vehicles have Lake Bluff stickers, down from 25% four years ago. This analysis does not support the assertion that 93% of users are residents. He stated that he has no interest in making it difficult for Lake Bluff residents to get to the beach, and he wants to find something that works for residents, the church, and the yacht club. He concluded by saying that the growth continues to trend in a positive direction.

Robin Mattson, resident, came forward to address the Board. She stated that she has been a resident of Lake Bluff more than half her life, and she loves how accepting the community is. She attends church on Sundays at the beach and often invites friends from outside Lake Bluff to join her for service or just to be at the beach. She lives next to the Middle School, where there is an abundance of vehicle traffic, but she acknowledges that she made the choice to live there. When she walks down to the beach, she doesn't know a soul, but that has allowed her to make a number of new friends that are Lake Bluff residents. She is excited to have a committee and open dialogue so everyone has an opportunity to talk about this.

Tom Dickelman, Pastor of the Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Community Church and former Lake Bluff resident, came forward to address the Board. He stated that he moved to Lake Bluff exactly 30 years ago, to the day, to serve as the pastor of Lake Bluff Community Church (which meets on the beach). He stated that his biggest concern isn't parking, but is about avoiding the "us versus them" mindset so prevalent in America. He believes that his experience with governmental agencies and community groups has gone positively because there has not been a contentious "winning" mindset. He is appearing to lobby for a committee that allows people to sit down and understand the issues. He discussed the issues in holding service at the beach and in making it accessible for all residents. He concluded by describing the positive attitudes he has encountered in Lake Bluff, and hopes it will carry into solving these challenges.

Mark Wildman, resident, came forward to address the Board. He stated that he works in the parking industry and believes that parking needs to be managed. If it is not managed, there are unintended consequences. These issues tend to be emotional, and that's why it needs management. Residents may ultimately get more preferential parking in this area, but he stated that it is not about exclusion. He described his experiences with diversity in Lake Bluff and stated that these are why he moved here from Lake Forest 15 years ago. He believes that residents should be able to enjoy the community but not feel crowded out, and that Lake Bluff should still feel like a welcoming community.

Village President O'Hara concluded the period for public comment. Upon no further comments from the Board, she allowed members of the public to leave the room before proceeding to the next agenda item.

Report and Discussion Regarding Lake Bluff's Joint Fire/EMS Proposal to the Rockland Fire Protection District

Village Administrator Irvin provided a verbal report at the request of Village President O'Hara. He presented a brief history of Rockland Fire Protection District #2 (Knollwood Fire Department) and of the Village's proposal to form a joint department alongside them. He stated that, last week, the Board of Trustees of the District met to consider a competing proposal by the Village of Libertyville and the City of Lake Forest. While it appears that the District is favoring their proposal, no action has yet been taken, and the District's Board has continued their discussion to an uncertain date and time. He concluded by saying that the District's action plan remains unclear.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Member Grenier, seconded by Member Ankenman, and passed on a unanimous voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

R. Drew Irvin
Village Administrator