

VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF - FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING – May 27, 2020

I. Call to Order – Roll Call

The Finance Committee of the Village of Lake Bluff was called to order on Monday, May 27, 2020 at 5:30 PM in a Virtual Meeting.

Members Present: Trustee Barbara Ankenman, Chair
Trustee William Meyer, Member
Trustee Aaron Towle, Member

Others Present: Kathleen O'Hara, Village Board President
Megan Michael, Village Clerk
Regis Charlot, Village Trustee
Mark Dewart, Village Trustee
Joy Markee, Village Trustee
R. Drew Irvin, Village Administrator
Bettina O'Connell, Finance Director
Marlene Scheibl, Assistant Finance Director
Glen Cole, Assistant to the Village Administrator
David Graf, Fire Chief
Jeff Hansen, Village Engineer
Mike Hosking, Police Chief
Jake Terlap, Superintendent of Public Works
Peter Friedman, Village Attorney

II. Approval of Minutes

Member Aaron Towle made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2020 meeting as presented; seconded by Member William Meyer and approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

III. Non-Agenda Items and Visitors

Ms. Michelle White, resident of 100 Boardman Court was present on the phone to address the Committee. She thanked the committee for the time to speak today. She said there was information her husband, Mr. Jeff White, sent to the Board and also letters from the neighbors which were shared. Ms. White addressed the committee with the following comments: her goal is to make the Board aware of how difficult their situation has become; they have lived in the Village for over 16 years; the flooding issue has taken not only a financial toll, but the emotional and anxiety toll has become unbearable; and she knows there is a lot going on with the pandemic but respectfully requested the Board consider what occurred to date and the risk, not just for her family, but for neighbors also. She said that this has been a very lengthy process. She reiterated that all plausible solutions proposed to fix the flooding over the last 3 years have been rejected by the Village, for various reasons. There has been no other alternative they could come forward with to fix the flooding. It is not just a little bit of flooding, there is a tremendous amount of water at least 3-4 times a year and it comes all from Green Bay Road and Forest Hills. She said that their area suffers an incredible amount of flooding. Since the 2017 flood, the Village of Lake Bluff has committed to improve the public infrastructure; however, Ms. White said they were told the project was difficult and it was not an easy problem to solve. For 3 years they have worked on this and are finally here with the approvals, and now are told the recommendation was to delay the project once again. It's not a huge project in comparison to the full budget but I understand there is a lot going on.

She reiterated the significant impact on the lives of those who suffer from flooding is just incredible. Not fixing it leaves considerable risk, for property damage, and it could also reduce home value. Ms. White said the pandemic also affects homeowners and people too, and it's concerning that they may have to walk away from the property in Lake Bluff. She wanted to speak and let the Board know there are real families and real lives behind this issue who are being impacted.

Chair Ankenman thanked Ms. White for her comments and acknowledged receipt of the letter and the video. Chair Ankenman stated the video was very powerful and thanked Ms. White for sharing it. She stated this would be discussed as the third item of the business.

IV. Business Items

1. Discussion Regarding Payroll Processing

VA Irvin summarized the information in the memo regarding the payroll provider change stating the change to the new payroll processor would improve services internally and would result in a savings. He would recommend this change and if the committee approves this recommendation staff would present it to the Village Board at the next Board meeting to have it approved. VA Irvin said although it is within his spending authority, the Village has been using ADP for decades and since it is a change, he wanted to present it to the Board.

Chair Ankenman noted the new provider, Paylocity, had offered some additional one-time incentives as well as significant savings moving forward, in addition to the benefit of additional services. Member Towle asked if there was anything ADP provides which Paylocity doesn't provide. Director O'Connell responded that ADP does provide a broad range of services but each service is segregated in its own module and each module requires its own implementation and there are costs associated with each piece. She stated her experience with ADP has not been favorable and she is looking to move, especially with one-time incentives and savings moving forward, to one product to simplify processes.

Member William Meyer made a motion recommending the Village Board approve the change to the new payroll processor; seconded by Member Aaron Towle and approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

2. Discussion Regarding the Lake Forest-Lake Bluff IGA

VA Irvin said there have been years of discussions trying to find an equitable way to address Lake Forest's desire to charge the Village for services they were providing which historically the Village did not pay for. When Lake Forest responds to a call and the patient declines transport, there are expenses incurred, risk, and liability that historically Lake Forest has not been compensated for. A dispute with how Lake Bluff and Lake Forest interpreted the agreement has lasted years. This is the plan we previously talked about. He opined the Village is ready for closure and it's a fair approach moving forward. If everyone is comfortable with this, it will be presented to the Board at the next Board meeting. The goal is to have the draft agreement to the Board by next Board meeting. The goal is to get it done. It also involves the Village amending the fee structure to match the IGA.

Chair Ankenman stated there were periods of 8 years and 4 years in the analyses which were reviewed to assess how much the Village was paying and she asked VA Irvin to explain how they affected the negotiations. VA Irvin responded that the time frames were reviewed to determine impact, and calculate actual costs under the various proposed scenarios. It appeared that Lake Forest was supporting the costs related to non-transport calls. Staff performed their own analysis and derived similar costs per call. This helped determine if the rate calculations were reasonable for the time periods under dispute. Chair Ankenman said so it was not just Lake Forest giving us numbers, the Village did

their own analysis. VA Irvin said there's definitely a cost for Lake Forest to respond to a non-transport call.

Chair Ankenman stated we had larger numbers in dispute and asked what the status is of those past payments. Director O'Connell responded that for this fiscal year ending April 30, 2020 the Village has made three payments for quarterly services. After discussion with Lake Forest, the Village agreed to pay FY16 and FY17 differentials in FY20, FY18 and FY19 differentials in FY21, FY20 differential will be paid in FY22. There was \$468,000 budgeted for ambulance fees for FY20, which after paying the two years for differentials for FY16 and FY17, would put the Village over budget by \$16,000 and that includes two years of back pay. The next two years budget included the two years of differentials. Chair Ankenman said she was concerned looking back 4 or 8 years that there were big payments still due and wanted to be sure the Village was were planning for that. VA Irvin responded the Village had planned to pay in a shorter window of time.

Chair Ankenman stated it seems like the Village is comfortable with the number of calls. Member Towle said the recent call volumes are lower. People are not calling ambulances and so volumes are down. He said looking at the number of calls and commented that, historically, they have been pretty even year-to-year. He commented on how he found it interesting negotiations included payments for canceled calls. He stated he has never heard of that in the Fire service. Member Towle asked if Lake Forest is billing patients. VA Irvin responded Lake Forest has always billed and collected for services. Lake Forest adjusts the bills for the payments they have received from the patients. VA Irvin said there are two primary variables in the costs the Village incurs: (1) the total number of calls and (2) the amount Lake Forest charges us for the base number of calls. The idea is if Lake Forest has many calls, the cost per call goes down.

Member Towle asked what Lake Forest charges their own residents. VA Irvin responded it is a lot less than they charge the Village. Lake Forest subsidizes their residents' calls since their residents are also charged for their ambulance services through their property taxes. VA Irvin added that there is a low frequency of cancellations but Lake Forest does want to acknowledge that responding to those calls requires them to take an ambulance out of their district making it unavailable to respond to other calls during the time.

Chair Ankenman asked what the price per call will be and if there was a cap on the charge. Director O'Connell responded the net price per call is \$1,699 and there is a 4% cap over the term of the agreement. Chair Ankenman requested staff send out a redlined copy of the revised agreement when received.

Trustee Dewart commented that VA Irvin and Director O'Connell have done a very good job dealing with this a difficult situation. He opined that this is a fair resolution and puts the Village in a better situation than before. President O'Hara agreed. She said the agreement is a compromise and she is not thrilled with it but the Village will move on and continually reevaluate. Member Towle asked if there is an expiration date for the agreement. VA Irvin said there is an expiration date which is about a year and a half away. He said he wanted to discuss with the Lake Forest City Manager to determine whether it should be revisited so soon. He added that both municipalities have the option to give a twelve-month notice to terminate the agreement. Trustee Charlot asked what the cost would be for the Village to provide the service. Member Towle responded that Fire Chief Graf has studied this in-depth. He said this IGA is not significantly different in how the cost was calculated. VA Irvin said the question is whether the Village could even staff appropriately for EMS services. The Village may have a hard time staffing volunteers in the evening. Trustee Charlot said he is trying to put the terms of this agreement in perspective comparing what it would cost the Village to provide the service itself. Member Meyer stated he assumed the IGA would take advantage of economies of scale. As the Lake Forest service area expands, the cost per call should decrease. VA Irvin added he thought past analyses showed the cost for the Village would be about two times the cost per call from Lake Forest.

Member Towle said there is a third model for services, which would be to staff with private ambulance services. VA Irvin said the Village did get a quote and it wasn't a better option. He added Lincolnwood uses private ambulance services. Member Dewart said the IGA does provide, as Drew pointed out, the option to terminate the agreement with a twelve month notice.

Member William Meyer made a motion recommending the Village Board approve the Lake Forest-Lake Bluff IGA; seconded by Member Aaron Towle and approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

3. Discussion Regarding the FY21-22 Revenue & Expense Modification

VA Irvin said it was not long ago the Board approved a modified budget and that we will walk through those changes and discuss about another round of modifications. Staff told the Board as time moves on and we have new information to share, we will provide updates. It is so early on in this process that there is not a lot of good new information. Certain things have been clarified in terms of what will happen at the state level, such as the LGDF (Local Government Distributive Fund) stabilization and issuance of new bond money for capital improvements, but staff anticipates that MFT revenues will drop since people are driving less. Therefore, those taxes will be lower providing an offset to the additional funds. There are some projects in process that cannot be deferred as they have already started but staff has developed recommendations based on the traffic signal system red for hard stop, yellow (we watch it and maybe the Village proceeds if things get clearer), and green (we recommend the Village proceeds ahead). VA Irvin said Director O'Connell has prepared a presentation on the COVID-19 preliminary financial impact and then Village Engineer Hansen commented specifically on the Boardman Court project continuation.

Director O'Connell discussed the impact on revenues saying assumptions were made on the financial impact of COVID -19. Revenues will be impacted to a greater degree than expenses. She discussed the specific assumptions and impact on each of the significant revenues and provided a chart showing the anticipated total projected revenue reduction of \$1.6M. As expected sales tax, declines will probably have the most impact on the Village of Lake Bluff.

In terms of additional expenditures, COVID-19 expenses are being charged to the contingency General Fund expense line. The budget as approved includes a \$200,000 expenditure that will be used to include any expenditures related to supplies, additional technology, and also the local grants. Director O'Connell provided a list of capital projects which could be deferred to offset revenue declines. She stated the impact of the current financial environment will vary by fund and given the uncertain duration, it is important to highlight other areas of concern. She reviewed the specific financial impacts on each of the funds and the effects of different spending scenarios on the General Fund balances.

Chair Ankenman asked about the increase of 4.5% in revenues in FY22. Director O'Connell said the 4.5% increase is the amount of increase we would need to bring the fund balance back to the pre-COVID FY20 level. Chair Ankenman asked if the Boardman Court project is \$270,000, what is the number in dollars revenue would need to be to bring the fund balance % back from 33.2% to 50%, which is our goal. Director O'Connell responded that the projection is in the third version and includes the Boardman Court expense and brings us to 57.3%. Director O'Connell said the FY22 assumes the same expenses and projects in the past. Chair Ankenman asked if the 33.2% in FY22 is a net effect of bad revenue years and is an accumulation. Director O'Connell responded that the percentage is based on the prior year balance so that it is a cumulative number. Discussion ensued regarding the assumptions included in the General Fund balance scenarios.

Member Meyer asked if the numbers presented show a fund balance percentage of 33.2%, what does this do for having money available to pay the Village part of the Green

Bay Road project. Village Engineer Hansen responded the application for funding was submitted in April. The Village should have an idea where we rank in a month or month and a half, with the final grading coming out in August or September. There were projects approved in prior years which are not finished and are now first in line for funding. If they are all approved they will fill up the funding program for this two year cycle. The Green Bay Road project will not begin next year but the earliest it could happen would be in 2022, we would have a much better idea in 2-3 months if 2022 is realistic or if it's going to be deferred. Member Towle asked if the Village was at risk of losing any grant funding if we delay any of these projects. VE Hansen said no, the grant funded projects including the Green Bay Road bridge, the McCory pedestrian bridge, and the Green Bay Road are all grant projects the Village is moving forward with.

Chair Ankenman said the Capital Fund balance was not reviewed but it appeared that the 2023 may be the earliest we would need the money for the Green Bay Road project. VE Hansen said no it would be FY23 which is the summer of 2022 and the Village outlay is \$1.2M with the bridge and road. Chair Ankenman stated in theory the Capital Fund balance started with \$2M for funding of larger capital items and asked what the balance is in the Capital Fund as of today. Director O'Connell responded the estimated FY20 balance as of today is \$429K.

VA Irvin said in the past the Village has looked at how to fund capital projects. There have been times the Village has decided to skip a few years because of insufficient revenue. Director O'Connell stated the State Capital Bonds distribution the Village is receiving cannot be spent in the same way as MFT monies, so it cannot be used on roads but needs to be used for projects. VA Irvin said the Village has had years where street repaving has been the only budgeted capital improvement project.

VA Irvin reviewed the list the Project List-10 year summary.

VA Irvin asked VE Hansen to review the Boardman Court project. VE Hansen said the existing condition is a dip in the road on Bath and Tennis road about 300 feet east of Green Bay Road and when that dip overflows the water and runs into the White's yard and goes around their house and sometimes gets their basement wet. The Village has looked at many different solutions since 2017. The solution we have is a bit of a compromise and would increase a portion of the storm sewer on Bath and Tennis Road to capture more of that water before it dumps into the White's yard. It is sized for the Village criteria of a 10-year storm. The proposal is to increase the size of the pipe. The Village looked at running larger pipes all the way to the wetland at the large cost of half million dollars. The project is just about ready to bid. Chair Ankenman asked if more than one home is affected by this. VE Hansen said the home to the north of the White's home took water in 2017 but that's the only one he is aware of. Member Towle asked if in his opinion, this solution would have solved the flooding caused by the storm last week. VE Hansen said that was a two year storm and they changed the storm criteria. Member Meyer asked how the project could prevent flooding. VE Hansen said there is a dip in the road and where bottleneck is, the water will come up on the street and will not hurt anyone's property. VA Irvin said to be clear would VE remind the Board of the Village standards of storm water projects. VE Hansen said the Village wants to have all the storms sewers sized so the streets are not taking water in a 10 year storm and homes are not taking water in a 100 year storm. Trustee Markee asked as a follow up to Member Meyer's question, how flooded will street be then. VE Hansen replied that it will be passable, about two inches of water may pool. Chair Ankenman asked in regards to the timing of the project, how long will the project take from start to finish. VE Hansen said the hard end of construction season is roughly Thanksgiving. The project will involve probably about a month of work, a month of lead time, and a month to bid so roughly 3 months. However, to plan the project for a 3 month time frame the Village may need to pay a premium in the price. It would be better to have 5 months for the project.

Member Towle said in other projects the Village has done in the past, the project is specific to one property but there are other benefits to the neighborhood. He asked if

there was any benefit other than to the one resident. VE Hansen said he thinks it is just the one property now. Trustee Markee asked if there was anything that could be done that would cost less than \$272,500 that the Village could do to help them until the Village could do the complete project. VE Hansen said we could use a smaller pipe but then it probably would not work.

VA Irvin asked in the interest of time if it would be acceptable to quickly review the list with the intention to continue this discussion at a Finance Committee meeting prior to the Board meeting on June 8. VA Irvin said Director O'Connell is researching other sources of funds but she needs more time for this. Discussion ensued on the project list.

President O'Hara added she would like to see the plan for the beach erosion and what the Park District is planning to do. She would like staff to send the photo to the other Board members, of the home at Mountain and Sunrise where they lost a good amount of table land.

Member Aaron Towle made a motion recommending the Village Board approve the staff's recommendations to the project list; seconded by Member William Meyer and approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

4. Discussion Regarding a Plan for Construction Escrow and Bonds

VA Irvin said the goal of the proposed plan to clear permit performance deposits was to clear the account from the books and was expected to take a period of 100-120 days. The principal goal is not for the Village to retain the deposits but to clear them and not have the unpaid liability open.

Member William Meyer made a motion recommending the Village Board approve an ordinance for adoption that formalizes the plan of action presented by staff for clearing out the performance bonds account; seconded by Member Aaron Towle and approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

V. Adjournment

Member Meyer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:04 PM; seconded by Member Towle and all members voted aye.

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Respectfully submitted,

Marlene Scheibl
Assistant Finance Director