

Minutes
Village of Glen Ellyn Board of Trustees
Workshop Meeting
October 21, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by President Demos.

Present: President Alex Demos: Trustees Clark, Elliott, Friedberg, Ladesic, McGinley and O’Shea. Village Clerk Galvin, Village Attorney Mathews. Staff present: Village Manager Franz, Assistant Village Manager Stonitsch, Deputy Police Chief Holmer, Finance Director Wachtel, Director of Planning and Development Hulseberg, G Mark Binkerd Information Technology Manager, Glen Ellyn Volunteer Fire Company Chief Bodony and First Assistant Fire Chief Chris Clark.

Agenda Item 4 - Paramedic (EMS)/Firefighter Contractual Services

Paramedic (EMS)/Firefighter Contractual Services – Village Manager Franz and Assistant Village Manager Stonitsch

- a. Review 2012/13 Paramedic (EMS)/Firefighter Contract
- b. Review 2013/14 Request for Proposal – Draft

Village Manager Franz and Assistant Village Manager Stonitsch provided an overview of the Village’s current ambulance/paramedic services contract, and solicited feedback from the Village Board on the preliminary draft of the Request for Proposal (RFP).

Since 2009, the Village has been contracting its ambulance/paramedic services with Public Safety Services, Inc. (“PSSI”) of Rosemont, Illinois, which includes the provision of (4) certified firefighter/paramedics twenty-four hours a day, year-round. These paramedics are housed in, and respond directly from, the Village’s two fire stations. As part of this model, the contract personnel utilize the two (2) front-line ambulances and one (1) reserve ambulance, all of which are owned and maintained by the Village.

To offset some of the costs associated with the Village’s ambulance/paramedic services program, the Village assesses ambulance fees to resident and non-resident patients who utilize the ambulance services. These fees are reviewed and approved periodically by the Village Board. To handle the billing and collection activities, the Village has contracted separately with Paramedic Billing Services, Inc., Elmhurst, Illinois since 2009. As part of this contract, the vendor assesses a fee of five (5) percent of all payments that it collects on a monthly basis, which over the last four years has equated to approximately \$33,281.00 per year.

Trustee Elliott asked if the firefighter/paramedics employed by PSSI are union. Chief Bodony responded that they are not. Trustee Elliott inquired about in house maintenance of the ambulances. Finance Director Wachtel responded that the maintenance is performed at Public Works and that the time is tracked by Public Works.

Trustee Clark asked about the life expectancy of an ambulance. Chief Bodony responded that it can start at 5 years. However the hospitals are close which helps with mileage. The chassis are the weak link and the Village ambulances, which are at the end of their duty cycle, are evaluated often. Village Manager Franz remarked that Public Works is phenomenal when working on the ambulances and that there is very little downtime.

A Committee was formed to review this RFP consisting of President Demos, Village Manager Franz, Assistant Manager Stonitsch, Trustee Friedberg and Chief Bodony.

Trustee Elliott asked if the terms in the RFP are realistic. Chief Bodony responded that it is. The firefighter/paramedics like Glen Ellyn, it is a nice place to work and that the playing field is level, from municipality to municipality

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Trustee O'Shea asked about the turnover in firefighter/paramedics last year and about insurance. Chief Bodony responded that only 2 firefighter/paramedics had less than 2 year's experience. The vendor (PSSI) has their own insurance package.

Trustee Clark asked about other municipalities that own their own ambulances. Chief Bodony responded that most municipalities own their own ambulances. Elmhurst is an exception as they utilize their vendor's ambulances.

Regarding payment from residents who utilize ambulance services: Village Manager Franz commented on hardship cases and that the billing vendor and the Village is involved in that process. Chief Bodony responded that if the hospital writes off the patient than the Village usually does as well. The Village transports quite a few patients who have no insurance or resources. There is also a high incidence of treating without transport. Chief Bodony used The Meadows as an example where there were over 200 calls last year that the Village was not paid for since those residents were not transported.

President Demos and Trustee Elliott asked about possible changes due to the Affordable Care Act. Chief Bodony responded that there is not definitive answer yet but cautioned the Board to be careful how they budget. The set rate may be set artificially low like the Medicare rate.

Trustee McGinley asks who controls the rate. Manager Franz responded that the Village controls the rate. Chief Bodony also responded that the Village is due for an increase and that they are awaiting a report from Naperville to aid in their research.

Trustee Ladesic asked about the RFP requirement to keep some of the current firefighter/paramedics. Chief Bodony responded that this is a common clause in the contract and that Glen Ellyn is used to a certain level of experience. Trustee Ladesic asked if they were hamstringing vendors. President Demos responded that out of the 12 paramedic/firefighters, asking to keep 6 was a good compromise.

Village Manager Franz commented that the paramedics are cross trained by the GEVFC. Three are volunteers, one is also the fire inspector and one is heavily involved with I.T. and assists with their computers.

Trustee Elliott asked if this is a Professional Services Contract, Village Manager Franz responded that it is.

President Demos asked the Board if the Village wants to be in the ambulance business and does the Village want to subcontract.

Trustee Friedberg commented on the Affordable Care Act. He stated that everyone in the health care industry will be chasing money and that the cost of care and revenue will be adversely affected. The only variable is how long an ambulance will be in revenue generating mode.

President Demos stated that the Board can also choose to extend the current contract. Trustee Friedberg asked about a complete separation of EMS and fire. Manager Franz responded that the EMS is relied on for fire service. President Demos responded that the Board needs to further study the numbers and consider all options.

Agenda Item 5 - Volunteer Fire Company Needs & Funding Options

At the Village Board Workshop on September 16, GEVFC Fire Chief Bodony discussed some of his concerns with the current funding structure of the Volunteer Fire Company. Chief Bodony presented some background on the Department and how operations have changed over the years and explained how funding is not keeping up with the costs and future needs, particularly the capital replacement needs of the Fire Company. The annual fund drive puts unnecessary pressure on a group of volunteers to campaign for funds to meet the critical needs of the community and then we ask this same group of volunteers to provide this service to the community.

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The Village Board directed staff to review the Fire Company's needs and funding alternatives. Therefore, staff examined revenue trends, audits and budgets as well as the GEVFC's Fleet Replacement Schedule, and 10-year Financial Forecast which were developed by the Fire Company.

Manager Franz commented that \$500,000 is needed for the first 5 years to replace the 2 pumpers. In 10-15 years a new fire station will be needed. If there is a tax levy, the impact on a property tax bill will be less than \$100 for a \$425,000 home. This will bring in approximately \$870,000 in additional revenue.

President Demos stated that at a prior Workshop meeting there was a unanimous consent from the Board to find funding options for the GEVFC.

Chief Bodony responded that he is grateful that the Board is looking in the right direction. The GEVFC is working to get the Capital Replacement Program on track, as well as training initiatives and making the business end more organized.

Trustee O'Shea commented that is not in favor of a tax levy but is in favor of a fee.

Chief Bodony commented that the GEVFC budget has been spartan for the last few years. There have been adjustments to the original plan but the daily uniforms are paid for out of pocket.

Trustee Elliott asked how you would enforce a fee. Trustee O'Shea responded that he hopes they don't have to go there and that he does not have an answer. Trustee Clark asked why churches and schools would be exempt.

President Demos commented that water rates may already increase by 40%. The tax levy is not a significant levy. The GEVFC needs a long term and fair funding mechanism.

Trustee O'Shea asked how the SSA's are collected. Finance Director Wachtel responded by the tax bill. Trustee Elliott asked about an SSA in lieu of a tax levy. Director Wachtel responded that SSA's are for unincorporated areas only.

Trustee McGinley expressed concerns that a tax levy would lead to a full time department and that a levy would be unfair compared to a fee since apartments require more calls than a mansion with sprinklers. Trustee McGinley also expressed concerns about the money staying in the department. Trustee McGinley added that if a fee or levy is imposed the current Village funding of \$105,000 annually should be eliminated and the 10 year schedule needs more meat to it. Chief Bodony responded that the part time volunteers that created the schedule may not be that sophisticated but thanked them for their effort.

Trustee Freidberg commented that residents with sprinklers should be eligible for a rebate. Trustee Elliott commented that the reality is the GEVFC is putting out fires; it makes sense to tie it to the water bill.

Trustee O'Shea asked about donations. Chief Bodony responded that the current fund drive would be eliminated and that the GEVFC would get back to the fire business. The tax levy is the most equitable. Manager Franz responded that there is a short window in which to enact a levy.

Chief Bodony responded that the GEVFC is the best bargain in DuPage County some municipalities levy \$780 for a \$450,000 home, the Village is suggesting \$120. Currently 24% of the residents contribute to the fund drive, 76% do not. If the Fire Company became a full time non-volunteer department with a pension liability that cost could be over 4 million dollars annually.

Agenda Item 6 - Wayfinding Signage Update

Earlier this year the Village entered into a contract with The Lakota Group and Western Remac for completion of a community wayfinding study. The study was recommended in Glen Ellyn's 2009 Downtown Strategic Plan and expanded to include the entire community. The purpose of the study is to strengthen the economic vitality of the Village by better directing residents, visitors, shoppers and others to the community's shopping districts, parking facilities and abundant community assets and to provide a more unified image of the Village.

Five potential signage designs were initially prepared by the consultant teams. The designs were presented to staff and narrowed down to three possible designs that were shared with the public by way of an online survey. The survey asked respondents to select their preferred design scheme and also asked additional questions related to things such as logo and materials. The survey was well received with 389 people responding. A large majority of the respondents expressed a preference for Sign Design A, which was the most traditional of the three. The consultant team subsequently built put this sign family and presented it to the ACRC at their September 11 meeting. The consultants has taken the ARC's comments into consideration and further refined the proposed sign family. This meeting is to touch base with the Board with the proposed design before moving into the second phase of the project which will include an evaluation of specific sign locations and a determination of what community amenities should be identified.

Trustee McGinley asked how the consultants came up with their designs. Mr. Zach McDonnell, The Lakota Group responded that it is a difficult process, especially in designing the gateway monument. The emphasis is on the style and character of Glen Ellyn as a whole. They work to produce something unique to the community. Mr. Michael Conoscenti, Western Remac, Inc. responded that they did not set out to create a Victorian look that evolved after meeting with the ARC.

Lee Marks, Historic Preservation Commission commented that the early settlers came from upstate New York and New England. Mr. Marks feels that the signage on Roosevelt Road needs to change but the Village entrances are ok. It does not make sense to change the color; the brown on gold is good. There is a strong obligation to do what is historically correct. Finials need to be incorporated, they need to have continuity with the signage, and they need to stick with historic signs.

Mr., Tim Loftus, Historic Preservation Commission stated that there should be a simplicity of the New England style. When you combine styles, you come up with no style. Glen Ellyn is a historic district now, LED signs are not a good idea, and this could turn the downtown into a gigantic billboard.

Ms. Chris Wilson, Historic Preservation Commission stated that the signs should be kept historic. She was surprised to see an electronic message board addressed, and considers this unsafe.

Trustee Ladesic commented that an electronic sign was addressed approximately 6 years ago for emergency notification. President Demos responded that the electronic sign would not be animated. Mr. Marks replied that the National Registration people would be appalled if Glen Ellyn installed an electronic sign downtown. President Demos responded that at some point we need to embrace technology.

Mr. Conoscenti commented that the focus is on developing a brand that people can recognize.

Ms. Kathy Cornell. 678 Forest Avenue, Glen Ellyn and Commissioner, Glen Ellyn Park District commented that she notices the signs and that people she knows who do not live in Glen Ellyn wish that they did. Ms. Cornell prefers the traditional signage; it is beautiful and consistent and it will become the brand. It is more important to make the right decision; Ms. Cornell thanked everyone for taking this so seriously.

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Mr. Marks prefers signs on posts, not on bricks. Trustee Elliott is in favor of removing the Victorian scroll. Mr. McDonnell asked if the clock tower should be included as a logo. President Demos responded that the clock tower is not needed. Trustee O'Shea asked how this works with the downtown plan. Director Hulseberg responded that this is in keeping with the Streetscape Plan.

The meeting adjourned for a small break at 10:11 p.m. and was called back to order at 10:17 p.m.

Agenda Item 7 - Tax Levy & Budget Kickoff (SSA/Non-Home Rule Sales Tax)

Finance Director Wachtel presented the Tax Levy and Budget Kickoff (SSA/Non-Home Rule Sales Tax). A proposal will be provided to the Board at the October 28 Board Meeting, on Tuesday, November 12 there will be a hearing and on November 25 the Board will be adopting a Tax Levy Ordinance.

Agenda Item 8 – 2013-2014 Strategic Plan Report and Village Goals

Trustee McGinley complained she would like to see specific goals achieved such as changing the fiscal year to a calendar year rather than talking about it for years. Director Wachtel responded that the transition is the hardest part.

Trustee Clark asked if the fiscal year for the Village changes does the library change. Director Wachtel responded that he did not think so. Manager Franz responded that it would be easier for the golf course. Director Wachtel responded that they need to see if their software program can accommodate this change as most municipalities upgrade their software when changing their fiscal year. A software upgrade can cost several hundred thousand dollars.

Manager Franz responded if this is a goal to change the fiscal year and embark on a bottom up budget that they hold off one year. Trustee Ladesic responded why can't we do this now, this would not be a big labor effort and they have good help.

Trustee McGinley complained that the budget is approved because you (staff) come up with things to spend it on. Trustee McGinley commented that she appreciates the attempt at the 2013-2014 Strategic Plan Report and Village Goals but is disappointed with the minimum expectation of what we expect to happen. Manager Franz reminded everyone that the Strategic Plan Report and Village Goals did not just involve the Village Board but that Village employees and Commission members were also included.

Trustee Freidberg stated that the document should simply state: what does the Board want and what does the Board want to hold staff accountable for. Trustee Elliott stated that he would like to see a cleaner document. Trustee McGinley offered to re-work this document and re-present it to the Board.

Agenda Item 9 - Other Items

Manager Franz discussed the impending closure of the Dominick's at Baker Hill. A meeting was held with the property owners to discuss potential new tenants for the space being vacated by Dominick's.

Adjournment

At 11:12 p.m. Trustee Elliott moved and Trustee Friedberg seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Galvin,
Village Clerk

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