

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR SESSION  
11004 Carpenter Street, Mokena, Illinois 60448**

Session #013

July 8, 2019

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Fleischer called the Regular Session of the Board of Trustees to order at 7:01 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Board of Trustees and members of the audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL/ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM**

Clerk Martini called the roll and the following Trustees were present:

Joseph E. Budzyn  
Jillian Hersted  
George Metanias  
Jim Richmond  
Joe Siwinski

Absent: Debbie Engler

Also present were: Clerk Melissa Martini; Finance Director Barb Damron; Assistant Village Administrator Kirk Zoellner; Police Chief Steve Vaccaro; Public Works Director Lou Tiberi; Civil Engineer Dan Peloquin; Community/Economic Development Director Alan Zordan; and Village Attorney Carl Buck.

**DISCOVER MOKENA**

Cheryl Collins provided information on Curtain Call Theatre's Emily McCabe Musical Theatre program *Frozen Jr.* July 12-14 at LWC HS. Their Summer Stock will be performing *Working, A Musical* July 25-28 at the Front Street Theatre. In addition, auditions are being held July 19-20 for their upcoming production of *Little Shop of Horrors*.

**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

Clerk Martini presented the Community Calendar.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mayor Fleischer stated 30 minutes would be allowed for public comments; 3 minutes per commenter. He requested that points not be repeated in order to allow others time to speak.

Emily Biegel, President of the Southwest Suburban Activists (SWSA), spoke about the Village's lack of response to residents' concerns which includes swastika graffiti and students in blackface. She also requested that Daniel Ray be removed from his duties on the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals due to threatening remarks he made about SWSA on Facebook. A police report was filed, and they expect action to take place. She also requested the Board listen to what is being said tonight and to respond to the comments being made and not read a prepared statement.

Mayor Fleischer stated that with regards to comments attributed to a current Village Planning Commissioner, the Village is reviewing the matter and will get back with residents when it is appropriate.

Amanda Knittel Herman stated that she had reached out to the Board regarding the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kentucky Cavalry but did not receive a response. She expressed concern regarding the "culture of intolerance" displayed in Mokena and in its leadership. She stated that Confederate re-enactors have no reason to be at a 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration. She conducted research on other groups that could be used instead of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kentucky Cavalry. She expressed her disappointment in the lack of a statement and firmness from the Board for not denouncing swastikas. She thanked Administrator Tomasoski and Assistant Administrator Zoellner for contacting her; However, she would have liked a response from the Board.

Mark Cerkvenik spoke about symbols of confederacy that have been removed throughout the country. He provided examples of vandalism and prejudice he has observed in

Mokena. He spoke about the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kentucky Cavalry being a part of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities. He requested a dialogue with the elected officials to make Mokena a more inclusive and better community.

Bill Walsh asked who invited the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kentucky Cavalry to participate in the festivities.

A member of the audience responded that former Mayor Werner had first invited them to participate in 2005.

Mr. Walsh inquired how much the Village pays the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kentucky Cavalry.

Assistant Village Administrator Zoellner responded \$875.

Mr. Walsh spoke about his family's military history. He spoke about what the Confederacy stands for, and is hurt and upset about the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kentucky Cavalry participating in the Village's 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities. He stated that the Board has to "step up" when on-camera requests for comment are received on controversial topics by the media.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Assistant Village Administrator Kirk Zoellner presented two (2) items on the Consent Agenda for Board approval. These items are strictly administrative in nature.

- a. Motion to approve minutes from the June 17, 2019 Work Session.
- b. Motion to approve minutes from the June 24, 2019 Board Meeting.

Trustee Richmond made a motion to approve Consent Agenda Items 6 (a) and (b) as depicted in the July 3, 2019 Request for Board Action prepared by the Assistant Village Administrator. Trustee Metanias seconded.

AYES: (5) Budzyn, Hersted, Metanias, Richmond, Siwinski

NAYS: (0)

Absent: (1) Engler

Motion carried

### **FINANCE REPORT**

Finance Director Barb Damron presented the accounts payable list for July totaling \$1,308,397.92. She highlighted the following invoice to be paid.

- \$ 324,119.00 Southwest Agency for Risk Management – Annual Workers Comp and Liability Insurance Premiums

Trustee Richmond made a motion to approve the monthly accounts payable in the amount of \$1,308,397.92. Trustee Metanias seconded.

AYES: (5) Budzyn, Hersted, Metanias, Richmond, Siwinski

NAYS: (0)

Absent: (1) Engler

Motion carried

### **PRESENTATIONS/APPOINTMENTS/PROCLAMATIONS**

#### **Appointment of Mike Lief to Street Maintenance Worker Position**

Public Works Director Lou Tiberi presented a recommendation to appoint Mike Lief to the position of Street Maintenance Worker. Public Works Director Tiberi stated that a vacancy for a Maintenance Worker was created when Ryan Petrow was promoted to Wastewater Plant & Water Operator in June. This opening was advertised internally, with one Village employee, Mike Lief, expressing an interest in filling the vacancy.

Pursuant to a personal interview and a review of his training and work experience, it was determined that Mr. Lief was qualified to fill the Maintenance Worker position.

Over the past several years, Mr. Lief has worked in Public Works as a seasonal Maintenance Worker in the Street Department, as a part-time employee installing radio read meters, and as a full-time Meter Reader in the Utilities Department. Since his hiring in 2014, he has performed in an exemplary manner in each of these capacities. Mr. Lief

has successfully passed the State test necessary to obtain a commercial driver's license (CDL) and operate the Village's 2½ ton snowplows.

Staff is confident that Mr. Lief possesses the skills and capabilities necessary to perform all tasks required in connection with the Maintenance Worker position, and that he will be an asset to Village operations moving forward.

Trustee Metanias made a motion to approve the appointment of Mike Lief to the position of Maintenance Worker in the Street Department at the starting step for that position in the Collective Bargaining Agreement executed August 22, 2016 between the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 150, Public Employees Division, and the Village of Mokena, effective July 9, 2019. Trustee Siwinski seconded.

AYES: (5) Budzyn, Hersted, Metanias, Richmond, Siwinski

NAYS: (0)

Absent: (1) Engler

Motion carried

### **Introduction of New Police Officers**

Police Chief Steve Vaccaro introduced new police officers Sean Bolton and Gregory Anicich. Both officers have fulfilled the requirements of the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board by completing the 540-hour Basic Police Training Academy. Each graduated from the Suburban Law Enforcement Academy at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn on July 3 and began field training on July 4. They are expected to be released as solo patrol officers as early as late September of this year.

The officers thanked the Board for this opportunity.

Mayor Fleischer welcomed them and stated that they are respected and backed up by the Board.

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

N/A

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Community/Economic Development Director Alan Zordan presented the proposed zoning ordinance amendments for Temporary Promotional and Window Signs.

The Village Board reviewed a draft ordinance updating the Village's Zoning Regulations on June 17, 2019. The purpose was to update our regulations regarding temporary promotional and window signs.

In 2018, the Board asked for information regarding what neighboring towns require for temporary promotional and window signs.

Community/Economic Development Director Zordan provided some examples of commonly used temporary signs.

Community/Economic Development Director Zordan Staff provided the results of research conducted on eight neighboring municipalities regarding their sign regulations.

At the January 21, 2019 work session, the Village Board discussed leaving existing regulations in place which allows three 30 day periods but that the number of temporary promotional signs should be limited to two or three with a total square footage of 32 sq. ft.

On February 21, 2019, the Planning Commission held a public hearing. There were no comments from the public. The Planning Commission reviewed the sign regulations from other communities and, after a thorough discussion, unanimously recommended approving the revised sign regulations.

The Planning Commission recommended that the temporary sign regulations allow six (6), 15-day promotional periods per year which can be combined for a 30-day maximum promotional period and to limit the quantity of temporary signs to no more than two (2) during each promotional period, with a total sign area of 32 square feet max.

In addition, the Planning Commission recommended that window signs are no more than 25% of every window on each façade, a line of sight into the establishment must be maintained and no more than 25% of any access doors shall be covered with signage.

The Village Board reviewed the draft ordinance on June 17, 2019 and had no suggested changes.

Trustee Richmond made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2019-O-026, an ordinance revising the zoning regulations as they pertain to temporary signs and to authorize the Village President and Village Clerk to execute same. Trustee Metanias seconded.

Mayor Fleischer commented on the amount of time the Board has been discussing the sign ordinance.

AYES: (5) Budzyn, Hersted, Metanias, Richmond, Siwinski

NAYS: (0)

Absent: (1) Engler

Motion carried

#### NEW BUSINESS

N/A

#### VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS

Assistant Village Administrator Zoellner requested Community/Economic Development Director Alan Zordan update the Board on development and business activities. Mr. Zordan provided an update on pending development projects, new businesses and highlighted businesses offering senior services.

Assistant Village Administrator Zoellner provided additional information on the upcoming Firecracker Dance and Festa Italiana.

#### TRUSTEE'S COMMENTS

Trustee Hersted thanked everyone that worked on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade.

Trustee Budzyn attended the parade and commented on the attendance.

Trustee Metanias spoke about his experiences with Clarendale. He thanked everyone that worked on the parade.

Trustee Richmond spoke about the parade and his duties as announcer. He thanked everyone that worked on the parade.

#### CLERK'S COMMENTS

N/A

#### MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mayor Fleischer stated that he had prepared comments to read and hoped that it wouldn't offend anyone. He had several important points he wanted to make and wanted to make sure that he didn't forget any of them.

Mayor Fleischer addressed the comments made about vandalism that occurred in Mokena.

He stated that the Village immediately responded by removing the defaced property. Although this is a rare occurrence, the Village takes acts like this seriously. He also stated that every member of the Board condemns such acts and will prosecute the responsible individuals to the fullest extent of the law.

Mayor Fleischer affirmed that this criminal act occurred in 2017. The Village immediately acted to remove or repair the vandalized property and the police investigated the crime. He stated that random acts such as this are difficult to prosecute if the offenders are not caught in the act or if there are no witnesses. The Police Department has not yet discovered any evidence of who defaced the property. The Village will continue to investigate this incident and will dedicate the necessary resources to addressing the matter.

He feels it is important to make residents aware of what has occurred, even though at times the action of making citizens aware is exactly what criminals want. But actions are stronger than words, and the Village will be vigilant in its effort to denounce such actions and stop them. He asked residents to report any issue to the Police Department should this occur in the future.

Mayor Fleischer addressed the black face incident at Speedway gas station.

He stated that the participants involved are minors and are therefore protected by the Illinois Juvenile Court Act. He doesn't think that an incident like this should be used for an ulterior motive or to define the Village.

He spoke about Mokena and the types of activities that help define the community such as Danny Potter's 40th birthday party celebration, the 4th of July parades and Christmas Fests, student government days, and the way the community collectively mourned the loss of Private First-Class Aaron Toppen, and continues to honor his memory with community events to this day.

Mayor Fleischer addressed the 4th of July fireworks presentation and the involvement of the 2nd Kentucky Cavalry group.

The celebration that is conducted in Mokena is a community event. Beginning with the parade to the culmination of the day in a fireworks display, the entire day could not happen without the commitment and contributions of the entire community.

He further stated that the Village of Mokena has never and will never condone any action that threatens the safety of residents. As the Village's motto says, "Pleasant living through Planned Progress", requires everyone, elected officials and residents alike, to work together when there is an issue that could interfere with pleasant living or planned progress. The Village of Mokena stands ready, willing, and able to address concerns of the community in a productive, respectful, and meaningful manner.

The 2nd Kentucky Cavalry group is a war re-enactment group. At all times, they fly the American Flag. It is not their vocation, it is a hobby.

The group did not conduct a war re-enactment in the Village. They provided a realistic sound effect in support of the community band during the band's musical presentation. He stated that the group has been providing that service for 15+ years.

Mayor Fleischer spoke about how people protested the Vietnam war and the way soldiers were treated who fought in that war. Over time, the country realized the contribution made by those soldiers and now celebrate their service to our country. That understanding is relevant because the celebration in Mokena is about our country, our citizens and our soldiers. It is not about politics.

Mayor Fleischer addressed the concerns of the residents that objected to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kentucky Cavalry because of its association with the Confederate Army and its relation to slavery. He stated that the Village of Mokena does not and will not associate with any group that has such a purpose. The Village will meet with those concerned residents to listen to concerns.

Mayor Fleischer spoke about when President Lincoln sought to unite ALL Americans, he appealed to the "Better Angels of Our Nature" to unite us and to resolve our differences. He stated that it was good advice then and it is good advice now. To promote the values of Mokena and to continue to progress as a community, we must work together without malice or attacks which are both unfounded and unnecessary.

He stated the Board is extremely proud of Mokena and pledged to continue to work to make it even better. The Village Board members take their oaths to represent every resident of Mokena very seriously. Therefore, the safety and security of Mokena citizens will remain a top priority as well as their respect for each of them.

Mayor Fleischer stated that this would be the last time he comments on these topics publicly but would be happy to meet with individuals to discuss further.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Siwinski made a motion to adjourn the Regular Session at 7:49 p.m. Trustee Metanias seconded.

AYES: (5) Budzyn, Hersted, Metanias, Richmond, Siwinski

NAYS: (0)

Absent: (1) Engler

Motion carried

Respectfully submitted,

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Frank A. Fleischer, Village President

ATTEST:

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Melissa Martini, Village Clerk