

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES WORK SESSION**  
**11004 Carpenter Street, Mokena, Illinois 60448**  
**Monday, July 8, 2019**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Fleischer called the Board of Trustees work session to order at 7:50 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

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.

**Pioneer Cemetery**

Assistant Village Administrator Kirk Zoellner introduced this topic.

Last September, Michael Campagnolo of the Fox Valley Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) contacted the Mokena Area Historical Society (MAHS) regarding the possibility of erecting a cast aluminum plaque at the entrance or near the grave of Revolutionary War veteran Charles Denny in Pioneer Cemetery. This proposal was subsequently referred to Village staff by MAHS President Doug Heathcock.

In early October, 2018, Mr. Campagnolo and his group, Mayor Fleischer, Trustee Richmond, VFW Commander Jim Hogan, and staff met at the cemetery to further discuss the SAR's proposal. All parties involved were amenable to the proposal and agreed to meet again in the first half of 2019 to discuss the matter further, with the goal of erecting the plaque and holding a grave-marking ceremony in the late summer or early autumn of 2019.

On May 30, 2019, the parties held another planning meeting at Village Hall. A date of Saturday, September 7, was set for the grave marking ceremony.

On June 27, 2019, an additional planning meeting was conducted, and a proposed location for the plaque was determined.

The SAR's proposal represents the most recent in a series of planned undertakings and recognitions elevating the profile of Pioneer Cemetery over the past few years. These activities have included the following:

- Recognition of Pioneer Cemetery as a County Landmark by the Will County Board
- Rededication of the Charles Denny grave by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR)
- Refurbishment of the 1942 3” Anti-Tank Gun located on the cemetery grounds

The SAR’s proposal to install a professional plaque recognizing Mr. Denny is consistent with these past activities and will further raise the profile of Mokena and Pioneer Cemetery. Mayor Fleischer, Trustee Richmond, VFW Commander Hogan, and staff all unanimously support it.

Similar plaques recognizing Revolutionary War veterans have been installed by the SAR at other cemeteries around the Chicagoland area.

The SAR has indicated their organization is more than willing to shoulder the cost of the plaque, associated installation materials, and labor, although the Village may wish to partner in some activities associated with installation (i.e., concrete and labor).

As discussed in planning meetings, the Village may also wish to contract for ground-penetrating radar in advance of the ceremony to ensure no existing graves or other artifacts are present at the location where the post for the plaque will be installed. This precautionary research/measure was suggested by Trustees Mazzorana and Richmond and authorized by the Board in late 2017 in association with moving and more permanent placement of Pioneer Cemetery’s refurbished WWII “cannon”. The cost to have this work performed is estimated at approximately \$750.

In conjunction with the SAR and the Mokena VFW, this installation and ceremony is being jointly organized by the Village, and as such does not require the submittal of a special event application.

Ted Miller of the Fox Valley Chapter of the SAR provided a brief overview of the organization’s plans for the installation and ceremony. He explained that the SAR had previously performed similar installations and ceremonies honoring Revolutionary War veterans buried across northeast Illinois. Mr. Miller additionally presented to the Board illustrations showing what the proposed plaque looked like and where it was proposed to be located in Pioneer Cemetery.

**Discussion:**

It was the general consensus of the Board to move forward with plans for installation of the plaque and the grave marking ceremony for Charles Denny on Saturday, September 7, 2019, as proposed. The Board additionally expressed support for the use of ground-penetrating radar to survey the proposed plaque installation site prior to the plaque’s installation.

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Trustee Richmond, along with Mokena VFW Post 725 Commander Jim Hogan, commented on long-term plans to continue improving Pioneer Cemetery in the future.

There being no further business to bring before the Mayor and Board of Trustees, Mayor Fleischer adjourned the work session at 8:02 p.m.