

**APPROVED MINUTES - SPECIAL BOARD MEETING  
PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF OAK PARK  
HELD ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2012 AT 7:30 P.M.  
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF OAK PARK VILLAGE HALL**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

President Pope called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Trustees Brewer, Hedges, Lueck, Salzman and Tucker; President Pope  
ABSENT: Trustee Johnson

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Annabel Abraham, 1131 N. Oak Park Ave. Ms. Abraham requested that the Village shovel snow off of the parkways, as they are public property.

**V. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING REQUEST BY  
OAK PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT 97 AND THE PARK DISTRICT OF OAK PARK  
REGARDING FACILITY PLANNING**

School District 97 President Peter Barber and Park District President Christine Graves thanked the Board for the opportunity to share their presentation. Mr. Barber recognized School District 97 Board Members Denise Sacks, Jim O'Connor, Jim Gates, Bob Spatz and Peter Traczyk. Ms. Graves recognized Park District Board Member Jessica Bullock.

Ms. Graves stated that the concept of partnering together represents an opportunity for the Park District, District 97 and the Village of Oak Park to realize the goals and objectives of the Madison Street Plan. Mr. Barber added that a shared facility has been previously considered but never formally proposed. He and Ms. Graves spoke about the necessary renovations budgeted for both the District 97 and Park District facilities, totaling \$1.3 million and \$2 million, respectively. Mr. Barber stated that they questioned whether investing \$3 million in repairs was the best use of public funds.

The District 97 Facilities Advisory Committee was asked to examine four different scenarios, all of which involved the two entities consolidating into one space. Locations considered were the existing District 97 headquarters and lot, the existing Park District building and lot, the former Volvo space on Madison Street and the Village Hall parking lot. The committee reported back to the board that the parking lot behind Village Hall was the logical choice, as it would create a government center for Oak Park, with three entities and the services they provide in one location. What is being proposed is to develop a joint administrative facility in this location that would house the District 97 and Park District administrative staff. The facilities currently housing these entities would be sold, placing those properties back on the tax rolls. Also being proposed is moving District 97's maintenance operations to the Public Works facility at 201 South Boulevard and moving the Park District's maintenance operations to District 97's warehouse building at 514 Madison Street.

Benefits of this proposal include reduction of the total footprint of Oak Park's governing bodies; increased economic development; exploration of shared space, services, costs and purchasing; a coordinated effort to support the Madison Street plan; "one stop shopping" for residents; operational efficiencies; long-term sustainability and increased opportunities for collaboration and sharing best practices.

Funding options were discussed. Mr. Barber made it clear that nothing from the District 97 referendum would be used towards this fund. No significant impacts to District 97 services were anticipated, although Mr. Barber noted that there will be some challenges related to parking and traffic for Village Hall and the surrounding neighborhood. He noted that both Boards agreed to preserve the existing green space. Total cost has been estimated to be between \$6 million and \$10 million, depending on the design of the building and parking provisions. Parking was briefly discussed. Mr. Barber discussed use of the TIF payout of approximately \$6.3 million towards the project and explained that funding of capital improvements was a better use of these resources than educational services, since the State will reduce their educational contribution if TIF monies are used for educational purposes. Revenues from the sale of the vacated buildings may also be available.

The Park District and District 97 asked for consent from the Board to explore this option further. Input from the community will be sought and a public forum has been tentatively scheduled for September 19. They requested that a decision be made by December 1 on whether to move ahead, as District 97 cannot put off repairs to their building much longer and the Park District faces similar issues. President Pope noted that issues regarding Madison Street are typically referred to the Madison Street Coalition. Mr. Barber responded that the Park District, District 97 and the Madison Street Coalition will be meeting on Friday, September 14.

There was a discussion regarding the combined number of full-time employee to be housed, the number of visitors to each of the facilities, and space needs. Trustee Lueck noted that putting two properties on the tax rolls would be a positive for Madison Street if they sell but a negative if they don't. There are currently other proposals before the Board regarding improvements to Madison which also require TIF funding. The District 97/Park District proposal should be considered in conjunction with other proposals to determine what is best for Madison Street overall. She added that exploration and discussion of a joint facility should take place, but it should also be kept in mind that at any point, there could be a decision not to move ahead.

Mr. Barber stated that they are only looking for an agreement to investigate at this time. He realized there will be challenges and that this will only be viable if what is best for the taxpayers is the top priority.

Trustee Brewer asked about next steps in the investigation process, noting that once money is invested into the project, it will be more difficult to abandon it. Mr. Barber stated that this would include the previously mentioned public forum and identification and discussion of parking and other challenges. If these challenges can be overcome, the next step would be to consult an architect. Trustee Brewer noted that parking is a critical issue and asked if any parking or traffic studies would be included, as having this information very early on in the process is imperative. An idea of what the building will look like, including square footage, what parking will be displaced or replaced and an appraisal of each of the current properties should also be included. Concrete details are needed before further consideration.

The likelihood of selling the current government facilities was discussed.

Trustee Lueck suggested that there was consensus to move forward. Aside from space needs, parking and cost saving, how this government center will function, what civic role it plays, how it will foster citizenship and educate people about the workings of government should be incorporated into the process as it moves forward.

Trustee Salzman commented that not only is this an opportunity for intergovernmental cooperation, but an opportunity to make some significant improvements to Madison Street.

President Pope summarized the discussion.

It was moved and seconded to direct Village staff to work with the staffs of the Park District and District 97 to further explore the possibility of a joint administration center on the south parking lot at Village Hall and to develop further information to be presented back to each of the three bodies for subsequent direction.

The roll call on the vote was as follows:

AYES: Trustees Brewer, Hedges, Lueck, Salzman and Tucker; President Pope

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Johnson

The motion was approved.

## **VI. ADJOURN**

It was moved and seconded to adjourn. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:51 P.M. Monday, September 10, 2012.

**SUBMITTED AND RECORDED IN THE OFFICE OF:**

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Teresa Powell, Village Clerk

By: MaryAnn Schoenneman  
Interim Deputy Village Clerk