

Minutes of the Taxing Bodies Efficiency Task Force
Tuesday, July 10, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.
Oak Park Village Hall, Room 101

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.
2. **Roll Call:**

Present: Chair David Pope, Members John Hedges, Jim Peters, Gary McCullough, Judy Greffin, Brian Chang, and Joi Cregler by phone

Absent: None

Also Present: Deputy Village Manager Lisa Shelley, Village Attorney Paul Stephanides, Josh Ellis and Sawyer Middleleer of the Metropolitan Planning Council (“MPC”)

3. Introductions

Josh Ellis and Sawyer Middleleer of the Metropolitan Planning Council introduced themselves to the Taxing Bodies Efficiency Task Force (“Task Force”). Each member of the Task Force introduced themselves as well as Deputy Village Manager Shelley and Village Attorney Stephanides.

4. Public Comment

Chris Donovan discussed consolidation of the taxing bodies and a possible extension of the Madison Street TIF. Theodore Foss, Oak Park Library Board Trustee, discussed the proposed advisory referendum on local government consolidation. Mr. Foss stated that the Library is already part of the Village. Eric Davis, Oak Park Township Trustee, voiced concerns about the proposed advisory referendum and stated that studies should be first conducted. He also stated that the results of such a referendum could be used as a rationale for a consolidation effort without studies for such consolidation.

5. Approval of June 19, 2018 Meeting Minutes

It was motioned by Member Peters and seconded by Member Chang to approve the Task Force’s June 19, 2018 meeting minutes with amendments discussed by the Task Force. A voice vote was taken and the minutes were approved.

6. Analysis of Options

a. Summary of discussion on June 19

Members Greffin and McCullough summarized the discussion about ways to ensure budget discipline from the previous meeting.

b. Analysis of potential recommendations identified on June 19

Member McCullough created handouts to aid the discussion about potential recommendations to encourage budget discipline. Member Peters suggested going to the community and asking residents about their priorities. Evanston can be used as example.

c. Identification of additional potential recommendations

Chair Pope provided a handout about the possibility of having a “Jurisdictional Consolidation Referendum” placed on the ballot in the fall. The referendum should be placed on the ballot in the fall because voter turnout is higher during that time. The referendum question is intended to see whether the community has an appetite for consolidation of taxing bodies. Although Chair Pope did not have specific numbers, he stated consolidation has the potential to have significant savings without requiring service cuts. Member Greffin added that Evanston saved \$800,000 by consolidating the applicable Township into the City of Evanston and stated that consolidation. Chair Pope noted that actual consolidation of taxing bodies is premature because there cannot consolidate without changes in the state law.

Member Peters moved that the Task Force make a recommendation to the Village Board to study consolidation and place an advisory referendum on the November 2018 ballot to determine the level of support for consolidation. It was seconded by Member McCullough.

The roll call was as follows:

AYES: Chair Pope, Members Chang, Cregler, McCullough, Peters,

NAYS: Members Greffin, Hedges

The motion was approved by a vote of five (5) in favor and two (2) against.

7. Report preparation

a. Presentation of recommendations

It was proposed that the taxing bodies work together and agree on an annual percentage budget increase across the village which would reflect the increase in CPI (inflation) and revenues. There should be an overall percentage increase across all taxing bodies. Within the overall increase, the taxing bodies could agree to make adjustments for each other. This would mean greater transparency and allow for community input on overall community-wide budget increases. Member Hedges suggested a 5 year plan to set priorities and financial projections. Member Peters discussed the requirements of submitting a binding referendum question on an election ballot under 35 ILCS 200/18-206. The statute provides for a petition to be filed to require such a referendum for a school district to decrease its property tax levy. Attorney Stephanides read the applicable provisions from the statute.

Chair Pope stated that to increase employee pension contributions for various applicable local government employees, there have to be corresponding changes in state law. There is also a collective bargaining process to change contributions in healthcare.

Member Hedges suggested the collection fees for services to replace property taxes. Member Greffin suggested moving to more web-based services rather than physical locations to provide applicable services and also discussed the consolidation of governmental facilities by the taxing bodies. Member Cregler suggested the sharing of back office functions.

b. Other guidance in report

Chair Pope stated he will distribute to the Task Force formal responses he received to the Task Force's survey questions to the taxing bodies from Oak Park Township, the Village Board, the Executive Director of the Library, and the Park District. He also suggested interviewing the Oak Park Village Manager by Task Force members and this interview will be scheduled by the MPC in the near future.

The Task Force discussed the scheduling of its remaining meetings. The Task Force agreed to meet on August 7, 2018 and August 14, 2018 and these meetings will be at 7:00 p.m.

8. Adjournment

It was moved by Member Hedges and seconded by Member Chang to adjourn. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 24, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.