

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

July 13, 2009

Mayor Pro Tempore Nutschig convened a Committee of the Whole Meeting on Monday, July 13, 2009 at 6:15 p.m.

Meeting Convened

Attendance: Trustees Lentz, Meier, Nutschig, Semple, Sullivan, and Voss.

Attendance

Also present: Village Administrator Lobaito; Assistant Village Administrator Flynn; Director of Planning and Development Barrera; Finance Director Hatton; and Planner Goski

Electronic Message Signs

Topic

Mayor Pro Tempore Nutschig asked Administrator Lobaito to provide background information. Mr. Lobaito reported that the purpose of the Committee of the Whole meeting is to discuss the use of electronic message boards, which are currently prohibited by Village ordinance. In the past, the Village has granted variations to several public and quasi-public institutions, such as public and private schools and the Park District. The Village can continue to operate in this manner, or it can regulate the placement and installation of electronic signs. As a home rule municipality, the Village has a wide range of regulatory options. The question at this time is whether or not the Village Board should regulate electronic message boards and, if so, what should those regulations be?

Should Village regulate electronic message boards?

Trustee Voss raised the issue of brightness and whether the brightness of the sign can be regulated. Mr. Barrera noted that brightness depends on a number of factors, including the technology installed in the sign. There are measurement standards, and brightness levels can be prescribed.

Question re: brightness of signs

Trustee Semple voiced objection to video and animation displays used in message boards, and stressed the importance of limiting the size of such signs. He had no problem with permitting electronic signs in public zoned districts, although he felt a size limit on the property on which the sign is permitted is necessary.

Objection to video and animation displays

Discussion regarding the regulation of electronic signs by size of the property followed. Acreage or frontage were two methods discussed. Trustee Meier asked for visual depictions of the various types of signage.

Discussion re: size of signs

Trustee Sullivan recommended that standards for electronic signs be established based on size of the property (either by square footage or street frontage), minimum setback requirements, size of the sign, restriction on moving images, and a requirement to carry public service announcements.

Standards for signs discussed

The discussion turned to the use of electronic message boards by businesses, including big box commercial companies. The consensus was there should be provisions for the use of electronic message boards

Use of electronic message boards by businesses

by businesses.

Question re: need to regulate signs

Trustee Lentz questioned the need to regulate the signs and suggested no action be taken, and the Board continues to deal with signs on a case-by-case basis. The importance of creating clear and understandable rules for the community with consistent application was discussed.

Mayor Kessler arrives

Mayor Kessler arrived at 6:40 p.m.

Staff advised to prepare draft ordinance

The consensus was to advise staff to prepare a draft ordinance based on the discussion of the Board, along with a pictorial display of sign types.

Topic

Funding Street Repairs

Discussion on increased funding for street repairs

Mayor Pro Tempore Nutschig reported that as part of the budget process, the Board asked to have further discussion on the question of increasing the funding for the street repair program.

Increased revenues necessary to fund street program

Mr. Lobaito explained that the current street program is funded at roughly \$2 million per year. The Board expressed an interest to raise that figure to \$3 million. The question for the Board is how to find an additional \$1 million per year for this purpose. A new recurring revenue source is necessary. A bond issue for street repairs is not recommended due to the high cost of debt service.

The Village Board discussed the need for doing more road repairs. The consensus was that many roads are currently in poor condition, and unless something is done, they will continue to deteriorate to an unacceptable level.

Options for additional revenues explained

Finance Director Hatton was asked to explain the options presented in her memo. The memo, she said, presents several ways to add an additional \$1 million annually to the budget over a three-year period by increasing the road and bridge tax levy by \$350,000 per year. She explained the tax levy process, including debt service, pensions, road and bridge, and general corporate funds, and the Board's past practice regarding the tax levy.

One option holds the tax rate steady by reducing the corporate levy and increasing the road and bridge levy. Other scenarios keep the corporate levy the same and raise the road and bridge levy, which has a net impact of raising the property tax rate. Ms. Hatton summarized the decisions for the Board to be how much money to raise annually and how much impact should the increase have on the property tax rate?

Objection to increasing the tax rate

Trustee Sullivan objected to any increase in the tax rate, advocating that increases in property tax value through new construction and renovation, and sales tax increases should be expanded to raise revenues for the Village, rather than raising the property tax rate. He also advocated wiser use of engineering funds, construction practices, and reprioritizing

Village expenditures.

The discussion then focused on whether or not property tax should be raised to improve the streets, and how the Board will answer residents who complain about the condition of their street. Trustee Voss suggested that an advisory referendum might be in order. The consensus of the Board was to direct staff to investigate the procedure and options regarding an advisory referendum.

Motion by Voss, seconded by Sullivan, to adjourn. Upon roll call vote, the vote was as follows: Ayes: Voss, Sullivan, Nutschnig, Lentz, Semple, and Meier; nays: none; absent and not voting: none. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Advisory referendum
recommended

Adjournment

Deputy Village Clerk