

**RANTOUL VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR STUDY SESSION
MARCH 6, 2007**

LOUIS B. SCHELLING MEMORIAL BOARD ROOM
RANTOUL MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 333 S. TANNER, RANTOUL, IL

A Regular Study Session of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Rantoul was held at 6:15 P.M., President Neal Williams presiding.

Roll Call

The Clerk called the roll, finding the following members physically present:

President Neal Williams, and Trustees Herman Fogal, Clifford White, Margurette Carter, Ron Loy, and Charles Smith – 6.

The following member was found to be absent:

Trustee Mike Graham – 1.

The following representatives of Village departments were also present:

David Johnston, Administrator; Paul Farber, Police Chief; Robert Bruce, Economic Development; Kenneth Beth, Attorney; Scot Brandon, Comptroller; Janet Gray, Executive Assistant; William Clayton, Aviation; Ken Waters, Fire Chief; Rich Thomas, Recreation; Larry Madalon, Human Resources; Greg Hazel, Public Works Director; Pete Passarelli, Assistant Public Works Director; Mike Loschen, Community Development; Dan Culkin, Inspection; and Clerk Jeremy Reale.

Public Participation

Mr. Richard Pittman, 1013 Oakcrest Drive, addressed the Board to express his concern over the conditions at the Village's animal pound.

Ms. Margarethe Williams, 1007 Oakcrest Drive, addressed the Board to discuss the handling of animals housed at the Village's pound.

The Clerk read a statement on behalf of Joe Bolser, Rantoul Area Chamber of Commerce, announcing the date of the community forum for all candidates seeking election to Village office in April. The event will be held at 7:00 P.M. on March 26, 2007, in the cafetorium of Rantoul Township High School, and will include candidates for Village Board, Park District Commissioner, and the two school district Boards of Education. The forum is being sponsored by the Rantoul Area Chamber of Commerce, the Rantoul Rotary Club, and the Rantoul Exchange Club.

Champaign County Convention and Visitor's Bureau Presentation

Mr. Scot Hockman, Executive Director, addressed the Board to provide an update on the activities of the Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB). He distributed copies of the latest CVB publications to the members of the Board, including: the local Visitor's Guide; the Culture Guide; and the Sports Facilities Guide. Mr. Hockman also explained the role that the bureau has played in attracting events to facilities in Rantoul and helping to secure grants from the State of Illinois to fund advertising for the World Free Fall Convention and the I & I Tractor Show.

Following Mr. Hockman's presentation, President Williams announced that the Convention and Visitor's Bureau had requested funding from the Village of Rantoul to assist in the continuing promotion of Rantoul events, facilities, and businesses. He further announced that \$5,000 from hotel/motel tax revenues had been earmarked in the proposed 2007-08 budget as a contribution to the bureau.

Items from the Clerk

(A) The Clerk reported that an additional item had been received from the Police Department regarding a proposed service agreement between the Village of Rantoul and Provena Covenant for paramedic ambulance services. He presented the item upon a proposed addendum to the agenda for the Study Session.

Trustee Fogal moved to approve the addendum to the agenda, as presented. Trustee White seconded the motion.

The Clerk called the roll:

YEAS: Fogal, White, Carter, Loy, and Smith – 5.

NAYS: None – 0.

ABSENT: Graham – 1.

The motion carried by roll call vote.

Items from Police

Chief Farber presented a proposal to establish a three-year agreement with Provena Covenant Medical Center (Professional Ambulance Services). Under the terms of the proposed agreement, Provena will provide a paramedic-level team and vehicle licensed to provide advanced life support services. The ambulance will be stationed in Rantoul on a twenty-four hour daily basis and will respond to all calls in Rantoul and those area communities with which the Village has intergovernmental agreements to provide ambulance service. Chief Farber stressed that there would be no cost associated to the Village with the proposed agreement.

Chief Farber introduced Mr. Mark Griffith, Pro Ambulance, to provide the Board with an overview of the ambulance services provided to the Village of Rantoul and to answer any questions. In response to an inquiry from Trustee Loy, Mr. Griffith stated that continued growth in the Rantoul area may be sufficient cause for Provena to consider the addition of another ambulance or basic life support (BLS) car to the service area at some point in the future. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to place this item upon the formal agenda for its regular meeting.

Monthly Department Reports

1) Comptroller

Mr. Brandon reported that the Village and its consultant were continuing work on the conversion to a custom-designed software package to handle the storm water tax billing system. Although the process has taken longer than originally anticipated, he informed the trustees that customers should expect the final bills to be sent before the end of March. This custom software system is expected to serve the Village's needs for many years to come.

Mr. Brandon announced that a budget review session for the Board had been tentatively scheduled for March 15, 2007, with March 20, 2007 set as a possible continuance date, if necessary. He informed the Board that budget books had been placed in their mailboxes and that a hard copy of the budget Power Point presentation would be forthcoming. By consensus of the Board, the Clerk was directed to prepare notice for a special meeting to review the proposed budget on March 15, 2007 at 6:30 P.M.

2) *Inspection*

Mr. Culkin reported that steady progress was being made on the Wal-Mart Supercenter, with workers on site through February, despite some snow days. The status of the construction project is as follows:

- Inspections are taking place on a daily basis
- Changeovers are being reviewed
- Plumbers are working on site
- Concrete block work has begun
- The majority of the steelwork on the structure has been completed

Mr. Culkin reported that construction was resuming on the Burger King project. He stated that staff was reviewing the plans for the Alliance Resources addition and had commenced an evaluation of the condition of roofs on a number of Village facilities. Department staff is also working on updating the language of the Village building codes in order to maintain its favorable ISO rating. He informed the Board that staff was finalizing the in-house procedures for the residential rental inspection program.

3) *Community Development*

Mr. Loschen reported that Congress had passed its appropriations bill, though the Village had yet to receive word from the Department of Housing and Urban Development about its funding level. He stated that staff anticipates receiving an appropriation comparable to that received the previous year.

Mr. Loschen informed the trustees that quotes had been received from two contractors for the asbestos abatement of the Keesler Drive properties acquired for demolition by the Village. The figures received from the two contractors were \$11,000 and \$6,900, respectively. He added that neither contractor would be able to commence the abatement project before late March or early April.

3) *Public Works*

Mr. Hazel reported that the Village had begun advertising for the water treatment plant reconstruction project, with bids due to be received by the end of March. Bid figures should be available for Board consideration at the April study session.

Mr. Hazel also announced that the department would resume its curbside brush pickup for Village residents during the first week of April. He further informed the Board that David Meyer had donated the flagpole from the former post office building to the Village and that staff was investigating the possibility of using this pole to replace the existing flagpole in Constitution Park.

4) *Human Resources*

Mr. Madalon reported that vacant positions in the Electric Division (line foreman) and Recreation Department (recreation services worker) had been filled. He is also in the process of collecting employee performance evaluations from department supervisors and preparing a pay plan accordingly.

5) *Recreation*

Mr. Thomas reported that the department had concluded its wrestling and basketball programs and was preparing for its summer baseball and softball programs. Approximately 700-800 youths are expected to participate in these summer sports programs from early May through mid July.

Mr. Thomas also informed the Board that the Recreation Building is experiencing major leakage problems as a result of the deteriorating condition of the facility's roof. Staff is also in the process of clearing the community parks of debris from trees damaged by the recent winter storms.

6) *Fire*

Chief Waters stated that the department had responded to a total of 34 calls during the month of February, including: an apartment fire at 345-K North Drive; a partial roof collapse at the Jeld-Wen plant; and an explosion at a Rantoul Products facility. He added that the department is currently working on driver safety training and is reviewing plans for its annual mock car crash demonstration for Rantoul Township High School students on April 27, 2007.

7) *Aviation*

Mr. Clayton reported that he had been working on addressing safety and security issues for the airport, including lightning damage to one of the runways. He also reported that 1,583 gallons of fuel had been sold during the month of February, down from approximately 2,700 gallons sold the previous month. He stated that the decline in fuel sales could most likely be attributed to the recent inclement weather.

Mr. Clayton informed the Board that the department was working with the University of Illinois Police Training Institute to host its driver training courses. Additionally, staff is busy preparing for a series of upcoming events at the Aviation Center, including the inaugural Chanute Air Festival.

8) *Police*

Chief Farber reported that the department was beginning its first phase of the P.O.P. program for community-oriented policing. This initial phase will entail officers walking local neighborhoods to establish contact with residents. The department is also continuing work on contract negotiations with the Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.) and finalizing budget issues. He also mentioned the newly-created victim advocate position, designed to provide social assistance to area residents through the police department and the Community Service Center.

9) *Economic Development*

Mr. Bruce reported that he was in the process of reviewing and updating economic development and strategic marketing materials and making retention calls. The department is also providing assistance in the implementation of the Foreign Trade Zone. He further reminded the Board and the public about the upcoming Rantoul Area Chamber of Commerce Business Expo, March 29, 2007, from 4:00 to 8:00 P.M. at Rantoul Township High School.

Items from Administrator

(A) Mr. Johnston announced that the Village would be hosting a meeting with the Champaign County Economic Development Commission (CCEDC) to present information on the Foreign Trade Zone. He stated that the Board would be advised of the details of the meeting once a firm date had been established.

(B) Mr. Johnston announced that a vacancy had been created in the Wastewater Division due to an employee resignation for permanent disability. As this is a replacement position, he informed the Board that Human Resources would begin advertising and recruitment for the operator position.

(C) Mr. Johnston reported that the Air Force had expressed an interest in opening a discussion with Village officials with respect to the transfer of property in the former 900 area. He stated that any acceptance of property through early transfer would require state approval and that staff was scheduling meetings with the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency to further discuss the issue.

(D) Mr. Johnston reported that the Village had not yet received a response from Joe Warner with respect to the pending issues in the proposed Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district on the Village's west side. He informed the Board that Mr. Warner had contacted the Rantoul Park District to discuss the 40 acres of park property located within the proposed residential development area.

(E) Mr. Johnston stated that the Village had not received any new information regarding the status of the Collins & Aikman facilities. The company is proceeding with its restructuring plan and selling off assets. He anticipates additional information should be available by the end of the First Quarter.

(F) Mr. Johnston addressed the condition of the roof at the Recreation Building. He informed the Board that Martin Alblinger, Assistant Inspector, and a local roofer had assessed the condition of the roof and had made the determination that replacement was necessary. He introduced Mr. Alblinger for a presentation of his findings.

Mr. Alblinger informed the Board that the roof of the 28,000 ft² building is approximately 26 years old and is essentially beyond repair. It is proposed that a rubber membrane roof would replace the existing roof at an estimated cost of \$180,000 to \$190,000. Staff had contacted a qualified engineering firm to assess the project and prepare bid documents before the Village selects a contractor through a streamlined RFQ process.

Items from Public Works

(A) Mr. Hazel presented information regarding proposed purchasing contracts for diesel fuel for the electric generators. He stated that the Village is seeking three types of fuel—a low sulfur fuel, standard #2 diesel fuel, and a diesel fuel winter blend. Bids had been received on March 5, 2007; however, staff was not prepared to make a recommendation until the lowest bidding firm can be contacted for clarification of its understanding of the bid specifications. He stated that he anticipated a final recommendation being made to the Board prior to the regular meeting. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to place this item upon the formal agenda for its regular meeting, pending receipt of a final recommendation for awarding the bid.

(B) Mr. Hazel presented a proposal to authorize the changing of certain roadway names and the installation of new signage in accordance with these changes. Staff had identified inconsistencies that existed with respect to the naming of the east/west roadway known as "Grove" and the east/west roadway known as "Veterans Parkway". He reported that Grove is identified in certain sections as "Grove Avenue", whereas it is identified as "Grove Street" in others. Staff is proposing that the entire roadway be formally identified as "Grove Avenue". Due to the realignment of Veterans Parkway, that roadway is now aligned with North Perimeter Road at its intersection with South Maplewood Drive. Staff is proposing that the entire length of North Perimeter Road be formally identified as "Veterans Parkway", from the point at which it intersects with South Maplewood Drive to the point at which it currently merges with East Perimeter Road. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to place this item upon the formal agenda for its regular meeting.

(C) Mr. Hazel presented the annual Motor Fuel Tax Resolution, formally allocating the \$175,000 budgeted in IDOT MFT funds for eligible street and highway maintenance projects in the Village. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to place this item upon the formal agenda for its regular meeting.

(D) Mr. Hazel noted that Eagle Wings Industries had requested a variance from the Village of Rantoul on the pollutant limitations of two parameters in their wastewater discharge. He requested that consideration of this item be deferred to April, pending receipt of results from the Donohue & Associates study of the Village's water treatment processes.

Items from Community Development

(A) Mr. Loschen presented the Board with the proposed Community Development budget and a request for authorization to submit its annual grant application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). He reported that the Village anticipates receiving approximately \$375,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for the upcoming fiscal year. The proposed departmental budget—including funds from the new grant, funds carried over from the previous fiscal year, and program income—was set at \$481,335. The breakdown of budgeted expenditures is as follows:

- Housing Rehabilitation Program (\$336,350)
- Demolition of unsafe and dilapidated sheds (\$13,650)
- Acquisition and demolition of unsafe and dilapidated properties (\$36,925)
- Sewer-line improvements for Illinois Migrant Council (\$7,205)
- Acquisition of playground equipment (\$12,205)
- Planning, management, and administrative fees (\$75,000)

Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to place this item upon the formal agenda for its regular meeting.

Items from Trustees

(A) Upon the request of several trustees, Mr. Culkin delivered an overview presentation of the Residential Rental Inspection Program being implemented by his department.** Following the presentation, staff yielded to questions and comments from the trustees.

Trustee Loy noted that the program included a provision for online registration procedures. He inquired as to the expected cost and lead time for the software, further suggesting that the Board could approve the purchase now and defer payment to the next budget year. Mr. Johnston responded that lead time for the implementation of the online registration program would be approximately three months, with a cost of \$14,000. He explained that staff would need to meet with the Information Technology department to get input before taking any further action.

Mr. Culkin informed the Board that registration for the program was scheduled to begin May 1, 2007. Staff would hold a series of meetings with area landlords to explain the details of the program in late March. He anticipated that the new program assistant would be hired before these meetings, so that the incumbent would have an opportunity to establish contact with the property owners.

The Board discussed the program assistant position at length. In response to an inquiry from Trustee Carter, Mr. Culkin explained that the proposal for the program had always included a provision for the hiring of an additional full-time position to assist in the registration and scheduling of inspections. He stressed the importance of having a full-time individual to assume the total workload of the rental inspection office, rather than relying upon existing staff to fit these duties into their current schedules. Trustee Fogal added that the additional person was needed to establish and maintain consistent contact with landlords and property managers.

Trustee Loy noted that the program called for the Village to be divided into zones from which annual inspections will systematically take place. He suggested that landlords with properties located in multiple zones might be inconvenienced by this arrangement. Mr. Culkin responded that staff intends to work with the landlords to try and coordinate the program's activities so that all properties of individual landlords are combined into one cycle—at least to the

extent that such arrangement is practicable. He also stressed that staff will work with property owners to accommodate non-traditional schedules in their inspection process.

(B) Trustee Carter expressed concern over the recent series of articles in *The News-Gazette* highlighting the diversity and economic struggles of the Village of Rantoul in the post-Chanute era. She stressed to the community that diversity should not be perceived as a problem and challenged the Village to embrace these issues and work to better publicize its assets.

She cited the goals established by the Board to improve public relations and increase cooperation between local units of government. She felt that, in particular, the local school districts had not received enough favorable publicity for their efforts in addressing student and community needs through innovative programs. To that point, she suggested that the Board should arrange an intergovernmental meeting with the boards of the local school districts as a means of sharing information and formulating common goals and a plan of action to improve the public image of the Village's schools.

(C) Trustee Carter noted a lack of diversity in the membership of the various advisory boards, committees and commissions that serve the Village of Rantoul. She stressed that appointments to these groups should better represent the actual makeup of the community. She also expressed her opinion that many of these committees were not being used to their full potential.

(D) Trustee Smith asked to revisit the issue of the delayed storm water tax billing, inquiring as to how far behind the billing cycle currently is. Mr. Brandon responded that the bills for last year (2006) would be going out at the end of March, with 2007 bills distributed in November or December of 2007. He anticipated that the Village would return to its normal billing cycle in the summer of 2008. Trustee Loy noted that the cash flow in the storm water drainage fund is not being adversely affected by the delayed billing at this point.

(E) Trustee Loy expressed concern about the Village's residency requirement for employees, suggesting that it might be beneficial to have employees who are more fully invested in the community by residing in the Village that they serve. He stated that this issue has troubled him for a number of years and that he believes the policy enacted by a previous Board with respect to employee residency had been a mistake. Trustees Carter and White echoed those sentiments expressed by Trustee Loy and Trustee Smith suggested that the Board revisit the issue of employee residency. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was that the employee residency requirement be reviewed at a future meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, President Williams declared the proceeding adjourned.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:48 P.M.

Jeremy A. Reale
Clerk of the Village of Rantoul

** Clerk's Note: Under the provisions of 5 ILCS 140/1 et seq. (Freedom of Information Act), a hard copy of the rental inspection presentation is available for public inspection upon request at the Office of the Clerk.