

**RANTOUL VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
REGULAR STUDY SESSION  
JANUARY 2, 2008**

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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. President Williams called the proceeding to order at 6:20 P.M.

**Roll Call**

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

President Neal Williams; and Trustees Herman Fogal, Margurette Carter, Joe Bolser, Charles Smith, and Jim Stubblefield – 6.

The following member was found to be absent:

Trustee Clifford White – 1.

The following representatives of Village departments were also present:

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

**Items from Trustees**

(A) Trustee Smith addressed the continuing issues surrounding the timing of the traffic signal at U.S. Route 136 and Lon Drive. While it had temporarily appeared to be functioning normally for a time period, he suggested that the signal was once again causing unnecessary delays for motorists approaching the intersection from northbound Lon Drive. Trustee Smith stated that he had personally timed the signal and found that it had taken 3:20 to change. Mr. Hazel responded that staff had examined the signal after Trustee Smith initially raised the issue in December and had found no apparent problems. He assured the Board that his staff would check the signal again to try and resolve the issue.

**Items from the Clerk**

(A) The Clerk reminded the Board that the Village was required by state law to review its closed session records every six months to determine which records, if any, may be appropriate for public disclosure. He suggested that it would be most appropriate for the Board to adjourn to closed session for the purpose of reviewing all closed session records and approving the minutes of any closed sessions held since the previous semi-annual review.

(B) The Clerk noted that the Open Meetings Act also requires all government bodies to maintain a verbatim record of their closed session proceedings in the form of an audio or video tape. Although these legal requirements are relatively recent, he stated that the Village of Rantoul had begun the local practice of taping all closed sessions in the mid-1990s. As such, the Clerk reported that the large amount of audio tapes currently being stored in the secured filing

cabinets in the vault was creating a space issue. Furthermore, he suggested that the Village may potentially face liability issues by continuing to maintain verbatim records of often sensitive topics for extended periods of time. He stated that the law permits public bodies to destroy these verbatim records after a period of eighteen months and once the minutes for the sessions have been officially approved; however, staff cannot undertake this task without the authorization of the Board. He informed the trustees that Mr. Beth would be preparing a resolution authorizing the destruction of any closed session tapes meeting the aforementioned requirements. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to place this item upon the formal agenda for its regular meeting.

### **Monthly Department Reports**

#### *1) Economic Development*

Mr. Bruce reported four new tenant inquiries for the Rantoul Business Center (Smith Hall), also noting that his office had fielded additional prospect inquiries for Buildings 720 and 718 and Hangar 1 on the former base. An additional prospect had toured the Westside industrial area. Finally, he informed the trustees that he would be participating in an International Conference of Shopping Centers event in Chicago during the month of February.

#### *2) Police*

Chief Farber noted that departmental restructuring was continuing. With the retirement of Lt. Randy Davis in December, Alex Meyer had been promoted to patrol lieutenant and Lt. Glenn Williams had been shifted into an administrative role. Keith Welch had been promoted to the sergeant position vacated as the result of Lt. Meyer's promotion and Matt Bross had been sworn in today to fill a vacant patrol officer position. Chief Farber also reminded the public that the Smoke Free Illinois Act had gone into effect January 1, 2008. At this point, the Health Department is still working on settling enforcement issues related to the provisions of the Act. He stated that it would be the policy of the Rantoul Police Department to refer all calls to the Health Department until an enforcement structure has been put into place.

#### *3) Aviation*

Mr. Clayton reported 46,657 gallons of fuel sold for 2007, representing a significant decrease from the 68,899 gallons sold in 2006. He noted that this is a reflection of a general trend of declining activity in the face of high fuel and insurance costs. He also reported that the Village had utilized 52 hours of airport snow removal services from its contractor during the month of December. Finally, he announced that Burns & McDonnell, the airport engineering firm, had provided the Village with a transportation improvement plan proposal that details a 10-year schedule of airport improvement projects.

#### *4) Fire*

Chief Water reported 32 calls for the month of December, including a number of accident responses due to winter weather conditions. During the previous month, the department had also responded to two major house fires at 425 ½ E. Wabash Avenue and in Penfield on December 11, 2007. The Penfield fire had resulted in one fatality. He also reported that the department had received its new washer unit for the firefighter protective gear purchased through FEMA grant funds. Finally, he noted a total of 55 carbon monoxide-related calls for the 2007 year, with seven occurring in December.

5) *Recreation*

On behalf of Mr. Thomas, Mr. Johnston thanked the *Rantoul Press* for its positive article highlighting the programs available at the Forum Fitness Center. He also announced that Frank Buck would be retiring from the Central Maintenance Division effective January 3, 2008 and that Herb Kirschbaum would be assuming the permanent part-time position that Mr. Buck previously held. The Village is in the process of interviewing seven candidates for the full-time mechanic position being vacated by Mr. Kirschbaum.

6) *Public Works*

Noting recent periods of inclement weather, Mr. Hazel urged all citizens to be mindful of hazardous road conditions as they travel during the winter season. He also announced that the Street Division would conduct its final brush and Christmas tree collection for the season through January 11, 2008. Brush collection is scheduled to resume in April. Finally, he reported that staff was scheduled to meet next week with engineers on the development of a long-range storm water study.

7) *Community Development*

Mr. Loschen reported that his department continued to work through its housing rehabilitation program performing emergency repairs. Staff was also finalizing the communitywide survey for its 5-year HUD Consolidated Plan, which will be made available to citizens on the Internet and at location throughout the Village. Finally, he announced that the Village had received a preliminary estimate of the next year's grant from U.S. Housing and Urban Development. With the overall budget for HUD down approximately three percent, it is anticipated that Rantoul will receive \$365,000 for the next fiscal year. This estimate is down from the current year's \$378,000 allocation and reflects a continuing downward trend in federal funding to local community development programs.

8) *Inspection*

Mr. Culkin reported that he had been working with Mr. Beth and the Plan Commission on proposed changes to the Village Zoning text. With respect to the Rental Inspection Program, he reported a total of 542 units inspected to date, with 397 cases closed. He also stated that the new state smoking restrictions had brought about inquiries about outdoor cafes and beer gardens in which smoking could be permitted. As the Village currently lacks any provisions for these types of facilities, he stressed that officials should enact some regulations in this area once formal guidelines on the Smoke Free Illinois Act are handed down from the state.

9) *Comptroller*

Mr. Brandon reported that Village had received its sales tax receipts from the State of Illinois. While overall receipts were down 4.3% over the first six months compared to last year, he noted that receipts were up 18.8% for November-December 2007. He also reported developments in the Collins & Aikman bankruptcy case, as the company has sued all its creditors for preference payments. The Village's bankruptcy counsel is currently preparing a defense to try to reduce the potential costs to be borne by the Village of Rantoul. Finally, Mr. Brandon reported that the storm tax bills for 2007 would be sent to residents by early next week.

10) *Administration*

Mr. Johnston reported that staff had been working with the Air Force in conducting the annual inspection of base properties. He also noted that eight firms had responded to the RFQ issued for the Century Gateway drainage

project, with a final recommendation to be made to the Chanute Commission next week. On the subject of the Century Gateway development, Mr. Johnston informed the Board that the Village would need to identify an appropriate place to relocate the campground to make way for future industrial development in that area. To that end, staff is investigating the possibility of obtaining grants to help defray the costs of moving the campground facilities to the land immediately south of Heritage Lake. Finally, given the long-range needs signaled in the airport transportation improvement plan submitted by Burns & McDonnell, Mr. Johnston told the trustees that the Village would be applying for an available opening in the FAA Military Airport Redevelopment Program.

#### **Items from Administration**

(A) Mr. Johnston reported that Tim Mathews had donated two lots to the Village. These two lots are located along South Garrard Street, in between the Century 21 building and the former One-Hour Martinizing building site, and would serve as part of the Village's plans to incorporate an attractive green space in that section of downtown. He stated that Mr. Beth would prepare a resolution accepting the properties for the Board's consideration prior to the next meeting. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to place this item upon the formal agenda for its regular meeting.

#### **Items from Public Works**

(A) Mr. Hazel noted that the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) requires the Village to submit a resolution each year to request state approval of any community parade routes that would require the temporary closure of state roads (U.S. 136 and U.S. 45). He presented a proposed resolution detailing the three community parade routes that would require closure of either highway during 2008. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to place this item upon the formal agenda for its regular meeting.

(B) Mr. Hazel presented the Board with the Village's annual resolution allocating and permitting the use of IDOT Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) funds for eligible street and highway maintenance expenses for the calendar year. These expenses are locally identified as "day labor and equipment" and are used to support the functions of the Public Works Street Division. He noted that the Village had allocated \$175,000 for these services in its annual budget for the current fiscal year. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to place this item upon the formal agenda for its regular meeting.

#### **Items from Inspection**

(A) Mr. Culkin presented a set of proposed changes to the Village's Zoning text, as recommended by the Plan Commission. While most of the current Zoning text will remain in place, the Plan Commission has recommended the addition of two new residential districts, five new commercial districts and a new section on community design standards. The new residential districts would include a high-end single family district (named R-1A) and a traditional neighborhood district (R-2A). The commercial districts proposed include: interstate commercial (C-3), commercial/industrial (C-4), central business district (CB), central business extended (CBE), and office park district (OP). The new community design standards section would include provisions for the establishment of a design review subcommittee, new building requirements for exterior walls, landscaping and site treatment, parking areas and access ways, and lighting and maintenance requirements. Mr. Culkin provided the Board with an overview of the types of specifications for building design included within these new standards, including the following:

- i) limiting “bright or brilliant colors” to accent only, not to exceed 25% of the building façade;
- ii) provisions to eliminate any monotony of design in single or multiple building developments by requiring the incorporation of certain design features with respect to façade and roofline;
- iii) establishing a list of permitted construction materials for building exteriors and setting forth percentage coverage requirements for each zoning district. Such approved materials would include: brick, natural or architectural cast stone, stucco, split face block or masonry veneer, tinted or textured concrete masonry units, tilt-up concrete panels designed with brick veneer or other architectural design, or non-reflective glass.

Mr. Culkin stated that these changes are deemed necessary to support the Village Comprehensive Plan, as adopted in 2006. He also noted that additional changes to other sections of the Zoning text would be coming before the Board at a later date.

In the ensuing discussion, the Board members generally signaled opposition to the façade requirements proposed in the community design standards section. President Williams suggested that placing such strict requirements on new structures could hamper economic development efforts during a time in which Village officials are seeking incentives to draw new businesses and industry to Rantoul. Echoing the points raised by President Williams, Trustee Carter suggested that Mr. Bruce should have been consulted for his input during the discussion phase of the new design standards. The majority of the Board agreed that the proposed standards could possibly frustrate the Village’s ability to entice further development. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to table these proposed changes for further review.

#### **Closed Session**

Trustee Bolser moved to adjourn to closed session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (C) 21, for the purpose of discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under the Open Meetings Act, whether for the purpose of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06. Trustee Smith seconded the motion.

The Clerk called the roll:

YEAS: Bolser, Smith, Stubblefield, Fogal, and Carter – 5.

NAYS: None – 0.

ABSENT: White – 1.

The motion carried by roll call vote.

The Board entered into closed session at 7:42 P.M. By the authority of the Board, the following individual was permitted to remain present: Jeremy Reale.

Trustee Fogal moved to adjourn the closed session and reconvene the open Study Session.

Trustee Bolser seconded the motion.

The Clerk called the roll:

YEAS: Fogal, Carter, Bolser, Smith, and Stubblefield – 5.

NAYS: None – 0.

ABSENT: White – 1.

The Board reconvened in open session at 7:47 P.M.

#### **Adjournment**

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

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:47 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Jeremy A. Reale  
Clerk of the Village of Rantoul