

**RANTOUL VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR STUDY SESSION
JULY 7, 2009**

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 6:15 P.M.

Roll Call

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

President Neal Williams and Trustees Roger Jones, Tony Brown, Margurette Carter, Joe Bolser, Charles Smith, and Jim Stubblefield – 7.

The following representatives of Village departments were also present:

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

Public Participation

Kris Martin, Rantoul, addressed the Board to discuss her concerns about ongoing issues that were affecting the quality of life in the community, including: loitering, trespassing, disorderly conduct, curfew violations, and obstruction of roadways. After relaying stories of several such incidents to the Board, Ms. Martin asked what citizens could do to end this type of behavior and improve the quality of life in Rantoul. In response, Chief Farber urged citizens to be vigilant of this type of activity and report it to the Police Department immediately. He also noted that one of the aims of the new problem-oriented policing program was to get officers out into the community to address these issues; thus, it was important for citizens to help the department identify areas of concern. Trustee Carter added that residents needed to work cooperatively with their neighbors to address issues within their neighborhoods, noting that such collaboration had helped to relieve some of the problems within her own area on Englewood Drive. A meeting was arranged for July 8 with Chief Farber, Mr. Thomas, and Ms. Martin to further discuss these issues and possible solutions.

Tim Hethke, 601 Illinois Drive, addressed the Board to discuss concerns regarding speeding traffic and pedestrian safety in his neighborhood. After expressing his concerns to the Police Department, Mr. Hethke noted that police began monitoring the street. However, when his wife tried to report the license number of a vehicle that had traveled down Illinois Drive at an excessive speed, she had been cut off by a dispatcher. He noted that it was not the only time that representatives from the police department had failed to respond to their calls. Chief Farber stated that he was unaware of the incident with dispatch, but promised to investigate. He also noted that the department had increased its traffic enforcement presence in the area, resulting in the issuance of several tickets and one impoundment. Trustee Brown asked about a possible engineering solution to the chronic speeding issues on Illinois Drive, to which Mr. Hazel responded that “traffic calming” options would be considered during the upcoming resurfacing work on Illinois Drive.

Items from the Mayor

(A) President Williams reported that several Village officers and employees were in the process of relocating their offices within the Municipal Building (including the Administrator, Comptroller, Executive Assistant, Village Clerk, and the Accounting Department). He noted that the moves were expected to be complete by the end of the present week.

Items from Trustees

(A) Trustee Jones thanked Chief Farber for the installation of new speed control signage along South Murray Road.

(B) Trustee Bolser thanked all employees and departments of the Village for their assistance during the community Fourth of July events.

Items from the Village Clerk

(A) The Clerk reminded the Board of its legal obligation to conduct a semi-annual review and approval of the minutes of the Board's closed session meetings and to further determine whether or not the confidentiality of those minutes is still necessary. He noted that a closed session had been placed upon the formal agenda for the purpose of conducting this review after the conclusion of regular business.

Monthly Department Reports

1) Comptroller

Mr. Brandon reported that the auditors had completed their annual review of Village records during the previous week, with no major problems or deficiencies being identified. The preliminary audit report should be available in September for approval by the Board. He also reported that the Village had received its first two property tax receipts for the year, including approximately \$10,000.00 from the new TIF district. Finally, he informed the Board that the Village had received a check from the State of Illinois for repayment of airport engineering costs.

2) Inspection

Mr. Culkin reported that community cleanup days had been held on June 6 and June 13, with over three hundred residents participating. He thanked C & S Sanitary and Village employees for their assistance on the cleanup projects. He also reported that the Village had issued demolition orders for three derelict properties during the month of June: 11-12 Charles Drive; 438 S. Steffler; and 1301 Briarcliff Drive. Mr. Culkin noted that code enforcement cases continued to increase this summer, with fifteen cases scheduled for court hearings on July 9, 2009. Finally, he reported that the department had been working with the current owners and a prospective buyer for the Odd Fellows Building (125 E. Sangamon Avenue) to determine what repairs would be necessary to bring the structure up to code, or what steps would need to be taken to demolish the building.

3) Community Development

Mr. Loschen reported that representatives from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) had been on site in early June to audit the department's programs. A final report of their findings was expected shortly. He also told the Board that the Village had submitted grant applications for available funds from the federal economic stimulus package. Finally, he noted that the property tax abatements for the Village's Enterprise Zone had been filed with Champaign County.

4) Public Works

Mr. Hazel reported that the Illinois Department of Natural Resources had provided the Village with ten traps to be placed around the community as a means of tracking the progress of the emerald ash borer beetle. He also noted that the Village's annual water quality report was

complete and in the process of being prepared for distribution to all customers. He reported that the Village and the contractor had signed for substantial completion of the Wastewater Treatment Plant improvements, with substantial completion of the Water Treatment Plant project expected to be achieved within the next couple of weeks. Mr. Hazel informed the trustees that the Village had also submitted an application to the federal government for an energy efficiency grant. Finally, he reported that smoke-testing of the sanitary sewer lines in the Eden Park neighborhood had taken place on July 6, 2009.

5) Human Resources

Mr. Coffey reported that the Village's performance management process had advanced beyond the performance evaluation stage and into the performance planning phase. This planning stage would involve extensive discussions with each employee to determine where employees and their duties fit into the vision and operations of the Village. He also reported that the Village employees would be sponsoring a clothing drive in conjunction with the Bethany Park Christian Church clothing center. Finally, he noted that thirteen summer youth program employees were working in various departments throughout the Village this summer.

6) Recreation

Mr. Thomas reported that the summer youth baseball and softball programs were coming to an end. He also commented on the continued success of the summer lunch program and the construction of new T-ball fields at the Youth Center. He noted that usage of the aquatic center continued to increase after a relatively slow start to the season. Thus far, the highest daily attendance had been pegged at 834. Mr. Thomas also reported that the adult softball program had begun, with games taking place at the Maplewood Sports Complex. Finally, he mentioned that Recreation employees had worked in collaboration with Public Works on the redevelopment of the downtown park area on Garrard Street, which was now completed.

7) Fire

Chief Waters reported a total of 26 calls for the month of June, including a fire set on playground equipment at Pleasant Acres School that had resulted in approximately \$50,000.00 in damages. He also reported three carbon monoxide calls, bringing the year-to-date total to 61 CO calls. He informed the Board that the Village would be hosting a training class for Firefighter II certification candidates, and also mentioned that the department had provided a ladder truck and three officers for a demonstration at the Generations of Hope community picnic.

8) Aviation

Mr. Clayton reported roughly 6,000 gallons of fuel sold at the airport for the 2009 year, down about 3,000 gallons from the same year-to-date figures for 2008. He also stated that the installation of the new runway lighting was complete, with the next major improvement project scheduled to begin in September. Beginning September 1, 2009, the airport would be closed for 53 days for milling, grading, and resurfacing of the airport runway intersection. Mr. Clayton also noted that the airport continued to receive significant traffic from local cropdusting activities. Finally, he mentioned that the airport area had continued to host several special events throughout the summer, including eight various events during the month of June.

9) Police

Chief Farber reported that the department would once again be hosting a student employee through the Principal Scholars Program this summer. He also reported that the department had been working on developing a series of departmental goals. The Police Department, in conjunction with the Champaign County State's Attorney, was in the process of finalizing a juvenile justice program including station adjustments. Chief Farber noted that Rantoul was the only original department in the county to have a station adjustment program. Now, the state's attorney was taking the program countywide, using Rantoul as a model.

10) Economic Development

Mr. Bruce reported that work was substantially completed on the new downtown park area, located on the former site of the One-Hour Martinizing Building that had been demolished. He thanked employees from Public Works and Recreation for their assistance in the redevelopment and cleanup of the site, which would serve as an attractive asset to the downtown area. He also told the trustees that Village officials had toured various structures on the former base property with architects from OWP/P Architects of Chicago to develop a strategy for the possible demolition of several of these buildings. Mr. Bruce announced that, during the last sixty days, the Village had secured leases with seven new clients for a total of nearly 12,000 sq. ft. of office space at Rantoul Business Center. The department had also overseen the completion of steam pipe asbestos remediation work in the former 900 area.

Items from Public Works

(A) Mr. Hazel presented a request for an alternative utilization of federal funds allocated to the Village through the American Recovery Reinvestment Act, which had initially been targeted for improvements to South Murray Road. Given the complexity of the South Murray Road project, the anticipated design and construction timeline, and the federal stipulations placed upon the funds, Mr. Hazel told the Board that it was unlikely that the project would be ready for the November 2009 IDOT letting. To save the Village from the possible loss of the \$390,741.00 in federal funds, staff had reviewed the possible FAU-designated routes for a roadway that would qualify for an improvement and a project that could be developed within the relatively shortened timeframe. After review, it was recommended that the funds should be applied toward the resurfacing of Flessner Avenue, from Doolittle Boulevard to Veterans Parkway. This project would have the added benefit of being eligible for TIF funds to cover the engineering costs.

To initiate this project, Mr. Hazel requested three separate actions from the Board. The first item was the execution of an engineering agreement with Foth Infrastructure & Environmental, LLC, for the preparation of construction plans, specifications, and estimates for the project. This agreement would cover design work only, for a not-to-exceed amount of \$20,000.00. The second item would be an agreement with IDOT that would identify the project involved, the amount of available federal funds, and an assurance that the Village had set aside sufficient funds for its local requirements. Finally, a budget amendment would be necessary to transfer \$20,000.00 from the TIF fund balance to the account for the project design. He reiterated the fact that the foregoing items would only provide for the design phase of the project, with Village staff expected to make every effort to perform construction observation and associated recordkeeping to reduce costs during the construction phase.

In response to an inquiry from Trustee Jones, Mr. Hazel noted that the Village was recommending the engineering agreement with Foth because of the firm's better understanding of the project needs. He added that staff believed the quote provided by Foth to be competitive. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to place these items upon the formal agenda for its regular meeting.

Items from the Comptroller

(A) Mr. Brandon presented a recommendation to approve the 11.5% phase-in rate proposal offered by the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) for Village employer contribution for the 2010 year. Noting that IMRF, as a defined benefit retirement plan, had lost roughly 25% of its value during the economic downturn last year, he stated that the employer was obligated to make up any investment losses through its contribution. The Village's actuarial required contribution (ARC) for 2010 had been calculated at 13.87% - a substantial increase from the current rate of 10.71% - and would have a huge impact on payroll costs. Due to the potential hardship presented by this increase, IMRF was offering a phase-in rate below the ARC. For the Village, the phase-in rate would be 11.5%. Mr. Brandon told the Board that he had estimated that the total IMRF cost to the Village would be \$713,400.00 for the next year under the ARC, while the total cost would be \$594,750.00 under the phase-in rate.

After consultation with IMRF, staff had recommended choosing the phase-in rate, as it would give the Village more flexibility and would minimize the cost increase for the next year. Mr. Brandon noted that the Village would be able to choose at a later date to go with a higher rate or even make additional contributions to reduce its unfunded liability. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to place this item upon the formal agenda for its regular meeting.

(B) Mr. Brandon presented two proposed budget amendments. The first amendment would provide \$20,000.00 from the Corporate Restricted Reserve Fund to cover the costs of the approved frame repair for the Fire Department tanker. The second budget amendment would transfer \$20,000.00 from the TIF Fund balance to pay for the engineering design work on the Flessner Avenue improvement project. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to place these items upon the formal agenda for its regular meeting.

Items from Counsel

(A) Mr. Beth presented a proposed ordinance to amend part of the Village's Rental Registration and Inspection Program to comply with recent case law. In a lawsuit involving the City of Urbana, the court handed down a decision that would require tenants to receive notice from the municipality in advance of inspections as well as providing tenants with an opportunity to object to the inspection of their properties. Mr. Beth had drafted an ordinance that would realign the Village's rental inspection procedures, in accordance with the ruling of the court, to provide for additional inspection notices from the Village directly to each tenant.

Trustee Smith expressed concern about the additional costs to be incurred by the Village in the preparation and mailing of notices to each tenant. Mr. Beth responded that the Village essentially had no option but to provide the notices, as required by the court. It was also noted that these additional fees could be recouped as part of an overall rental registration fee, if the Board decided to reinstate that fee when the sunset provision expires next year. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to place this item upon the formal agenda for its regular meeting.

Closed Session

Trustee Bolser moved to enter into 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, Jones, Brown, and Carter – 6.

NAYS: None – 0.

ABSENT: None – 0.

The motion carried by roll call vote.

The Board entered into Closed Session at 7:49 P.M. With the consent of the Board, the following individuals were permitted to remain present: Kenneth Beth and Jeremy Reale.

Trustee Stubblefield moved to adjourn the Closed Session and return to open session. Trustee Carter seconded the motion.

The Clerk called the roll:

YEAS: Stubblefield, Jones, Brown, Carter, Bolser, and Smith – 6.

NAYS: None – 0.

ABSENT: None – 0.

The motion carried by roll call vote.

The Board reconvened in open session at 7:52 P.M.

Adjournment

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

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:53 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy A. Reale
Clerk of the Village of Rantoul

APPROVED AUGUST 11, 2009

ATTEST:

Neal Williams
Village President

Jeremy A. Reale
Village Clerk