



## ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Virtual Meeting

Meeting Minutes -April 23, 2020

Draft Approved - May 7, 2020

**I. CALL TO ORDER - 4:30pm**

**II. ROLL CALL**

<p><b><u>Committee</u></b> Trustee Liddle (as Chair) Mayor Gunter Clerk Szymski Trustee Addington Trustee Barker Trustee Guzzo Trustee Nero</p> <p><b><u>Visitors</u></b> None</p>	<p><b><u>Staff</u></b> Village Manager May Finance Director Parker IT Director Liljeberg (host)</p>
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**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - Due to this being a virtual meeting the pledge was waived.

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS** - Manager May read the following submitted written public comments from 5 local restaurateurs into the record:

- A.** Matt Verde, Neat Kitchen + Bar, 246 N Cass Ave.  
“The economic impact of Covid 19 on this industry in America could reach over \$200 billion in the next 3 months and cost 5-7 million jobs to be lost. The restaurants in Westmont could be a part of that without assistance. Restaurants are not just a place to eat and drink but they are a business that employs local residents, buys food and supplies from other local businesses, donates to churches, schools and community organizations in the village, we pay rent to residents that own the buildings in the CBD, we are members of the chamber and other organizations throughout this town and we are all going through this difficult time together. We have revised our business models to continue to provide food to the community via carry-out and delivery but without assistance the economic headwinds we are facing will lead to more job loss, restaurant closure and an end to what we have been providing to the community. No one wants these restaurants to close and the people that work there to be unemployed, no one wants to have more vacancies in the CBD after this crisis than before this crisis and no one wants to look back and say "I wish we would have done more". My questions - what can be done, when can it be done, what is needed to get it done. My suggestions - (what

financial aid to restaurants from the PFE tax, if not to the restaurant directly then to the property owner of the business with the benefits flowing through to the business owner, relief of village related expenses (water, sewer, trash, licenses, permits, etc...). (when) Immediate action is necessary, sense of urgency is critical. A lot of restaurants pay the bills from last week with the revenue that was generated this week, the doors were ordered closed on 3/17 but the bills were still there. Immediate action is necessary and a sense of urgency is critical. (needs) If a committee or team is needed I raise my hand to lead this. I will work with whomever is available with the urgency necessary to get the assistance to the independent restaurants that need it most. Thank you."

**B.** Folce Dolce, Dolce Restaurant, 15 W Quincy St

"As a restaurant effected dramatically by COVID-19 does the Village have any plans to do anything to financially to support us and our neighbors that are struggling to obtain Federal Funding and Grants and have received nothing? Darien just donated \$310,000 back to their bars and restaurants by returning their input of village taxes from May - October of 2019 as a stimulus to try and help save them. Should we have to close our doors forever if we can not survive what good would that do for long term growth for the town and future tax income? Because of what the economy will be in the future many of these buildings could be left empty for years."

**C.** John Fleming, J. Fleming's Absolutely Delicious, 18 N. Cass Ave.

"Would you consider following suit with Darien's support program for their restaurants or similar. In granting taxes collected for restaurants for eating tax back to restaurants from May of 2019 to October of 2019 for stimulus. To help us to keep our doors open and keep the taxing base in place. It's going to be a long and difficult road. I'm sure there will be plenty of stipulations on opening back up which are going to hinder restaurants and sales in the coming year. It has already become difficult to source a lot of products. Pricing has started to increase as well. Please Keep in mind I'm guessing there won't be as many people wanting to sign up to open a restaurant real soon. Please help to keep the ones that are here now open. In addition I believe that most of us, at least the few I have talked to, have not received any sort of stimulus yet. Including either the PPP or any grants to date. We are all trying really hard independently and collectively. Thank you for your consideration."

**D.** John Dasoqi, Johnny's Blitz, 20 N. Cass Ave.

Bars and Restaurants in Westmont are struggling and need help of any kind , Darien approved a stimulus to their venues based on collected taxes last year . Is westmont able to match or exceed Darien's stimulus since we have a lot more businesses in westmont ?

**V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - A motion by Trustee Nero to approve the April 9, 2020

Administration & Finance Committee was seconded by Trustee Barker. All Ayes, motion passes.

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS** Budget Overview - Manager May stated that this is just a review of the past few meetings, the budget is on the Board Agenda tonight.. Director Parker stated that he will review the calendar regarding the budget and that a staff member is delivering the information for the budget this evening to trustee homes as we speak. The timeline was reviewed to have quarterly meetings the first being 6/25 as a special budget workshop. An August date for the 2nd meeting, to decide if we have more cuts or does it look like we will be able to add things back in or hold the course. There will be a third meeting in November and the fourth meeting in February. This will allow for review as funding is coming in over time. Director Parker then took questions from the Board.

- Trustee Liddle thanked Director Parker for the calendar approach.

- Trustee Nero asked that the calendar be published as well so the public was aware of the process.

- Trustee Barry stated that he does not like the fact that we have not done any actual cuts. He would like a discussion of the Public Works facility which has gone from 7 million to 17 million in costs. This is bonded to the Places for Eating tax which could come in much lower than we would have thought. By law we are going to have to keep the places for eating tax, we cannot just make it go away.

1. Director Parker stated that we could have a new program for the restaurants but we have to have the tax, and we are required to make the full payment to the lending agency.

2. Trustee Barry would like to see the Village focus on this area.

- Mayor Gunter asked for clarification about the Places for Eating tax and the bond payments, stating that the legal requirement is that the bond payment is made, not that all the tax collected goes to the payment.

1. Director Parker agreed and discussed the possible options.

- Trustee Barker asked where the statement that we won't have any places for eating tax for the next 18 months came from?

1. Trustee Barry said that there will not be a vaccine for at least 18 months per the CDC, so people are not going to be sitting in restaurants at 100% capacity, eating when you can't stop the virus.

- Manager May stated that the forecast is a projection based on the emptier hotels and restaurants than we are used to in town.

1. Director Parker stated that it is done at 40% for restaurants and the hotels/video gaming at 0. This is why we made the cuts/holds that we have and reviewed again each quarter. We hate to cut services until we have to do so.

- Trustee Barker asked about the debt payments.

1. Director Parker went over the necessities of payments and the cuts that we have identified, along with the reserves.

- Trustee Liddle asked Director Parker to find out what the Places for Eating taxes have been from June to December.

1. The answer was that it was just under \$1,000,000.00.

- Trustee Barry said that at the end of the day we are in big trouble and we cannot only help the restaurants, we need to help the whole business community or just help the residents.

- Trustee Nero stated that rebating the Places for Eating tax paid is a

possibility, yet it is not preferred as it is not revenue it is atax.

1. Trustee Barry stated that the rebate would go to the restaurant not to the resident that paid it, so it doesn't seem legal.

■ Mayor Gunter said that whatever we do should be for all 600 businesses in town not just the restaurants, everyone is hurting.

■ Trustee Nero commented that the federal funding for businesses might be a better fit for businesses and the residents might need help more.

■ Trustee Barry asked if the property taxes could be rebated?

1. Mayor Gunter said that our portion of property tax is 8% of someone's tax bill.

2. Director Parker stated that this could not be done this year as the county deadline for abatement is passed.

■ Director Parker confirmed that a budget workshop is planned for June 25th to review the forecast and the cuts that have already been made, and those that might need to be made.

■ Trustee Guzzo asked about the Governor's report today.

1. Discussion ensued on the Governor's recommendations and what this will mean for the Village business and all businesses.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

**A.** Economic Incentive Programs Committee Report - Trustee Nero has connected with all the trustees, the county, Downers Grove, and various Mayors to see what is being planned. Everyone wants to help, it is just what is the right way to help. Who to help? All residents, how to manage that if people would prefer not? All businesses? Which?

■ Manager May stated that the restaurants came forward based on what Darien is proposing to do, however there are a lot of businesses in town. Elk Grove Village is proposing all businesses receive something from the amount pulled from reserves. The hotels and auto dealers are worried and will need help as well.

■ Trustee Nero stated that the amount discussed, \$250,000.00 is not going to be much help if you are trying to help all the businesses and residents. What happens if things get worse? We have to make decisions about what we want to do and for who.

Trustee Barry stated that the Finance packet was received, thank you Ruth, but there is no board packet. Manager May replied that we have not done that in the past. We have only been distributing the finance spreadsheets that are not standard size so it is difficult for you to print. If you do not have the ability to print, we can have meeting materials delivered to you. Trustee Barry stated that the packets were delivered the last two weeks so he believed they would be prepared today so he did not print them. Mayor Gunter stated that we could deliver agendas to you while we were doing this remotely.

- Mayor Gunter stated that what the various county mayors are doing is trying to get the economy opened for the businesses. Manager May replied that the DuPage Mayors believe that our area is more insular than other areas in the state.
  - Trustee Nero reviewed the ideas that were presented. Who do we help, how, and should it be something opened to participation by residents/businesses that feel that they could help out as well. It needs to be something committed to Westmont.
    - Trustee Barker would like to give this more time, see how things are going and to review the information presented. The goal is to do something with value even if it's a week or month from now.
    - Trustee Nero said that we did not have to decide everything today. Suggestion of the following:
      - Defer Places for Eating Tax payments to help the restaurants, file of paperwork is required, just not pay immediately
      - Postpone the water rate increase, no late fees
      - Permit refunds/next session passes instead
    - Director Parker asked what you want to publicize it or just move forward.
- Mayor Gunter asked Director Parker to review the budget plans for Economic Assistance and why we have to have a budget again, as it is on the agenda tonight for the board meeting.
  - The budget has to be passed to allow for the financial software to process anything
  - The appropriation ordinance has to be done for the County
    - Trustee Barry asked that the spending be reviewed 100% and not just certain ones read by the manager in a consent agenda - all should require an ordinance.
      - Director Parker stated that at the beginning of the budget year, all the blanket PO's will be placed on the agenda that we pay from all year for the regular business needs such as street lights and are listed as not to exceed a certain amount.
      - Manager May asked Trustee Barry as to what he had in mind, as we have placed everything on hold, not to be spent, that is not regular business. So does he want the whole finance ordinance covered at an admin/finance meeting? We can do it however you would like.
    - Trustee Barry said that all the purchase orders that might be normal business regularly moved forward with can't just be done as we have in the past.
      - Manager May said that there will be a new purchase order line that will state if it is an on hold item or regular business. Director Parker confirmed that this will be in the system for FY21.
    - Trustee Barker would like this to be done at the Committee level, we are not funding things due to the funds not being available. These items are part of the budget and we would not go forward without it being needed and have funds

available.

- First, Trustee Addington is disappointed that the packet was not sent to the board.
- Trustee Addington stated that only the board as a whole should be able to take anything off hold. Trustee Liddle said that was what was agreed to at the last meeting.
- Trustee Barker said that we did discuss it but was it decided on?
- Trustee Nero replied that we had agreed that it would be brought to our attention on the agenda.
- Trustee Barry would like everything on hold taken out of the budget so that staff could not sneak things by as they did with the public works building.
- Mayor Gunter replied that everything would be brought to the board, and things had to be there in case of further emergency.
- Trustee Guzzo said that we will be touching on the budget every month as it is all an ongoing topic.
- Mayor Gunter asked that a hard copy of the budget be sent to all trustees so that they would have it on hand going forward.
- Trustee Nero said that it was in the information we received for the workshop.
  - Director Parker informed that it was the same information with the addition of the \$250,000.00 stimulus possibility.

**B.** Mayor Pro Tem Policy - Manager May presented on the need for a policy going forward in case there is a need for long term Mayor Pro Tem. Westmont has had this twice in the last 20 years: Mayor Burke and Mayor Rahn both had to have someone take over, one from passing away in office and one from illness. This becomes an acting Mayor allowance and gives more power than a Mayor Pro Tem. It is laid out by seniority.

- Trustee Barry said that the rumor going around is that the Mayor is not planning to go to a full term after the next election and if that is the case, this might give someone an advantage in an election..

1. Mayor Gunter responded that he planned to remain in office going forward. If he resigned, not due to incapacitation, this would not apply; we should ask the attorney at the board meeting.

**ADJOURN 5:58 p.m.**