

**VILLAGE OF BELLWOOD
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES
February 10, 2025**

The Village of Bellwood conducted a Committee of the Whole meeting on Monday, February 10, 2025, at 3:30p.m. in the Village Board Room at 3200 Washington Boulevard, Bellwood, IL. 60104-1984.

Call to Order

The Committee of the Whole meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Bellwood was called to order by Mayor Harvey at 3:30p.m. on Monday, February 10, 2025.

Roll Call

Those in attendance were Mayor Harvey, Clerk Janel Moreland, Trustees Ciavattone, Boston, Holman, Robinson, Delgado, Nightengale, Willie Norfleet (Finance), Attorney Michael Castaldo.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approve Minutes of last Committee of a Whole Meeting
3. Approve Agenda for Committee of a Whole Meeting
4. Trustee Committee Reports
 - a. Public Works – Trustee Ciavattone, Chairman; Trustee Delgado, Member
 - b. Community Development – Trustee Boston, Chairman; Trustee Robinson, Member
 - c. Quality of Life - Trustee Holman, Chairman; Trustee Boston, Member
 - d. Administration – Trustee Robinson, Chairman; Trustee Ciavattone
 - e. Public Safety – Trustee Delgado, Chairman; Trustee Nightengale, Member
 - f. Finance – Trustee Nightengale, Chairman; Trustee Holman, Member
 - g. Ad Hoc Committees – Traffic Safety
5. Department Head Reports
 - a. Economic Development
 - i. Capital Project
 - ii. Developmental Projects
 - b. Finance Director/Comptroller
 - i. Utility Collection Billing and collection Status
 - ii. Payments of Bills
 - iii. Review of Revenue and Investments
 - iv. Inventory
 - v. Bidding
 - c. Police Department – Police Chief
 - d. Fire Department – Fire Chief
 - e. Director of Public Works
 - i. Street Department
 - ii. Water Department
 - f. Village Engineer
 - g. Building Commissioner
 - h. Director of Human Resources
 - i. Village Attorney/Corporation Counsel
 - i. Litigation (item to be reported on in executive session if required)
 - ii. Contract negotiations (item to be reported on in executive session if required), and
 - iii. Pending legal matters.
6. Clerk's Report – Per Mayor Harvey & Attorney Castaldo, the clerk will no longer give a report and Attorney Castaldo removed it from the agenda effective April 2021.
7. Mayor's Report
8. New Business – Discussion/Agenda Items for upcoming board meeting
9. Unfinished Business
10. Public Comment
11. Adjournment

Mayor Harvey requested a motion to approve the agenda for the February 10, 2025, COW meeting. Trustee Holman made a motion and Trustee Delgado seconded to accept the agenda of the regular COW meeting. Upon voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously to approve February 10, 2025, COW Meeting Agenda.

Mayor Harvey requested a motion to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2025, COW meeting. Trustee Ciavattone made a motion and Trustee Boston seconded to accept the minutes of the last regular COW

meeting. Upon a voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously to approve January 13, 2025, COW meeting minutes.

Committee Reports

Trustee Ciavattone: regular report

Trustee Boston: regular report

Trustee Holman: regular report

Trustee Robinson: regular report

Trustee Delgado: regular report

Trustee Nightengale: regular report

Ad Hoc:

Department Head Reports

Economic Development

Peter Tsiolis reported the following:

A few items under new business and presenting for approval at the board meeting:

- i. On the agenda is 2817 St. Charles Road the village to purchase the vacant property.
- ii. We are recommending to the board a change of order for Pioneer in reference to modifying the Gateway Project.
- iii. The Gateway Project, 71 units are going up on St. Charles Road and 6,00 sq. feet of commercial. They are substantially ahead of schedule.
- iv. Today, there should have been a closing for 241 Bohland Avenue, the 26th house of the Bellwood New Single Family Home initiative. The house sold for \$409,000, which was the asking price.
- v. A few other homes will be going up on 24th Avenue, 2400 sq ft.

Finance Director/Comptroller

Willie Norfleet reported the following:

- i. Utility billing for December 2024 was billed \$637,919 and collection for the same time was \$417,264. Water billing according to the budget was at 100%, Year to date total \$1,562,214. Water sales year to date was at 99% of the budget for a year-to-date total of \$4,873,306. Sewer revenue the sale amount was 102% of the budget and year to date total was \$1,373,289.
- ii. Receivables - Total unpaid bill which includes the total billing for water is \$418,595. For water & sewer is \$1,140,285. The delinquencies are equivalent to 3 months of billing.
- iii. Year to date total for turn-on fees 192 and 189 new owner fees for December 31st.
- iv. December 2024, the cash receipts we collected were \$1,787,931. for a year-to-date total of \$51,357,847.
- v. In January 2025, the village of Bellwood processed invoices in the amount of \$4,911,354 of the total \$3million was used to pay off the balance of the \$12 million bridge loan for the Gateway Project.
- vi. January totals for revenue and expenditures - revenue for the General fund we brought in \$1,395,225 and the expenditures were \$1,173,159 meaning the revenue was over the expenditures by \$222,000. Total is almost a reverse of where we are with water and sewer.
- vii. January the revenue was \$572,846 and we spent \$786,259 for a negative meaning the expenditure exceeded our revenues by \$213,000.
- viii. Interest - We closed the year in December with \$95,290 for a year-to-date total interest earned \$1,142,946. For January the general fund received \$96,801 in interest for a year-to-date total of \$96,801.

Police Department

Chief Allen was absent. Commander Chilson reported the following in his absence:

- i. 2 new officers in the academy who will be graduating in May. 3 officers in Field Training.
- ii. The men's locker room has been completed, and it looks great.
- iii. I interviewed for a Commander Position. There were 7 applicants.
- iv. We have 2 officers retiring; Ronald Hopkins retires today after 20 years as a full-time officer and 4 years as a part time officer. Master Sgt. Buckner is retiring on February 26, 2025, after 19 years as a full-time officer and 2 years in the military.

- v. A new squad car is coming in April.
- vi. I enjoyed going to the black history celebration. Thank you for the award.
- vii. My condolences to the Boston Family, Johnny Boston will be missed.

Fire Department

Fire Chief Reitz reported the following:

- i. As of February 2nd, we had a house fire at 106 Linden Avenue. The residents weren't home at the time and there were no injuries.
- ii. We are also continuing our smoke alarm program. If any residents are interested the fire department will come out and install up to two smoke alarms in your private residence, no multi families. If anyone is interested call the fire department at (708) 547-3525.

Director of Public Works

Superintendent Marty Walker reported the following:

- i. Water main breaks were up last month and this month. We currently have 1 water main break out there now for repair.
- ii. The building department remodel has begun it will be done in 4 weeks. They will be moving to a temporary location within the community room. We will put out signage letting residents know they are in the community.
- iii. The Obelisk on Frederick & Washington is. The contract is supposed to come today. After that is done when we will redo the light.
- iv. The village & school district 88 are looking into entering an intergovernmental agreement where the village will provide salt for District 88, and they will buy it. We will purchase and store the salt for them.

Village Engineer

Chuck Hodges from Hancock Engineering reported the following:

- i. We don't have any items appearing on the consent agenda.
- ii. We have out for bid the traffic signals improvement project, which will improve 5 intersections in town: 3 on 25th Avenue & Oak Street, 25th & St. Charles Road 25th & Washington Blvd. Washington Blvd & Eastern Avenue and Washington Blvd & Bellwood Ave.
- iii. The active projects are:
 - a. Maywood Drive Street Resurfacing Project, which includes traffic signals improvement project. Foundation is in place and will be installing the poles.
 - b. Cook County Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application is due March 21, 2025. We anticipate submitting applications for CDBG and Invest in Cook Grants.

Building Commissioner

Jim Stock reported the following:

- i. We have two items on the agenda, one from the planning commission and one from the zoning board.
- ii. 837 Mannheim Road was before the planning commission. Requesting a conditional use have his contracting/painting business at that location. They are requesting a variance on their property for parking.
- iii. The zoning board met for 34 Davis to have their sign on the south side of the pole. Driving up the street you can't see the sign on the face of the building.
- iv. The Bellwood Gateway project is moving really quickly. Working on the 3rd & 4th floors on the south building. Framing the 1st floor and should start tomorrow putting the walls up on the 2nd floor of the north building.

BOEM/Homeland Security –

Mike Sabel reported the following:

- i. We assisted the fire and police department with the fire at 106 Linden Avenue.

Director of Human Resources

Tonita LeShore reported the following:

- i. The Village staff along with our engineers met with CIS this week. They are the consultants for the Phase II part of the climate resiliency plan. This phase II included us trying to decide what projects we will use the \$2+million dollars that has been awarded us from Cook County. We had the pleasure of having the mayor in the meeting with us, so he also knows what our thought process is. Once we

come to a final decision we will move forward with that project because it has to be completed by 2026.

- ii. I did speak with our insurance company regarding cyber security training for all of our employees, especially for the suspect emails that pop up and we go to click on it and we're thinking they're legit. We want to make sure our employees avoid that.

Village Clerk – At Mayor Harvey's request the clerk will no longer give a report and Attorney Castaldo removed it from the agenda. The Clerk is no longer given the opportunity to give a report.

Mayor

Mayor Harvey reported the following:

- i. Thank everybody that volunteered and came out to the Black History Celebration.
- ii. Gateway Project is moving in a great direction. More people are calling to reserve a spot in the building.

New Businesses

Attorney Castaldo reported the following:

All items have been reported on.

Unfinished Business

None.

Public Comment

Mayor Harvey requested a motion to open the floor for Public Comment. Trustee Delgado made a motion and Trustee Ciavattone seconded to open the floor for public comment.

All Trustees were in favor of opening the floor for public comment. Upon a voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously. Mayor Harvey declared the floor for public comment open.

Arnetta Watkins – How much will the apartment go for rent at the new building? **Mayor** – they will be market rate apartments so I can't tell you the exact number, but it will be whatever the market is.

Watkins – That's going to be high. **Mayor** – Well whatever the market is, like houses.

Watkins – Since you mentioned houses, do we have to get anymore big houses built because my little house isn't worth \$400 something thousand for the new houses. It means that when they assess my property taxes, they assess it based on some of the new properties. **Mayor** – No no, you're not going to get assessed at an 8-bedroom house if you live in a 3-bedroom house, but let me say this, the question was do we have to continue to build big houses. The residents and the citizens want big houses and that's the way we're going because as you can see, we've sold every house that has been built. We want to bring new residents in, and we want to continue moving forward. It's actually going to increase the value of all of our homes.

Watkins – It's not increasing the value of our homes. We need another big house like we need a hole in our head. If we got some more businesses that will offset some of what we're eating. **Mayor** – What are we eating? **Watkins** – These high taxes. **Mayor** – You do know with these high taxes that the village of Bellwood has not raised its portion on taxes. **Watkins** – I beg your pardon and the difference. **Mayor** – You can beg it. **Watkins** – When I look at my itemized bill and I look line for line. I do see where there has been an increase on the item line. **Mayor** – Do you know how those increase happen? If you have someone living next to you and they're a disabled veteran and they stop paying taxes, then other people taxes are raised. Our levy is the same but all of us has to pitch in. If someone becomes a senior or gets the senior freeze. We, at the village, still only ask for the same number. **Watkins** – Numbers tell the truth. **Peter** – the levy hasn't changed at all, it's been \$16,164,000. The way the county treats the taxes line item by line item depends on the property. The Village's portion has not changed a single penny since the mayor's been in office. Now if you want to talk about history. **Watkins** – I don't want to talk about history, I'm talking about right now. **Peter** – the village has not raised its tax levy since this administration. It's been the same.

Watkins – I'm not saying the village raised its levy, all I'm saying is when I hear Bellwood hasn't raised its taxes and when I look at an itemize line and I see an increase for village of Bellwood. **Peter** – there are other properties right next door, and their line item goes down. **Watkins** – I can't talk about anyone else; I just have to talk about what's in my house cause I'm a resident of Bellwood.

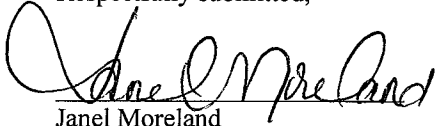
Mayor Harvey requested a motion to close the floor for Public Comment. Trustee Ciavattone made a motion and Trustee Holman seconded to close the floor for public comment.

All Trustees were in favor of closing the floor. Upon a voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously. Mayor Harvey declared the floor for public comment closed.

Adjournment

Mayor Harvey requested a motion to adjourn the Committee of The Whole meeting at 3:55pm. Motion made by Trustee Holman seconded by Trustee Boston to adjourn the meeting. Upon a voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously. Mayor Harvey declared the meeting adjourned, with no further business to come before this Board, this meeting stands adjourned at 3:55p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janel Moreland", written over a horizontal line.

Janel Moreland
Village Clerk