

1 **MINUTES OF THE VILLAGE OF OLYMPIA FIELDS**  
2 **MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
3 **Held on January 14, 2019**  
4

5 The Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on Monday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019, at the  
6 Linzey D. Jones Municipal Building and was called to order by Village President Sterling M.  
7 Burke at 7:00 P.M. The assembly recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Village  
8 Administrator/Deputy Village Clerk, Cynthia Saenz called the roll.  
9

10 Present: Trustees – Gibson, Oliver, Pennington, Thomas, Hudson, and Matz  
11 Village President Sterling M. Burke  
12 Village Administrator/Deputy Village Clerk, Cynthia Saenz  
13

14 Absent: None.  
15

16 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**  
17

18 **Motion by Trustee Pennington, second by Trustee Oliver to Dispense with the Reading of**  
19 **the Minutes from the December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Workshop, and the December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Board**  
20 **Meeting, and Approve the Minutes from the December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Workshop, and the**  
21 **December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Board Meeting as Presented.**

22 **Voice Vote: All Ayes Motion Carried.**  
23

24 **BILLS FOR APPROVAL:**  
25

26 **Motion by Trustee Matz, second by Trustee Thomas to Approve the Payment of Bills for**  
27 **January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019, in the Total Amount of \$429,649.05.**

28 **Roll Call: Ayes (6-0) Motion Carried**  
29

30 **ADMINISTRATION REPORTS:**  
31

32 **Report of the Village Administrator** – Village Administrator Saenz stated that she did not have  
33 a Formal Report this evening.  
34

35 **TRUSTEE REPORTS:**  
36

37 **Public Safety – Trustee Gibson** – Trustee Gibson stated that she had some information to go to  
38 the residents, as well as the Board of Trustees. The Public Safety Committee met last  
39 Wednesday. She stated that to her surprise, we have been offered that the Police Department  
40 could have body cameras and car cameras. We are happy about that. That will help our police  
41 officers to have the right information when something happens. Trustee Gibson stated that  
42 hopefully, nothing will happen.  
43

44 **Beautification/Building – Trustee Hudson** –  
45

46 **2018 – Holiday Award Presentation – Beautification Committee** – Trustee Hudson stated that  
47 the Beautification Committee went around and looked at the various homes and determined the

1 residents who will receive first, second and third place with the Holiday Awards. She asked  
2 Susan Moroney to come up and make the presentations.

3

4 Mrs. Moroney thanked the Board for their support over the years for the Beautification  
5 Committee's award programs. Mrs. Moroney thanked the residents because if it wasn't for them  
6 decorating their homes, we wouldn't have a program. Mrs. Moroney recognized the members of  
7 their Committee: She stated that Belinda Lowry is the only other member who is here tonight  
8 besides Trustee Hudson. Other members are: Sue Gowen, Evelyn Owens, and Naomi  
9 Amegashie. Mrs. Moroney thanked the Department of Public Works for their efforts, who helped  
10 them with sign placements on short turnaround times.

11

12 Mrs. Moroney stated that the first-place award is in The Trails Subdivision. The award goes to  
13 the Stubbs Family. (There was a round of applause). Mrs. Moroney presented the Stubbs Family  
14 with a Certificate, and a \$100.00 Gift Certificate from Walgreens. (There was a round of  
15 applause).

16

17 Mrs. Moroney stated that the second-place award is in The Trails Subdivision. The award goes to  
18 the Chana Family. (There was a round of applause). Mrs. Moroney presented the Chana Family  
19 with a Certificate, and a \$75.00 Gift Certificate from Walgreens. (There was a round of  
20 applause). Mrs. Chana stated that they wanted to thank the Committee and they love the sign.  
21 (There was a round of applause).

22

23 Mrs. Moroney stated that the third-place winner is in The Greens Subdivision. The award goes to  
24 the Cotton Family. (There was a round of applause). The Cotton Family was not present to  
25 receive their award. Mrs. Shirley Johnson, who is the Vice President of The Greens Homeowners  
26 Association, accepted the award for the Cotton Family. Mrs. Johnson stated that they made their  
27 block so beautiful. (There was a round of applause). The Cotton Family received a Certificate,  
28 along with a \$50.00 Gift Card to Walgreens. (There was a round of applause).

29

30 Trustee Hudson stated that she received some calls because people worked very hard decorating  
31 their yards and their houses, and they questioned why they were not chosen. She stated if you  
32 want to meet with us so we can talk about how we go about choosing the homes, they will be  
33 happy to meet with them at any time. She stated that you can give us a call, and we will talk  
34 about what we look at as a whole. You may have the most beautiful lights around your house,  
35 but it has to coordinate with everything else. She wants everyone to be aware of that. They try  
36 not to overlook the beauty of any particular residence. We will send certificates out recognizing  
37 that we did look at your house and it was beautifully decorated, however, there were some that  
38 had the total look.

39

40 Mrs. Moroney stated that all of the Homeowners Association Presidents are the ones that submit  
41 the names to the Beautification Committee. In addition to the top three, six other homes are also  
42 included. All will get a recognition for their efforts. It is not that just the top three get recognized.  
43 Everyone that has been nominated by your Homeowners Association is recognized.

44

45 Trustee Oliver thanked the Beautification Committee. He knows that has to be a very hard task  
46 to go around the entire Village and select three out of all of the nominations. He knows how  
47 much work that is. He stated that you add a great deal of subscribing to the President's three

1 basic tenets: Maintaining the charm and the beauty of Olympia Fields. He stated that for your  
2 part in keeping people involved and providing incentives for us to do these kinds of things, he  
3 thinks is very important. He stated that you are to be commended. He inquired whether or not  
4 Arlene Burke is still a member of the Committee. Mrs. Moroney stated yes. She is the Chair.  
5 Trustee Oliver asked that that be passed onto Mrs. Burke.

6  
7 Trustee Oliver asked the Committee to consider offering one of these awards to our businesses.  
8 Trustee Hudson stated that we do that as well. Mrs. Moroney stated that the Business Award was  
9 begun last year. She stated that homes were picked for the summer landscape awards. The  
10 awardee was Davis Staffing on Lincoln Highway. Trustee Oliver stated great. He did not know  
11 that.

12  
13 Trustee Oliver stated that we have a lot of very talented people that you are all aware of in the  
14 Village. One of them is an award-winning journalist by the name of John Fountain. He is a Sun-  
15 Times columnist. He has written many stories about Olympia Fields. When Mr. Fountain's mom  
16 disappeared some years ago, he wrote an article about Lars. He stated that Lars found her. It  
17 moved Mr. Fountain to write a story about Lars. On December 24<sup>th</sup>, he wrote an article about this  
18 very thing. Trustee Oliver thought that the Beautification Committee, as well as those who were  
19 awarded tonight should hear excerpts from what he wrote. He won't read the whole thing, just  
20 the excerpts of what he wrote. He believes that everyone will get a kick out of it.

21  
22 Trustee Oliver stated that the article is called: "My block's friendly war of the Christmas lights,  
23 and the lovely meaning of it all." "Three radiant white reindeer plus a giant glowing black  
24 Santa ... Yeah, that'll get 'em, I say, plotting my full Christmas lights attack. I'm coming hard  
25 this year, going for the jugular..." My wife laughs. I can read her mind: "Men... Nope, war.

26  
27 Except there are no real enemies in this war. It's a friendly unspoken rivalry between my south  
28 suburban neighbors, begun with a peek and a nod and the opening shot.

29  
30 A good brother down the street always draws first blood." Trustee Oliver stated that he lives on  
31 Tenuta Court. It is a cul-de-sac of 10-houses. Of the ten houses, three of them won those  
32 Landscape Award Nominees. Mr. Fountain is looking out his window at these three nominees.  
33 He says, "Each year, I see them working hard incognito (it seems to me), getting an early start,  
34 laying the finishing touches while the rest of us (speaking mainly for myself here) recover from  
35 stuffing ourselves.

36  
37 In my reconnaissance, I spy my neighbor planting his lights day, trimming his bushes and trees.  
38 With pastoral-like care, he adores his front lawn with reindeer and assorted accoutrements.

39  
40 Then suddenly, one night after Thanksgiving, he illuminates the block in twinkling meteoric  
41 light. His gutters drip with white sparkling icicle splendor, shaming us – at least some of us—  
42 into stringing together our own Christmas creations.

43  
44 Apparently, we have official holiday light judges who troll the neighborhood each year covertly  
45 (I have never knowingly seen one). Without speaking, apparently in the middle of the night, they  
46 inconspicuously plant the top award certificate on the lawn of recipients. I – I mean we – won  
47 one year.

1 That year, I lit all the bushes and enlisted my landscaper, who climbed our statuesque evergreen  
2 and strung white lights up to its roughly 20-something-foot peak. Man, you turn the corner onto  
3 our block, from either end, it was like the North Star or an angel had descended from heaven. It  
4 was like ComEd had infused the tree with special glow juice. It was like the spirit of Christmas  
5 kissed it and ignited it with glory... Yeah, I got 'em that year.”

6  
7 Trustee Oliver stated congratulations to all of the winners. If you want to see the full article,  
8 Google John W. Fountain. He is a really good journalist. It came out December 24<sup>th</sup>.

9  
10 Village President Burke stated that he knows it was a very hard task to pick these winners. Every  
11 subdivision turns in their recommendation. When he was the President of their Homeowners  
12 Association in The Greens, we had a point system. It took quite a while to get everybody to come  
13 to an agreement on who the winners are. There are a lot of people who did not win, as Trustee  
14 Hudson stated. We are very proud of our town and all of the people who have done things to try  
15 to light up their neighborhood. The holidays are a special period of time. We need to continue to  
16 do that. The competition will continue in the summer season. Let your neighbors know that there  
17 will be people out walking around, and driving around, looking at the best lawns, and the best  
18 presentation of their property.

19  
20 Trustee Hudson stated that there are at least two areas that did not submit their information to the  
21 Committee. The Beautification Committee sends the information to the Presidents of the  
22 Homeowners Associations. If they don't get anything from your Homeowners Association, they  
23 still go and look through that subdivision. If you are not nominated by the President of your  
24 Homeowners Association, the Beautification Committee cannot do anything other than send you  
25 a certificate and recognize that you did have a beautiful home. You will not win the gift cards,  
26 but you would get recognition. Make sure that you go to the President of your Homeowners  
27 Association and have them submit the names in the future.

28  
29 **Public Works – Trustee Matz** – Trustee Matz stated that she did not have a Formal Report this  
30 evening.

31  
32 **Education – Trustee Oliver** – Trustee Oliver stated that last month he spoke on one of the  
33 hottest agenda items for the Educational Commission, which is the building of the website. They  
34 want to develop a world-class website, specifically for the children and the parents of the Village  
35 of Olympia Fields. It's a place where you will go to for resources for our children. It's something  
36 that we want to develop that is interactive. It's something that we must have the participation  
37 from the residents of Olympia Fields. We are going to try to get as much participation from those  
38 outside of the Village. We know that there is a wealth of events, and affairs that our children can  
39 engage in, which is going to enhance their education. It's our hope to have a folder of sorts,  
40 where you can send this information to.

41  
42 Trustee Oliver stated that he would need the Village President's assistance. Trustee Oliver stated  
43 that we have a budget in which we can pay someone to be our webmaster. After speaking with  
44 the Village Administrator, they reached a conclusion that this is something that they are going to  
45 have to do outside of the Village and not use in-house talent. We know that you have a  
46 relationship with Dr. Thomas at Rich Central. Another option is to use a student from Governors  
47 State who is majoring in something like this and give them a stipend to maintain the website. It is

1 not just the development of the website, but the maintenance of it. He would like to have further  
2 discussion with the Village President offline about how we might go about doing this, and then  
3 submit it to the Educational Commission to review and move from there. We are soliciting  
4 information to go on the resource part of the website. There is more information to come on what  
5 the website will look like. You will be very proud of it.

6  
7 Village President Burke inquired whether or not this is just for the high school, or for all of the  
8 schools. Trustee Oliver stated that it is for all of the schools, from kindergarten through college.  
9 If you know of some event that any child within our 60461-zip code will benefit from, we want  
10 to include it. He stated that not everything is in the school. They just can't provide enough  
11 resources. There are a lot more resources out there collectively. We believe that learning starts in  
12 the home. We want to provide you with all of those resources so that you have more than ample  
13 information in which to choose from to educate your child.

14  
15 Village President Burke stated that the Board knows that we are in the planning stage for next  
16 year's budget. Any ideas that people have, they are welcome to bring them forward and this is  
17 one of them. The public is invited to come to a discussion on those items that we want to include  
18 in next year's budget. During the next two-months or so, we will be going through a process in  
19 which the Finance Committee, and each one of the liaisons with their respective Committees,  
20 will be bringing forth those items that are near and dear to their heart that we need to consider.

21  
22 Village President Burke stated that on Wednesday there is a workshop that the public is welcome  
23 to come to look at, and prioritize the Capital Projects for the Village. That covers anything from  
24 roads, to water projects, to all kinds of things that will be discussed. The staff has created a list  
25 that they believe we have to spend money on. The Board will go through the process and  
26 prioritize it, and it will be put into the budget. We won't be able to do all of the things. We will  
27 be able to do some things based on the money we have been able to squeeze out of the budget,  
28 and we will be prepared to do more for next year. The public is welcome to come Wednesday, at  
29 7 o'clock. The next step is the Finance Department is going to present to the Board the actual  
30 Capital Projects. Village President Burke stated that what Trustee Oliver brought up, we will  
31 take it into consideration. Trustee Oliver thanked Village President Burke.

32  
33 **Finance – Trustee Pennington – November Financial Statement** - Trustee Pennington stated  
34 that we are now in the seventh-month of our 2018/2019 Budget. Tonight, he will be reporting on  
35 the results regarding revenues and expenses for the Village of Olympia Fields for the period  
36 commencing May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018, through November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The General Fund revenues for this  
37 period exceeded budget projections by \$128,771.00, or 4% of Budget Plan. Budgeted revenues  
38 for the period were \$3,535,861.00. Actual revenues received for the period were \$3,664,631.00.  
39 The General Fund expenses were favorable to budget projections by \$147,575.00, or 4% of  
40 Budget Plan. Budgeted expenses for this period were \$3,415,547.00. Actual expenses incurred  
41 for the period were \$3,267,973.00. This resulted in a favorable fiscal year to date actual plus  
42 encumbrance in the General Fund of \$396,658.00. The overall impact to the budget, is a positive  
43 \$276,345.00.

44  
45 Trustee Pennington stated that water revenue fees for the period were unfavorable to budget by  
46 \$172,467.00, or 11% of Plan. Budgeted revenue for the period was \$1,625,863.00, while actual  
47 realized revenue was \$1,453,395.00. Water expenses were favorable to budget, by \$12,955.00, or

1 1% of Plan. Budgeted expenses for the period were \$1,092,484.00, a difference of \$12,955.00,  
2 1% favorable to Budget Plan. The Fiscal Year to Date actual, plus encumbrance, is a positive  
3 \$373,866.00. The overall impact to the budget for this seven-month period is a negative  
4 \$159,513.00.

5  
6 Trustee Pennington stated that with respect to the Sewer Fund, Sewer Fund revenue fees for  
7 November were unfavorable to budget by \$87,197.00. Budgeted revenue for seven-months was  
8 \$1,038,833.00, while actual realized revenue was \$951,637.00, or 8% unfavorable to Budget  
9 Plan. Sewer Fund expenses were favorable to budget by \$36,650.00, or 5% of Plan. Budgeted  
10 expenses were \$784,754.00, while the actual incurred expenses were \$748,104.00. This resulted  
11 in a fiscal year to date actual plus encumbrance in the Sewer Fund of \$203,533.00. The overall  
12 impact to our budget for this seventh-month period however, was a negative \$50,547.00.

13  
14 Trustee Pennington stated that our Non-Home Rule Sales Tax Fund, (NHR Fund), realized  
15 revenues from Non-Home Rule Sales Tax exceeded budget projections by \$8,125.00, or 2%  
16 favorable to budget. Our budgeted amount in this line item was set at \$355,833.00. The Village  
17 realized \$363,959.00 in actual Non-Home Rule Sales Tax Revenue. Expenses in this line item  
18 were budgeted at \$124,014.00. Incurred expenses were on budget for this period. This resulted in  
19 a fund surplus in the amount of \$231,819.00. Our Fiscal Year to date Actual Plus Encumbrance  
20 in the Non-Home Rule Sales Tax Fund, is a positive \$239,944.00 for the seven-month period.

21  
22 Trustee Pennington stated that if you want to see specific detail, you have that in your Board  
23 Packet on a line by line item covering all areas of those four major funds.

24  
25 Village President Burke inquired of Mrs. Zigras whether or not she had the top sheet that shows  
26 the fund balances. He knows that she sent it out to the Board Members. Mrs. Zigras stated that  
27 she does not have it with her. Village President Burke stated that when we do the Capital Project  
28 planning on Wednesday, those of you that won't be able to attend, the Finance Department has  
29 done projections for the General Fund, the Water Fund, the Sewer Fund, and the Non-Home  
30 Rule Sales Tax Fund. There are four, dollar amounts in each one of those. Those dollar amounts  
31 are what the Village will be able to use potentially to do these Capital Projects. He encouraged  
32 everyone to attend the workshop. The information that Trustee Pennington presented, is  
33 summarized and we will have that information for our discussion on Wednesday.

34  
35 Mrs. Zigras stated that for Wednesday she is looking at the Fund Balance from Fiscal Year 2018.  
36 She is also adding in the chart our budgeted Fiscal Year 2019 surpluses. The Fiscal Year 2019  
37 deficit or surplus will be ready sometime in February. The chart shows a Fund Balance, less what  
38 we are suppose to keep per our funding policy in reserves. The rest we can use for Capital  
39 Projects. It's excess funds that can be used for Capital Projects. A lot of Municipalities take this  
40 excess reserve and they move it into a Capital Projects Fund, and then you can keep track of your  
41 projects. As a Municipality, you shouldn't have a ton of money sitting in your General Fund  
42 because that means you are overtaxing. If you can show that these excess funds over your policy,  
43 if you have scheduled projects that you need to go through and implement, that's what we should  
44 be doing with our Capital Projects Funds.

45  
46 Village President Burke stated that Trustee Pennington just presented the funds as of November  
47 30<sup>th</sup>. The exercise on Wednesday is to look at these Capital Projects and look at things that we

1 can do. One of the objectives of his administration is not to have to borrow any money, and to be  
2 able to fund projects out of money that we are able to save, and to put money in the right places  
3 without having to go out and borrow money, because then you have to pay it back. We want to  
4 be able to do it with our own money. We will have money to do some of these projects. We will  
5 discuss what the projects might be, and the funds that we will have available to do so.

6  
7 Mrs. Zigras stated how we will pay for these projects and how much excess reserves we have in  
8 each fund.

9  
10 Village Administrator Saenz stated that the other thing for the Trustees to consider when they are  
11 reviewing this information, some of the Capital Projects we have included in our budget have  
12 carried over from past years. One of the decisions that we have to make for the exercise, is to  
13 prioritize those Capital Projects and make sure that we understand which ones are the most  
14 important so that we can see what we can self-fund.

15  
16 **Sikich Auditing Services Proposal** – Trustee Pennington stated that in your Board Packet is the  
17 Sikich Proposal for auditing services for 2019/2020. Sikich has been our independent auditor  
18 since 2006. They have done a marvelous job in performing auditing services for the Village.  
19 They are comprehensive. They are professional. They leave no stone unturned when it comes to  
20 what the Village’s responsibilities are with regard to its finances. The detailed information that  
21 you have in your Board Packet is nothing more than an executive summary of the services that  
22 Sikich provides.

23  
24 Trustee Pennington stated that on Page 15 of the proposal, it outlines the fee proposal that they  
25 suggest that the Village consider for the years 2019 through 2021. They presented to us a  
26 multiyear proposal through 2021. Trustee Pennington and the Finance Committee are  
27 recommending that we do a one-year commitment to Sikich, and perhaps in April of this year,  
28 we do a Cost Benefit Analysis with other auditing firms to get a flavor of what is out there.  
29 Sikich has been with us since 2006. It makes sense for us to look at outside auditing services to  
30 see what we can get for the best bang for our buck given the dynamics that we are faced with in  
31 the Village. The recommendation is that we engage Sikich for the 2019 season this year and then  
32 we look for additional services in the forwarding years. The proposal that they propose is kind of  
33 two-fold: 1. Is the total base proposal cost including a single audit for 2019. That is \$33,975.00.  
34 They also propose an auditing cost of \$29,175.00, which excludes a single audit. Trustee  
35 Pennington spoke with the Finance Director, and they are in agreement that we don’t need a  
36 single audit for this year. The single audit figure of \$4,800.00 would not be included. Our overall  
37 cost if one were to pare it down, would come to about \$24,900.00 for 2019. The only thing that  
38 we would be responsible for in terms of payouts would be the financial statements and the  
39 management letter, the GASB Statement No. 75, and any future GASB pronouncements that  
40 might come out, and the TIF compliance. The Police Pension of \$4,275.00 is paid out of the  
41 Police Pension. It does not come out of our General Fund. If we need a single audit, that cost will  
42 be incurred and included. At this particular point in time, we don’t think we need a single audit at  
43 this juncture. Our overall costs would be in the neighborhood of \$24,900.00 for the 2019 Audit  
44 season. Trustee Pennington stated that he recommends that we engage Sikich for one more year,  
45 and then we go out and seek additional proposals from other auditing firms for the forwarding  
46 years.

47

1 Trustee Thomas stated that she agrees with the recommendation from the Finance Committee.  
2 We have had them since 2006. That's a long time, not taking away from their work. She thinks  
3 that we should switch. It hasn't been too long since they just completed the audit that they did in  
4 2018. She thought that we could go without doing another one in 2019, and make that part of the  
5 new evaluation RFP process, or however you want to do it for a new one in 2020.  
6

7 Trustee Pennington stated that our audits are annual. Trustee Thomas stated that she knows that,  
8 but she thought they just did one last year. Mrs. Zigras stated that they just presented the report.  
9 They are out here in July. The report is given in October or November. Mrs. Zigras stated that  
10 we are a little behind the eight ball to do an RFP or get quotes, and implement for the 2019 audit.  
11 Trustee Thomas stated that she agrees. She agrees with the recommendation without an audit for  
12 the \$29,175.50 excluding the single audit. And then we prepare for an RFP process for 2020.  
13

14 Village Administrator Saenz stated that the single audit is based on the amount of revenues. We  
15 have to include it. We will include it in the budget, but based on the revenues that we are  
16 receiving through grants and Federal Funds, we don't foresee having a single audit. Mrs. Zigras  
17 stated that in the budget we will include the \$29,900.00 less the Police Pension. Village  
18 Administrator Saenz stated less the \$4,275.00, because that is paid for by the Pension Fund. She  
19 stated that they have included everything. Trustee Thomas stated she understands.  
20

21 Trustee Oliver stated that he would defer to the Committee and whatever recommendation that  
22 you make. He stated that your opening statement talked about having dealt with them since 2006,  
23 and they have been stellar to the Village. Trustee Oliver inquired whether or not this is the first  
24 time that they have given a multiyear proposal. Trustee Pennington stated no. We have had  
25 multiyear contracts with them. Trustee Oliver inquired how does this rate differ from the last  
26 three, or the previous five-years. Is it pretty much in the same ballpark? Mrs. Zigras stated that  
27 their increase is approximately 2% from last year. Trustee Oliver stated that he would defer to  
28 the Committee. He was just curious why we would change.  
29

30 Trustee Pennington stated that it is always good to see what other services we can get for the size  
31 of our Village. All of that is predicated upon the amount of revenues that we take in, as well as  
32 the amount of our expenses that we pay out. He stated notwithstanding the fact that they have  
33 done a wonderful job for us in the 13 or 14-years that they have been our auditing company, it is  
34 always good to see what other services might benefit the Village going forward. That's not to say  
35 that we won't go back to them. This is a way that we can see what other auditing firms can  
36 provide for the Village of Olympia Fields.  
37

38 Trustee Pennington stated regarding Wednesday's meeting, the Finance Committee will be in  
39 attendance at that meeting. He just wanted to make that point. It is going to be a joint meeting  
40 with the Finance Committee, as well as the Board of Trustees.

41 **Motion by Trustee Pennington, second by Trustee Thomas to Accept the Sikich Auditing**  
42 **Services Proposal for One (1) Year.**

43 **Roll Call: Ayes (6-0) Motion Carried**  
44

45 **Human Resources – Trustee Thomas –** Trustee Thomas stated that she did not have a Formal  
46 Report this evening.  
47



1 **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

2  
3 Village President Burke opened Public Comment at 7:48 P.M.

4  
5 **Continued Concerns on the Fence and the Wall by Maynegaite** – Dr. Faye N. Hughes stated  
6 that she is the secretary for the Maynegaite Homeowners Association. She has a letter for the  
7 Village President regarding the fence and the wall along Lincoln Highway. Dr. Hughes stated  
8 that Miss Constance Means, who is the President of the Homeowners Association of  
9 Maynegaite, gave a report regarding the wall and the fence along Maynegaite on Lincoln  
10 Highway. We were promised for several meetings that you would have someone come out and  
11 evaluate it and repair it, or replace it. It has not been done to this date. We need to meet with you  
12 in regards to this because our property value is going down.

13  
14 Village President Burke stated that he will give the letter to Cindy. She runs the day-to-day. He  
15 asked Mr. McDonnell to come up and address where we are in this whole thing. Dr. Hughes  
16 stated that he did that the last time we were here in November to no avail. Village President  
17 Burke stated that he can give you an update on where we are. He inquired who owns this  
18 property. Dr. Hughes stated that she believes that it is owned by the Village. She is not sure.  
19 Village President Burke stated that it is not the Village. It belongs to the people who own The  
20 Reserves. It does not belong to the Village. That property is not really part of the Village, nor is  
21 it part of your Homeowners Association. It belongs to a third-party. That is another independent  
22 organization.

23  
24 Dr. Hughes stated that we have fence along Maynegaite. There's a fence line. There is debris,  
25 paper, and trash along that part. That belongs to the Village of Olympia Fields.

26  
27 Mr. McDonnell stated that she is talking about two fences. There is a partial stone fence that is in  
28 front of The Reserves of Maynegaite. That separates The Reserves of Maynegaite residential  
29 property from Lincoln Highway into the residential area. There is a wood section of fence that  
30 goes from Indiana all the way to the dialysis center on Brookwood. The wooden fences belong to  
31 individual homeowners. Those homeowners have been cited. They will most likely be in court in  
32 April if they do not have those fences fixed. Those fences will be repaired. They have always  
33 repaired them before. There are a few sections that have just fallen down from the snow. There  
34 are two sections that just fell over.

35  
36 Mr. McDonnell stated that the stone fence is property that is owned by a bank. The bank is  
37 responsible for repairing that fence. We have not found out who the bank is, because there is an  
38 attorney that is involved that is tying it up in the courts. As soon as we find out who that is, we  
39 will go ahead and move forward with that. We have had an evaluation on the stone fence. There  
40 is \$56,000.00 worth of repairs that are needed on that fence. The Village doesn't have it in their  
41 budget to serve a warrant and repair that fence. That's something we may want to talk about in a  
42 staff meeting, or with the Board in a Joint Session with the Finance Committee. Currently, there  
43 are several sections that are, and can become dangerous. We are going to have to remove those  
44 sections. There will be a space from one section of fence to the other section of fence, similar to  
45 the section that is right by the Metra Station.

46

1 Village President Burke inquired this fence that is not ours, can we tear this fence down. He  
2 stated that if one section is \$56,000.00 to repair it, if we tear the whole fence all the way down,  
3 what's the downside of that. It's not our property to do that.  
4

5 Mr. McDonnell stated that it is not our property to do that, but we can certainly do it when it is  
6 dangerous. When there's an emergency situation that it could fall, there is a public walk there  
7 that we have to be concerned with, and we have taken down a section already. There are several  
8 other sections that are going to be needed to be taken down as well.  
9

10 Dr. Hughes inquired what section are you talking about. She didn't see anything that was taken  
11 down.  
12

13 Mr. McDonnell stated that there is a section that partially fell down, and we took it down. We  
14 removed all of the debris. Dr. Hughes inquired whether or not that is by the Metra. Mr.  
15 McDonnell stated yes. It is between Indiana and the Metra Station.  
16

17 Village President Burke stated that you suggested that we meet to discuss this. We can do that to  
18 see that we are all on the same page, to make sure that we are all in agreement and we are talking  
19 about the same fence. Those fences are not the Village of Olympia Fields. We will act for safety  
20 purposes. We will act if it is a nuisance. Then we can tear it down. We have to know first who  
21 actually owns it. Part of the issue is, there is some question about who actually owns this fence.  
22

23 Mr. McDonnell stated that is correct. The property is in foreclosure. It's just a matter of when a  
24 Judge makes a Judgment to put that property on the market for a Judicial Sale. Generally, when  
25 it goes to a Judicial Sale, the bank that did finance that property is the highest bidder on the  
26 property, and then they get that property back as ordered by a Judge.  
27

28 Village President Burke stated that we can get offline, and we can setup a time where John,  
29 Cynthia, and if he is here, he will be involved with the meeting. Dr. Hughes stated that she would  
30 like the Village President to be at the meeting, because she thinks it is vital to their Homeowners  
31 Association. Village President Burke stated that's fine. He wants to make sure that she gets a  
32 report back. Mr. McDonnell looked into this. We discussed it. You want to know where we are  
33 today on this situation. Dr. Hughes stated exactly. That's why he asked John to give her a report.  
34 We will get together with a date that we can all agree to. Dr. Hughes stated that she would like to  
35 have this report in writing as well. Village President Burke stated that it's part of the minutes.  
36 We will have a written response to the letter. Dr. Hughes stated thank you. She stated that she  
37 will still be back if there is nothing done.  
38

39 **Additional Comments on Maynegaite** - Miss Constance Means stated that she is the President  
40 of the Maynegaite Homeowners Association. She stated that what she is hearing in the dialog  
41 here, is that as a resident of Olympia Fields, people who purchased property can allow that  
42 property to diminish her home value by the appearance of some structures on their property, and  
43 she is not protected. That's what she is hearing. She stated that if she is not protected, no one in  
44 Olympia Fields is protected.  
45

46 Village President Burke stated that we do have Ordinances that we can fine people who are not  
47 keeping up their property. The inspectors go out and do that. On a change of ownership, they do

1 that automatically. In this particular case, The Reserves, the developer who was going to build it,  
2 built one building, and the whole project failed. He believes that someone else picked up the  
3 project. The question is who actually owns the property today.

4  
5 Mr. McDonnell stated yes. They are losing the property to the bank that financed them. Village  
6 President Burke stated that our ability is to fine, put a lien on that property, and then once we do  
7 that, whoever owns that they are responsible. Even if we do some work on it, the owner of the  
8 property is responsible to payoff that lien before they can do anything with the property. Mr.  
9 McDonnell stated that is correct. Village President Burke stated that if it was a homeowner that  
10 was doing this, then we can fine them. We do fine people. If it's a change of ownership, we do  
11 not allow the next owner to move in, which is basically rendering the property of no value until  
12 they fix it. In this case, there is one building on the whole property.

13  
14 Miss Means stated that is her concern. We are talking about home ownership. We have things in  
15 place to put them in check. This anonymous bank, who owns this property, who has that entire  
16 area up there looking like a mess, who we are not even picking up the trash out there, we are not  
17 doing anything. That's not a good look. It's not a good look at all. She inquired going forward,  
18 what can we look for to protect us as homeowners and residents of this Village. Properties  
19 change hands to banks all of the time. That's the nature of the beast. If we are going to be  
20 protected, we need to be protected. It's not a joke to own a home in Maynegate and have that  
21 situation going on out there on Lincoln Highway. The other eyesore is the trash, and the broken  
22 trees and the shrubbery that's out there. She stated on whose property that is again, that's a  
23 problem. She comes from the City of Chicago. She watched Woodlawn deteriorate. She knows  
24 what happens when we have people who come in who are slumlords. She doesn't care if it is a  
25 bank or who it is. She doesn't like what is happening on that corridor. She doesn't think that  
26 anyone sitting here should like it because we all live in the Village. We all have something  
27 diminished on our homes already. She stated that what happened in 2008 took away some of our  
28 wealth. We don't need a bank, anonymous or otherwise, or any other entity coming into our  
29 community, buying up property, or assuming ownership. If they assume ownership they ought to  
30 be held to the standard of the Village. That's her and everybody else. That situation needs to be  
31 remedied now, ASAP. That's not getting any better. She doesn't feel any better when she drives  
32 west and she hits Wolf Road and she sees all of that beautiful stuff going on over there. We need  
33 to be serious about what we do. We really need to address this. It's not something to just look up  
34 where we are going to go away. She doesn't want to go away. She doesn't want to go away for  
35 the sake of the Village. She stated that you might not like what she has to bring. You might not  
36 like the way she says it. She apologizes for that. Village President Burke stated it's no problem.  
37 Miss Means stated that if she didn't love where she lives, she wouldn't be here.

38  
39 Trustee Matz stated that when you talk about the debris that's up and down the corridor of  
40 Lincoln Highway that is going up against the fence, Public Works is out there picking it up. It's  
41 windy. As soon as they pick it up, it is coming back down. They are doing their part to try to  
42 keep up with it.

43  
44 Miss Means stated that it is not enough for her who walks her two dogs over there every day.  
45 Some areas are going to require more of our time. She is a retired principal. Some students  
46 require more work than others. You might have a plan where you only see someone once a week,  
47 but you need to see them four times a week. She is saying that whatever they are doing out there

1 only when it snows and the snow is fresh, does it appear that nothing is there. We pay taxes for  
2 people to pick that debris up. It needs to come up. Whatever the plan is to get it up, whether it is  
3 daily, weekly, bi-weekly, twice a day, because it is located where it is located, we can't stop the  
4 public from throwing things out there. She stated that certainly if garbage is out there, people  
5 will throw more garbage out. The only time that she went through there and she was pleased with  
6 it, was when the woman's golf people were playing here. That was being picked up daily,  
7 sometimes twice a day. She wants to see that living here. She wants to experience that.

8  
9 Village President Burke stated that Lincoln Highway is a State Road. Vollmer Road is a County  
10 Road. The Village of Olympia Fields does not have responsibility for those. When they do not do  
11 their job, we have gone in and cleaned up. When the LPGA was here, the County was the one  
12 that was getting the tax dollars that was associated with that golf event. The Country Club is not  
13 part of Olympia Fields. We get no tax money from that golf course. They put the pressure on the  
14 County to clean it up and make sure that it was presentable. The Village, Jim Landini's  
15 Department, as Trustee Matz said has gone in and cleaned up. Trustee Hudson has  
16 Beautification. He knows that their Committee has tried to form an Ad Hoc Committee to work  
17 with other Villages that are surrounding us, and to actually do things to help beautify the whole  
18 area. Village President Burke inquired of Mr. Landini how often the State comes through and  
19 cleans up that road. Mr. Landini stated that they don't. We call them repeatedly. We operate  
20 weekly going out there to clean up the garbage. We were just out there Thursday. We pulled out  
21 four dead trees that had fallen down and chipped those up. He just got two new staff members.  
22 We can probably bump that regularity up a little bit more to stay on top of it. We constantly call  
23 the State. The only answer that he gets is that they are understaffed too. They may come out once  
24 a year. Village President Burke stated that's not good enough. That's not going to work for us.

25  
26 Village President Burke asked Trustee Hudson since this is part of Beautification, if she would  
27 work with Jim's department and try to formulate a program to try to do something to get the  
28 State involved. There are people running up and down Lincoln Highway going 60, 70, 80-miles  
29 an hour, and some of these people have no regard for Olympia Fields and they throw stuff out of  
30 the windows. They are speeding. They are doing all kinds of things that none of us would think  
31 is appropriate. We hear you. We understand what you are saying. He stated that Jim just got two  
32 new resources on his team. He will step it up. There are some trees that have red x's on them.  
33 Village President Burke inquired of Mr. Landini whether or not those trees are on people's  
34 properties, or are they on the State side.

35  
36 Mr. Landini stated that all of the ones that are marked are on the State side. Those were marked  
37 by the State. They were marked six-months ago.

38  
39 Village President Burke inquired of Mr. Landini whether or not we have any authority to cut  
40 those trees down and bill them back. Mr. Landini stated possibly. He can look into that.

41  
42 Trustee Thomas stated that she knows that we have a policy if our tree is impeding someone  
43 else's property, they can cut it and do what they need to do, because we have neglected to do it.  
44 Why can't the Village do that? Particularly, if we have on record, residents coming and talking  
45 about things we can't control, trash, and the trees. You can't stop people from throwing it out  
46 there. Can we cut those trees down since the State is not going to do it? Hopefully, after today,  
47 the new Governor will have some changes within those agencies. We'll see. We aren't going to

1 count on it. Can we do that? Mr. Landini stated that he will look into it. He doesn't know what  
2 the ramifications are.

3  
4 Village President Burke stated that if you cut those trees down and throw them in the middle of  
5 Lincoln Highway, he will bet they will come out. Mr. Landini stated yes, within an hour.

6  
7 Trustee Thomas stated that she knows the wood fence is the residents who need to do their part  
8 to maintain it. He is addressing that. Mr. McDonnell stated that is correct. Trustee Thomas stated  
9 that she heard him say that the stone fence, is a danger. She stated that if we are unable to  
10 identify who the owner of the property is, if we are going to start to tear it down, can we just tear  
11 it down? We didn't know who it was. Mr. McDonnell stated that is correct. They are  
12 unresponsive, and that's why we have removed debris and taken a section down already. There  
13 are probably three or four more sections that are going to be coming down within the next couple  
14 of weeks.

15  
16 Miss Means stated that she knows things take time. It takes time to do whatever you need to do.  
17 When you are seeing the same thing repeatedly month, after month, after month, that's a little bit  
18 too much time. We need to expedite this. It's not just a selfish thing for Maynegaité. This reflects  
19 on all of us. Village President Burke stated that we agree with you. Miss Means stated that if that  
20 thing falls on someone. Village President Burke stated that we take this very seriously. He stated  
21 that to maintain the nature of the Village of Olympia Fields is the Number 1 priority. We discuss  
22 this stuff at our staff meeting. This one is a little unusual in that it is not a house. We have  
23 Ordinances that say that if your house is in disrepair, we are going to get you at the time there is  
24 a change in ownership and you are going to have to bring it up to a certain level. That's one of  
25 the things that is on the books to ensure that we try to maintain the level of what we want with  
26 the rest of us that are still living here. In this case, the ownership of this property is missing in  
27 action. If we take it and assume the responsibility for it, part of the problem here is the owner of  
28 the property, and the other part is the State owns the policing of stuff and we fill in and take care  
29 of it. We just hired two new guys. Mr. Landini will have it at the top of his priority list to try to  
30 do everything that he can to police it. We do have some people who are not civilized. They just  
31 throw stuff out the window. Miss Means stated that those aren't necessarily our residents.  
32 Village President Burke stated no, they are not.

33  
34 Miss Means stated that going forward, perhaps this particular example, is an example that drives  
35 us to move to create Ordinances to protect ourselves from ownership, and big banks, and  
36 anonymous landowners who would do this kind of thing, who would further diminish the value  
37 of people's property, and the property here in our Village. This could happen anywhere in the  
38 Village. The property could be assumed by these entities, and then they decide they are not going  
39 to keep the property up and they are not going to do what they need to do. Try to find me. Try to  
40 catch me. Try to make me do it. If there are Ordinances in place that would put that in check, it  
41 wouldn't happen.

42  
43 Village President Burke stated that John is the keeper of those Ordinances. We will have that  
44 discussion in more detail about what we can do. One thing is to seize the property. Once we seize  
45 it, then we own it. He stated that it is \$56,000.00 to fix one section. He doesn't know if we want  
46 to take responsibility. There are speculators who are out buying up property in our town that we  
47 try to rezone to control those kinds of things. There are still people who have already owned

1 property, and because they are in the hole, they are just letting it go. Your point is to do  
2 everything that we can, even if it means to put some Ordinances in place. We have to be careful  
3 about what we say. If we try to take it, then we own it.  
4

5 Miss Means stated that you guys are the experts there. Maynegaite is faced with it on a much  
6 smaller scale. We don't want to own the property. We are not asking you to own it. She stated  
7 that with all of these creative minds here, and all of this experience and know how, we need to  
8 protect our Village from these kinds of culprits that come in and they play these games.  
9

10 Village President Burke is sure that she will agree that you heard from just about all of the  
11 Trustees, and they feel the same way that you do because we are all homeowners. It took us a  
12 little bit to wrestle the Wal-Mart and nail it to the ground. We got that all cleaned up. We will get  
13 this cleaned up too.  
14

15 Miss Means thanked the Board. She just needed them to hear her out. She hopes she can come  
16 the next time with something happy. She is not happy right now. Village President Burke closed  
17 Public Comment at 8:13 P.M.  
18

19 **NEW BUSINESS:**  
20

21 The Board did not have any New Business to discuss this evening.  
22

23 **RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS:**  
24

25 The Board did not have any Resignations nor Appointments this evening.  
26

27 Trustee Matz stated that she had a suggestion for Resignations and Appointments. She knows  
28 that everybody is busy. They are doing their civic duty by getting on our Commissions and  
29 Committees. She suggested that at the first meeting, they come for the Appointment, and we all  
30 agree that this person should sit on that Committee, we should be able to look at them and see  
31 who they are. We have absolutely no clue.  
32

33 Village President Burke stated that's fine. Point well-taken.  
34

35 **ADJOURNMENT:**  
36

37 **Motion by Trustee Pennington, second by Trustee Matz to adjourn the Board Meeting at  
38 8:15 P.M.**

39 **Voice Vote:                      All Ayes                                      Motion Carried.**  
40

41 Respectfully submitted by Faith Stine.  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47