

## VILLAGE BOARD COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

February 17, 2025

6:30 PM

Village Hall - Village Board Room  
418 Main Street, Lemont, IL 60439

### **I. Call to Order**

Roll Call: Trustees Janelle Kittridge, Dave Maher, Ken McClafferty, Ron Stapleton, Mayor Egofski, Kevin Shaughnessy, present. Rick Sniegowski, absent.

Staff: George Schafer, Janet Schatz, Darshana Prakash, Jason Berry, Chief Maton, Ralph Pukula, present.

### **III.A Discussion of Refuse, Recycling, Landscaping Waste Collection Agreement Renewal**

The Village's agreement for refuse, recycling, landscape waste collection plus special waste recycling for Village households is set to expire on April 30th, 2025. After an area review, the Village's existing vendor, Waste Management has offered the Village a 5-year agreement with mutually agreed upon option years. The topic was also discussed at the December 16, 2024 Committee of the Whole where there was some follow up items to bring back to the committee along with a consolidated agreement to share for discussion. For a recap, the services would remain the same which generally include the following: Weekly trash pick up Weekly recycling Weekly yard waste (April 1st thru first full week December) One bulk item per week At your door special waste recycling program WM will continue to send direct billing to residents and manage billing Update and enhancement to Village facilities / special events (in kind services) Staff shared at the meeting that Waste was able to provide these services at a rate under what they are currently providing Lemont residents, this is what was shared below: Current Rate: \$32.83 (monthly, billed quarterly) \$3.00 Senior Discount Proposed Rate \$29.88 (monthly, billed quarterly) \$3.00 Senior Discount 5% price increase each year\* \*(lowered to 4.5% after further discussions)

George said new contract is lower and is for five years. We did pick up more services such as special event services. Lemont is one of the few towns that Waste Management bills the customer direct. Other Villages have to bill through their water bills. The rates will hold for three years and then increase in 2028. Darshana said approximately 28% of our population are seniors and receive a discounted rate.

### **III.B Special Service Area Potential for Downtown Lemont**

Staff has begun exploring the establishment of a Special Service Area (SSA) to support the continued growth and enhancement of Downtown Lemont. An SSA is a designated area where an additional property tax is levied to fund improvements and services that benefit properties within the district. SSAs are widely used in Illinois communities to provide sustainable funding for downtown business districts, reducing reliance on general tax revenues or one-time grants. Common uses include streetscape

improvements, marketing and business support, snow removal, parking enhancements, and downtown administration. The Village has received a proposal from Teska Associates, Inc., a firm with extensive experience in SSA establishment, to facilitate the creation of a Downtown Lemont SSA. Their proposed scope includes: Defining SSA boundaries and funding scenarios Engaging property and business owners through meetings, surveys, and workshops Developing an SSA plan and tax levy assessment. Facilitating the public hearing and approval process. This memo is for discussion purposes only. If there is interest from the Board, staff will proceed with outreach and further analysis.

SSA is a property tax within a fixed area like downtown Lemont. The tax collected can stay in that area for improvements. Jason is proposing Teska to define the project at a cost of \$25k. Trustee Stapleton asked how many properties would be involved. Jason said around 100. Trustee Shaughnessy asked is this for homes or business. Jason said it can be for both. Trustee Maher asked if the Lofts would be taxed. Maher would like only businesses taxed. Mayor believes we have done a great job increasing the values of the Lofts and homes near downtown. Mayor asked if the SSA can purchase land. Trustee Shaughnessy would like Jason to reach out to Downers Grove to see how they benefitted with this. Ralph Pukula said his staff spends most of their time in the downtown area. Trustee Maher does not want any more taxes for downtown Lemont residents. Can residential properties be excluded from this tax. George believes it is a good idea to have the study completed. Board would like data from other towns such as Downers Grove before they decide. Jason will gather comparable data and bring back to the board.

### **III.C Village Green Improvements**

Village Green, also known as Main Street Park, is a publicly accessible civic space in Downtown Lemont that serves a variety of community functions. The site is primarily used for the Lemont Farmers Market, seasonal holiday lighting displays, and Village programs such as yoga, small pop-up events, and informal gatherings. It also functions as a general open space where the public can relax, dine, and enjoy the downtown atmosphere. The original 2021 concept plan envisioned a multi-use public space with flexible seating, nature play elements, overhead string lighting, and food and beverage kiosks housed in repurposed shipping containers. The design prioritized pedestrian-friendly access while allowing for seamless transitions between programmed events and casual daily use. Village staff has reviewed a proposal that includes the addition of a deck in the northeast corner, which would create an elevated seating or gathering area. Along with this, there was discussion to change the alley traffic circulation, as recommended in the concept plan, rerouting it to a southbound one-way direction from Main Street to Illinois Street. These changes aim to improve site activation and vehicular flow but require further analysis to ensure they align with the park's ongoing community functions.

Jason has received feedback from neighbors near Village Green who would like to see improvements to the park. There is money in the general budget to make improvements. Pollyanna's Social is trying to utilize the Main Street area as well. Trustee Shaughnessy asked is this public or private use. He has reservations about just one business using this area.

There is one utility AT&T pole that is a concern at the corner. Al Weiss owns most of the buildings near Aster gardens. Trustee Stapleton would like to see pavers instead of a deck if put up. Mayor likes the idea of updating the space. Mayor would like a firm understanding of who can use this area. Trustee

Maher would like this space open for the residents as a park. He would like to have no shipping containers as in a rendering. Trustee McClafferty asked how the farmers market fared. Jason said it launched but the consistent locally owned vendors are a small number with seasonal items.

### **III.D FY 2025 Financial Review Proposed FY 2026-2030 Capital Equipment Proposed FY 2026-2030 Capital Improvement Plan**

Staff began the FY 2026 budget process in October 2024. All capital equipment and capital project requests were submitted to Finance in December 2024. The Village Administrator and staff met with the respective department directors to discuss the capital equipment requests. Staff and Village Engineer discussed the construction projects. Tonight, staff will begin discussions with the Village Board.

We will begin with a review of the Village's current financial situation i.e. revenue and expenditures. Followed with a review of the capital equipment requests. Capital equipment are vehicles, trucks, radios, etc. Items that are classified as large purchases located in the operating funds of the Village. Most of these purchases (except Water/Sewer) are funded from the Village vehicle sticker program. Finally, we will discuss the FY 2026 - 2030 Capital Improvement Plan. The current practice has been to account for capital equipment purchases (except water/sewer) within each department within the General Fund. These purchases are large dollar value and vary from year to year. Staff is recommending that these purchases be accounted for in a separate Fund instead of the General Fund; rename the Property Maintenance Fund to Property Maintenance & Capital Equipment Fund. By accounting for these costs in a separate fund, the General Fund will reflect the day to day operational expenses. Each year, as part of the budget process, a fixed amount will be transferred from the General Fund to the Property Maintenance & Capital Equipment Fund, to meet the following year's needs.

Darshana stated \$23 million of revenue was received at the end April 2024. Enterprise was \$8 million. This did not include water or sewer funds at 9.4 million. Darshana noted monies are good in the debt service/government side yet short on our water and sewer fund. Trustee Shaughnessy wanted to know if we had an emergency fund. Darshana said yes.

The Police pension is funded at 85% at the end of 4/24. We need to be funded by 90% by 2040. This date might be extended through the state. Inflation has gone down to 3%. Permits in the Village increased to over 900 written permits. This equates to a 23% increase over the previous year. Grants received were \$300K which have been spent.

Trustee Shaughnessy asked if the governor or the Village will increase the local food tax. Darshana said it is in place till the year 2026 but the Village can increase it to 1% sales tax. Mayor mentioned 22 municipalities would like to increase food tax at the same time. ARPA fund a total of \$2.3 million. General fund will be reimburse \$30K and the water/sewer fund \$730K.

Salt dome, storage barn and landscape will be completed within the year. Jason Berry said Cook County applied for a grant for the centennial trail and will be moving forward. Stephen Street bike bridge will be moving along in November of this year. Some engineering is being covered by grants said Darshana. George Schafer said the downtown park is on hold waiting on Nicor. Nicor found an above ground gas main that needs to be secured. They are working with the railroad on this bridge issue. Ralph is waiting to repave the road until the bridge has been completed. Briarcliffe pedestrian crossing will be going up in late spring. The Bell to Derby bike path is still in planning and needs to get engineering locked down. George would like to invite Grand Prairie staff to come to the April COW meeting for an update. The township said they would contribute money to the bike path. Trustee Shaughnessy asked of the safety of the Briarcliffe crossing. Ralph Pukula said it will have a plenty of light at night, warning signs and a middle curb safety area.

Water and sewer is \$200K over budget due to the storage barn costs near the salt dome. We collect 98% of the property taxes each year. March 4 is the due date for the property tax. Two water funds and one general fund were paid off this year. Water fund is looking good for the year. We had a \$7 million bond.

Capital improvement projects -

- Stephen street bike path and retaining wall

- Tree replacement in the Village

- Meter readers on the water towers

- TOD TIF for railway safety improvements

- Stephen street alley, underground ComEd utilities behind Hughie's, downtown underground utilities - \$330K in 2027

George noted the boiler at 416 Main is old and needs to be replaced. A rooftop unit needs to be considered. Mayor said to go ahead with this plan.

George recommended to Jason to expand the SSA study to include land across the bridge.

Mayor would like to know what Ozinga pays in property tax. Ralph mentioned the parking garage needs joint repairs. MWRD wants to see that the Village have a place holder and committed to the I&M Canal and CSO Outfall.

Darshana will seek approval at the next board meeting.

**Other:**

There is a concern with trucks parking over night at Gas N Wash. Parking lot lights need to be on at night for safety purposes. It's not a truck stop. Board would like Mike Stillman to reach out to Lenny. Board recommends that area be gated. Trustee Maher said their signs say you can park for 4 hours and the agreement is only for 2 hours. Attorney Stillman will reach out to the owner.

Adjourned at 8:45 p.m.