

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
OF
VILLAGE BOARD

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
COUNTY OF HENRY)
VILLAGE OF ORION)

The regular meeting of the President and Board of Trustees was held at 7:30 p.m., December 1, 2008 at the Village Hall, 1202 4th Street, Orion, Henry, Illinois. The following members were present: Cooper, Sederquist, O'Leary, Lawson, Kane, Dunne, and Drucker. Absent: None.

The meeting was called to order by President Cooper. It was moved by Drucker, seconded by Dunne to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held November 17, 2008. Ayes: Sederquist, O'Leary, Lawson, Kane, Dunne, and Drucker. Noes: None. Absent: None.

Mr. John Fellman of Missman Stanley addressed the board regarding the 13th Avenue bridge in Orion. He said the village was responsible for performing inspections on the bridge and an inspection was due October 2008. Trustee Kane acknowledged the fact that the village was responsible for the inspection but said he didn't want to spend the money to inspect a bridge that was closed. Mr. Fellman said the only way to get away from inspection requirements was to make the bridge closure status permanent by Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) standards. He also said an inspection would most likely result in a lower rating and possibly spur IDOT to travel to Orion to look at the structure themselves and change the status to permanent. President Cooper objected to spending money for an inspection since Mr. Craig Rasmussen from Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad agreed to have a third party inspect the bridge at BNSF's expense. He said the railroad had not yet responded to a timetable for the bridge inspection nor had they responded to a letter from the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) requesting repairs to all three at-grade crossings by a deadline of October 8th. President Cooper also said he wanted the bridge to remain intact until an agreement was reached with BNSF on the repair/replacement of the bridge and Orion's three at-grade crossings. Mr. Fellman said the only way to get the railroad to move on the bridge and crossing issues was to formally petition the ICC. He said this would force BNSF to meet with the village and the ICC in front of a law judge who would negotiate a settlement. Mr. Fellman warned that this method would require a fair amount of legal assistance and could get expensive. He said any settlement proposed by a law judge would most likely include a compromise by the village to permanently close the bridge or one crossing. Trustee Kane reminded the board that the ICC indicated they were in favor of reducing the number of crossings in the state. Discussion was held about getting the bridge rebuilt in-kind and closing the 10th Avenue crossing versus keeping the crossing open and tearing down the bridge. Trustee Kane said the bridge committee had decided the village should not give up any crossings, and Mr. Bob Thompson, a member of the bridge committee, asked the village to consider taking over ownership of the bridge. Clerk Sampson said ownership of the bridge presented an insurance problem. She said the village's risk management pool just began offering bridge insurance to its member communities, but the coverage was very limited. Mr. Fellman said the village should be wary of taking on increased liability risk

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The minutes of December 1, 2008 continued:

that would come with bridge ownership. Mr. Alan Saunders, a member of the bridge committee, said he felt strongly that the bridge was needed for emergency vehicles. He said it would take several extra minutes to access the west side of the railroad tracks by way of the 7th Street bridge. Trustee Drucker said risk was inherent in all aspects of life. Trustee Lawson agreed and said the length of response to emergencies by fire and ambulance personnel varied depending upon the availability of the volunteers. Trustee Kane told the board that only six times out of the last 200 calls did the fire/ambulance service need to use the 7th Street bridge due to a train blocking the at-grade crossings. The board discussed the fact that one and one-half years had passed since the bridge had been closed without any action by the railroad. The board agreed it was time to try to negotiate a compromise that would provide Orion with crossing improvements of some kind. President Cooper said he would contact Mr. Rasmussen and ask him to present the village with a written offer regarding the 13th Avenue bridge and all three at-grade crossings.

President Cooper and Trustee Drucker asked that drivers be reminded about the snow route and snowmobile route in the village. The snow route was printed in the December 1st edition of *The Nosy Neighbor*. Trustee Drucker asked those not on the snow route but who park vehicles on the street to move them so plows can clear the street.

President Cooper asked residents to shovel their sidewalks as a courtesy to school children and other walkers.

Trustee Dunne thanked Mr. Ron Thompson for his donation of a tree for the band shell and for erecting the tree. Others helping with the project were President Cooper, Mr. Bill Larkins, Sr., Mr. Tom Weihler, and Park Superintendent Arnie Sandberg. Trustee Dunne also thanked the park superintendent for installing Christmas decorations in Central Park.

Trustee Kane said Street Superintendent Neil Dahl had been responding to weather conditions by plowing and salting when necessary. He also said the landscape waste site was closed November 30th and the accumulation of waste had been burned. President Cooper said the site would be open for disposal of live Christmas trees and wreaths from December 26th through January 5th.

Trustee Sederquist said the tax levy hearing was set for 7:00 p.m., December 15, 2008, and the amount to be requested was \$176,155. He also said the next finance committee meeting would be held December 10th at 4:00 p.m.

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President Cooper reminded the board that petition filing dates for village offices of president, clerk, and four trustee positions were December 8th through the 15th. He asked all trustees with expiring terms to consider seeking another term.

President Cooper said the informational recycling meeting held at Orion High School was a success. He said there was little opposition to the program. President Cooper said Eagle Enterprises offered to absorb the recycling pick-up cost for half of the original estimate of seniors eligible for the property tax freeze. The original estimate totaled 89.

President Cooper said he was still checking on funding for prior Love Park baseball diamond improvements. He said Senator Mike Jacobs' office thought the village should have received an application form some time ago but no form had been received. President Cooper said he would keep in contact with Senator Jacobs' staff until a resolution was reached.

President Cooper announced a Northwest Municipal Association dinner to be held on December 10th in Milan. He said any trustee interested in attending should notify Village Hall by December 5th.

President Cooper said he authorized Christmas bonuses for full-time employees in an amount equal to the same as last year plus \$100.

There being no further business to come before the board, it was moved by Drucker, seconded by O'Leary to adjourn. Ayes: Sederquist, O'Leary, Lawson, Kane, Dunne, and Drucker. Noes: None. Absent: None.

Lori A. Sampson
Village Clerk

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OFFENDING COMMAND:

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