

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
OF  
VILLAGE BOARD

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

A special meeting of the President and Board of Trustees was held at 3:00 p.m., August 29, 2011 at the Village Hall, 1202 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Orion, Henry, Illinois. The following members were present: Cooper, Stiles, Peterson, O'Leary, and Drucker. Absent: Newman and Lawson.

President Cooper called the meeting to order and led the board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Trustee Newman arrived at 3:02 p.m.

President Cooper thanked Illinois Senator Mike Jacobs, U.S. Representative Bobby Schilling, and Mr. Anthony Holland, staff member for Illinois Representative Rich Morthland, for attending the special meeting called to discuss the village's financial needs for infrastructure improvements. Also in attendance at the meeting were Sewer Superintendent Chris Lundburg, Orion resident Jim Eccher, village engineer Scott Kammerman, and an aide for Congressman Schilling.

President Cooper explained the need for infrastructure funding to the three politicians, beginning with the most pressing issue of a sanitary relief main. The village is under order from the Illinois EPA to correct the problem of sewage backing up into basements and pumping from manholes by 2013. The cost to install a sanitary relief main to carry the excess flow to the sewer plant during heavy rain events is expected to total \$350,000. President Cooper said the cost wouldn't seem unmanageable if the village hadn't already been saddled with a \$4 million debt for upgrading the sewer plant and installing other sanitary relief mains. He said if state or federal grants weren't available, village residents would face more increases in monthly sewer fees. In addition, some residents affected by sewer backup have gone to the expense of installing shut-off valves to the tune of \$5,000 or more.

Mr. Kammerman showed those present a map of the proposed relief main and said it was proposed to handle the excess inflow because trying to eliminate infiltration is next to impossible. Nonetheless, Trustee O'Leary said the village is televising sewer mains to pinpoint infiltration sources so problem areas can be dealt with. Mr. Kammerman told the visiting politicians that the proposed relief main was the best approach and should alleviate the problem, though many factors are unknown when utilities are buried in the ground. President Cooper said the village could have chosen a cheaper alternative but the board wanted to correct the problem, not put a band aid on it.

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President Cooper pointed out the fact that the village doesn't qualify for low-to-moderate income grants but feels slighted when state and federal tax dollars go to projects such as bike paths or discretionary-type projects versus important infrastructure needs. Congressman Schilling told the board there is money that can be accessed for communities that don't qualify for grants based on income, much like earmark funds but called 'plus up'. Senator Jacobs suggested all three politicians in attendance try to obtain partial funding for the project. He said there may still be state funds available for the village's project. Senator Jacobs said there were not a lot of new projects being presented for funding, so that may work in the village's favor.

Trustee Drucker questioned the need to be shovel ready if grant funds were available. Senator Jacobs said shovel readiness was not as important as previously projected. He also said the last round of funding didn't do much for rural communities but a subsequent round might be aimed more toward rural projects. Mr. Kammerman said he could get construction plans drawn up in short order but the IEPA could take up to 90 days to review the project prior to approval.

President Cooper thanked Senator Jacobs, Mr. Holland, and Congressman Schilling for their commitment to seek funds for the sewer relief main project.

Trustee Drucker informed the group about the need to rehab the east water tower. A projected cost for those improvements is \$265,000. Trustee Drucker said the village hoped to find funding before the tower deteriorated to a level where it needed to be replaced. Mr. Kammerman said total replacement would push the cost closer to \$500,000.

Additionally, the board told Mr. Holland and Senator Jacobs about the battle to get the IEPA to remedy a gasoline spill at the current Orion Mart location, which occurred 16 years ago. The EPA was aware of the spill but did not pursue anything with the perpetrator until gasoline vapors became evident in nearby residential basements in 2010. Trustee O'Leary outlined expenses involved in lining a sewer main to prevent vapor infiltration, which only caused the vapor to infiltrate elsewhere. The village also purchased an exhaust fan that is continuously venting an open manhole in order to disperse vapors until the situation can be remedied. President Cooper said the IEPA has pursued the issue but progress is slow and only one phase of a 4-phase plan has

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been completed. Senator Jacobs told the board he would contact the IEPA regarding the pace of the investigation.

Senator Jacobs asked the board to write separate letters about each of its funding requests and an additional letter combining the requests. He felt if the projects were presented in two different ways, they might have a better chance of gaining funding. Senator Jacobs agreed that infrastructure upgrades were important to the community. He thanked village board members for their service to the community.

Congressman Schilling said it was important for politicians to work with each other, regardless of political affiliation, and the country needed to work toward fixing problems instead of applying temporary solutions.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was moved by Drucker, seconded by O'Leary to adjourn. Ayes: Stiles, Peterson, Newman, O'Leary, and Drucker. Absent: Lawson.

Lori A. Sampson  
Village Clerk



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