

VILLAGE OF DOLTON
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
June 16, 2014

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Riley H. Rogers called the Committee of the Whole of the Board of Trustees to order in the Harper Municipal Building Board Room at 8:58 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following Trustees were present: Cathern L. Bendell, Stanley Brown, Tiffany Henyard, Robert E. Hunt, Jr., Robert E. Pierson, Jr., and Sabrina G. Smith.

Also present: Village Engineer Ronald Smith and Department Heads. The Village Attorney and Legislative Counsel were absent.

A quorum was present.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

A. DORCHESTER MANAGEMENT
Presentation by Awakened Alternatives, Inc.

Genevieve Thomas, President of Awakened Alternatives, introduced herself and briefly described her thirty years of health care experience. She introduced her associates, Bakari Cowan and Ed Campbell, and presented their proposal to become the interim management company of the Dorchester beginning July 1st, 2014.

Ms. Thomas said that due to the time sensitive nature of the situation, the management company had not been able to complete its due diligence on the situation, so no formal contract or budget has been submitted. The group would like a letter of agreement instead that calls for Mr. Cowan to be the manager of the Dorchester. Mr. Cowan has a B.S. in Family & Consumer Sciences and an M.A. in Gerontology. Mr. Campbell, who has an extensive background in marketing, would serve as marketing director. They plan to continue the current market strategy, but also incorporate other tactics. The proposal calls for current staff of the Dorchester to be transferred onto the Awakened Alternatives payroll. The current operating budget for the Dorchester would stay the same and Awakened Alternatives would require a management fee. They plan to talk to all current staff to inform them of Awakened Alternatives' policies and standard practices. They believe by September 1st 2014, a review of financial statements, medical statements, and other important documents will make it possible for them to propose a final contract. The goals for the Dorchester include marketing the facility as soon as possible to fill the vacancies, maintaining a smooth transition for the staff and residents, and most importantly making sure the Dorchester keeps its license. Making sure the facility is prepared for state review is essential to keeping the license. They hope to operate within the revenues the Dorchester creates. They hope to have the Dorchester running at a surplus when the correct changes are made.

Ms. Thomas and her company propose a \$10,000 a month fee for running the Dorchester. The fee covers the salary and benefits of Mr. Cowan, and the cost of operating the Dorchester at its current condition. She noted that the two former employees that Mr. Cowan will replace had a combined salary of \$150,000. Ms. Thomas does not anticipate any changes to the \$10,000 fee unless there is an increase of revenue. The fee would likely increase after that. The fee will represent the work that they are doing and the overhead cost of running the facility. No discussions have been had about profit-sharing if the Dorchester starts running at a surplus.

Administrator Urban informed the Board that current residents have lease agreements with the former management and those agreements would have to be renegotiated in the future with the new management. The management has the power to also renegotiate benefits and salary with the current staff, as does the village, but the village doing so would be very costly. Mr. Urban noted that Ms. Thomas' parents are residents at the Dorchester. Mr. Urban said he is very pleased with the professionalism of Ms. Thomas and her team during their meetings.

Trustee Henyard asked Ms. Thomas to provide a business plan with short-term and long-term goals when the final details of the agreement are finalized. Trustee Smith addressed the proposed plan for gaming being allowed in the Dorchester. She would like the Dorchester to be the epicenter for the seniors to be able to play games, eat lunch, and other activities. She said that it should be noted that nothing is finalized, that this is being proposed to the residents of the Dorchester. Trustee Hunt inquired about the transition of the current employees. Ms. Thomas informed him that there is no plan for layoffs; they first want to assess what is going on.

Mr. Thomas briefly summarized anticipated marketing efforts, including advertising, brochures, and internet visibility. Mr. Thomas said that he believes increasing the number of new residents by eight each year will help the facility remain self-sufficient. Ms. Thomas said that she plans for rent to stay the same.

A consensus was reached among the six trustees to accept the proposal for Awakened Alternatives, Inc. to take over the Dorchester for an interim period.

B. UPGRADE OF WATER METER READING SYSTEM

Administrator Urban began the discussion by asking members of the audience if they had ever received an estimated water bill. He proposed replacing the current practice of meter reading with more exact readings. He said that the current practice is inefficient and that those assigned to do the reading cannot finish reading all of the meters in a year. The new proposed plan would make water meter wireless, and would allow a vehicle to go up and down the streets gathering readings to later be input into a computer system. The new system would allow for readings of the entire village in an eight-hour day. The use of the new water meter reading system would allow the village to transition from a process that bills residents every 3 months to a monthly billing statement. Mr. Urban said that he believes that all of the meters would not have to be replaced; rather a monitor could be attached to some of the water meters. If, worst case scenario, all water meters had to be replaced in the village it would cost \$3.5 million. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) has a grant program for the wireless meters over one to three years. The IEPA gives out loans to municipalities with low interest rates of 1.97 percent over 20 years. The IEPA also has a 25 percent forgiveness rate depending on the state of the village. Mr. Urban explained the village would have to increase the water bill prices from \$49.80 to \$52.30 per quarter to pay back the loan. Mayor Rogers advocated for this project noting that due to the inaccuracies of the old system, there are over two million dollars of uncollected water bills and constant complaints to the water department. He said that the increase in accuracies will benefit the residents more in the long run.

Trustee Henyard said that she is in support of the new water meter reading system, but does not support increasing water bills to do so. Mayor Rogers reminded the Board that water prices will raise regardless due to increases from the City of Chicago. Trustees Bendell and Pierson said that they were in favor of the project. Trustee Smith said that she was on the fence at this time. Trustee Hunt said he wants to learn more but is in favor of moving forward. Trustee Henyard repeated her opposition to raising rates and Trustee Brown agreed. Trustees Henyard and Brown also asked for more information on the program.

C. FIRE INSPECTION FEES FOR BUSINESS

Pete McCain of the Dolton Fire Department proposed an ordinance which would require new businesses to have an annual inspection and pay a \$100 annual fee. This fee would be for commercial businesses only. An additional fine would be imposed if businesses do not pass inspection requirements. The fees would range from \$75 to \$150 for chronic citations. The program would increase safety as well as create

revenue for the village. Mr. McCain presented a list of suburbs that have similar ordinances to the one being proposed.

Trustee Henyard said that she would like the proposed ordinance to be reworded, because it currently includes structures that are not commercial properties. Trustee Brown agreed. Mayor Rogers advocated for the ordinance because it reduces liability of the village. Trustee Henyard suggested that the health inspector should be the one doing the inspections to consolidate all the work. Mayor Rogers disagreed, stating that the health inspectors have no experience or knowledge regarding fire-related issues. Trustee Hunt said that he wants the inspections to happen but that he does not want the businesses to be charged. Trustee Smith disagreed and said that she believes the \$100 fee is too little for businesses and that it should be increased. Trustee Pierson said he believes the \$100 dollar fee is necessary because it requires manpower for the inspections to occur. Trustee Brown inquired about an action plan for the inspection. Mr. McCain informed Trustee Brown inspections are currently being performed.

Trustees Bendell, Pierson and Smith said they are in favor of the proposed ordinance; Trustee Hunt said he is in favor without a fee and with fines for violations only; Trustee Henyard and Brown said they want more information before agreeing. Trustee Henyard also asked for a list of suburbs surrounding Dolton which are currently doing the same thing.

D. REORGANIZATION OF 911 DISPATCH

Mr. Urban said that he and Fire Chief Hughes would like more time to prepare their presentation. They plan to make a formal presentation at the next Committee of the Whole.

E. PURCHASE ORDER POLICY

Mr. Urban requested feedback on his proposed purchase order policy. Trustee Henyard said she agreed with everything except that she wanted to change the provision to allow the mayor to authorize payments up to \$10,000, and instead authorize the Village Administrator. Mayor Rogers said that he is more familiar with village needs than Mr. Urban, who also agreed that Mayor Rogers should have more funds at his disposal as he has the power to act in case of emergency. Trustee Brown said that he would also like to increase the Village Administrator's authorization to over \$5,000. Mr. Urban stated he would refuse authorization over \$5,000. Mr. Urban explained the use of the purchase order for the audience. Mayor Rogers said that he wants on record that if an emergency situation occurs, he will take any action he feels necessary to correct the situation. Further discussion followed.

No consensus was reached. Mr. Urban said that the Board will have the necessary information to make a decision by the July 7th meeting and the issue will be added to the meeting agenda.

F. LAND BANK

Mr. Urban explained that the Board must appoint a representative to the board of the South Suburban Land Bank and Development Authority, which the village recently joined. Trustee Smith said that she believes that since Trustee Henyard is over housing, she should be appointed to the board. Trustee Bendell said she believes it is a conflict of interest for any trustee to be appointed, noting that there are currently no trustees on the land bank board; rather, it is made up of administrators and mayors. Trustees Hunt, Brown, and Henyard agreed with Trustee Smith's recommendation to appoint Trustee Henyard. Trustee Pierson said that he agrees with Trustee Bendell that appointing a trustee creates a conflict of interest and supports appointing the mayor. Mayor Rogers nominated himself to represent the village.

Mayor Rogers stated for the record that he plans to attend all Land Bank meetings regardless of who may be appointed and that he will represent the village.

G. LIFE INSURANCE POLICY

Administrator Urban explained that a village-provided life insurance policy for a former employee, Brenda Smith Ferguson, was never canceled. The village owns the policy. The policy was converted to stock shares now worth about \$18,000. There was a consensus to redeem the shares.

CITIZENS ADDRESS

Mayor Rogers announced that the Village Hall will be closed on July 1st for electrical work by ComEd.

Karen Gause, GEG Services, addressed her recent proposal to manage the Dorchester. She reminded the Board that she had submitted a business plan as requested. She has not received any word regarding her proposal. She noted that her plan does not ask for a management fee, only salary. She noted that Awakened Alternatives plans to keep all of the staff when cuts can be made. She also said that the number of new residents they projected to keep the Dorchester running is wrong. She questioned the response time to her proposal compared to Awakened Alternatives, Inc.

Trustee Smith told Ms. Gause that she had fought for her proposal.

Donna Gray, who accompanied Ms. Gause, summarized her credentials, including 15 years of marketing experience and previous employment at the Dorchester.

Pat Byrd, 146th and Dorchester, asked about the status of channel 4. She said she has not been able to attend Board meetings and had watched them from home, but channel 4 has not been updated. Trustees Hunt and Brown said the trustees have been locked out of the TV station, and that they had been told it is contaminated by mold. Acting Public Works Superintendent Matt Stacey Superintendent said the water pipes had been broken and that there is mold. Trustee Henyard said that she and Mr. Urban are looking for a location to replace the TV station. Resident further asked for a stop sign at 146th and Dorchester. She also presented a list of houses that need lawns cut.

Mrs. Crayton, resident, asked administrators and trustees to all work together in harmony and asked the trustees to support the mayor to make the village a better place.

Mayor Rogers said that he wanted to take time to bring attention to the great work the police department has been doing. At his request, Police Chief Franklin reported on the status of the two armed robbery suspects recently captured and now charged. Mayor Rogers noted that the number of residential burglaries is down, and that crimes are down in every category.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee of the Whole, on a motion by Trustee Bendell to adjourn, second by Trustee Smith, Mayor Rogers asked for a roll call to adjourn.

Roll Call

AYES: 6 Trustees Bendell, Brown, Henyard, Hunt, Pierson, Smith

NAYS: 0

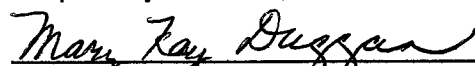
ABSTAIN: 0

ABSENT: 0

Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


MARY KAY DUGGAN, Clerk

APPROVED by the Board of Trustees this 7th day of July, 2014.


RILEY H. ROGERS Mayor