

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING
MAYOR AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES
FOR THE VILLAGE OF FORSYTH, IL

Held at the Forsyth Public Library Conference Room
January 28, 2010

Call to Order

Mayor Hap Gilbert called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Upon call of the roll, the following Trustees answered present:

Physically present: Morr, Johnson, Rasho, Reed, Hubbard, Allsup.

Absent: None.

Also Physically Present

Brad Townsend, Heather Kimmons, Don Van Lyssel, Kathy Mizer, Charlyn Brautigam.

Strategic Plan Session

Mayor Gilbert announced that the purpose of tonight's Special Meeting was to continue discussion on development of a Strategic Plan for the Village, and to begin discussion on the process for screening the administrator position applicants. He recognized Brad Townsend, who was in attendance to facilitate the meeting, and turned the meeting over to him.

Brad began this part of the meeting by referring to the agenda, and other materials prepared for tonight's discussion. He commented, that the information provided may help Trustees as they move through the process of developing a Strategic Plan for the Village, and to use as a tool to help in the selection of a new Village Administrator.

Included with the agenda package, Brad provided members with a summary of what he called the "*Post-It Priorities*" Trustees submitted at the November 23, 2009 meeting. He explained that he tried to group the priorities given to him on post-it notes, into categories. They included:

1. Community conditions and community relations
 - Retain a small friendly and safe community
 - Seek public input and feedback through the Village website
 - Honor and obey Village ordinances
 - Operate a transparent Village government with good communications and collaboration

2. Community and economic development
 - Control growth consistent with our comprehensive plan and mission statement
 - Formulate an economic development plan to guide marketing efforts and development discussions
 - Spend time and effort on residential planning

- Attract affordable housing
 - Support new housing in the \$125,000 to \$200,000 range
 - Favor more affordable housing
 - Support moderate priced residential development
 - Search for a grocery store
 - Promote economic development other than restaurants and hotels; e.g. grocery store, drug store, dry cleaners, and other basic services
 - Foster growth through annexation east and west; stay away from Stevens Creek and Spring Creek
3. Operations and finance
- Encourage and practice fiscal responsibility and accountability
 - Maintain strong property tax base with less dependence on sales taxes
 - Foster harmony among the Trustees
 - Diversify the tax base with less reliance on sales taxes
4. Public Works, facilities and services
- Initiate Village asset planning; i.e., consider what buildings are needed and where they should be located
 - Improve streets and road in the older part of town
 - Work with Decatur to improve Hickory Point East
 - Expand the public library
 - Complete the bike-pedestrian trail connection
 - Design and build a community center
 - Plan for and build a community center for all to enjoy
 - Construct a new recreation and community building on the east side
 - Build an activity center for everyone
 - Develop a community park on the east side

Brad again, referred to the above-mentioned list of priorities and noted that each one of these was given to him on post-its at the November meeting. He remarked that many of the ideas submitted were quite similar. Brad mentioned that in his opinion, after reviewing the list, it appears Trustees do share some common goals or share a common vision.

Brad then distributed copies of what his company, EHLERS and Associates, Inc., call the “*Foundations for Effective Communities*”. The narrative described four areas that might be considered or may be useful as the Board goes through the planning process. The four areas include:

1. Shared Vision

The shared vision statement should communicate Forsyth’s aspirations for the Village wants to be, and how to get there. It should reflect a future idealized state of the community that describes how the Village will compete to retain and attract residents, businesses, and other investors and stakeholders.

2. Shared Values

Shared values should reflect a contract between and among elected officials, staff, and community volunteers regarding standard expectations for interaction with each

other, residents, and other stakeholders. To be effective the values must be clearly communicated and self-enforced within the officials, staff team.

3. Strategic Plan

The strategic plan outlines goals and objectives and the strategies required or necessary to achieve those goals, as the Village moves toward achieving the shared community vision. To be effective the plan must include a manageable and measurable set of goals with clearly defined strategies.

4. Operating System

The operating system relates to the structure that accomplishes governance, provides day-to-day service delivery, and implements the strategic plan for the Village. It encompasses personnel and budget systems, departmental operating procedures, personnel policies, public policy development, financial planning, public participation, and communications, customer service systems, and service evaluations.

Brad pointed out that the information provided should be used as a tool as the Board begins discussing what Trustees believe should be included in a Strategic Plan. The goal is to work toward a common goal or a vision of where the Village wants to be in the future, and how to get there. Brad asked for input from Trustees on the materials presented.

Rasho remarked that he believes the Board has been looking at and discussing six very large and costly projects. His list included an Activity or Community Center, extension of the bike path on West Hickory Point Road to Oakland Avenue, Prairie winds, water recovery costs, sewer system upgrades, and the possible expansion of the library. Rasho remarked that the Board needs to consider each of these as discussion on the upcoming budget continues. Priorities need to be set, and noted that maybe some of these projects need to be moved out for consideration in future years.

One question asked was if there were any areas that Trustees did not mention or include in their ideas submitted at the November meeting. Brad replied that public safety, and the regulatory side of government were not mentioned. He pointed out that Trustees were asked to submit their ideas at the end of the November meeting, which might explain why these two areas were not mentioned.

Trustees discussed different ideas at length. It was agreed that the following items should be included in a Strategic Plan for the Village and be the main headings of each section of it:

1. Community and Economic Development
2. Village Atmosphere
3. Public Works, Facilities and Services
4. Operations and Finance
5. Public Safety
6. Regional Relationships

The different categories were discussed, and what should be included within each one.

There was a consensus from Trustees to think about other ideas that were talked about tonight or maybe were not talked about, and if other things come to mind, Trustees should write them down for discussion at the next meeting. Another thought was to give them to the Clerk and she will forward them to Brad directly. Trustees agreed to get this information to Brad by February 12, 2010 to enable him to prepare a summary of priorities the Board has identified.

Brad referred to the next item on the agenda for tonight's meeting. He stated that Trustees need to decide on how the applications for the administrator's position should be screened. Brad referred to a proposed screening tool, and also to one that Mayor Gilbert provided. He commented that it does not matter which one the Board chooses to use, but noted that everyone needs to be using the same criteria as applications are reviewed.

Village Clerk Kathy Mizer reported that 69 applications or resumes have been received. She pointed out the majority have been sent via email, with very few being sent through the regular mail. Kathy stated that she has kept them in a file, and noted that no one has seen them.

Following a lengthy discussion, Trustees agreed that each one would review the applications at Village Hall. Trustees are to schedule a time with Kathy to screen them, but the documents would not be taken out of Village Hall. Brad also stressed the importance of confidentiality during this process. Trustees also were advised not to make contact with any of the applicants.

Mayor Gilbert commented that he would like consultant Dave Anderson to submit another screening tool to consider prior to Trustees making a decision on which one should be used. He stated that he would contact Dave and ask him to submit something for review at the regular meeting scheduled for Monday, February 1, 2010.

Trustees agreed to meet on Tuesday, February 23, 2010 in Closed Session to rank the top 10 applicants each one has selected. Interviews are scheduled for Saturday, March 13, 2010.

Adjournment

After a lengthy discussion Hubbard moved, and Rasha seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was declared adjourned at 10:10 p.m. on voice vote.

By: _____
Village Clerk