



**Village of Oak Park Board of Trustees  
February 2, 2010**

*Andrea Kovach, Observer*

In attendance: Teresa Powell, Glenn Brewer, Colette Lueck, Jon Hale, David Pope, Ray Johnson, Thomas Barwin, Ray Heise

LWV 90th anniversary proclamation was read by David Pope. National African American History month proclamation was read by David Pope.

During non-agenda public comment session, Richard F. spoke of his concern about the new plans for a hotel at Lake and Forest in light of previous remarks from the owners of the Carleton Hotel and the Wright Inn stating that such a hotel would drive them out of business, and in light of the fact that Oak Park is experiencing excess housing capacity and very slow condo sales.

Second reading on the agenda included “an ordinance amending the Code of the Village of Oak Park Adding Chapter 30 Entitled ‘Special Events’.” Joan of the Frank Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust spoke against adding this ordinance because she thinks it will overburden organizations such as hers that provide special events, it confuses rather than clarifies an organization’s responsibility regarding whether a proposed event would qualify as a “special event” under the ordinance and the Board inadequately notified relevant organizations that this ordinance was up for a vote and that there was inadequate time for public comment and review. She further stated that the ordinance is a violation of free speech and it fails to address public safety—the purported reason for its enactment.

Thomas Barwin stated that the Board’s intent is to encourage events and make it clearer for everyone involved. He stated that the ordinance is similar to the one implemented in his prior community. He said that such an ordinance allows police/fire to be aware that something special is going on and that it pertains to more “mega-events, such as Oaktobefest.” He further stated that any special event ad needs to be pre-approved because if not, then if the event’s permit gets denied, the event planner would be out of the money spent on advertising.

Teresa Powell gave an example of when the Village received notice of a large event May 10 for an event occurring two days later where buses needed to be rerouted. The ordinance was intended to impose procedure and formality so that this wouldn’t happen again.

Colette Lueck indicated that she would like clarity on the definition of “special event” and asked whether a car wash on private property with people standing on sidewalk [public way] advertising would qualify? She did not receive a direct

answer. Ms. Lueck also advocated for a checklist for people to know whether their event qualifies as a “special event” under the ordinance. She reiterated that since the intent of the ordinance is to encourage special events, the Board should ensure that it does that.

Teresa Powell gave the history behind why the ordinance is needed. The current protocol is that a paper form request for a special event is received and copies of it are distributed to various agencies for them all to provide feedback to one staff person who then collects the feedback and decides an answer. She stated that there currently isn't one definition of “special event” that everyone is working from—just past custom. She further stated that there is no clear framework as to decide whether an event is beyond the scope of Oak Park's ability to re-route buses, etc.

Village Counsel Ray Heise stated that without a formalized process, the decision is made haphazardly and randomly. Mr. Heise further stated that there should be 60 days advance notice on all special events and 90 days if it involves alcohol and that this will also help with scheduling.

Teresa Powell agreed that it would help with scheduling. She stated that her office has also received a lot of applications for events already this year and she is unsure which process she should use to evaluate them: the current one or the new ordinance. She also stated that she has twice notified the 44 groups that customarily have held special events on the public way regarding the new proposed ordinance. She further stated that people can call her office to describe their proposed event and she can tell them if the ordinance applies.

Ray Johnson stated his concern that there needs to be a clear definition of a “special event” and to possibly include a checklist for people.

David Pope said that this issue would be tabled for further discussion pending obtaining more information and getting business associations to weigh in.

On the Second Reading of Proposed Amendments to Article 2 Titled Oak Park Farmers Market Ordinance of the Village Code and the Rules of Operation as Recommended by the Farmers Market Commission:

Jon Hale stated that he supports the changes because he believes they will increase clarity and support “locally grown.”

Ray Johnson stated he would like local Oak Park merchants to have the opportunity to provide their local products at the Market and he would like the Board to explore a mid-week second market. He stated that he loves the current Farmers Market as well.

There was a discussion as to why Iowa is not included in the Farmers Market Commission slate of local states. Melissa W., Chair of the Farmers Market Commission (who was present at the meeting and stepped to the podium) stated that they are not anti-Iowa and can include Iowa.

David Pope stated that Iowa has been officially added and someone should inform them.

The meeting adjourned.

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