

Village of Oak Park Board of Trustees
October 17, 2016

Suzanne Davis, Observer
7:30 Open Session

In attendance: Mayor Abu-Taleb; Trustees Barber, Tucker, Button Ott, Salzman, Lueck (by telephone)

Non-Agenda Public Comments:

Reverend Dora S. White-Merritt proposed that a portion of Maple Avenue be named in honor of Oak Park resident Pastor Edie Burton. Now in her 80's, Pastor Burton was a longtime realtor and one-time chair of the Oak Park Housing Authority.

Fred Arkin of the D200 Board and Dr. Pruitt, Interim Superintendent of D200, gave a lengthy presentation in support of the facilities plan referendum that will be on the November 8, 2016 ballot. They stated that while the facility is structurally sound, the proposed plan would entail the creation of more classroom space and more room for a growing performing arts program, the replacement of the 88-year-old pools, and improvements to the locker room. D200 would pay \$20 million of the \$44 million cost; the remaining \$25 million would be raised through a bond issue. The projected tax increase is an average of \$90 per year for Oak Park homeowners and \$136 per year for River Forest homeowners.

Barbara Mullarkey, spokesperson for the Oak Park Environmental Network, called attention to a number of incidents at the train bridge/viaduct at Ridgeland and South Boulevard involving the tops of trucks hitting the viaduct. Village agencies have not responded to requests for a complete list of incidents, but a number of them are known to have occurred, and the viaduct poses a safety concern. The speaker called for an examination of the adequacy of the existing signage; whether repaving on Ridgeland affected the distance between the ground and the viaduct and the accuracy of the signs; and whether the integrity of the train tracks has been affected.

Regular Agenda:

RES 16-343, a Resolution Authorizing the Rejection of All Bids for the Washington and Wisconsin Traffic Signal Project: The lowest bid for a traffic light project was \$302,725.20, submitted by H&H Electric. This exceeded the \$150,000 included in the FY 2016 budget for this project. Two area residents spoke about dangerous traffic conditions at the intersection and urged acceptance of the H&H bid. Rebidding next year would not result in a \$150,000 bid. All voted in favor of going with the low bid and proceeding with the project.

ORD 16-121: The Board approved an ordinance providing for the issuance of \$10,005,000 tax-exempt general obligation corporate purpose bonds, and providing for the collection of a direct annual tax for the payment of principal and interest on the bonds to finance certain capital improvement projects.

RES 16-349: As recommended by speaker Mark Prewitt, who is advising the Village, an extension of the electric power supply contract for the Oak Park Community Choice Aggregation Program was approved. The extension will be for 6 months at a rate of 6.799 cents per kWh, inclusive of the .3 cents per kWh local fee to support Smart City USA or other renewable energy projects within the Village.

ORD 16-123: Trustees Tucker and Salzman proposed an annual compensation increase for trustees, from \$7,200 to \$15,000, and an annual compensation increase for the Village President, from \$10,800 to \$25,200. The last increase was 20 years ago. The increase is in line with several other municipalities. The increase would become effective for those persons elected to office on or after April 17, 2017, so would not presently affect three trustees whose terms end in 2019. Salzman called the fiscal impact "negligible" and opined that

the increase would attract a greater pool of candidates. Abu-Taleb suggested that the current compensation levels discourage diversity on the Board. Trustees Barber and Lueck voted against the increase for trustees on the ground that more than doubling the annual compensation was too high. Barber suggested an increase to \$10,800 per year for trustees. Both Barber and Lueck questioned whether persons are attracted to the Board by salary rather than a commitment to public service, as some boards do not offer compensation yet attract motivated individuals. All others voted in favor of the increase, which passed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.