

1 **MINUTES OF THE VILLAGE OF OLYMPIA FIELDS**
2 **MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**
3 **Held on March 17, 2018**
4

5 The Meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on Saturday, March 17th, 2018, at the Linzey D.
6 Jones Municipal Building and was called to order by Village President Sterling M. Burke at 8:30
7 A.M. The assembly recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Gladys Foster, Administrative Assistant
8 called the roll.
9

10 Present: Trustees – Gibson, Oliver, Pennington, Thomas, and Matz
11 Village President Sterling M. Burke
12 Gladys Foster – Administrative Assistant
13 Chief John Krull – Police Chief
14 Jim Landini – Director of Public Works
15 Betty Zigras – Director of Finance
16 Chairperson Trinette Britt-Johnson – Economic Development Commission
17

18 Absent: Trustee Hudson
19 Acting Village Administrator/Deputy Village Clerk Cynthia Saenz
20

21 **EXECUTIVE SESSION WITH A NEED TO RECONVENE:**
22

23 **Motion by Trustee Oliver, second by Trustee Gibson to go into Executive Session to Discuss**
24 **Compensation and Performance of Individual Employees per Section 2(c)(1) of the Open**
25 **Meetings Act at 8:32 A.M.**

26 **Voice Vote: All Ayes Motion Carried.**
27

28 **OPEN SESSION:**
29

30 **Motion by Trustee Pennington, second by Trustee Gibson to go Back into Open Session at**
31 **8:56 A.M.**

32 **Voice Vote: All Ayes Motion Carried.**
33

34 **AGREEMENT FOR ECONOMIC CONSULTING SERVICES (T. BRITT-JOHNSON)**
35

36 Village President Burke stated that we are back in Open Session. The next item on the Agenda is
37 an Agreement for Economic Consultant Services with Trinette Britt-Johnson. He is
38 recommending the contract that you have before you. He stated that the contract has been
39 worked out with John Murphey. He also provided a Written Legal Opinion on the validity of the
40 contract and on what Mrs. Johnson is able to do. The salary is laid out in the contract for
41 \$6,250.00 a month. The contract is for two-years for the services we discussed, in nailing down
42 the \$1.2 Million that was projected that was going to be needed to address the projected
43 increases in expenses. Trinette will be responsible for making those things happen. She has an
44 Economic Development Company. He wants the people that live in the Village to participate
45 with what we are doing around here as far as economic development.

46 Village President Burke stated that there are four ways you can balance a Budget. We talked
47 about that the last time. You can reduce costs. We are trying to do that. You can raise taxes. You

1 can increase economic development or do transfers. In the past, transfers were done. We are
2 reorganizing how things were done in the past. He asked Trinette to talk about her background
3 and what her company has done.
4

5 Mrs. Britt-Johnson stated that she is a 15-year resident of the community. She stated that what is
6 important to her is her mortgage, Real Estate Taxes, our amenities and services that we can
7 utilize, and our safety, and way of life. She has not had a child go through our School System.
8 Our School System is very important to her. She has lived here and supported paying taxes that
9 also support our School System. The prior Administration was very helpful and instrumental in
10 our School System partnering with Franciscan Health as a Shadowing Program.
11

12 Mrs. Britt-Johnson stated that in the prior Administration she was appointed as the Commission
13 Chair for the Economic Development Commission. In that role we are advisory. We provide
14 recommendations. They do strategic planning. She has learned quite a bit about how the Village
15 works. She has learned through that experience what the Village needs, and what the residents
16 need and would like to have in this Village. In her current capacity as Chair, they still do the
17 same thing, but moving from making strategic recommendations from planning, from advisory,
18 this is an opportunity for her to utilize her skillset to go from planning, to execution, and
19 assisting, implementing, and executing some of those strategic plans that we helped come up
20 with.
21

22 Mrs. Britt-Johnson stated that she is an Industrial Engineer even though she never really
23 practiced in that field, an Urban Planner. She stated for the last 30-years of her career she
24 typically worked in the City of Chicago and various neighborhoods, whether its building
25 housing, or building commercial. She got an award for a Transit-Oriented Development Project
26 at Lake and Pulaski working with the CTA and the elevated train. She worked with Industrial
27 Companies. She is a licensed Real Estate Broker. She is a developer. She has written plans for
28 the Chicago Housing Authority. She has built houses. She has brought in new developments. She
29 worked with Whole Foods, Mariano's, bringing in different amenities and restaurants throughout
30 her career. She created Incubator Programs and pop-up stores. She worked with Northwestern,
31 Kellogg, and Roosevelt University. She has done a lot of things in trying to help bridge and bring
32 amenities and services to various communities. She has trained and counseled small businesses.
33 That's a snapshot of things that she has done in her career.
34

35 Mrs. Britt-Johnson stated that because the Village does not have an Economic Development
36 Person that does those activities, she believes that her skillset would be helpful to bring some of
37 the services and amenities to the Village. The Village has contracted out a Strategic Planner who
38 is conducting a Marketing Plan. It is not a final product yet. It will be a final product in the next
39 few weeks that we can report on. There was a recent vote on the Class 8. That has been an
40 important tool besides TIF that businesses are looking for. We have been courting businesses for
41 the Jewel Plaza. We've been courting a couple restaurants that are interested in Vollmer. We are
42 competing with Will County Taxes, and we are competing with taxes in Indiana. Why come
43 here? We know why we like it here. The average businesses are coming with their hand out
44 looking for incentives. We need to figure out how to be aggressive to help support them,
45 especially with the tool that most people use is Class 8. We have to figure out how to be creative.
46 She will be coming back to the Board from the Commission side, or from the consulting side to

1 ask for their support to try to bring in these amenities that folks are looking for. They also need a
2 little help. One of the things that we will probably be asking support for in the future is a Class 8.

3
4 Trustee Matz inquired of Mrs. Britt-Johnson what a Class 8 is. Mrs. Britt-Johnson stated that it is
5 the opportunity for taxes to be reduced for a business coming in for a period of 10-years. And
6 then the taxes will gradually increase back.

7
8 Village President Burke stated that as citizens our homes are taxed at 10% of the assessed
9 valuation. He and Cindy went downtown last Monday and he has been testifying before the Cook
10 County Board. There are 160-Mayors from all over the southern suburbs. Even Wheeling, places
11 like Tinley Park, and Orland Park were there. We are at a disadvantage. One of the reasons why
12 the property taxes are so high is because of the loss of businesses and manufacturing in the
13 southern suburbs. The shift of the burden has been to our personal property taxes. The Class 8 is
14 an equalizer that allows us by a stroke of the pen and a vote by the Board.

15
16 Mrs. Britt-Johnson stated that businesses need 10% of their Budget to go anywhere. There's a
17 10% operating cost that they need in order to make the deal work for them. Part of that
18 occupancy cost is the cost of the Real Estate Taxes that they would pay. Their rent, their Real
19 Estate Taxes, their personnel, that falls into a certain number. They typically want some kind of
20 assistance to help with that number to make it make sense for them.

21
22 We have one Class 8 in the Village and that's Dotty's. Both Dotty's got a Class 8. However, in
23 order to do what we needed to do, and what we want to do with economic development, I
24 mentioned before we don't want to raise taxes. We aren't going to be doing transfers anymore.
25 We have to drive economic development. Trinette is coming onboard and we would like to bring
26 her onboard with this contract in an official capacity. She is not an employee. She is a contract
27 person, a 1099 person. She has the skills. She has the background. She has been involved in it for
28 years already. We have done the Studies. We have a strategy. She is at the forefront of making
29 that happen. We have four or five projects that we are trying to work on right now that we are
30 talking to people about. They are all asking us for money. This Class 8 will affect it. We have to
31 come up with creative ways to close these deals without making it happen. As an experienced
32 developer she will be tasked with helping us to it.

33
34 Trustee Matz inquired whether being a paid consultant would be a conflict of interest being the
35 Chair of the Economic Development Commission. Would she have to step down?

36
37 Village President Burke stated that here is a written, legal opinion. He just got it last night.
38 Trustee Pennington suggested reading it into the record in its entirety. Village President Burke
39 read as follows: "Trinette Britt-Johnson is currently Chair of the Village's Economic
40 Development Commission. This is currently a proposal to appoint her to a paid position as the
41 Village's designated Economic Development Consultant. A question may arise as to whether any
42 sort of legal conflict of interest may result if Ms. Britt-Johnson remains a member of the EDC.

43
44 In my opinion, no legal conflict would result from Trinette remaining on the EDC after her
45 appointment. Under the law, the term "Conflict of Interest" refers to financial conflicts which
46 might place an official in a position of divided loyalty. For example, Village Board members
47 who own businesses are generally prohibited from entering into contracts with the Village.

1
2 In the present case, there is no such financial conflict. The goals which Trinette will be pursuing
3 as a paid consultant for the Village are the same goals which the EDC pursues as an advisory
4 body. To that end, I am attaching the applicable Village Code provision. As you can see, Ms.
5 Britt-Johnson’s duties on a paid, during-the-day basis, are quite similar to the duties of the EDC
6 as an advisory body. The goals are the same. The Village is now deciding simply to pay one
7 EDC member in recognition of the need to devote more time and effort into pursuing these goals.
8 Trinette, in turn, will be able to issue progress status reports to the EDC, and obtain policy
9 guidance from the EDC on initiatives and opportunities as she moves forward.

10
11 Accordingly, no legal conflict will result if Trinette remains on the EDC after she has been
12 appointed to the paid consultant position. A note of caution: Trinette is an active real
13 estate-development services professional throughout the Southland. If at some time in the future
14 she (a) enters into a business relationship with the “XYZ Corporation,” and (b) the XYZ
15 Corporation proposes to enter into any sort of land use or incentive agreement with the Village,
16 then there would be divided loyalties (She cannot be on both sides of a negotiation), and she
17 would have to step down from the EDC.”

18
19 Village President Burke stated in the packet that was passed out last week, we gave you a
20 projection of what the increases in the Village were going to be in terms of our expenses. That’s
21 roughly \$1.2 Million. Trinette has that as a target. One of the Studies that the Board voted on to
22 be conducted that she referenced, we have the preliminary information back from that. We know
23 all of the demographic information. We know the buying habits of the people in the area. We
24 have an input of the opportunities that exist in our community. The people who border us all of
25 us leave the area to go someplace else for a restaurant. All of that information came out of our
26 Study. We have a list of potential businesses that we want to bring in. All of those people that
27 debate on the Economic Development Commission, when we had a meeting, is to prioritize those
28 kinds of businesses that we want that are going to be consistent with the primary, number one
29 item in his principles that he laid out to maintain the nature of the Village of Olympia Fields. All
30 of that has been under the direction and put together by Trinette. The contract that we went
31 through, the Open Meeting Process on bringing multiple people to come in and help give us that
32 kind of information, she’s the one that put all of that stuff together as an experienced
33 professional. We have discussions at the Economic Development Commission meetings made up
34 of people who live in the Village to talk about and prioritize those listings of businesses. Our
35 prime directive is to make sure that we maintain the nature of the Village, look at something that
36 is sustainable, make sure that the types of businesses are the ones that we can all be proud of, and
37 to make sure that they don’t get economic incentives that are not going to be to the best interest
38 of all of the people that live here. All of that is part of what Trinette as the Chairperson has been
39 advocating for, and what we have done as a group. Bill has sat in on those meetings. There was a
40 Joint Meeting between the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Economic Development
41 Commission. That’s something that Trinette orchestrated. She got all of the people together to
42 make sure that our zoning efforts, as well as the kinds of businesses that we want to bring in are
43 all in sync, to make sure that this going to work seamlessly. None of this is a guarantee. We
44 know the kind of businesses that we want to go after. We have a strategy that is not one that is in
45 conflict with our neighbors. We tried to carve out things that we want to focus on that will not
46 cannibalize them, and that what they are doing will not cannibalize what we are doing in order to
47 keep in sync with this whole concept of maintaining the nature of the Village. Trinette as a

1 person has been doing this for the last two or three-years before the new Administration came in.
2 They were kind of handcuffed. They were not able to do as much because we had this “Preferred
3 Developer.” We have implemented a program in which we have multiple developers and have
4 them compete against each other to put in front of them to do those things that are in our best
5 interest. Having someone who is a seasoned, experienced person who really knows how to do
6 this was key to his decision in wanting to move forward.

7
8 Trustee Thomas inquired now that we are going down the pathway of hiring an economic
9 developer, do we need that Chair of that Commission. Do we need something else? She is
10 concerned about the Commission. Even though the attorney has given us conflicts, that’s fine.
11 People perceive things differently. She is wondering what the harm or foul would be
12 restructuring that Commission or something so the same person that is the Chair, she is going to
13 say how people are going to perceive this, has figured out how to take that professional expertise
14 that they have and turn it into a compensated job. We have people on other Committees that are
15 professional in what they do. They are not being compensated. Is there a reason that Mrs.
16 Johnson needs to remain the Chair now that she is transitioning from zero to \$72,000.00? She
17 knows that is probably peanuts compared to whatever she makes in her day-to-day function.
18 What’s the problem with either redoing the Chair, or putting someone that is currently on the
19 Commission, let them Chair the Commission because now she is leading it from another level.
20 Do we need that?

21
22 Trustee Thomas stated in this situation is either dismantling, you have Ad Hoc Committees, or
23 now we don’t need this Committee. Maybe we have staff support and we have some Ad Hoc
24 individuals, but this Executive Type Committee since we have outsourced and hired an
25 individual we are doing away with that. It looks bad. She understands what Mr. Murphey said.
26 She is just talking about perception. Perception is in the eye of the beholder and a lot of times
27 that’s how it turns out. She is not trying to block what we are doing. She is saying let’s do it
28 decently. Let’s look at it. We don’t have anybody on that Commission that can serve as the
29 Chair? Why does this person that is outsourced need to be the Chair of the Commission? Those
30 are her questions.

31
32 Village President Burke stated as far as the members of the Commission, some of these people
33 are leftover from the Commissions and Committees that are being reviewed. He has been putting
34 additional people on these Committees. He feels that he will be the one that will help drive those
35 things. There will be changes to Ordinances. You should have Ad Hoc Committees and
36 Commissions versus Committees and Commissions that just go on and on, and people are more
37 concerned about perpetuating what went on in the past. The way the contract is setup right now,
38 it says that it is for two-years. You will note in the contract that it is structured in such a way that
39 at anytime we can terminate the contract with 30-days’ notice. Trinette can terminate it from her
40 perspective if it’s not working. There are things that we are working on that we need to get
41 going. We can’t allow this stuff to slide. If we have a new business that comes into the Village
42 that is going to build something new, how long will it take John to get a new building built that
43 we can start collecting revenue? Every month that we let this slide until we fix and address those
44 things that you are talking about is putting us further and further behind the eight ball on getting
45 it done.

46

1 Trustee Thomas stated that she agrees with him. She has one thing to ask that she would like you
2 to really, really consider. This is going to be show me. We will go along, and get along, and see
3 how this works. If she doesn't see nothing she is going to ask the questions. She is not
4 questioning this contract. She is questioning Mrs. Britt-Johnson serving as the Chair. Now she is
5 being compensated for what she does. Why does that title of being the Chair need to be carried?
6

7 Village President Burke stated that we can work on identifying somebody else who will step up
8 and put the time in to be the Chairperson as we move along. The language that was put together
9 was from him, Cindy, and John Murphey. Trinette sat down and went through this. The Chair
10 part was left in there because we didn't have an answer for somebody to be the Chair. Right now,
11 he doesn't have a person to be the Chair. We went through it. We don't have an answer today.
12

13 Trustee Thomas stated that she is the consultant that we hired to be our Economic Developer.
14 She doesn't think that being the Chair of the Commission is that important. She inquired when
15 can she follow up with the Village President on that. Village President Burke stated that we can
16 talk about that next week.
17

18 Trustee Thomas inquired whether or not we are going to vote on this again next month or are we
19 done with it. Village President Burke stated that we want to vote on this today because we have
20 to get started. Trustee Thomas inquired how will the public be aware of what we have done.
21 Village President Burke stated that this is a Public Meeting. Trustee Thomas stated that here
22 should be a way of doing it if we are transparent, to let the residents of the Village of Olympia
23 Fields know that we are moving in the right direction. We have hired an Economic Developer
24 who is going to help us. You can put it in the water bill just for transparency. Village President
25 Burke stated that when Cindy gets back we will make sure that the public gets aware of what we
26 are doing. It will be in the water bill, of course. Trustee Thomas inquired for new businesses that
27 move, her doctor relocated her business from Ingalls in Flossmoor to Olympia Fields. The rent
28 was cheaper. She guesses that is a medical facility right over there. How do we welcome and
29 help support those businesses so that they stay here? It's a doctor's office. All of her patients are
30 not from Olympia Fields. She has some come from Indiana that Trustee Thomas referred to her.
31 What is that process that we have for engaging businesses and helping them to stay? Village
32 President Burke stated that Trustee Thomas has to come to the Economic Development
33 Commission Meetings. That's one of the things that they talked about at the last meeting with the
34 Planning and Zoning Commission. We talked about not only how we do more outbound
35 marketing, how to put a process in place to track new businesses, what we have done as we have
36 found out about it is put new businesses on the website to let people know that this is a new
37 business that is there. The problem with that is how do you get more people driven to the
38 website? He stated that Hilde Betts, at our last Economic Development Commission Meeting,
39 she did some staff work to say what are the things that we need to do to do more outbound
40 marketing. There was a whole list of things that we need to do to get more people to look at the
41 website, to get the development people looking at the website. These are some of the things that
42 we have been discussing and we are building a list of what we need to do. That is part of what
43 Trinette will be responsible for as the person who is driving it is taking the arms and legs and the
44 Commission is making recommendations. Some of it Gladys will be doing. Some of it we will
45 have the Commission people doing. Some of it he will be doing. There was a whole list of things
46 that just weren't getting done before that. We have to start marketing the Village. That has to be

1 done. That process is one of them. How do we get new people involved? We have a list of those
2 things that came out of the last meeting that we are working on.
3

4 Trustee Thomas stated for a new business we do know that they are here. Do we have a
5 Directory? She heard him say that they are online. She wants to make sure that she feels a part of
6 our community. Village President Burke stated that is part of what we are working on right now.
7 He inquired of John McDonnell that if a new business comes in, other than him finding out about
8 it and telling us because they get the Permits, when the water is turned on, do they get a
9 “Welcome Pack?” Trustee Pennington stated that he doesn’t think we do.
10

11 Mrs. Britt-Johnson stated that was something that the Commission was working on. We don’t
12 want to experience what our neighbor to the southwest has experienced. We are starting with our
13 retail store fronts. She stated on April 19th at 8:00 A.M., we are starting a series of roundtable
14 discussions. We are bringing in these folks. Not the Office Park yet. Wal-Mart, Walgreens, and
15 CVS. We are asking with a personal letter written from the President to these business owners by
16 name, or managers, not the property owners yet. We are having a series of these and bringing
17 these folks in and asking them questions. How are you doing? How can we help you? How can
18 we partner? What keeps you up at late at night? We want to partner. We want to collaborate. We
19 want to make sure that you keep your doors open. How can we be helpful? We are here. Talk to
20 us. Let us talk to you. We started with them because we need the Sales Tax Revenue. She walks
21 to Wal-Mart like she is the police. She is searching the aisles, the shelves, how it is looking. She
22 is at Meijer’s looking. She wants to make sure that that big box we have stays open as best we
23 can. She talks to the people like she works there. She’s the police. That’s our biggest source of
24 revenue coming in.
25

26 Village President Burke stated that he is not a Wal-Mart shopper. He gets his Patti LaBelle
27 Sweet Potato Pies. He gets comments from people about the Wal-Mart. He goes around and talks
28 to people. He brought it to the Board’s attention before that he had the Walgreens people come
29 in. He was concerned about Walgreens leaving. He is going around and talking to people in these
30 stores. He spent a lot of time not only in our town but in other places. The Village President, and
31 Trinette have checked places out. They are looking at businesses they could bring in. They don’t
32 want to be in conflict or cannibalize our neighbors. We want those things that are the best fit for
33 the Village of Olympia Fields. The gas station that was potentially being upgraded at the corner
34 of Western and Lincoln Highway, we spoke with them. They wanted to tear that place down and
35 redo it and make it a Wal-Mart Gas Station, Murphy’s Gas Station. We said that they are not
36 going to do that. They had to come back with a better plan and something that was conducive to
37 the Village and it has to look a certain way. John was sitting in the meeting with us. We showed
38 them the kind of brick we want to see. It has to look like Oak Brook. You have to maintain it that
39 way. You have certain plants you have to put in. Anybody that comes in and we talk to, it’s a
40 balance between taking their temperature and making them feel good, and at the same time
41 telling them that you will do this and make it look a certain way.
42

43 Trustee Thomas stated that we are removing the stigma that was presented to us previously that
44 said a community that the majority is a minority are not shoppers and not tippers. The research
45 shows the opposite. We are the number one consumers in America, and we do tip and pay for
46 what we want. It has to be what we want. She wants Whole Foods or a Mariano’s. She likes
47 Trader Joe’s, and Bath and Body.

1
2 Village President Burke stated that everything that you are saying was from the Study that we
3 did to update the Economic Development Book that David had with current information that we
4 can use to leverage when people tell us “No.” According to this redlining thing, we do not buy
5 into this redlining concept. The Studies that come back are telling us there are demographics and
6 our buying habits are superior to what you see in these other places. We use that data when we
7 talk to people. The pitch is that this is the place that you should come and put your business at.
8 All of that is what we have been doing for the last eight, nine-months with the Economic
9 Development Commission to have the data to back that up. We whip out the data and say here’s
10 the facts. We want you to come here and Olympia Fields is a destination. We have a Plan to get
11 ahead of that stuff and to cut these people off with the data to back it up. One of the reasons to
12 have Trinetta, as a person who has done development, and the person who has been leading this
13 effort before he even got involved with this, he had his ideas and his vision about what we want
14 to do. The day-to-day blocking and tackling is what she is going to be charged with doing.

15
16 Trustee Thomas stated that you see how you took me through it. She has the mindset of a
17 resident. You are explaining things that are near and dear to her. When it comes to where she
18 lives, when it comes to what she likes to see in this community, at sometime in the future after
19 she gets onboard with what she is doing, have a conversation with the people. People want to
20 know who they are entrusted and where their dollars are going, and that you have this eye to eye,
21 and not the business, not the numbers, the real conversation about what people are concerned
22 about when it comes to economic development. How having that whole community support and
23 collaboration could help to continue to say that Olympia Fields is a destination. It would be good
24 to figure out how to have that and start to get the community involved and understanding. That’s
25 another thing she would ask if we could do that.

26
27 Village President Burke stated that is part of all of the groundwork that we put together to be
28 able to show that, and the businesses that we are trying to attract, as well as the people who live
29 here so they will have confidence that we are moving in the right way.

30
31 Mrs. Britt-Johnson stated that was a role that the Commission was going to do. She calls those
32 “Community Sherrets.” She stated that you might call them a “Town Hall Meeting.” That was
33 something that the Commission as a whole was going to do, not her personally, but she is part of
34 that. She is only one vote of a body of whole. We operate by consensus.

35
36 **Motion by Trustee Matz, second by Trustee Pennington to accept the contract of Mrs.**
37 **Britt-Johnson.**

38 **Voice Vote: All Ayes Motion Carried.**

39 **Roll Call: (Ayes 5-0) Motion Carried.**

40
41 This matter concluded at 9:56 A.M.

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43 **FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET REVIEW:**

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45 The Board discussed the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Review.

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ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Trustee Gibson, second by Trustee Pennington to adjourn the Board Meeting at 11:52 A.M.

Voice Vote: All Ayes Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted by Faith Stine.