

1 **MINUTES OF THE VILLAGE OF OLYMPIA FIELDS**  
2 **SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
3 **Held on June 13, 2016**  
4

5 The Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on Monday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016, at the  
6 Linzey D. Jones Municipal Building and was called to order by Village President Debra Meyers-  
7 Martin at 7:00 P.M. The assembly recited the Pledge of Allegiance. The Village  
8 Administrator/Village Clerk called the roll.  
9

10 Present: Trustees – Nale, Pennington, Byrd, Hudson, and Waite  
11 Village President Debra Meyers-Martin  
12 Village Administrator/Village Clerk David Mekarski  
13

14 Absent: Trustee Gibson  
15

16 **BILLS FOR APPROVAL:**  
17

18 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that you have before you tonight Bills for Approval in  
19 the amount of \$177,551.71. There is a Cover Memo in the Board Packet designating the more  
20 significant payouts.

21 **Motion by Trustee Byrd, second by Trustee Waite to approve the payment of Bills for June**  
22 **13<sup>th</sup>, 2016, in the total amount of \$177,551.71.**

23 **Roll Call: Ayes (5-0) Motion Carried.**  
24

25 **COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS:**  
26

27 Village President Meyers-Martin opened Communications & Petitions at 7:02 P.M.  
28

29 **Mass Shooting in Orlando** - Village President Meyers-Martin stated that we are deeply  
30 saddened, and she hopes that you keep the family members of those killed in Orlando last night  
31 in your prayers. She stated that she doesn't even know what to say because we continue to have  
32 these types of incidents, and there doesn't seem to be anyway to address them to resolve the  
33 issue. There are varying opinions about what is going on with that. In any case, the bottom line is  
34 it is a sorrowful, sorrowful time. We hold and keep those family members, friends, and  
35 colleagues in our prayers. She knows that it is extremely difficult as it has been for any of the  
36 other mass shootings, or even the shootings that occur on a daily basis in the City of Chicago. It  
37 is something that she cannot wrap her brain around and she is sure that most of you cannot as  
38 well. Please keep them in your prayers. Although there were members of the public in the  
39 audience, no one wished to address the Board. Village President Meyers-Martin closed  
40 Communications & Petitions at 7:05 P.M.  
41

42 **CONSENT AGENDA:**  
43

44 **A. Recommended for Payment of Invoice #8 to Performance Pipeline, Inc. for Work**  
45 **Completed in Connection with the Graymoor Subdivision, Lateral Line Rehabilitation**  
46 **Non-USACE Funding (Project No. 12-677.04) in the amount of \$129,174.74.**  
47



1 Administrator Mekarski stated that he can read the Policy into the record. This is the rental  
2 information for the Board Room in the Old Village Hall. This doesn't pertain to Homeowners  
3 Associations privileges for the Board Room, or some of our organizations, Boards, and  
4 Committees use of either the Board Room or the office area. This is for Residents renting the Old  
5 Village Hall Board Room and/or Non-Residents. **Usage Information. Maximum Capacity:** 75  
6 people. **Payment:** All fees must be paid to secure the date. Reservations must be made seven  
7 days in advance. Reservations are always at the New Village Hall in the Reservation Book.  
8 **Cancellation:** Cancellation of any application must be received by the Village seven days prior  
9 to the scheduled date. Failure to give seven days notice of cancellation will result in forfeiture of  
10 deposit and possible denial of future permits. **Smoking:** Smoking is not allowed at any Village  
11 facility. **Alcohol:** Alcoholic beverages may not be served, consumed or brought onto Village  
12 property. **Setup:** The Village will provide basic setup; any additional set up will be the  
13 responsibility of the individual renter. **Cleanup:** All food, table coverings and decorations are to  
14 be removed prior to leaving the facility. Nothing may be attached to any walls, door or ceiling  
15 without advance approval. All groups or individuals will be responsible for their general cleanup.  
16

17 Administrator Mekarski stated that the Rate Information is the most substantive changes that  
18 were made. **All renters must provide a Certificate of Insurance with the Village listed as an**  
19 **additional insured/certificate holder. No organization or individuals will be granted rental**  
20 **privileges in excess of 4 times per calendar year, and not more than 2 times in any given**  
21 **month, unless approved by the Conference Committee.** The Conference Committee is  
22 composed of two Trustees from this Board. **Resident Rate:** The Resident's Hourly rate is  
23 \$20.00 per hour. Daily rate: \$100.00 per day. \$35.00 non-refundable maintenance fee. \$100.00  
24 refundable deposit. **Non-Resident Rate:** Hourly rate: \$175.00 per hour. \$100.00 non-refundable  
25 maintenance fee. \$100.00 refundable deposit. **RENTAL IS FOR THE CONFERENCE**  
26 **ROOM ONLY. THE VILLAGE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO RESCHEDULE OR**  
27 **CANCEL AN EVENT DUE TO EMERGENCY PURPOSES.**  
28

29 Trustee Hudson inquired of Administrator Mekarski whether or not any of the people are here  
30 that are on the Committee. Administrator Mekarski stated that it was Trustee Gibson and Trustee  
31 Ormsby. You would probably have to reappoint Trustee Gibson and another individual.  
32

33 Trustee Pennington stated that he had expressed an interest of serving on that Committee, but he  
34 was never notified of the meetings.  
35

36 Trustee Byrd stated that there is one person currently on it. Administrator Mekarski stated that  
37 we have not had a convening of that Committee. Trustee Hudson stated that we are telling people  
38 that this is what it is. She is not sure how it is going to be monitored. Administrator Mekarski  
39 stated that is something that the Conference Committee could study and bring back a  
40 recommendation. Trustee Hudson stated that is why she was asking who was on that Committee.  
41

42 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that it is Trustee Gibson. She sort of led the charge to  
43 make these changes in the Policy. Trustee Ormsby was also on the Committee. Now there does  
44 need to be someone appointed. That Committee has not really convened.  
45

46 Trustee Hudson stated so we will have some additional information once they have convened to  
47 tell how that is going to be monitored. She stated that as it stands now, you can go there and





1 meeting with 11 other towns to create a Water Authority. This previously was called a “JAWA.”  
2 There were six towns involved. The whole planning of that JAWA was to not rely on others for  
3 our water supply. We would create our own Water Authority and we would be creating the  
4 pipeline into Hammond. She stated that Hammond has signed on for that with those previous  
5 towns. That whole Water Authority fell apart because there were changes in administration.  
6 They did not have a strong contract in place, and therefore they couldn’t even get a quorum when  
7 they were meeting in order to go forward with that program.

8  
9 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that we are discussing with 11 towns that are interested  
10 in creating a new Water Authority where we would then have control of our own destiny. We  
11 would be working directly with Hammond. Those 11 towns have provided a Letter of Interest to  
12 the City of Hammond. She has not gotten a response back from Russ Prekwas from Robinson  
13 Engineering as to Hammond’s level of interest in creating this new Water Authority. The towns  
14 are quite interested. They were very stable towns. The previous towns that were involved had  
15 financial issues. They had political issues that they couldn’t really maintain that level of  
16 participation in order to go forward. The towns that she has been meeting with have been  
17 meeting right here in Village Hall. She stated that some of those towns are: South Holland,  
18 Homewood, Flossmoor, Matteson, Country Club Hills, and Thornton. The Village did provide  
19 that Letter of Interest. We have an upcoming meeting to discuss what Hammond has decided.  
20 She stated that water would not flow from that Water Authority until 2022 if that were to go  
21 forward. Our contract with Oak Lawn is up in 2024. We have time to continue our investigative  
22 work. Other towns in that Water Authority do not. Some of their contracts are coming up quite  
23 soon.

24  
25 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that it was a very interesting conversation with Mayor  
26 Gonzalez. We are leaving all of our options open because at the end of the day, what we are  
27 trying to do is to provide safe water that we can more control the rates than being at the mercy of  
28 Chicago every time they raise the rates. We are waiting for some answers from Mayor Gonzalez.  
29 She wanted to bring it to the Board because he gave us two-weeks. We are currently coming to  
30 the end of those two-weeks. Now that we have provided this letter to him in response to his offer,  
31 he will be providing answers to those questions. You will see what those rates would look like.

32  
33 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that the thing about going with Chicago Heights, he has  
34 current customers. He provides water to Glenwood, Thornton, Ford Heights, and South Chicago  
35 Heights. Hammond will not let those towns come in if we go with Chicago Heights. They will  
36 remain on their current contract with Hammond. It would only be the new towns of Homewood,  
37 Flossmoor, East Hazel Crest, Hazel Crest, Olympia Fields, Matteson, Country Club Hills, and  
38 Sauk Village. According to Mayor Gonzalez he has all of them ready to sign onboard. We have  
39 discovered that is not true. We have reached out to those towns and none of them have agreed to  
40 work with Mayor Gonzalez. We are now holding the position that he must answer all of these  
41 questions regarding rates, supply, redundancy, quality of water, and capacity. Can he supply  
42 capacity to us? These are things that we don’t know at this time.

43  
44 Trustee Waite inquired of Village President Meyers-Martin how she feels about somebody who  
45 gives you a Proposal and you find that there is a whole lot of things that aren’t true. Does that  
46 make you feel real comfortable about negotiating with them?  
47

1 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that at this point she is just trying to keep all of our  
2 options open. You have been at some of the JAWA Meetings. The attorney from Ice Miller has  
3 made it clear that if, in fact, there is going to be any contract that is signed for water, that we are  
4 going to make sure that that contract is iron clad so that there is no wiggle room for that supplier  
5 to come back and change the elements of the contract if it is with JAWA, or if it is with Chicago  
6 Heights. Initially, when Chicago Heights approached us they were talking about Kankakee  
7 water.

8  
9 Trustee Waite stated that they have been talking about a lot of different sources of water not just  
10 Kankakee. He agrees that it didn't seem as though Chicago Heights was really interested in  
11 getting serious about discussions. It seems like they still are not serious if they are giving us  
12 Proposals which are erroneous. Of course, we can clear that up. He likes the fact that Chicago  
13 Heights is now coming to the table a little closer. The whole project of putting together a  
14 separate water company is going to approach \$400,000,000.00. That is serious money. And then  
15 we won't get the water rates back down to where they are today until you get out 20, 25-years.  
16 He likes the idea of thinking that far out. He stated that when you are thinking that far out it  
17 harbors some risks that we have to think about very, very seriously. But it is nice that there is  
18 something going on there because it gives us a little more leverage with Chicago Heights.

19  
20 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that the other thing about Oak Lawn is that they are  
21 finally coming around back to the table as well. We have been chasing them to get some answers  
22 about their rehab of their Water System, the fact that at any given time they couldn't even supply  
23 capacity to us at the level that we need it. They are finally answering some of the questions that  
24 have been on the table for quite a while.

25  
26 Administrator Mekarski stated that ultimately what we are hoping to do is do a full Cost Benefit  
27 Analysis with the three alternatives on the table. 1. The Joint Water Authority, JAWA, with the  
28 11 communities; 2. The City of Chicago Heights; and 3. The Village of Oak Lawn. The Village  
29 of Oak Lawn, their rates have been going up on average about 6% a year. That's generally about  
30 3% plus or minus from the Village of Oak Lawn for their Capital Improvements, as well as their  
31 operation and maintenance, and about 3% from the City of Chicago Heights both for Capital  
32 Improvements and operation and maintenance. In previous years the City of Chicago Heights  
33 had some real stiff hikes, 15%, 15%, and 25% over like a three-year span. It really jumped up  
34 our rate significantly. When you compare it with the Joint Water Authority, it is on average  
35 about 6%. He stated that what makes Chicago Heights attractive is they are guaranteeing the  
36 rates not to increase by more than 3%. That is very attractive on face value. We have at least 21  
37 specific comments or questions about the system. It appears like it is 3% but there are a lot of  
38 questions in the detailed fine print.

39  
40 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that the thing about Hammond is they always guarantee  
41 that they will always be 88% of what Chicago rates are.

42  
43 Administrator Mekarski stated that the one factor that makes Oak Lawn more attractive than any  
44 of the two is that 10-years ago this governing body along with the other governing bodies that  
45 were part of the Oak Lawn System, demanded from Oak Lawn that they wanted a Capital  
46 Improvement Plan. They wanted an Operation and Maintenance Plan. They wanted a separation  
47 of accounts. They wanted transparency. They wanted accountability. They wanted Audit  
48 Reports. They wanted to be part of the financial management decisions. They wanted a

1 uniformed contract across all users. Ultimately, Oak Lawn responded. The system 10-years ago  
2 was not reliable. It was not dependable. It did not have redundancy. We were subject to major  
3 water shutoffs. He stated that for our community it could have been extremely dangerous  
4 because we are at the end of the line. We have a water tank and towers that hold three-days of  
5 water. Beyond three-days we are out of water. If there is a stiff wind and a fire we'd have a  
6 dangerous situation, let alone not having sanitary conditions.

7  
8 Administrator Mekarski stated that they hired one of the best Engineering Firms in the world.  
9 They said that you are right. The system is not dependable. It is not reliable. It doesn't have  
10 redundancy. They came up with a Master Plan. All of the communities got what they were  
11 demanding. It turns out that because of gross neglect in the past of not really managing a Water  
12 System, now they are playing catch up and doing \$260,000,000.00. That \$260,000,000.00 means  
13 that the Village would have to invest \$5.4 Million. We can amortize it over 30-years. It would  
14 mean a 10% hike in the Water System. That 10% would be able to sustain that. There are  
15 mechanisms that we are looking at with Non-Home Rule Sales Tax that could absorb that whole  
16 10% so we don't have to pass it onto the rates. We will be having discussions on that subject in  
17 August. He stated that the system in terms of governance now, and in terms of Capital  
18 Improvements, in terms of Operation and Maintenance, is really the most sound. Our Village  
19 Attorney is strongly recommending this Board to consider both the quantitative and the  
20 qualitative factors.

21  
22 Administrator Mekarski stated that the JAWA could be the best system in the long run because it  
23 puts a crib out in Lake Hammond. They don't even charge us per 1,000 gallons. They just charge  
24 us a transmission rate. At the end of 25-years we could save literally millions, and with 11  
25 communities hundreds of millions of dollars for all of our rate payers. It is not until 25-years.  
26 You could imagine what it is going to take to put 11 communities together and all the  
27 governance issues, and the political issues, let alone all the Capital Improvements. We are  
28 hoping that the \$350,000,000.00 is the right number. It all depends on how many people actually  
29 sign up. The more people that sign on the more favorable that rate chart looks. The less that sign  
30 on the rates could be equal if not higher than what we have. It's still a work in progress. It is  
31 going to take probably one or two-years to do this Cost Benefit Analysis.

32  
33 Administrator Mekarski stated that we just received some additional data from Oak Lawn this  
34 week. We have four basic questions from Oak Lawn before we could even begin a Cost Benefit  
35 Analysis. They have taken over nine-months almost a year to deliver that. We passed that to the  
36 engineer yesterday. Betty Zigras is working internally with some of those figures. She was  
37 working with us on the 2030 Analysis. We are going to be now analyzing that with Chicago  
38 Heights.

39  
40 Administrator Mekarski stated that the one thing with Chicago Heights that we all have to  
41 evaluate is some of those qualitative issues. Is there going to be the openness, the accountability,  
42 the account procedures, the separation of funds, and will the governance in Chicago Heights be  
43 sustainable in the long run? Fluctuations in leadership can actually affect it.

44  
45 Trustee Pennington stated that is the X factor that you just don't know. Trustee Byrd stated that  
46 could be Oak Lawn also. Administrator Mekarski stated that it was historically, until they  
47 institutionalized all these changes with the Master Water Agreement and they segregate their



1 revenues. They have to pay just like we do for water. He stated that prior to that their local water  
2 was being delivered almost for free.

3  
4 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that initially in the meeting with Mayor Gonzalez it  
5 sounded quite attractive because he was offering in the contract that Chicago Heights would pick  
6 up all of the costs, which sounded pretty good. However, he didn't explain how that would  
7 happen, what would happen if any of those elements changed. He was going to go to Oak Lawn.  
8 He was going to intercede for us at Oak Lawn. That's why it is extremely important that he come  
9 back in a timely way and provide details, specifics, about how that contract would work. Right  
10 now it just sounds good but there is no substance.

11  
12 Trustee Pennington inquired what the term of the Chicago Heights contract is. Administrator  
13 Mekarski stated that is one of the questions that we asked. He provided a Rate Chart of 25-years.  
14 We are suggesting that at a minimum we would like to see 40-years or more. Trustee Pennington  
15 stated absolutely. Trustee Pennington stated that he notes that we have a revised letter. It appears  
16 to be that the only change is found in the rate structure on Page 2, \$1.85 from \$1.60.  
17 Administrator Mekarski stated that is correct. The \$1.60 was Hazel Crest and the \$1.85 is our  
18 rate. We are a little bit more expensive because we are further from the intake in Hammond.

19  
20 Trustee Pennington stated that Madam Mayor stated that Hammond would guarantee 88%  
21 of Chicago's rate. What do they base that guarantee on?

22  
23 Administrator Mekarski stated that he thinks it is just a political consideration. They will look at  
24 the rate of Chicago and they want to make sure they can maintain their customer base.

25  
26 Trustee Pennington stated that we shouldn't go on the premise that it is a political issue. We need  
27 to get them to state with clarity how they guarantee that 88%. Administrator Mekarski stated yes.  
28 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that it is also based on CPI. We are asking him would  
29 that rate be impacted by CPI. He hasn't answered that yet.

30  
31 Administrator Mekarski stated that is a real good point. That is some of the nuances that we need  
32 to see in a draft contract. That's why it was so difficult when Mayor Gonzalez has asked for even  
33 a cursory decision of the Board within two-weeks. The letter with the 21 points is to make a  
34 point that we don't even have the basic elements to even make a cursory decision. The Mayor  
35 couldn't make this decision unilaterally. The Village Administrator couldn't make it unilaterally.  
36 So we had to put it on for discussion. We wanted to be very polite about the Proposal because it  
37 very well may be the second best alternative.

38  
39 Trustee Pennington stated that the letter is fine. The letter is right on point.

40  
41 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that Mayor Gonzalez was quite gracious in his response  
42 to say that he would be providing those answers. We look forward to that. This is a very complex  
43 issue that really is going to require a lot of due diligence on our part. The Cost Benefit Analysis  
44 of these three Plans is going to help determine which direction we go in. We have to have some  
45 assurances and some guarantees.

46  
47 Trustee Pennington stated that he finds it interesting that when we were negotiating with Oak  
48 Lawn in 2009, 2010, we asked for a Cost Benefit Analysis and never got one. Village President

1 Meyers-Martin stated that is right. Trustee Pennington stated that it's strange that they are now  
2 coming to the table seeing that. There might be a different aspect developing here.  
3  
4 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that she thinks that Oak Lawn is getting wind just like  
5 Chicago Heights got wind that people are looking at other alternatives. They are looking at doing  
6 other things than just falling into line with them.  
7  
8 Administrator Mekarski stated that one thing about Oak Lawn is very, very difficult. Our fate  
9 with the Village of Oak Lawn, whether we even have the opportunity to continue water service  
10 delivery is really dependent on the willingness of Country Club Hills and Matteson. We are a  
11 pencil with a stream of water compared to the two communities with a much larger allocation. If  
12 they decide to go with JAWA and/or Chicago Heights, and after all our Cost Benefit Analysis we  
13 think that Oak Lawn is the better alternative both qualitative and quantitative, we may not have  
14 the opportunity because they are maybe unwilling to deliver the water to us because we are such  
15 a small allocation. We only have 2,000 homes and like 100 businesses.  
16  
17 Trustee Waite stated that whatever our decision is about where we would like to get our water  
18 from and what would be best for us, is that if we take the short-term view none of us are going to  
19 be here when the 20 or 25-years are up. He thinks the better decision is to go long-term and try to  
20 nail down what's in our best interest long-term, as opposed to trying to take a short-term view.  
21 When you are in elected office you look at things and you say, "Well, I won't be around here.  
22 Let's move this forward." He finds that an unattractive approach because it use to be our water  
23 was one of the cheapest in the area. That is no longer the case. It has caught up with us. We are  
24 applying some pressure to Oak Lawn and pressure to Chicago Heights and maybe some other  
25 areas. There is nothing like being able to say, "I don't have to think about this again for 50-  
26 years." Administrator Mekarski stated yes. Trustee Waite stated from the number of meetings  
27 that he has sat in; there are a number of other communities that feel the same way. They would  
28 like to have a really long-term fix on this issue or we are going to have \$500.00 or more a month  
29 that it is going to cost each resident for water.  
30  
31 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that she thought it was very interesting that when we  
32 started pulling those towns here to talk about the Water Authority, which they were very excited,  
33 very enthusiastic about providing that Letter of Interest to Hammond, Chicago Heights then  
34 started going after those same towns. He was calling them on the phone. She thinks that he feels  
35 that is a true option that very well may be taken.  
36  
37 Trustee Waite stated that Mayor Gonzalez has started to recognize the fact that there is a good  
38 possibility that we are going to take the longer view, and he is going to be standing out there  
39 without enough water to cover what he needs to cover.  
40  
41 Administrator Mekarski stated that he thinks that is right. It is important for the Board to grasp,  
42 as well as the public, that on the short run any alternatives being considered will not decrease  
43 your water rates. The one opportunity that has a huge opportunity for substantial savings after the  
44 Debt Service is paid is the Joint Water Authority. Basically, it is a Federal alternative to make us  
45 independent and part of the governance of the delivery of water. We wouldn't be just subservient  
46 to in the case like we are now with the City of Chicago and the Village of Oak Lawn. We would  
47 be one of equal votes of 10 or 11 communities. He was digging up some historic records. We  
48 started this analysis with Oak Lawn way back in 2006. He looked at what they were projecting in

1 2006 as the water improvements. They were \$40,000,000.00. Today they are \$211,000,000.00.  
2 That is something we have to be cautious. The engineer's best estimate for the Joint Water  
3 Authority is \$350,000,000.00. If you use that same analysis of what the projection was and  
4 ultimately what it came in to, that is why he thinks Trustee Waite made a good point that while it  
5 looks very exciting and it is going to give us independence and opportunities for huge savings,  
6 there is also a huge risk. You can't discount Chicago Heights. You can't discount the Village of  
7 Oak Lawn. The dilemma is the Village of Matteson's financial position is so tenuous that it  
8 could ultimately affect one of our alternatives.

9  
10 Village President Meyers-Martin stated at this point we don't know where they stand.

11  
12 Trustee Pennington inquired given the magnitude of what we just discussed, and given the need  
13 to have all input from all pertinent parties weigh-in on this, why isn't Jim Landini here. He is the  
14 Director of Public Works.

15  
16 Administrator Mekarski stated that it is a point well-taken. He stated that Jim had some personal  
17 commitments he could not get out of. We knew this was a Work Session and not a decision  
18 point. As the Mayor indicated it was to give this Board the questions that we gave to Chicago  
19 Heights so there is openness and transparency. He worked with Jim on this over two days. He  
20 and Jim brainstormed and then they worked with Robinson Engineering. They flushed this out.  
21 Out of the 10 communities, we are the first community to raise these questions. This letter is now  
22 going to be the model for the 11 communities, or at least the six of them that the Mayor read that  
23 is being recruited by Chicago Heights.

24  
25 Trustee Pennington stated that he understands and he accepts that. He just thinks regardless as to  
26 whether or not this is a Work Session, or a session where a vote is taken, Department Heads who  
27 are actively involved in whatever aspect that they are involved in, should be at these meetings.

28  
29 Trustee Waite inquired of Trustee Pennington what question he would like to ask of Jim. Trustee  
30 Pennington stated that it is not a matter of what question that he would like to raise with him. He  
31 stated the fact of the matter that is he is a Department Head. He needs to be here. And if he can't  
32 be here, then he is sure he will give a reason for his not being here. Trustee Waite stated why  
33 don't we have all the Department Heads here. Trustee Pennington stated that is not a bad idea.  
34 It's not a bad idea, but certainly on Department Heads that are involved in specific matters that  
35 are coming before this Board. He stated not everyone will have input on a project that they are  
36 working on until such time as it comes to the Board. He stated that something like this our  
37 Department Head should be present. He accepts the fact that he had a prior engagement. He  
38 accepts that. It is just that he has certain insight. Trustee Pennington would have loved to have  
39 heard his comment relative to this entire matter.

40  
41 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that ordinarily if he was unable to be here, then we really  
42 would not have put it on the Agenda. Again, because we are dealing with Mayor Gonzalez's  
43 two-week deadline it was very important to get this before the Board, in terms of what has been  
44 offered and what our response was. Trustee Pennington stated sure. Village President Meyers-  
45 Martin stated certainly when we get answers back from Mayor Gonzalez then Jim Landini, of  
46 course, should most definitely be here so that we can weigh-in on the quality of the answer, and  
47 the thoroughness.

48

1 Administrator Mekarski stated that he respects the Board's prerogative, and certainly Trustees  
2 your prerogative and opinion, but there is not a single question that either he as the Administrator  
3 and/or the Mayor could not answer on this. The Mayor was in attendance at the meeting with the  
4 City of Chicago Heights. He spent considerable hours analyzing the Proposals that were  
5 submitted and had in-depth conversations with Robinson Engineering and brainstormed with Jim  
6 Landini. This is under his signature and he authored these 21 questions. He appreciates it. He can  
7 certainly address that. He wants to assure you that between the President and your Administrator  
8 this issue was well represented tonight, especially at the point that you have to make a decision.  
9 He takes a lot of pride that this Board and his office always puts the emphasis that family is  
10 important. And when there is a very important family or personal need and this Board can be  
11 covered, he is going to back that Department Head because that is how you retain quality  
12 employees and that's how you maintain high level performance. He stated his apologies. If any  
13 criticism should be made it shouldn't be on Jim Landini, it should be on him because he made  
14 the decision to release him today for a family need. He accepts your criticism and he will  
15 respond accordingly. He stated my apologies.

16  
17 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that those towns that are interested in the Water  
18 Authority, all indications are that they are a strong coalition of towns. It is Olympia Fields,  
19 Matteson, Flossmoor, Homewood, South Holland, Thornton, Markham, Alsip, Calumet Park,  
20 and Country Club Hills.

21  
22 Trustee Pennington inquired whether or not that is the JAWA group. Administrator Mekarski  
23 stated yes. There is an outside opportunity for even Joliet if there is a possibility to increase the  
24 allocation.

25  
26 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that all came out of the Task Force out of the South  
27 Suburban Mayors and Managers Association.

28  
29 Trustee Pennington inquired of Village President Meyers-Martin what their position is on it.  
30 Have the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association taken a position regarding the  
31 entire water thing?

32  
33 Village President Meyers-Martin stated not really. They hadn't discussed this for a long time  
34 because a lot of their members are on the wells. When we had the Task Force well towns did not  
35 participate. Now that there is sort of a specific group of towns, Ed Paesel has been participating  
36 in those meetings. We will do that Cost Benefit Analysis. Hopefully, we will hear from Oak  
37 Lawn now that they have gotten wind that we are looking seriously at some other alternatives  
38 other than them. She believes that for the longest time they thought they were the only game in  
39 town.

40  
41 Trustee Byrd stated so we are going to do a Cost Benefit Analysis and also an analysis on the  
42 questions being asked. Village President Meyers-Martin stated yes, absolutely.

43  
44 Trustee Hudson stated that a couple of years ago there was a negative article in the paper  
45 concerning the delivery of water. She thought it was from Hammond. Village President Meyers-  
46 Martin stated that she doesn't recall. She stated that Chicago Heights sued Hammond. It is a very  
47 strange relationship. That being said, we are not leaving any stone unturned to find out what is  
48 going to be the best deal for the Village of Olympia Fields. We are the smallest user of Oak

1 Lawn from Oak Lawn customers. We are also at the end of the line. We have created a coalition  
2 with Matteson and the City of Country Club Hills so that we could approach Oak Lawn as a  
3 cohesive group. The Village of Matteson is in a very tenuous financial situation. We don't know  
4 exactly what they are going to do. They looked at privatizing their water through Aqua. She  
5 stated that Aqua gets their water from Kankakee. We weren't ever too interested in them.  
6

7 Administrator Mekarski stated that in the near future, probably between now and September,  
8 maybe in our Work Session in September we will probably have a Preliminary Cost Analysis  
9 between the three systems as we know it. We will advertise it. The public would be welcome to  
10 attend. We will answer any questions about the pros and cons from the engineer and our  
11 financial staff. He doesn't believe that even in two-weeks or a month; this Board is going to be  
12 placed to say yes or no with the City of Chicago Heights. We need to maintain them as an  
13 option. There are substantial issues here that have to be addressed. It very well may be a very  
14 good alternative, because while we are not going to be able to substantially lower the cost on a  
15 short-term, it is certainly in everybody's interest to manage the increase because it is just getting  
16 out of hand.  
17

18 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that it is very clear that Chicago is going to continue to  
19 keep raising their rates. They are not charging their citizens. They are charging all of their in-  
20 users from Lake Michigan.  
21

22 Trustee Pennington stated in order to improve their infrastructure. Village President Meyers-  
23 Martin stated exactly.  
24

25 Administrator Mekarski stated here is a little caveat that we just got news of today. We put in the  
26 Budget for the water rates not to increase this year locally. We tried to manage not to increase  
27 the water rate because of the Olympia Fields need. We had to carry like a 5% increase, 2.5% that  
28 we received notice from the Village of Oak Lawn, and 2.5% from Chicago. We just received  
29 notice today that the City of Chicago is not going to increase it by 2.5%. The only increase this  
30 year to residents will be 2.5% from the Village of Oak Lawn.  
31

32 Trustee Pennington inquired of Administrator Mekarski whether or not we know what  
33 percentage Chicago is going to charge, or did they just decide not to. Administrator Mekarski  
34 stated that they decided not to and he is not sure of the rationale behind it. He got a very terse  
35 Memo, one sentence that announced it.  
36

37 Village President Meyers-Martin inquired whether or not the Trustees had any other questions  
38 regarding the letter, Mayor Gonzalez's response, any elements of the letter, or the questions that  
39 we are asking of him to supply to us.  
40

41 Trustee Waite stated that it is a very good letter. It is really right on target. It is really holding  
42 their feet to the fire to respond. He likes it.  
43

44 Trustee Pennington stated that some of the points listed were points that we put together in our  
45 initial letter to Oak Lawn back in 2008/2009. He stated that in reading over the points in your  
46 letter, you have tightened them up a lot more. There is more substance, not to say that there  
47 wasn't substance in 2009, but there's clearly who we are working with and what we are doing.  
48 They are much stronger this year in 2016 than they were in 2009.

1 Administrator Mekarski stated thank you. We took a lot of pride that we are the smallest of all  
2 the members that he was soliciting, but the first to raise the questions.

3  
4 Trustee Pennington stated and apparently the only ones that are bringing up the questions.

5  
6 Administrator Mekarski stated absolutely. It is becoming a model for Hammond. Village  
7 President Meyers-Martin stated that now the other towns are going to use the letter.

8  
9 Trustee Waite stated that we are the only community that has a decent credit rating.

10  
11 Trustee Byrd stated that you did mention that the letter to Oak Lawn, you never got responses on  
12 that.

13  
14 Administrator Mekarski stated that we sent it out initially in November of last year and again in  
15 January. We just received a response this week from Brian on the four questions. We are  
16 analyzing to see if the four questions that we raised with Oak Lawn, if what they submitted  
17 answers them all. He doesn't know if that is the case.

18  
19 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that for the longest period of time they were totally  
20 unresponsive, other than you better resign up.

21  
22 Administrator Mekarski stated that we have an initial response from Chicago Heights. They are  
23 sending it to their engineer and their finance people.

24  
25 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that Mayor Gonzalez was quite gracious in his response  
26 that they would be providing those answers.

27  
28 Administrator Mekarski stated that he can provide copies of the letter to the audience, as well as  
29 copies of the response from Mayor Gonzalez.

30  
31 **Wishing a Speedy Recovery to Trustee Gibson** – Village President Meyers-Martin stated that  
32 she would hope that everyone would keep Trustee Carolyn Gibson in your prayers as well. She is  
33 currently hospitalized. We are all praying for her speedy recovery.

34  
35 **ADJOURNMENT:**

36  
37 **Motion by Trustee Pennington, second by Trustee Hudson to adjourn at 8:05 P.M.**

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

39  
40 Respectfully submitted by Faith Stine.

41  
42  
43  
44