

Village of Lombard

*Village Hall
255 East Wilson Ave.
Lombard, IL 60148
villageoflombard.org*



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 4, 2010

6:30 PM

Community Room

Special Meeting Board of Trustees

*Village President William J. Mueller, Village Clerk Brigitte O'Brien;
Trustee Greg Gron, Trustee Keith Giagnorio, Trustee Zachary Wilson,
Trustee Dana Moreau, Trustee Laura Fitzpatrick and Trustee Bill Ware*

I Call to Order

The Special Meeting of the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Lombard was called to order by President Pro-Tem Dick Tross at 6:39 pm, Thursday, February 4, 2010 in the Community Room of the Lombard Village Hall.

Present: Village President William J. Mueller, Village Clerk Brigitte O'Brien, Trustee Greg Gron, Trustee Richard J. Tross, Trustee Laura Fitzpatrick, Trustee Dana Moreau, Trustee Zachary Wilson and Trustee Bill Ware

II Roll Call

Present: Village Clerk Brigitte O'Brien, Trustee Greg Gron, Trustee Richard J. Tross, Trustee Laura Fitzpatrick, Trustee Dana Moreau and Trustee Bill Ware

Absent: Village President William J. Mueller and Trustee Zachary Wilson

Staff Present:

Village Manager David Hulseberg

Director of Finance Tim Sexton

Director of Community Development Bill Heniff

Chief of Police Ray Byrne

Fire Chief Ed Seagraves

Director of Public Works Carl Goldsmith

Executive Coordinator Carol Bauer

III Public Participation

None

IV Agenda

100052

Lombard Town Centre Update & Future Funding

Requests discussion and recommendation to staff relative to future funding for Lombard Town Centre.

Village Manager Dave Hulseberg requested Director of Community Development Bill Heniff give an overview regarding the Lombard Town Centre.

Director Heniff indicated this had been reviewed by the Economic & Community Development Committee. The committee was recommending Option #3 which provides funding for the Lombard Town Centre to establish a contract position (i.e. a 1099 position) to fill the role of the past Executive Director. This position would report to the Director of Community Development, but would be funded through the LTC grant from the Village and would serve as a liaison between the LTC Board and the Village. The committee recommended Village support in the amount of \$35,000 for the cost of this position. The committee discussed the successes as well as issues and concerns. It was noted that the LTC had received \$75,000 in funding for the past five years in lump sums.

President Mueller arrived at 6:42 pm.

Director Heniff indicated staff was looking for direction regarding the Lombard Town

Centre and the Village's financial support of LTC at this time and felt this was a good time as the Village Board was reviewing the budget to address this matter. He spoke about building on the successes of LTC. He stated that LTC has \$52,000 left in their budget. The Economic and Community Development Committee felt it was important to have the LTC presence in downtown Lombard. He spoke about the special events and activities that had been held in downtown Lombard. He noted this was a catalyst to bringing people to downtown Lombard.

Trustee Wilson arrived at 6:45 pm.

Director Heniff spoke regarding the \$35,000 grant for the Executive Director position who would work with the Lombard Town Centre and the Village. He stated staff recommendation was Option #4 which indicated utilizing the \$62,989 already in the LTC reserves. The LTC should be directed to allocate those funds specifically for their marketing, recruitment, promotion and membership activities. The funds would also be used for special events, as deemed appropriate. Village staff would advance the economic development and business recruitment efforts within the downtown area utilizing TIF expenditures to accomplish this additional activity.

Trustee Ware spoke of having a presence of the LTC in downtown Lombard and felt this was important. He noted Option #3 was the recommendation of the Economic & Community Development Committee. He indicated they felt strongly about keeping the LTC alive.

Trustee Moreau questioned the \$35,000 for the Executive Director position.

Trustee Ware stated the downtown presence is very important and noted that the LTC has \$62,000. They did not feel having LTC staff at the Village Hall would help bolster the downtown presence. They felt they wanted the progress to continue. The committee favored a grant up to \$35,000 keeping in mind that some of the \$62,000 would go toward funding of the Executive Director position and also toward fundraisers. He noted the \$35,000 would come from the TIF.

Trustee Fitzpatrick questioned funding for events.

Kathy Hogan, Treasurer of the Lombard Town Centre, spoke regarding financial support from the Village. She indicated if the Village approved the \$35,000, that should take care of funding for the Executive Director position. She noted the \$62,000 that the LTC has in reserve could be used for fundraisers and events.

Trustee Fitzpatrick questioned if the LTC Executive Director would be a Village employee.

Dan Whittington, President of LTC, indicated this amount could cover two years.

Trustee Wilson questioned the hourly rate if they were receiving \$35,000.

Trustee Ware indicated the Executive Director position would be a consultant position.

Dan Whittington spoke regarding the \$35,000 and a salaried position versus a part-time position and finding a qualified person. He noted they would want to take their time to find an experienced person to fill this position.

Trustee Wilson questioned the rate of pay.

Trustee Tross indicated he did not have a problem with the \$35,000. He stated although the results have not been to his satisfaction, he indicated he wanted to show support for the LTC. He stated the Village Board talked about very similar situations with the Lilac Parade and the Taste of Lombard and the fact that the Village does not run those events. He stated he did not understand the supervision of this position by the Director of Community Development. He questioned why the Village was getting involved in the operations of the LTC. He asked who would do the hiring. He asked if this position would be a 1099 employee. He felt the past director had some conflicting goals as the Village wanted vacancies filled and the LTC wanted promotions. He stated the Village does not get involved in the operation of the Chamber and the Village has given them in excess of \$70,000. He inquired as to who was going to hire the person and felt this was an LTC project and not a Village project.

Dan Whittington noted this would be a collaborative project with the LTC and the Village and come under the jurisdiction of Director of Community Development Bill Heniff.

Trustee Wilson reported the Village has not had a hand in the LTC operation and that

maybe the Village needed to be involved. He noted the Village has not been involved in the Lilac Parade and the Taste and emphasized where that is now. He felt if Director Heniff was involved, the results may be more to the liking of the Village.

President Mueller indicated that possibly the Village has been too involved. He stated he has attended almost all of the meetings and they are 2-3 hours in length. He indicated he was frustrated and stopped attending. He noted that staff also attended the meetings. He thanked Kathy Hogan for the most precise report he has seen come from the LTC. He stated the Executive Director left over a month ago and there had been no meetings.

Dan Whittington noted that a meeting had been called after the Executive Director resigned. He noted the meeting was in early December and that was the last meeting. President Mueller questioned two months with no director and no meetings. He indicated if the Village had lost a key person, they would be meeting.

Dan Whittington stated they had met a month ago. He stated they spoke about coming to the Village.

President Mueller felt the LTC should have met and that they should not be relying on the Village. He questioned how they have been operating for two months without a key employee. He stated he could not have run his own business for two months without meeting regarding the loss of a key employee.

Trustee Tross indicated marketing the downtown and filling vacancies was a key element and not just having events. He spoke about the Main Street Program. He spoke regarding the report that had been prepared by Community Development and had been given to LTC repeatedly. He stated LTC hired the past director Laura Bergeson and she had a strong marketing background. He noted the Village had spent thousands of dollars on two different reports and had a listing of storefronts available. He did not want to see this become another Historical Museum where they requested funding for a director and that has been expanded. He asked who would be hiring the LTC Executive Director.

Dan Whittington noted the Lombard Town Centre would do the hiring.

Trustee Tross felt having the LTC in downtown Lombard was important and he had no question with the \$35,000.

Trustee Moreau questioned the vision for Option 4.

Director Heniff indicated one person would be tasked with recruitment and advancing economic development. He spoke about the building code and Capital Improvement Program and all of that coming together.

Trustee Moreau questioned the special events.

Director Heniff indicated LTC would handle special events and not Village staff. He stated LTC has \$60,000 to cover those activities.

Trustee Moreau questioned if that money could be used to pay a staff member.

Trustee Gron noted his concern if the person did not have an office and appearance in the downtown. He stated it gave a feeling of comradery. He viewed it as having eyes on the street and being there to answer questions and help direct businesses. He felt if the Executive Director was at the Village Hall, the person would not be seeing and hearing the voices of the business people and not have a feel for what was happening in the downtown. He felt this was a big concern.

Trustee Ware indicated with Option 4, the Executive Director would be located in downtown and be able to focus on downtown.

Trustee Fitzpatrick indicated if this was a staff position, the time would be torn. She spoke about the City of Elmhurst and a similar situation. She noted the beauty of a contract, is that it can be ended.

President Mueller stated that in five years, the LTC had held over 30 interviews and tours of the downtown and not one resulted in a closing. He indicated the Village had given \$450,000 to the LTC, plus grant money and money for Cruise Nights. He stated over \$500,000 had been spent in the last five years to bring people to downtown Lombard and the Village is questioned as to why the Village does not do more. He questioned what the Village was receiving in return. He asked what LTC was doing and

felt they should be doing more. He stated after five years and \$500,000, the Village was still in the same situation it was five years ago with vacancies that have not been filled. Trustee Moreau agreed with President Mueller. She felt the Village was back to where it started. She questioned if the \$35,000 was realistic.

President Mueller stated the City of Elmhurst had a Special Service District that they had created. He noted if you went to downtown Elmhurst on a Saturday, they had people shoveling snow, but that the expenses came out of the Special Service District funds. He stated the property owners paid for that.

Trustee Ware noted the \$35,000 came from evaluating the amount of money in the TIF and keeping in mind that LTC still had \$62,000 in reserve.

Trustee Wilson spoke of the numerous e-mails he received from the previous LTC Executive Director and felt it was not fair to blame her for not filling any vacancies. He asked if there was something the Village was not doing and if the Village needed to be more business-friendly. He felt there was no one who worked harder than Laura Bergeson did. He did not know whose fault it was that \$500,000 and five years had not resulted in more positive results. He asked what other options were available and what else could be done.

Trustee Tross stated one thing was tried and has not worked.

President Mueller indicated the Village was not at fault and that staff had met with developers. He spoke most recently of a restaurant wanting to move into downtown Lombard at a cost of \$425,000 for the owner. The Village was giving a \$100,000 restaurant grant and a \$20,000 facade grant. The owner then came to the Village requesting additional funding to help with a \$60,000 sprinkler system that they could not afford to pay for. He indicated this was \$200,000 for a \$425,000 project. After all of the time and work of staff, the owner walked away.

Trustee Wilson indicated he was just looking for answers and not being critical.

President Mueller stated the Village lost a very good business and the owner decided to go to Elmhurst where the property was cheaper. He spoke of the time he and Trustee Gron had spent and that the business owner told him that the Village of Lombard had the best grant programs. He felt it was not the fault of the Village or LTC. He indicated it is the property owners who determine the rental amounts for the properties and this is what is causing problems. He stated he has heard of rents increasing by 33% and that business is looking to move. He indicated this is part of the problem.

Trustee Fitzpatrick stated one business could not get a bank loan.

Trustee Moreau questioned the Village bringing in businesses to downtown.

Trustee Gron indicated that Laura Bergeson went out and recruited trying to bring businesses to downtown.

Director Heniff indicated recruiting could be done and that the Village Board could direct the Community Development Department to take on this activity. He noted that staff has done outreach activities and if they hear of something or someone with interest, they follow up. Additional outreach could be done. He stated if the Village Board indicates they want Community Development staff to do outreach, that is what they will do.

Trustee Tross felt the Village should be committed to filling vacancies. He felt LTC should do promotions like Spooktacular to help promote a cohesive business district where all of the businesses are making a profit. He thought this bolstered comradery for the downtown merchants and helped bring foot traffic to the businesses. He felt the key was promotion. He spoke on going back to the issues of vacancies, build-outs and facades and that is why the Village established grant programs to help promote businesses. He questioned why the person promoting downtown should be an LTC employee. He stated he did not like the mix of an LTC employee and supervision by a Village staff person. He noted the Village is government and the LTC is a separate entity. He stated he supported the \$35,000, but did not support the Village supervision of the LTC Executive Director. He commented about the City of Elmhurst and the Spring Road area that is a Special Service District. He noted they also have vacancies. He indicated Elmhurst has a standing contract with a marketing company to try and

recruit business to the city. He stated the Village paid for an inventory study and a marketing study. He questioned the Village contracting with a marketing firm to do the legwork. He suggested giving a marketing firm the \$35,000 and let them do their thing. President Mueller stated the Village had already looked at doing that. He noted that the marketing firm that is contracted by Elmhurst was also contracted by the City of Wheaton. Wheaton received no leads and other communities that tried using the firm also received nothing. The other communities questioned if they were receiving their fair share. The City of Wheaton no longer uses that firm. He indicated the Village could contract with a marketing firm.

Trustee Tross stated that someone in the Village could possibly handle this as the Village had given LTC \$75,000 for three years and we had not received anything. He wanted someone to bring the Village merchants. He felt the Village was committed to filling the vacancies. He suggested giving LTC \$35,000 and let them do their thing. He suggested Option #4 or to contract a marketing firm.

Trustee Moreau felt LTC was spread too thin. She felt LTC should do the promotions and the Department of Community Development handle finding businesses to fill vacancies.

Colleen Whittington, member of Lombard Town Centre, spoke regarding the recession and that the LTC has been able to rally the businesses. She indicated they help the businesses by being the liaison between the businesses and the Village in getting answers for them and getting information on grants that are available. She felt it was good to have the LTC presence in downtown. She noted Laura Bergeson walked the streets and asked merchants what she could do to help them. She felt this was vital as well as filling vacancies. She talked about the red tape that merchants need to go through for the Village.

President Mueller disagreed with the red tape and indicated he sat down with Laura Bergeson and explained the grant programs to her.

Trustee Tross felt the business owners called red tape anything to do with the Village and obtaining a permit.

Trustee Wilson questioned the \$35,000 to LTC. He felt if staff was going to do the work, the \$35,000 should go to staff.

Trustee Tross indicated former Trustee Ken Florey had twisted his arm about LTC years ago. He felt LTC needs to know they have a revenue source that ends in June 2011. He suggested \$35,000. He felt the Village needed to keep the lines of communication open as well as the lines of communication from business to business and event to event. He felt there were other things that needed to be done in downtown Lombard. President Mueller noted that part of the \$62,000 was Village money.

It was moved by Trustee Ware, seconded by Trustee Wilson, that this matter be approved to concur with the recommendation of the Economic & Community Development Committee and to provide funding to the Lombard Town Centre in an amount not to exceed \$35,000 for a part-time Lombard Town Centre Executive Director, which will be a contract person (1099 position) to fill the role of the past Executive Director with the position to be employed by LTC, but reporting to the Director of Community Development. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Trustee Greg Gron, Trustee Laura Fitzpatrick, Trustee Zachary Wilson and Trustee Bill Ware

Nay: 2 - Trustee Richard J. Tross and Trustee Dana Moreau

V Adjournment

The Special Meeting of the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Lombard held on Thursday, February 4, 2010 in the Community Room of the Lombard Village Hall was adjourned at 7:32 pm.

It was moved by Trustee Gron, seconded by Trustee Tross, adjourn. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Trustee Greg Gron, Trustee Richard J. Tross, Trustee Laura Fitzpatrick, Trustee Dana Moreau, Trustee Zachary Wilson and Trustee Bill Ware