

**CHANNAHON VILLAGE BOARD
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
NOVEMBER 21, 2022**

VP Moorman Schumacher called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with Trustees Greco, Host, Scaggs and Slocum present.

Also present were Director of Community Development and Information Systems Mike Petrick, Finance Director Heather Wagonblott, Director of Public Works Ed Dolezal, Chief of Police Shane Casey, Village Attorney David Silverman and Village Clerk Kristin Hall.

VP Moorman Schumacher informed everyone present that anyone who speaks at the meeting shall be deemed to have given his/her consent to the recording of their likeness and speech. This meeting is being recorded.

VILLAGE PRESIDENT

Recognition – St. Ann’s Football Team Super Bowl Winners

VP Moorman Schumacher asked the Super Light Coaches to talk about their season.

Coach Brad stated they had a really interesting roller coaster season. It started out a little rocky, as they had three returning players and they didn’t have their helmets until the season was starting but they got it turned around. They started the season with one tie and three losses and then they won the rest of their games. They had four shut outs, including their victory in the Super Bowl.

The Super Light Weight players were presented with a certificate.

The Light Weight coach stated that their season was pretty good. They didn’t lose one game all year and they won the Conference and the Super Bowl. He also stated that a lot of the players will be moving up. They had solid defense and the offense was pretty good. There were some ups and downs but they kept coming through and winning.

The Light Weight players were presented with a certificate.

Program Director John stated that the league is in its tenth season. This is a testament to where we came from and where we’ve been. Last year they had their first two championships and this year they took three teams to the championship. Their varsity team did some awesome things. It was a rough season and there were a lot of new players but they had an awesome finish. The junior varsity scored 67 offensive points in the playoff run and they let up zero defensive points. They lost one game all year, to a team from Danville and the score was 6-0, with the Danville team scoring in the last two minutes of the game. They rebounded and played a really great season. 19 players will be moving up to Varsity. He is really proud of the organization that they have built for the town. They had championship shirts made and they include their overriding virtue of Faith, Integrity, Generosity, Humility and Trust, because we try to be a virtue centered organization; They do not want the kids to get so caught up in championship and forget where we came from.

The JV players were presented with a certificate.

Trustee Perinar entered the meeting at 6:09 p.m.

Presentation – Will County State’s Attorney James Glasgow Check Presentation for Flock Cameras to the Channahon Police Department

Casey thanked the State’s Attorney Office and State’s Attorney Glasgow for his tireless work in the community of Will County. He really does care about the community and that shows from his exemplary CAC and the fact that other counties emulate that. The flock camera program that he has instituted across Will County gives of the tools that are needed to keep communities safe. His tireless attention and prosecution of animal cruelty and the league of extraordinary dogs that he has assembled, which includes Hutch, is another example. Along with his tireless efforts in correct the loopholes in the Safe-T Act. He has a lot on his plate and the residents owe you a debt of gratitude for all that you do. He thanked Mr. Glasgow.

VP Moorman Schumacher stated he knows how she feels about the CAC and our dog, Hutch. She thanked Mr. Glasgow and we enjoy a wonderful working relationship with the State’s Attorney Office. She thanked them for all that they do for the Channahon community.

State’s Attorney Glasgow stated that he wanted to mention the Safe-T Act. We are in Kankakee County with 65 State’s Attorneys who have filed suit to declare the law unconstitutional. He doesn’t know of one other time that even one State’s Attorney sued the Governor. The sad part for him is that we have been telling them the problems with this law for two years. We are the experts and the only route is the route we are taking. There will be a hearing on December 7th, we will have a decision on December 15th and he believed we will prevail. The law will not apply to those 65 counties in the lawsuit if it is declared unconstitutional. He went to explain some of the provisions of the Safe-T Act. He was also so glad Channahon got an anonymous donation for \$5,000 for flock cameras. The law enforcement community has solved so many crimes, especially in the City of Joliet, that we would have never solved without these flock cameras. They are really happy to be able to do it here in peaceful Channahon in order to keep it that way.

ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

VP Moorman Schumacher stated that there are no formal items for discussion but she did want to let everyone know that Administrator Durkin is not here this evening because his sister-in-law passed away suddenly this morning. If you could keep the Durkin family in your thoughts and prayers, it would be very much appreciated. There are no arrangements yet but she will let everyone know once she finds out.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Presentation – Annual Comprehensive Financial Report by Betsy Allen from Miller Cooper & Co., Ltd.

Betsy Miller gave a brief presentation on the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Discussion – An Ordinance Approving a Special Use Permit for a Drive-Thru, Dairy Queen, 25208 W. Eames Street – 1st Read

Discussion – Site Plan for Dairy Queen, 25208 W. Eames Street

Petrick stated UMA, LLC is requesting approval of a special use permit for a drive-thru and a final site plan. Approval of the requests would allow for the construction of a 2,208 square foot

Dairy Queen restaurant with a drive-thru and outdoor patio. The site is generally located on the north side of the intersection of Reed and Route 6/Eames Street. The drive-thru restaurant would be the redevelopment of the Lone Star Restaurant site, which was demolished following a fire in 2015. The property was the subject of a previous request for a variance to reduce the parking by 20% and a special use permit for a drive-thru. The variance remains in effect and the special use permit expired in June 2021 after three (3) extensions.

PZC RECOMMENDATION:

Petrick stated the PZC considered the request during a public hearing at their regular meeting held on November 14, 2022. Representatives of the owner and project team were present to answer questions. He also stated during the public hearing, one (1) member of the public provided comment:

- Concern that the drive-thru stacking was not enough.

Proposed stacking of 10 spaces exceeds the Zoning Ordinance requirement of 4 spaces;

- Concern that the parking may not be enough and the approved variance should not be taken into consideration.

The proposed parking allotment is in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance requirements and the approved 20% reduction in parking based on the hardship of irregular shaped property and IDOT right of way acquisition;

- Concern that the building is too modern and should include brick.

The proposed exterior materials are in compliance with the C-2 zoning district Design Guidelines;

- Concern for exemption from stormwater management requirements.

The project would comply with stormwater management ordinances and is currently seeking approval from IDOT to connect to the Route 6 storm sewer. The project would not increase the run-off from what was previously generated by the former Lone Star improvement.

Commission discussion focused on the following:

- Inquiry of likelihood that the landscaping would be approved by the adjacent property owner and the status of a temporary construction easement.

The project team is working on the agreement. They stated that the adjacent owner is open to the agreement as long as he has a legal document designating the long-term maintenance and cost responsibilities by the Dairy Queen owner. The applicant's attorney stated he has reached out to the owner to the east and doesn't expect a problem with obtaining the temporary easement.

- Concern that IDOT may require the Route 6 access to become a right-in/right-out.

The project engineer stated that he had no comments from IDOT regarding the existing full access's design or location, but only review comments on the connection to the storm sewer;

- Inquiry as to whether there are any concerns for the drive thru and proximity to residential uses.

The business would have to comply with village noise ordinance. The zoning ordinance does not include distance requirements for drive-thrus from residential areas.

- Comment that the drive-thru makes sense at this location just like with the previous Lone Star application and that a drive-thru would be important for the business to have given society's dependence on driving and for convenience.
- Comment that the project would be a nice improvement to the site and fits well with the surrounding businesses.

A motion was made to enter the findings of fact that the standards set forth in the appropriate sections of the Village Code had been met and to recommend the Village Board approve the Special Use Permit. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

- A motion was made to recommend the Village Board approve the Site Plan subject to:

Staff review and approval of final engineering;

The dumpster enclosure shall have sliding gates;

Confirmation of all off-site easements and agreements with adjacent property owners for needed items of landscaping installation/maintenance and temporary construction easements.

Petrick stated the motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

Trustee Perinar stated that people are concerned with the stacking on Route 6 but they have an additional entrance to the site.

Petrick stated that there is a cross access agreement that goes through the neighboring property. He stated that there are two full entrances to the site.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Discussion – An Ordinance for the Levy and Assessment of Taxes for the Village of Channahon, Will and Grundy Counties, Illinois for the Fiscal Year beginning May 1, 2022 and Ending April 30, 2022 – 1st Read

Wagonblott stated we have on the agenda tonight the 2022 levy. It is similar to the prior year's levy. She also stated that the Village is allowed to levy up to a certain amount for the different categories and the Village has consistently levied an amount under the Non-Home Rule

limitations. She is suggesting an increase in the amount of the Police Pension Fund in an effort to get the Police Pension Fund closer to fully funded status. We have quite a few upcoming retirements to that fund. Over the last several years, we have seen an increase in EAV's for both Will and Grundy counties. She further stated that the proposed EAV is an increase of approximately 9% over last years' final EAV. She stated that the final EAV's will not be available until the spring.

VP Moorman Schumacher asked if we have been getting information from Grundy any quicker than we have in previous years.

Wagonblott stated for the levy, yes. She stated for the Aux Sable TIF, no this year was a struggle.

Trustee Scaggs stated that we used to have options as to the final levy.

Wagonblott stated that she hasn't done scenarios in quite some time. She stated that it has been just one recommendation for the last 5 years and levy amount has been under 5%, negating the need for a public hearing. There have not been options lately due to the fact that we have been under the 5% threshold. Our levy rate has gone down for six consecutive years and seven of the last eight years.

Trustee Scaggs stated that we used to have a number of options and now it looks like it is one and done.

Wagonblott stated that the last several years, we have not needed to go over 5%, so it is only one option.

Wagonblott asked Trustee Scaggs what additional he would like to be involved with? Trustee Scaggs indicated that property values have gone up but our reduction to residents is only \$15.

President Schumacher reminded the board that it has been quite a few years since the board was presented options to the levy from staff.

Wagonblott stated that total amount of tax levy is approximately \$150,000 higher than last year, or 4.93%. The tax rate is proposed to be reduced by 2.2%. Average taxpayer estimate will go down slightly. This information will be presented to the board on December 5th for final approval, unless there are changes indicated by the board.

As a side note, Will County sets the final tax extension which is partly based on CPI. Since 1991, the state department of revenue has never certified a CPI over 5% until this year, which is at 7%. County clerk rate will be established at 5%.

Trustee Scaggs asked what it would cost the Village to provide a \$250 rebate to the residents. He sees the school district providing rebates and he sees that our revenues in the general fund have increased by millions over the last few years. He would like to know the cost of this potential rebate.

Village President Schumacher reminded the board that the reason the school district has provided rebates to the residents of their district over the past few years is because they overtaxed to begin with. She would rather see the residents tax rate at the proper amount and let the residents keep their own money and earn their own interest. She is not interested in making interest money utilizing the taxpayers' money.

Trustee Host also reminded the board that the school district is legally obligated to return any surplus dollars to the taxpayer.

Village staff indicated that there are approximately 5,000 homes in Channahon so the rebate of approximately \$250 would total approximately \$1,250,000 plus the expenses to administer the program. Rebating property taxes back to residents incurs additional expenses for the Village related to administrative costs to communicate the program, receive rebate requests, perform calculations and verifications, process tax refund checks and deliver payments to the residents. Wagonblott does not believe it is prudent to offer this type of program because it means that you are overtaxing the resident to begin with and we are lowering the rate already.

Trustee Scaggs suggested we lower it even more.

Wagonblott advised against that because we have a number of future expenses that need to occur. She feels it is too soon to consider a program such as this.

Trustee Scaggs indicated that our revenues have increased \$5,000,000 from 2020 to 2022. When is the right time?

Village President Schumacher reminded the board that we just went through this space needs analysis that identifies a number of expenses related to Village facilities, we are also looking at hiring two additional police officers this evening. While we have more revenue, we also have more expenses.

Wagonblott also reminded the board that we have recently received an influx of one-time federal funds related to COVID that we will never see again.

Attorney Silverman suggested the board to first go through the budgeting process to determine whether such a program is possible.

Village President Schumacher suggested if we would do something like this maybe the better suggested is to provide credit in the cost of some municipal service like garbage removal. She also reminded the board that we do not levy for any debt.

Wagonblott also pointed out that while we have received additional revenues, we have future expenses, some existing debt, and most of the items in the levy such as insurance, police pension, etc. are the only revenue sources for those funds. It is really only the general fund line item that could be considered for this type of program and that amount is not significant in the big picture. In total, we have received a significant amount of revenue, a large portion which has been from one-time federal fund infusion that will not be sustaining. The Village can sustain raising the levy amount minimally to cover expenses while reducing the residents tax rate.

Village President Schumacher reiterated that the general fund line item on the tax levy exhibit is the only area that could provide the source of a rebate and that amount is not nearly enough to cover the suggestion made by Trustee Scaggs.

Trustee Slocum indicated that he likes the idea but would like to see it take a form of providing the residents improvements like building bike paths and measures that improve the quality of life of the residents.

Trustee Greco agreed that it would have to be something like that because some people don't use bike paths.

Village President Schumacher reminded the board that our ability to buy the Town Center property is due to the increase in revenues we have realized and we have talked about building a building and offering it to a grocery store.

Trustee Scaggs agrees with what has been said but is concerned about residents such as seniors facing inflation expenses and being on a fixed income.

Wagonblott reminded residents we do provide senior discounts on some services.

Further discussion took place.

Discussion – An Ordinance Abating a Portion of the Tax Levy for the Village of Channahon for 2022 (General Obligation Bonds, Series 2013) – 1st Read

Discussion – An Ordinance Abating a Portion of the Tax Levy for the Village of Channahon for 2022 (General Obligation Bonds, Series 2016) – 1st Read

Discussion – An Ordinance Abating a Portion of the Tax Levy for the Village of Channahon for 2022 (General Obligation Bonds, Series 2021A) – 1st Read

Discussion – An Ordinance Abating a Portion of the Tax Levy for the Village of Channahon for 2022 (General Obligation Bonds, Series 2021B) – 1st Read

Wagonblott stated the agenda for the December 5, 2022 board meeting will include four (4)* ordinances to abate all of the levy requirements to provide for debt service on the Village's outstanding general obligation bonds in accordance with the Village Board's established fiscal policies and past practice. These abatement ordinances provide instruction to the two County Clerks (Will and Grundy) to supersede the required levy information contained within the related bond ordinances and bond orders. In summary, these abatements are as follows:

Bond Issue & Purpose	Levy Required	Amount Abated	Net Levy	Source of Funds For Abatement
2021A Refunding GO Bonds, Water & Sewer	497,300.00	497,300.00	-	Water & Sewer
2021B Refunding GO Bonds, WESCOM Building	329,492.50	329,492.50	-	WESCOM
2016 GO Bonds, IDI Street & Water Main Infrastructure	428,450.00	428,450.00	-	Intergovernmental agreement with taxing bodies (property taxes)
Totals	1,255,242.50	1,255,242.50	-	

Wagonblott stated if the Village did not have alternate revenue sources to pay the debt service on these bonds, the 2022 tax levy contemplated would be almost \$1.3 million dollars higher than proposed (exponentially increasing the Village's tax rate and causing the Village's portion of the property tax bill to be significantly higher). The proposed abatements represent 100% of the total debt service levy requirements for tax year 2022. The Village has been abating its annual debt service levy requirements for many years. The Village's history has been to **not levy** any funds for outstanding debt payments, thereby minimizing the burden on the taxpayers. The Village's ongoing practice of abating the tax levy is more advantageous than most tax rebate programs that have been implemented by other area communities or surrounding taxing bodies. It is a more appropriate and efficient fiscal policy to not levy the tax than to tax and issue a rebate back to the residents. Rebating property taxes back to residents incurs additional expenses for the Village related to administrative costs to receive rebate requests, perform calculations and verifications and process tax refund checks. In addition, levying a tax unnecessarily reduces the amount of funds available to the taxpayer. She also stated the Village's tax levy abatement process benefits **all** property taxpayers including residential, industrial and commercial property owners. The 2013 GO Bond that was refinanced as the 2021B GO Refunding issuance still has a portion of unrefunded debt that requires the Village to file an abatement ordinance with the County. There are only 3 outstanding bonds, however within the 2021B bonds, 2 abatement ordinances are required to be filed this levy year (creating a total of 4 abatement ordinances to be file with each County).

Wagonblott stated that she passed out five PAFR's (Popular Annual Financial Report) to everyone, please let her know if you need more or don't need as many. Also, if there are any changes that need to be made to the levy, please let her know otherwise it will be brought back at the next meeting.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Discussion – Creation of Two Patrol Officer Positions

Casey stated as the community, duties, and expectations of the police department grow, it is prudent to plan for the future growth within the department. Additionally, the Superintendent of Channahon School District 17 and the Chief of Police have been in discussions to add at least one full-time School Resource Officer at a shared cost, with the approval of both governing boards'. If this partnership is realized, it would remove a tenured officer from our patrol

operations, which the police department would look to replace to maintain our current level of services to our residents. The police department is not currently looking to add personnel at this time, but just planning for the inevitable expansion of personnel. The police department has had several vacant positions in the past, with the last two vacant for over a decade. The Chief would still need permission from the Village Board, and budgeted funding, prior to filling any additional positions. The police department does not anticipate the filling of either of these positions in this fiscal year.

VP Moorman Schumacher asked if the schools have taken action on adding the SRO.

Casey stated that they have not, they are waiting for our final numbers on the officer and the expenses. In their agreement, they will also pay for the academy, less any reimbursements that we get from the State and half of the initial uniform allowance for the new officer. They also will provide input to the Village when it comes to the replacement officer.

Trustee Greco asked if they pay for the whole salary.

Casey stated that they pay 68.8%.

Trustee Greco asked if it was still necessary to keep an eligibility list anymore.

Casey stated that since we are Home Rule, we are not required to keep a list but we try to. Our list has been expired for a couple of months but we are working on updating our hiring process and we will be putting together a list soon.

Further discussion took place.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Discussion – Repair of Step Screen at Wastewater Treatment Plant

Dolezal stated the step screen for the wastewater treatment plant is used to remove debris from the incoming flow. It uses bars/plates called lamella in its removal process. The lamella and mounting system have deteriorated and need to be replaced. He further stated the screen is an original piece of equipment installed with the first plant expansion in 2002. The intention is to purchase the parts directly and then hire a contractor to make the repairs as a separate contract.

COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENT

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Committee of the Whole was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Submitted by
Kristin Hall, Village Clerk

