



## **Plainfield Township Board of Trustees Minutes from August 8, 2007**

Diane Troy and Judy Urbin outlined the status and scope of the Plainfield Community Chorus, a group made up mostly of Plainfield area residents. This organization has performed in various venues including the Plainfield Crèche lighting, local nursing homes and other community functions and also with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. It is a self-supporting organization that utilizes dues, ads, and community grants. The board is familiar with the group and has supported it in the past.

**A motion to authorize a donation to the Plainfield Community Chorus in the amount of \$300 was made by Chuck Willard and seconded by Ken McCafferty.** Roll call vote taken. Ken McCafferty – Aye, Chuck Willard – Aye, Kim Sandstrom – Aye, John Argoudelis - Aye. Motion Carries.

### **B. Shed for Assistance Center (Food Pantry request)**

Since the last meeting a potential conflict has arisen regarding the proposed location of the shed requested by Mary Dickerson of the Plainfield Food Pantry. A proposal has been developed to add a bus barn in that location to store the new senior shuttle bus. Ken McCafferty suggested that if the barn proposal came to fruition, additional square footage could possibly be added for Food Pantry use.

Regarding the proposed wooden shed as submitted by Food Pantry personnel, Mr. McCafferty asked what kind of floor the shed would have and would it be acceptable to the health department. Ms. Dickerson said that Food Pantries are not regulated and that only packaging, etc., would be stored out there. Ms. Dickerson did advise, though, that the township can no longer store commodes in the medical supply area which is in Assistance Center, the part of the township building that houses the Food Pantry.

In discussion, Supervisor Argoudelis felt that a wooden shed would be structurally inconsistent and also aesthetically displeasing. Chuck Willard agreed that it would not fit in with the look of the new building, would look like a shed and eventually look even less attractive as it weathered. None of the trustees were in favor of going forward at this point with the wooden shed. It was the consensus of the board to consider additional Food Pantry space when deliberating on the shuttle bus garage addition.

### **C. Reevaluation of the \$500.00 cap on donations**

Trustees McCafferty and Willard presented their list of categories and suggested caps for the various types of organizations that request donations from the township.

**A motion to adopt new donation caps (with certain organizations such as the Plainfield Food Pantry exempt at the discretion of the board) and to categorize organizations as “National” at a cap of \$250.00, “Local Civic” at a cap of \$500.00 and “Local Service” at a cap of \$1000.00, with the following past recipients being categorized as follows: American Cancer Society, Plainfield Lion’s Club, Seascout Sea Ship 13, and Kiwanis Club of Plainfield as “National” organizations; CW Avery Family YMCA, Plainfield Historical Society, Senior Services Center, Will County Historical Society and the Plainfield Community Chorus as “Local Civic” organizations; Guardian Angel Home, Will County Center for Community Concerns Cerebral Palsy and the Will County Children’s Advocacy Center as “Local Service” organizations** was made by Ken McCafferty and seconded by Chuck Willard. Roll call

## Plainfield Township Board of Trustees Minutes from August 8, 2007

vote taken. Chuck Willard – Aye, Kim Sandstrom – Aye, Ken McCafferty – Aye, John Argoudelis - Aye. Motion Carries.

### D. Township Building Issues

Supervisor Argoudelis said that the township flower beds looked good with the completion of the weeding and mulching by D&M Landscaping. He also stated that follow up of maintenance of the flower beds will be arranged for in the spring.

## VII. REPORTS

### A. Senior Coordinator –

### Written Report

Kathy Whalen reported that she is willing to do an article for the newsletter regarding the senior Christmas luncheon. Ms. Whalen passed out a *Summer '07* newsletter to the board. Supervisor Argoudelis offered the township's Community Room for the use of the seniors, possibly for bingo or bunco.

### B. Disabilities –

### No Report

### C. Emergency Management Coordinator -

Chuck Willard asked that everyone keep their cell phones charged and ready in preparation for potential bad weather. Supervisor Argoudelis and Mr. Willard commented on the danger of positively-charged cloud-to-ground lightning which was experienced in the area lately.

### D. "Plainfield Township Presents"

Ken McCafferty reported that thirty people were in attendance for the first session of the Alzheimer's care program and he hopes the good attendance will continue. Smoking cessation programs will be held every Monday in October and November.

### E. Senior Shuttle Bus

Sam Reichert was not present at tonight's meeting. Previously, a meeting was held with Mike Lambert, the building architect, Supervisor Argoudelis and Highway Commissioner Reichert regarding alternatives to housing the shuttle bus inside the highway department area.

Supervisor Argoudelis felt a good alternative was to build an addition to the salt shed for out-of-season highway department equipment at a cost of about \$30,000.00. However, he told the board that it is the point of view of the highway commissioner that all of his department's equipment should be under one roof. Another idea was to add on to the north-east side of the building on the far side of the garage or outside the back of the Assistance Center. The latter is more practical because it would be just a short walk to confer with the dispatcher. This plan would allow space for two buses, shelves for tools and equipment, electric doors, drains, hot and cold water for washing. The cost would be approximately \$107,000.00. Supervisor Argoudelis stated that if the board wants to go ahead, then the highway department would have to pay for this new building. Since the highway department does not presently pay rent for their space, the highway department's investment in this new addition could be an offset for future rents due. Michael Lambert suggested a lease agreement to this effect. Chuck Willard suggested making the addition

**Plainfield Township Board of Trustees Minutes from August 8, 2007**

bigger with an area for medical supplies since the Food Pantry is in need of more space. Discussion included the fact that this arrangement would affect the justification that the highway department support 100% of the cost. The board asked what the highway commissioner’s thoughts were. Supervisor Argoudelis said that no opinions have been given. Sam Reichert said that he would, “get back to us.” Some questions and suggestions included the time line, whether the building would include a restroom and whether investing in a separate building is really better than parking it in the highway department garage where it is now. Comments included the fact that some townships have no more highways and that the highway department has not contributed to the construction, maintenance or loan reduction. Supervisor Argoudelis stated he would get information on the cost of adding a third bay, a restroom, and what would be a timeline for the proposed addition. He also stated that he would speak with the highway commissioner and get back to the board with these answers. The board was generally in favor of the highway department paying for an additional building if needed.

Regarding the inclusion of the medical supply area in a new shuttle bus area, the board reiterated that the original purpose of the Assistance Center Area which now primarily houses the Plainfield Area Food Pantry, was always intended for more than one type of assistance, including the medical equipment to be given out on loan to needy residents. A lot of public money goes to the Food Pantry and Plainfield Township has been extremely generous in doubling, at its own expense, the space for this organization in addition to recently adding more shelves. Ken McCafferty stated that it needs to be clear that this is not the “Plainfield Township Food Pantry” and the organization actually has nothing to do with the township. This organization may be able to explore other options that would be even more economical for themselves. It was the consensus of the board that none of the members wanted a shed built. The possibility of a third bay in the potential new addition would be explored, but not necessarily for the medical supply closet.

Andi French gave a report on the monthly activities of the Shuttle Bus Program including a very successful first trip to the Fox Valley Mall.

Supervisor Argoudelis reported that discussions have started with Sarah Leach at the Village of Plainfield regarding possible participation in the township’s shuttle bus program for village residents. Also, Tom Cross is participating in a grant program that may benefit the township senior shuttle program.

**F. Youth**

**No report**

**VIII. ELECTED OFFICIALS REPORTS**

**A. Assessor**

Rick Martin advised the board that he researched the question of how residents can obtain tax relief when they are being flooded (declared “disaster areas”) and found no justification for tax reduction. He reported that Plainfield Township is the only local area where housing values are still increasing. Regarding appeals, he reported that in 2005 there were 13 appeals and 10 were upheld. In 2006 there were 3 appeals and none were upheld. He also reported that Plainfield is now the fifth fastest-growing community in the United States.

**B. Clerk**

## **Plainfield Township Board of Trustees Minutes from August 8, 2007**

Rosemary Pruss advised that she went to the township on the morning that the weeding and mulching of the flower beds was started by D&M Landscaping. Upon her arrival she found several plants in one of the less-weedy beds (4 of the 8 corner plants) had already been removed and discarded. Two of the eight had been pulled out and replaced without water. This left only two plants out of eight that had not been mistakenly pulled. The crew of young men was at that time working on another bed with no flowers in it.

Being concerned that the flowers in the heavily-planted areas in front of the building would not be recognized and would be pulled and discarded along with the weeds, Ms. Pruss reported the situation to the administrative assistant. The supervisor from D&M Landscaping was called to the township. Ms. Pruss pointed out to him where the flowers were located in the heavily-weeded beds in front of the building. Through her April, 2007 Earth-Day project, accomplished in conjunction with Conservation Plainfield, several hundred flowers had been donated and planted by volunteers. Some of the plants pointed out were also marked with plastic knives or flags. With the weeds being as tall as they are, Ms. Pruss was advised that some flowers would end up being pulled and that getting a person who can recognize all the flowers would be cost-prohibitive. The offer was made to replace plants that would be destroyed. The front areas were not scheduled to be completed that day.

Ms. Pruss returned a few days later, and found that almost all of the particular plants that she pointed out were gone, except for about ¾ of the daylilies lining the front circle which she had marked with colored tape. At this point it is unknown whether these plants were accidentally pulled or whether mulch was dumped on them without regard to pulling them up through it. One area that had contained 16 to 20 hardy, thriving rudbeckia, several of which were blooming, had only one live plant left. A second plant was visible (loaded with formerly bright yellow blooms), but it was dead, apparently pulled out and replaced without water.

Ms. Pruss pointed out that this is the third time that plantings at the township have been destroyed by improper pulling, tilling or mulching. The only time all of the plants were preserved was when an individual was hired to do a portion of the weeding. The situation goes beyond disheartening, based on the amount of original expense, this year's Earth Day effort by the community and generous donations of plants. On a positive note, there are still many plants left and they will eventually be large enough to be separated, provided care is given to the process and provided that weeds are controlled in the future. Also, an inventory will be done and some of the plants may be replaceable by the landscaper.

### **C. Highway Commissioner**

### **Written Report**

Supervisor Argoudelis asked Mary Domanus to put together at least a paragraph as to the status of the Renwick Road Bridge so that he can have a general answer for residents who approach him directly.

A written report was submitted listing the activities performed during the past month. These included performing garbage pickup, truck maintenance and repairs, blacktopping of pot holes, sign maintenance, branch pick-up, shoulder gravel, culvert replacement, mowing and weed control, ditching and Harris Drive improvements.

### **D. Trustee Comments**

## Plainfield Township Board of Trustees Minutes from August 8, 2007

When asked as to the progress of replacing the clerk and tax collector, Andi French stated that an ad will be in the Enterprise tomorrow, August 9, 2007. Ms. French also stated that she is currently taking information from those interested in attending the November TOI convention in Springfield.

It was decided to call a Special Meeting for September 5, 2007 at 6 pm. in order to interview respondents to the ad for Clerk and Tax Collector.

Ken McCafferty advised that articles for the newsletter will be due by September 30, 2007.

### E. APPROVAL OF BILLS

Supervisor Argoudelis explained that D&M Landscaping has presented a bill that is \$441.00 in excess of what was expected, citing six to seven extra yards of mulch needed as the reason for the increase. After discussion, because of the increase and the clerk's report of the damage to plants, the following motion was made.

A motion to pay D&M Land Care \$6,849.00 for weeding and mulching services which equals the original quoted amount, less 10%, which will be held back until the Supervisor addresses the issues of the added charges and the destruction of numerous plants **was made by Ken McCafferty and seconded by Chuck Willard. Roll call vote taken. Kim Sandstrom – Aye, Ken McCafferty – Aye, Chuck Willard – Aye, John Argoudelis - Aye. Motion Carries.**

On the continuing issue of employee expense reimbursement, it was noted that one of the assessor's employees attempted to be reimbursed without receipts. This employee stated that he did not keep receipts based on instruction from the assessor. For this one time, the employee will be reimbursed based on recollection because he was following the instruction of his supervisor. Kim Sandstrom asked if the assessor has changed his handbook back to the township's long-time policy of presenting receipts. Mr. Martin has been advised both by phone and email that the board reiterated its existing policy of requiring receipts at both the June 13, 2007 and July 11, 2007 board meetings. A written explanation will be sent with the payment and a memo will be sent to all employees restating that the policy of requiring receipts has not changed and reimbursements will not be made without them.

A question was asked as to who is the Chief Deputy Assessor and Erin Kljaich advised that is it she.

**Total General Town Fund – A motion to approve the Town Fund for in the amount of \$52,270.23** was made by Kim Sandstrom and seconded by Ken McCafferty. Roll call vote taken. Ken McCafferty – Aye, Chuck Willard – Aye, Kim Sandstrom – Aye, John Argoudelis - Aye. Motion Carries.

**Total Road and Bridge – A motion to approve the Road and Bridge Fund for in the amount of \$36,078.94** was made by Ken McCafferty and seconded by Chuck Willard. Roll call vote taken. Ken McCafferty – Aye, Chuck Willard – Aye, Kim Sandstrom – Aye, John Argoudelis - Aye. Motion Carries.

**Plainfield Township Board of Trustees Minutes from August 8, 2007**

**Total County Joint Bridge Fund – A motion to approve the Road and Bridge Fund in the amount of \$102,307.50** was made by Chuck Willard and seconded by Ken McCafferty. Kim Sandstrom – Aye, Ken McCafferty – Aye, Chuck Willard – Aye, John Argoudelis - Aye. Motion Carries.

**F. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Taken out of order)**

Crystal and Jim Butler of 2410 Poplar St., Joliet (Plainfield Township) stated that they have lived at their present location for twenty years and have maintained a stretch of property which they referred to as “township property” for the past 17 years. They stated that the creek on this property floods after previous attempts to get help no jurisdiction is claimed by any entity. Residents are in fear of flooding and of the 150-foot tall trees falling. Mary Domanus, representing the highway department, stated that the creek, the water problem and the trees are not under the jurisdiction of the Plainfield Township highway department because it is in the county and controlled by county government.

Supervisor Argoudelis explained that the county originally gave approval to develop Sunnyland as a subdivision under county ordinances. He assured the couple that although he cannot help directly, he can go to bat at the county level and see who has the legal authority and the budget to address the situation. He asked them to put together a list of the problems and the township will pursue answers. He also explained the limited powers granted to the township.

The Butlers also had a complaint that a part of a road, about 250 feet along Kellogg Street, does not get plowed due to differing jurisdictions. This road accommodates a school bus. Mary Domanus said it is the county’s responsibility to plow the 250 feet. Supervisor Argoudelis told the Butlers that if the issue is related to the township’s roads, it has to be presented to the Plainfield Township highway commissioner. He suggested the issue may have to go to the City Manager (Joliet) level to get a directive to the proper person to do the plowing.

This issue will be placed on the September board meeting agenda. Meanwhile Supervisor Argoudelis advised the Butlers that the issue of the creek and trees would go to the county administration and the issue of the plowing of roads would have to go to the City of Joliet (through the Plainfield Township highway commissioner, Sam Reichert.)

**A motion to amend the agenda and go into executive session to discuss a personnel matter** was made by Ken McCafferty and seconded by Chuck Willard. Roll call vote taken. Motion carries.

**A motion to come out of executive session** was made by Ken McCafferty and seconded by Chuck Willard. Roll call vote taken. Motion carries.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT -**

A motion to adjourn was made by Kim Sandstrom, seconded by Ken McCafferty. Voice vote taken. Motion carries. Meeting of August 8, 2007 was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

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Rosemary Pruss

Town Clerk