

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE VILLAGE OF HARWOOD HEIGHTS
HELD ON THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2008**

A. CALL TO ORDER at 7:30 pm by Mayor Margaret P. Fuller

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

C. ROLL CALL

Mayor	Margaret P. Fuller
Clerk	Dianne H. Larson
Deputy Clerk	Marcia Pollowy
Trustees	Mark Dobrzycki (Late 7:56pm) Michael Gadzinski Arlene Jezierny Demetrios Mougolias (Absent) Therese Schuepfer Lester Szlendak
Attorney	Paul Stephanides

D. PUBLIC COMMENT - Upon recognition to speak by the village president or acting chairperson, the person shall rise and state his or her name and address. An individual may speak for himself or herself or as a representative of a community group. No person shall speak longer than three minutes unless specifically authorized to do so by a majority vote of the board of trustees. The three minute time limit will be measured by a person selected by the village board. Thirty (30) minutes of meeting time will be the maximum time allowed for public comment. This according to Village Code, Section 2.12.090, Section D.

Joan K. White, 7429 W. Winona: Three thoughts for tonight; first, some exciting family news to share with you. Today's Pioneer Press, on page 5, features a big headline "Patrick Christl to premiere his film "Ends Runway"." The beautifully written article goes on to say that Patrick Christl, who was an Eagle Scout and former lifeguard for Norridge Park District, will be presenting his own independent short film at the Rosemont Movico Theater this Sunday. Patrick is my nephew.

Pat's mom and dad are well known to our village; his mother, Patricia, served several years on the Youth Commission and then worked over ten years on the Zoning Board. His father Carl was probably the original village Easter Bunny, and then for over twelve years served as a member, then Chairman of the Plan Commission. They both were appointed first by Mayor Ray Willas, and then by Mayor Norb Pabich.

Patrick's mother had the right idea when she said to me, "putting all politics aside, this is what our town of Harwood Heights is all about; helping our children to grow up in the best atmosphere, with the best schooling, giving them opportunities, and watching them become entrepreneurs in our society. This is the real heart and pride of our little town."

My brother Stanley would have been very proud to see what his grandson had accomplished by age 22. Family and friends will celebrate this wonderful occasion this coming Sunday.

Secondly, turning the page in today's paper is an article telling of Trustee Dobrzycki's plan to use the Lawrence Avenue lots for truck parking. Can't help but wonder how Mr. Wu and the other nearby residents will react to this idea. I recall the great concern about the old Village Hall site looking like a dumping ground; can we picture 30 or 40 trucks of all sizes there every night, and across the street as well. After we residents spend over five million dollars for a super streetscape that's supposed to attract the finest developers, we get to smell truck fumes and we will also have to patrol the lot to protect the trucks from theft and vandalism and probably even carry special insurance. But, no doubt, Mr. Schmidt, who is an insurance underwriter, will be able to guide us through that.

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A third message - just one more item from the newspaper, which I mention with very heavy heart. A week ago, a young man chose to throw mud at a very distinguished, honorable, hard-working resident, with apparently no regard to the after effects of his letter.

I believe that Mr. Steve Garnett is a young man who is not married, does not own his own home, does not pay real estate tax, is not raising a family in our community, probably never attended a school board meeting and certainly would not be involved with the difficult task of voting and making tough decisions as a school board member.

Because his letter resorts to name calling, derogatory innuendos, and unproved, unwarranted criticism, I believe that Mr. Garnett owes Mr. Bob Hesslau, his family and the Union Ridge School Board, a deep public apology.

Herman Wu, 4746 N. Odell: I would like to comment on JKW's comments at the March 13th meeting. I do a lot of volunteer work for many people including the Mayor. This I do because it helps make the person's job easier. I'm sure you do volunteer work for trustees. You associate me with the Mayor and the Historical Committee as I associate you with the trustees and the Senior Group. I believe that is why you continue to condemn the Mayor and the Chief at every meeting. Why don't you try to do their job with fewer personal and less time; maybe you'll see why the Mayor needs volunteers, by ordinance she has the right to appoint them without board approvals, volunteers, no pay. JKW, I don't see you stepping up to the plate and volunteering to help the office staff and help them out when we have community events other than your senior events. Please keep the Harwood Heights Historical Committee out of your references, they are individuals and should be referred to as that. Stop condemning the Harwood Heights Historical Committee.

Natalie Brower, Attorney for the Citizen Advocacy Center, 182 N. York, Elmhurst: We're essentially a good government group and we are focused on transparency and accountability and fairness in government. I'm here tonight because Herman Wu asked me to speak on a few issues; what I am not here to do is to enter into the fracas of what appears to be a divided board and several attorneys and basically a fight that we're not interested in. What we care about is good government and citizens rights.

The first issue I wanted to address is the village's repeated and ongoing failure to make the Financial Committee's minutes available. The Open Meetings Act in Harwood Heights both require these minutes, committee minutes to be made available. Harwood Heights has a law that says these minutes have to be submitted essentially to the Clerk within 10-days of the meetings. These minutes haven't been submitted since May, so they're basically 10-months late. We're concerned about this because what the board is basically doing is subjecting the village to liability. You can be sued for an Open Meetings Act violation; you can be sued based on Mr. Wu's Freedom of Information Act request for the meetings which was denied because the minutes are not ready yet, they're 10-months overdue and you can be sued on your own law. And we're concerned because you would basically subject the citizens and the residents to tremendous legal fees based on a lawsuit that I can tell you, is just a slam dunk for any plaintiff to bring and the Citizen Advocacy Center has brought cases like that before. I'm not sure we would bring this case but we would certainly consider it because it's a pretty clear cut violation of open government laws.

The second issue that is troubling to us is the village Whistleblower Law that was maintained over a veto by the Mayor and a legal analysis. I can tell you that as a former litigator for 6-years in Washington, D.C., a whistleblower case and as in employment law cases the Whistleblower Law that you've enacted directly contradicts the State Law and it's illegal. And frankly, I don't know enough about the politics or about what's going on here to clarify why you would adopt a law that's clearly illegal. And the problem with this illegal law is if you try to bring charges under it, what's going to happen is the village is going to get sued and you're not going to have any defense because the law you have contradicts the State Law and it's illegal. Again, I'm not really sure why, why the board has approved this, but from a legal perspective there's a problem with having your own Whistleblower Law that contradicts the State Law. And our capacity as community lawyers is to point out problems like this, and again, it would fall on the citizens of Harwood Heights to pay the legal bills to clear up the mess of having two contradictory laws.

So, I just caution you to be extremely careful; get the financial minutes out, avoid lawsuits and basically act in the best interest of the citizens.

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E. REPORTS OF MAYOR, TRUSTEES, CLERK AND ATTORNEY

Mayor's Report

Mayor Fuller

Cook County Board of Review Re-Opened the Appeal Process for Property Assessments. The additional period to file complaints for Norwood Park Township will end Monday March 31st. There is some info is on our web site and you can go to www.cookcountyboardofreview.com, to download the complaint form and obtain further details on this additional two-week filing opportunity. You may also call the Board of Review at 312-603-5542.

We received several notices from the US Food and Drug Administration regarding the nationwide recall of Honduran Cantaloupes grown, packed and shipped by Agropecuaria Montelibano, San Lorenzo, Valle, Honduras. These cantaloupes from Honduras appear to be associated with a Salmonella outbreak in the US and Canada. You can check for more info on line with the FDA.

On March 29, 2008 residents in major metro areas around the world will turn off their lights for one hour to show that it's possible to take action on global warming. Chicago has been selected as the flagship region to lead the Earth Hour effort here in the United States. On behalf of Earth Hour Chicago, the metropolitan Mayors Caucus and the Village of Harwood Heights, you are invited to turn off your lights at home and in your businesses from 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. that day, and make Earth Hour 2008 a truly regional and global event.

Motions I 7 and I8 on the agenda are to approve the IDOT agreements for the pedestrian and transit improvements at Union Ridge School; this is through a CMAQ grant I obtained thru attendance at Mayors meetings. The Board already approved the preliminary engineering for the plans, specs and letting back in Sept. 2007.

Motion I 10 is for the authorization to dispose or sell two old vehicles currently in the Public Works dept that are not being used. We would like to get them off the insurance, the old water truck is basically useless and the one automobile is a 1994 Chevy Caprice which may be available for sale but I believe it needs at least a battery to run. The Superintendent will advertise the sale if that is the action that is decided. Among their usual village maintenance activities, Public Works continues to do some tree trimming from Oak Park they went to Forest Preserve Drive.

Also, one of the residents mentioned about the movie premiere and I'll give a report on that at the next board meeting because I will be attending the movie premiere; I've know Patrick and his family for many years. So, it's very exciting to have a village resident that's attending Columbia College and put together this movie, so you'll hear about it at the next meeting.

Information/Technology

Trustee Dobrzycki

No Report – Absent (arrived at 7:56pm)

Forestry/Recreation

Trustee Gadzinski

I am proud to announce that one of the WSSRA Bobcat teams won a silver medal down state last weekend at Illinois State University in the Special Olympics State Basketball Tournament. This was the team that the WSSRA board members got to play a few weeks ago and of course we lost.

Although the other team lost both games, they had lots of fun and I am sure that they will be back, twice as good and competitive in any future tournaments.

On Saturday March 15th, the Harwood Heights Youth Commission held an Annual Easter Party at the Village Hall. It was a fun filled day, full of activities. Some of the activities included arts and crafts-designing/personalizing Easter picture frames with a variety of colors, letterings and cut-outs of little bunnies. The warm sunny day permitted the Easter Egg hunt to be held outside of the Village Hall; compared to this weather today. The children who found the most eggs

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were presented with baskets filled with toys, candy and basket balls, soccer balls and all sorts of little goodies. As always the Youth Commission members did a great job coordinating this event and all activities held that day; I thank them. I was very pleased to portray the Easter bunny. The kids were thrilled and I was happy to see the big smiles on their faces as they walked up to take pictures with the Easter bunny. Trustee Arlene Jerzierny assisted me and presented each of the children with plastic Easter Egg filled with candy and goodies.

Public Works

Trustee Jezierny

May I say "Merry Christmas" with all this weather we're having. Since the Mayor gave a little bit about what Public Works has been doing as far as their activities, I just want to add a little something. You know with the cold and hot that we've experienced; that if anyone can help us out and if you see any potholes, please report them in to the Village Hall so we can get out there and fill them when weather permits. I've been in contact with the Illinois Department of Transportation; they have been filling and refilling the holes on our state streets within our village. But, within our village itself, please report the potholes on your streets to our Village Hall so we can get these jobs to Public Works.

Also, with the Appropriation Budget coming due just around the corner, I look forward to meeting with the Public Works staff and obtaining their input, their requirements and suggestions for day-to-day operations and plans for our next fiscal year.

Public Health & Safety

Trustee Mougolias

No Report - Absent

Ordinance/License

Trustee Schuepfer

I have the report from the Ordinance & License Committee; it is very brief.

At the last board meeting, a resident who lives behind Mc Donald's came both to me and to the Mayor to talk about what had happened with the 24-hour operations of the drive-thru at Mc Donald's and his complaint was that it could be quite noisy and we had just started to see the 24-hour service just during the winter. So, he's really kind of anxious about what it means during the summer to have 24-hour drive-in hours. So, I know that the Mayor addressed his complaint by asking the police to essentially do surveillance; but what I had done in terms of ordinances is I went through the our code to look at in fact if we had anything on the books about 24-hours of operation. And right now, at least from what I can hear and based on what the Mayor has discovered as well, it looked like we had code relative to 24-hours for manufacturing, so I'll wait for the Mayor's update on that. **Mayor Fuller:** I'll just add to that right now. Neither one of us could find anything in the code for the hours of operation but the Village Attorney did; so we were able to find the code that the hours are for restaurants until midnight weekdays and 1:00am on weekends, so we did send the Building Department over to talk to the owners and they have complied. So there are no more 24-hours. **Trustee Schuepfer:** So, if you're craving that Big Mac, you'll have to go to another village.

And than beyond that, I guess this is even appropriate for what's going on with the weather; I hope at the next Committee Meeting of the Whole that we can address the change in the Snow Removal Ordinance; who thought it would snow again before we had to deal with it.

Finance

Sewer & Water

Trustee Szlendak

For the Finance Committee; on Friday, March 14th I took the time off from my job and was finally permitted to meet with our Village Accountant. The bottom line is not a pretty one; we basically have a revenue shortfall of \$750,000 for the fiscal year that we're in right now. What really hit me hard was that our Village Accountant informed me that we are

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fine until September of this year in our General Fund but after that we have a problem. In fact I was taken back by the Mayor's suggestion that in order to cover the shortfall we may have to go out and borrow money. **Mayor Fuller:** I never said that.

Trustee Szlendak: In search for additional funds for our General Fund I also discovered that there is a very strong possibility that our Police Chief does not follow the state mandate on how the money out of our state drug fund is to be spent. I made a copy of the bank statement and the checks for the state drug fund and sent them to our auditors for their review.

For the Water & Sewer Committee; last week during my conversation with Joe Russo, I was informed that St. Rosalie's Church received an unsigned letter from Harwood Heights Water Department dated March 14, 2008. This unsigned letter was notifying St. Rosalie's Church that, one, starting the next billing cycle they will be charged a commercial and industrial rate for the water and sewer. Then they were also notified that in the future they may be contacted to purchase a new radio read water meter at a cost of \$2,450.00. As Chairman of the Water & Sewer Committee, I did not know anything about this letter and to my knowledge none of the members of the Water & Sewer Committee ever heard of this letter. Later on I discovered that Union Ridge received the very same letter.

Mayor, this is not a way to treat anybody in our village; especially St. Rosalie's Church or Union Ridge School. Once again, the Mayor has a problem with cooperation and democratic process.

Clerk's Report

Clerk Larson

No Report

Attorney's Report

No Report

F. TRUSTEE COMMENTS

Trustee Jezierny: I just want to piggyback off of that; I, too received a memo, a letter regarding the issue of the unsigned letter from the Water Department and it came from one of our Not-for-profit organizations. I think it is very important that we open up the communication lines within our village and to resolve the issue together.

Mayor Fuller: I do have some comments here. First, the Village Accountant and I met with Trustee Szlendak on Friday, March 14th. We had requested a meeting prior to the last board meeting but Trustee Szlendak only let us know at 10:00am on the same day that he was coming in at 3:00pm. Overall it went pretty well although we still have some issues to clear up. First of all, I never said that we would have to borrow money or where we would borrow money from.

Second of all, the Drug Fund is managed by Officer DeVries and Captain Ricchio and it is audited every year by the auditors.

I did ask for documentation of financial comments made by Trustee Szlendak where the newspaper reported it to the public without any verification. I don't consider this criticizing but clarifying some very important financial information. First, Trustee Szlendak is quoted at the board meeting and in the newspaper as saying "Value City, we lose \$250,000." I asked Trustee Szlendak where he got this number and he said he spoke with Trustee Mougolias about it. What my concern here is; is that I signed a confidentiality agreement with the Illinois Department of Revenue to find out some of the sales tax information for particular retailers. The information is not public information and I can't disclose it to the trustees or the public. Trustee Szlendak does not have the information or the authority to make these claims public. This puts the village in a difficult situation especially when the newspaper continues to print financial information taken from unsubstantiated sources.

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I then asked Trustee Szlendak where he got the estimate he is using as the basis for the "official" estimate for the streetscape project and he said he found it in a file. I then asked for the minutes of any meeting where this particular estimate was made known as the "official" estimate, because several estimates were reviewed back in 2005 and there were several options and estimates presented by Vanderwalle; none of which I recall was made as the official estimate. I have not yet received the minutes of any meeting from Trustee Szlendak providing that the estimate he is passing around was the official estimate for the streetscape project. But once again, the newspaper picked up and reported that our project was over budget by numbers given by trustees without any substantiated backup material. By the way, the reporter did not contact me for my input regarding the costs.

So, I then contacted Scott Harrington of Vanderwalle and he agreed that they never made an "official" estimate. They did do several general cost estimates along the way beginning with the initial SSA feasibility analysis. At that time it was without any detailed drawings or complete picture of the related utility costs. Only later when the drawing and scope of work was finalized by the board, were estimates prepared just for the streetscape portions with Burke doing the parking and other hard infrastructure costs. With the SSA, what was decided upon was the maximum amount the property owners could afford to pay which was essentially the debt on \$3,000,000 plus annual administrative operating costs. This, plus the \$474,000 ITEP funds and the MFT money that Paul May was proposing for the side streets, became the basis for the project. Burke Engineering and I later obtained additional grant funds in the amount of \$450,000, so now we have a total of \$924,000 in grants. The engineer estimates were done later and submitted to IDOT; this was when the board directed the engineer to include the work in front of the vacant properties, that originally we had intended that work was to be done when a developer came in and helped pay for the improvements. This was the time that the trustees could have reduced the cost of the project.

It is also important to note that the SSA estimates are more than two years old at this time, at this point, and construction costs in Chicago have increased dramatically in the same period. Hence, Newport Builders problems, when they asked the village to change the scope of the project at the old Village Hall site, but were sued by the board. So my point here is that I don't believe there was an official estimate, only general cost assumptions that were not based on individual line item figures at current costs. So the reported over budget amounts quoted by trustees in the newspaper currently lacks supporting documents. I wonder if the local paper will correct all this misinformation that was previously reported?

Trustee Szlendak also said that all the Vanderwalle bills, even the bills for looking into the feasibility of going with an SSA were to be charged and paid by the SSA. I asked him for the minutes of any meeting where the board made this decision; I have not yet received this information.

At the last board meeting Trustee Szlendak requested all financial reporting to be completed by the 20th of every month. I informed the trustee that this is a requirement of the Treasurer and the Accountant is not the Treasurer. Perhaps the board would like me to hire a Treasurer who could put in the hours and do the reporting, because being extremely short staffed in the office, we are doing the best we can right now. It is not a matter of not doing something; it's a matter of time. We have less staff now than years ago and much more financial reporting required now. So, accept this as my official request for a full time qualified staff person for the office that can help with financial reporting. Please include this in your appropriation for fiscal year '09.

One of the issues consuming loads of time for the accountant is the lack of proper accounting software. The Finance Committee chose to remove this from the budget making the work load harder and longer for the current employees; accept this as my official request for new software.

Trustee Szlendak said that he predicts we'll be in the hole. Is it the only job Trustee Szlendak has as Finance Chairman and Village Trustee, one to make predictions of doom and gloom? The Village Code states that the Finance Committee shall attempt to determine whether in particular cases the charges for municipal services are sufficient to pay for such services. Will they review the costs? For Police Services? For garbage pickup? For plowing streets and alleys; for Youth programs?

Trustee Szlendak's media publicized doom and gloom and suing a developer, just delays any sort of stabilization or recovery of the housing market for us in Harwood Heights. We can't continue to focus on the negativity. I'm a strong believer in being proactive in making things happen. How about balancing out the predictions for the future, because

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once the fear is gone, qualified buyers will begin buying properties again. If we continue to believe and invest in ourselves and Harwood Heights, then the homebuyers and the developers will come.

G. SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

H. APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS

I. CONSENT AGENDA

**Motion by Trustee Dobrzycki, seconded by Trustee Szlendak on Consent Agenda items I 1-12:
Trustee Szlendak pulled I 11 for a separate vote.**

Motion by Trustee Dobrzycki, seconded by Trustee Szlendak on Consent Agenda items I 1-10 & I 12:

1. To approve the regular minutes of the Regular Board Meeting which was held on Thursday, March 13, 2008.
2. To approve expenditure, not to exceed \$1,720.09, payable to LexisNexis for supplemental service to the Municipal Code to be expensed to line item 11-01-00-7048 for year FY 07/08 – Village Code Recodification
3. To approve expenditure, not to exceed \$12,798.77, payable to West Suburban Special Recreation Assn. for 2nd quarter 2008 Share Payment and Inclusion Payment to be expensed to line item 11-08-00-7037 FY 07/08 - Special Recreation.
4. To approve expenditure, not to exceed \$11,044.50, payable to Sikich for professional services rendered through February 29, 2008 to be expensed to line item 11-03-00-7034 FY 07/08 – Accounting.
5. To hire Cori Hilton as Volleyball coach @ \$25 per hour session for 8 weeks to be expensed to line item 11-08-00-7034 FY 07/08 – Recreation.
6. To approve expenditure, not to exceed \$4,514.08, payable to Rockwood Company for Sports Accident Insurance to be expensed to line item 11-08-00-7030 FY 08/09 - Recreation.
7. To approve the Illinois Department of Transportation Local Agency Agreement for Federal Participation for the Construction Engineering for the Pedestrian and Transit Improvements for Union Ridge School in the amount of \$9,067.21 payable to Christopher Burke Engineering and to Authorize the Mayor to execute the agreement. (Federal grant portion \$7,200, local match \$1,867.21 line item 11-14-00-7008 FY 07/08 – with eligible match portions using MFT Funds).
8. To approve the Illinois Department of Transportation Local Agency Agreement for Federal Participation for the Construction of Pedestrian and Transit Improvements for Union Ridge School in the amount of \$85,000 and to Authorize the Mayor to execute the agreement. (Federal grant portion \$66,400, line item 11-14-00-7008 FY 07/08 – local match \$18,600 with eligible match portions using MFT Funds).
9. To approve a Waiver of Review by the Ordinance and Legislation Committee pursuant to Section 2.12.220 of the Harwood Heights Village Code of Ordinance 08-05, An Ordinance Authorizing the Sale or Disposal of Surplus Vehicles Owned by the Village of Harwood Heights, Cook County, Illinois.
10. To adopt Ordinance 08-05, An Ordinance Authorizing the Sale or Disposal of Surplus Vehicles Owned by the Village of Harwood Heights, Cook County, Illinois.

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12. Transfer from Parkway General Savings Account in the amount of \$136,399.74 to Parkway Bank Payroll Account.

A roll call vote on Consent Agenda items I 1-10 & I 12 resulted as follows:

A YES: Trustee Dobrzycki, Gadzinski, Jezierny, Schuepfer, Szlendak

NAYS:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Trustee Mougolias

Motion Carried

ITEMS PULLED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Trustee Szlendak, seconded by Trustee Dobrzycki to pull check #44458 on Consent Agenda item I 11:

11. Transfer from Parkway General Savings Account in the amount of \$243,892.93 as they appear on check register #44418 thru #44457 & #44459 thru #44475.

A roll call vote on Consent Agenda item I 11 resulted as follows:

A YES: Trustee Dobrzycki, Gadzinski, Jezierny, Schuepfer, Szlendak

NAYS:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Trustee Mougolias

Motion Carried

Motion to Table check #44458 by Trustee Szlendak, seconded by Trustee Dobrzycki

Check #44458, for \$2,812.36 payable to Vanderwalle & Associates.

A roll call vote to Table check #44458 resulted as follows:

A YES: Trustee Dobrzycki, Gadzinski, Jezierny, Schuepfer, Szlendak

NAYS:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Trustee Mougolias

Motion Carried

J. NEW BUSINESS

None

K. OLD BUSINESS

Clerk Larson: In looking at the Consent Agenda tonight apparently item "I" fell off into cyberspace.

L. CORRESPONDENCE

None

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M. OTHER NEW BUSINESS

None

N. TRUSTEE COMMENTS

Trustee Szlendak: The Mayor accused me of being the doom and gloom man and scaring everybody that we have no money. Personally I feel that I'm just being realistic and I think we should let the trustees and everybody in our town know that they are facing a financial crunch and we have to spend within our means. The estimate that I presented and discussed at a board meeting for the SSA was the highest estimate that we received from Vanderwalle & Associates, and at that time the presentation was made and the pictures were presented.

The Mayor's request for a Treasurer and new software, I would love to welcome it, but once again we have to figure out a way of paying our current bills, let alone looking for new ones.

The final comment on the checks that were written from the State Drug Account, they were signed by the Chief and that's the reason that I said it is the person that is writing them.

Trustee Schuepfer: I really just have a question about whether or not we're going into Executive Session this evening.

Mayor Fuller: No.

Trustee Schuepfer: Because I was hoping at some point we would get an update about the investigation you initiated in November, it's about four months since; I thought we needed some closure. So can we anticipate that sometime soon?

Mayor Fuller: I'll let you know.

Trustee Jezierny: What does the month of April mean to you?
Perhaps it's Spring, which means the end of a long Winter, perhaps it's Earth Day, perhaps it's Arbor Day, perhaps it's The beginning of our Street Sweeping in Harwood Heights and Some are hopeful that April rain showers bring May flowers But even more meaningful to many is that April is "Autism Awareness Month."

Every 20 minutes, another family learns their child has autism. And every diagnosis means a lifetime of challenges for families, schools and communities.

Autism is a disorder that inhibits a person's ability to communicate and develop social relationships. Autism is diagnosed in one out of every 150 children in the United States, affecting four times as many boys as girls and autism has increased tenfold in the last decade. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have called autism a national public health crisis.

While there is no known cause or cure, autism is treatable. People with autism are capable of making significant progress through personalized interventions and therapy; and can and do lead meaningful lives.

Nuccio D'Argento from Vines Restaurant, one of our own business owners in Harwood Heights knows first hand about these challenges when his son Enzo was among those diagnosed with Autism when he was just 3 years old. Nuccio has partnered with Easter Seals in a dedicated effort in helping to build a \$28 million Therapeutic School and Center for Autism -- a campus that will assist in education, research, training, and therapy for independent living.

If you are looking for a Charity, won't you consider in joining Nuccio and his son, Enzo in a fight to combat Autism. A fund-raising event is scheduled at Vince's Restaurant on Tuesday, April 29 at 6:00pm. While tickets to this particular event are \$125, any donation you may wish to contribute toward this worthwhile cause now or in the future would be greatly appreciated toward "Helping little Enzo Build a School".

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Mayor Fuller: I do want to add here that Trustee Szlendak if you do have something that says that was the highest estimate, I still would need to get a copy of the minutes or something were it says that you have some official estimate for the project because I can't find anything for any estimate.

Then my last comments are directed to Trustee Schuepfer and her comments at the last board meeting with consultation she received from the "alleged" legislative counsel regarding the overriding of the vetoes I made.

At the last meeting and in its minutes Trustee Schuepfer is reported saying "the Mayor's veto message on this Ordinance is an interesting exercise of "pin the tail on the donkey." "The Mayor thinks that this ordinance changes the form of government; this is a stunning misinterpretation." Trustee Schuepfer continues with listing a series of questions indicating what I, the Mayor, believes'; questions that she has made up herself, saying that by vetoing their ordinance that I have answered "yes" to these ridiculous ill conceived questions. Trustee Schuepfer then goes on to the Whistleblower Ordinance and states that all the Mayor had to do was write on the ordinance, "I veto this ordinance" and return it to us. Instead, she commissioned the Village Attorney to put together a lengthy convoluted memorandum explaining her ostensible reasons for vetoing this ordinance. But that is exactly what the trustees should be requesting from the Village Attorney; don't they want to know the legality of the ordinances? How can they be criticizing my efforts to help them understand the legal basis for or against the passage of an ordinance? Isn't that the basis they need to know before voting? Why are they just ignoring it?

Unfortunately, but predictably, none of the comments from the trustee referred to any case law or legalities for what the trustees are trying to do; just a lot of sarcastic remarks. I will stay with the facts and the fact is the trustees adopted illegal ordinances, did not hold a public meeting for their ordinances and did not waive the vote on any of the ordinances. But that's okay, because I feel very strongly that the voters will be making the final decision on the trustee's actions. The trustees, by taking powers they don't have and by deciding what is legal and what is not without the advice of the Village Attorney are leaving themselves and the village in a very precarious situation. The ordinances adopted by the trustees have weakened the employee moral to a new low. They continue to waste taxpayer dollars for their own personal benefit. Right now we have two unconstitutional ordinances on the books because of the personal beliefs of trustees.

O. EXECUTIVE SESSION

P. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Trustee Dobrzycki, seconded by Trustee Gadzinski to adjourn. On a voice vote, all being in favor, the motion carried and the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Harwood Heights was adjourned by Mayor Margaret P. Fuller on Thursday, March 27, 2008 at 8:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Dianne H. Larson, Village Clerk