

MINUTES
WINNETKA VILLAGE COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

July 12, 2016

(Approved August 2, 2016)

A record of a legally convened meeting of the Council of the Village of Winnetka, which was held in the Village Hall Council Chambers on Tuesday, July 12, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

- 1) Call to Order. President Greable called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present: Trustees Andrew Cripe, William Krucks, Penfield Lanphier, Scott Myers, Christopher Rintz and Kristin Ziv. Absent: None. Also present: Assistant to the Village Manager Megan Pierce, Village Attorney Benjamin Schuster, Public Works Director Steve Saunders, Environmental and Forestry Commission Chairman Chuck Dowding, and approximately 4 persons in the audience.
- 2) Environmental and Forestry Commission Refuse and Recycling Analysis.

Trustee Myers introduced this topic by noting a Village survey revealed 94% of residents are very satisfied with the current refuse collection system. He continued that this discussion is to explore funding and collection options.

Environmental and Forestry Commission Chairperson Chuck Dowding explained the research process and data gathered. He continued the information received from the City of Highland Park on their residential service and fees was very helpful. Highland Park utilizes a private company for collection services. The Council discussed the refuse collection data.

Public Works Director Steve Saunders explained 80% of Winnetka's refuse collection is attributed to residential waste and the other 20% is commercial waste. Multi-family units are considered commercial waste. Director Saunders noted commercial units actually pay twice for garbage with their property taxes and for dumpster pickup.

Trustee Myers noted Winnetka's rates are equivalent to Highland Park's rates and Highland Park employs a private, for-profit company.

Director Saunders noted that Highland Park is much larger than Winnetka and is enjoying some economies of scale. However, Winnetka is still cost competitive.

Trustee Cripe asked about the Village's unfunded pension liability for refuse workers. Director Saunders responded the seven refuse workers account for four percent of Winnetka's pension liability and IMRF is 90% funded.

President Greable stated that he and Manager Bahan have met with the Village of Glencoe to discuss collaborating on refuse collection.

Trustee Lanphier asked when the last time the levy covered the cost of refuse.

Director Saunders stated 1996 was the last time the levy covered the cost of refuse and that a Council action at that time authorized this amount to be levied and the remainder to come

from the General Fund. He continued this was a purposeful intent, and he maintained refuse is not running a deficit.

The Council discussed refuse funding and alternatives that could make it more transparent.

Trustee Myers suggested the Village has an opportunity to act as a lever to encourage homes to throw away less by adjusting how refuse is funded. He noted in twenty years we will reach crisis capacity at our current landfill. He suggested the Village has several options; one, continue with the current practice; two, stop transferring money from the general fund and have tax payers directly pay the full amount; or three, raise the fees for refuse. The possibility also exists to charge people by what they generate and issue utility bills as opposed to levy for the revenue.

Trustee Lanphier suggested community engagement is needed on this topic.

Trustee Krucks noted user fees are a slippery slope. Property taxes are the established way to fund municipal expenses.

Trustee Rintz noted that even with Winnetka's fixed overhead costs, Public Works is still running a very efficient and cost effective operation as compared to Highland Park's private collection.

The Council discussed the merits of efficiency, municipal service and giving residents the opportunity to control their own costs with a pay-for system.

Trustee Ziv noted Winnetka consumes quite a bit and may be interested in options to reduce waste if given a choice.

President Greable asked if the Council could come to a consensus on this issue.

The Council discussed the economic and environmental benefits of recycling and how Village policy could promote less waste.

Trustee Cripe requested more data is needed to understand the full equation. He continued that he would like to explore the conversation that was had with Glencoe regarding refuse.

Assistant to the Village Manager Pierce noted she can follow up with the next steps from the conversation with Glencoe.

Trustee Rintz stated Winnetka residents have a high level of service expectation living in this community. He wants to make sure the Council doesn't lose sight that these services are an important part of living here.

President Greable joined Trustee Krucks in requesting more cost information to present to the public. Director Saunders and Assistant to the Village Manager Pierce concurred

additional cost information would be compiled, along with further insight concerning Glencoe's refuse plans and priorities.

- 3) Public Comment. None.
- 4) Executive Session. None.
- 5) Adjournment. Trustee Rintz, seconded by Trustee Cripe, moved to adjourn the meeting. By voice vote, the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Recording Secretary