

**VILLAGE OF HUNTLEY
VILLAGE BOARD WORKSHOP
July 14, 2021
MEETING MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER:

A meeting of the Village Board of the Village of Huntley was called to order on Wednesday, July 14, 2021 at 8:10 a.m. in the Municipal Complex, Village Board Room, 10987 Main St., Huntley, Illinois 60142.

ATTENDANCE:

PRESENT: Mayor Timothy Hoeft; Trustees: Ronda Goldman, Mary Holzkopf, Curt Kittel, Harry Leopold, and JR Westberg.

ABSENT: Trustee Kanakaris

IN ATTENDANCE: Village Manager David Johnson, Deputy Village Manager Lisa Armour, Chief of Police Robert Porter, Director of Finance Cathy Haley, Director of Human Resources Chrissy Hoover, Director of Development Services Charles Nordman, Director of Public Works & Engineering Tim Farrell, and Village Clerk Rita McMahan.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION:

a) Village Strategic Plan Update

Village Manager David Johnson reviewed the 2016-2020 Mission Statement and presented an updated statement including suggestions provided by the Village Board. There was a general consensus to approve the following Mission Statement for the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan:

Mission Statement

Huntley's mission is to achieve excellence in the planning, management, and delivery of services in a reliable, efficient, fiscally, and environmentally responsible manner that enhances the quality of life for all those living, working, or conducting business in the Village

In support of this, we are committed to:

- Maintaining a forward-looking focus to identify new opportunities to advance the well-being of our community
- Pursuing partnerships and collaborating with the business community, governmental agencies, and other organizations to continue building Huntley's reputation as a desirable place in which to invest and grow a business
- Preserving the character of Huntley by supporting well-balanced and sustainable growth that ensures the quality of life for all residents today and in the future

Village Manager David Johnson then reviewed the current Vision Statement and presented an updated statement incorporating suggestions provided by the Village Board. There was a general consensus to approve the following Vision Statement for the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan:

Vision Statement

In 2030, Huntley will be known as the premier location in the region offering a healthy, well-balanced, prosperous, safe and friendly community because of its dedication to building community partnerships and attracting high quality residential, medical, commercial, and light industrial development

Village Manager Johnson continued with the proposed Values. He stated *transparency* is being added as a Value for the new Strategic Plan. There was an overall consensus to approve the Values as presented below.

Values

The Village of Huntley values being the Community of Choice by exhibiting Friendliness, Teamwork, Public Engagement, Respect, Integrity, Professionalism, Innovation, and Transparency

- Friendliness – We act in a friendly manner toward all those we interact with, both externally and internally within the organization
- Teamwork – We demonstrate a willingness to work together to help others and encourage our residents and businesses to help one another
- Public Engagement – We encourage citizens of all ages to participate in local government and service organizations, in addition to seeking opportunities to collaborate with the community through a wide range of partnerships
- Respect – We treat all residents and those with whom we interact with respect and fairness
- Integrity – We base our actions on what is legally, ethically, honesty, and morally correct
- Professionalism – We are committed to attaining high standards of professional conduct
- Innovation – We encourage new ideas and creativity to provide the highest quality and most cost effective municipal services
- Transparency – We are committed to acting openly and sharing information with our residents so that they are well informed about the conduct of Village business, enhancing accountability
- Community of Choice – We work towards preserving the quality of life for residents, attracting the best employees, and working together with our residents to maintain a safe and sustainable living environment for today and future generations

Village Manager David Johnson continued the workshop with reviewing a handout, *attached*, outlining employees per 1,000 population, property tax and water/sewer rates for Huntley and neighboring communities. Huntley continues to be at the lower spectrum in comparing costs for service with other communities.

The workshop continued with Trustees reviewing some of their higher priorities.

Trustee Goldman questioned how much land is within the Village south of the tollway and questioned if the Village should entertain a thought of shared services with Hampshire and Pingree Grove. She noted that the Villages of Pingree Grove and Hampshire are both growing south of the tollway. There was an overall consensus to not pursue a shared service agreement with either Hampshire or Pingree Grove. Village Manager Johnson replied that the boundary is from Big Timber and Route 47 and added that more housetops in Pingree Grove and Hampshire creates economic development for the Village of Huntley since those residents will visit and shop in Huntley.

Trustee Westberg stated that a top priority for him is the need for a destination attraction in the Village. The population now either works or lives in Huntley. He would like to find a better way to have non-residents visit, shop and dine in Huntley. He suggested a regional type of distillery. There was an overall consensus for a need for a destination attraction. He continued saying that he would also like to see more sit down restaurants but added they should be a local business and not something corporate like an Olive Garden. He stressed the importance of supporting local businesses. Trustee Holzkopf agreed and added that she would like more sit down restaurants as well, preserving Route 47 and to not include additional fast food restaurants at this time.

Trustee Holzkopf stated her top priority is the mental health of the community. She would like to see more training of staff as to how to deal with mental health in the workplace and residents. She added that all taxing bodies should be trained to help their staff recognize and deal with mental health issues and suggested that it could be conducted similar to a school DARE program except providing it to staff. Trustee Holzkopf would like the Village to take a proactive rather than a reactive approach in preparing for a crisis. Mayor Hoeft said he agreed completely with training front-line workers and staff not only for mental health issues, but also suicide prevention. Village Manager Johnson stated that the local Administrators group, Huntley Area Administrators Round Table (HAART), meets on a regular basis and discusses community issues like these.

Chief Porter added that in-house training for PTSD is very profound and highly involved with staff. There is a PEER support team that involves officers helping officers and that there is a Village of Huntley PEER support team currently being overseen by Deputy Chief Hooten. Chief Porter also spoke of the Never Walk Alone program and the Crisis Intervention Team training. He is very proud of the department with the programs and training offered. Chief Porter stated that 34 of 36 officers are currently trained in mental health assistance adding that the department is seeing an increase with mental health check requests from residents. Mayor Hoeft thanked Chief Porter for the department's involvement.

Trustee Holzkopf stated that she would like to see a flashing crosswalk on Reed Road by Marlowe Middle School. She understands it is Lake in the Hills jurisdiction, but that Huntley children also go to that school and perhaps there could be a joint venture between the Villages of Huntley and Lake in the Hills to fund the crossing.

Trustee Kittel said he supports continued growth but with a balance. He believes downtown is very under-represented. The Village needs to grow and develop events and storefronts to attract all ages. Trustee Kittel referenced Trustee Westberg's suggestion of needing a destination venue creating a feeling similar to that of Rosemont. He continued by questioning the ability to acquire land for a parking garage for a future commuter rail to help attract people to the downtown.

Mayor Hoeft stated that everyone seems to have a different opinion as to the boundary of what is considered downtown and the downtown TIF area. Village Manager Johnson explained the TIF District in general and

outlined the boundary of the downtown TIF District to include Lincoln Street to Donald Drive; and just north of Algonquin Road to Mill Street. Village Manager Johnson asked the Village Board if this was a priority for staff to attract business downtown to the TIF District. He explained the downtown debt service for the TIF District and added that the Village is losing the opportunity to capture funds by new businesses every day that a new business is not added to the District. There was an overall consensus in favor of attracting more businesses to the downtown area and overall TIF District. Mayor Hoeft added the most important part of a TIF is when it expires and the Village will then realize the full benefit of the property taxes.

Trustee Goldman stated that she is less interested in the downtown area and that more emphasis should be focused on the west side of Route 47, north of Main Street and Algonquin Road. She feels the area looks blighted and is an eye sore for the Village. Trustee Goldman would like to see a long-range vision plan for that area. The Village needs to be stronger and selective as to the businesses allowed along the Route 47 corridor and to not allow zoning and use variances to allow any and all businesses along Route 47. The businesses along Route 47 should fit the Village's vision. Mayor Hoeft added that he believes businesses and developers move on from looking in the area north of Algonquin Road, west of Route 47 because it is not appealing and agrees that something needs to be done to enhance that area.

Safe Community

Trustee Holzkopf believes a safe community is overall how everything blends together to provide a safe environment for the residents. She added that if you do not have a safe community no one would want to live here. The Village is a product of everything the Village Board and staff does. Trustee Westberg stated that Huntley is a safe community and feels high crimes are fairly non-existent but unfortunately crimes like domestic battery is on the rise. There was a general consensus of the Board members that a safe community is important.

Economic Development

Mayor Hoeft began the conversation by stating that the downtown TIF District is vital and industrial and commercial properties are critical as well throughout the Village. He said that he would like to see Route 47 enhanced and it's unfortunate that there are so many "for rent" signs in Route 47 buildings. Trustee Leopold questioned staff if the Village was still considered the end of the road on the tollway. Village Manager Johnson said that the Village is moving forward and believes the Village has become a major contender for businesses moving away from the city. Trustee Westberg said that he was proud of Huntley continuing to grow following the 2008 housing crash and added that he would like to see the Village remain focused on Economic Development enticing development to Huntley. Trustee Goldman questioned the placement of light industrial growth in the Village. Trustee Kittel stated where the new development is going is exactly where it should be; within 1 or 2 miles north or south of the tollway. After traveling through the industrial center off the tollway, then you enter the residential and business component of the Village along Route 47. Trustee Leopold agreed saying there were the same concerns when Weber was constructing their buildings and now the traffic really goes unnoticed.

Village Manager Johnson asked the Village Board of their tolerance for creativity. Trustee Kittel said that creativity and collaboration makes complete sense and he is all for it. He added that it contributes to the vision for the Village and supports staff 100% to be creative. Trustee Holzkopf said she was also in support of staff being creative and stated that she would like to see something done to help small business owners get established. She referenced the City of Crystal Lake and the programs they utilize in providing incentives and a grant program. Trustee Holzkopf added that small businesses in Crystal Lake can receive a Thank You Grant and receive money back for money being brought in to the City. Not every business opening in a town brings great revenue or may not even be a positive for the community. Trustee Holzkopf added that she would like to know if the new business will be giving back to the community through the food pantry, supporting local sport teams or what their plan is to bring in shoppers from out of town. She would like to see the Village raise the bar and consider an incentive policy for small businesses. Village Manager Johnson stated that staff is currently reviewing the City of Crystal Lake program and will report back to the Village Board.

Trustee Holzkopf left the workshop.

Trustee Goldman stated that she is not in favor of an incentive program for small businesses and would never vote for it if it was presented to the Village Board for consideration. Trustee Westberg agreed saying that it would not be fair for businesses like Beef Shack or Rookies stating that these businesses would then seek an incentive or reimbursement of some sort as well since they originally opened in Huntley without an incentive. Village Manager Johnson stated that it is difficult for brick and mortar restaurants to consider Huntley unless an incentive program is offered and mentioned BBQ King as a reference. Trustee Westberg stated, and Trustee Goldman agreed, that the incentives should be looked at independently, based on need, and considered on a case-by-case basis.

Customer Service

Mayor Hoeft said he believed the customer service is very good but believes it can always be better. There was a general consensus from the Village Board that there should be more opportunity to obtain documents such as applications and small licenses on the Village website. Approvals should also be made through the website for building permits, raffle permits and other smaller applications. Village Manager Johnson stated there are many opportunities to conduct business through the website and emails with staff, but will include the Board's suggestions in the upcoming website re-design project.

Trustee Holzkopf returned to the workshop.

Ethics and Social Media Presentation

Ms. Kelly Coyle of Clark, Baird and Smith LLP made a presentation titled "What you, as Elected Officials, need to know to avoid ethical issues and social media pitfalls while engaging with the public". Topics included the Gift Ban Act, Conflict of Interest, prohibited political activities and how to engage, or to not engage, on social media.

Mayor Hoeft thanked the Village Board and staff for their participation and asked if there were any further comments or questions. There were none.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further items to discuss, a MOTION was made to adjourn the meeting at 11:38 a.m.

MOTION: Trustee Westberg

SECOND: Trustee Goldman

The Voice Vote noted all ayes and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita McMahan
Village Clerk