

**MINUTES OF A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
OSWEGO VILLAGE PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OSWEGO VILLAGE HALL
100 PARKERS MILL, OSWEGO, ILLINOIS
May 16, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER

President Ryan Kauffman called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Board Members Physically Present: President Ryan Kauffman; Trustees Tom Guist, Kit Kuhrt, Karin McCarthy-Lange, Luis Perez, Jennifer Jones Sinnott, and Andrew Torres.

Staff Physically Present: Dan Di Santo, Village Administrator, Christina Burns, Asst. Village Administrator; Tina Touchette, Village Clerk; Jeff Burgner, Police Chief; Jennifer Hughes, Public Works Director; Andrea Lamberg, Finance Director; Rod Zenner, Community Development Services Director; Jason Bastin, Deputy Chief of Police; Bridget Bittman, Community Engagement Manager- Marketing; Joe Renzetti, IT/GIS Director; Kevin Leighty, Economic Development Director; Kerry Behr, Project Engineer; and Dave Silverman, Village Attorney.

PUBLIC FORUM

Public Forum was opened at 6:02 p.m.

Marty McAlpin, with Prairie State Gaming, addressed the Board on behalf of his company; video gaming has evolved; has seen positive relationships with retail sales tax money; changes are warranted if saturation is an issue; concerns with limiting licenses and discouraging gaming machines that help pay staff and property taxes for businesses.

James Marter II addressed the Board regarding video gaming and provided the Board with two 2015 articles from the Beacon News; the hard cap of ten licenses was changed in 2015; Stella's was the first gaming café; rules changed eight years ago and since then the Board has approved a lot of licenses; machines are a great source of income for businesses; taking away revenue is tough to do; what is going to replace the empty store fronts. He also addressed the Civility Pledge; free and spirited debate; feels this is disingenuous; it was not in place for the last four months; attacks on projects by the Cultural Arts Commission; mailer that was sent out; a lot of misleading information.

Gerald Sternberg addressed the Board regarding staying within the department for hiring of next Police Chief; best PD he has worked with; zoning for video gaming; update on Dairy Barn; get control of zoning; support local businesses; Wolf's Crossing name is different along the road; farms over housing; more high taxes with the housing coming in; new subdivisions not meeting the standards for the size of the streets.

There was no one else who requested to speak. The public forum was closed at 6:13 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

G.1 Video Gaming Discussion

Clerk Touchette provided the Board the history of video gaming in the Village and options for regulating.

Video gaming was approved in the Village in May 2013. There are currently 25 active video gaming licenses with an additional five licenses pending State gaming approval, and two businesses that are going through the application process. Of these:

- 12 are gaming cafes
- 9 are gas stations/truck stops
- 8 are bar/restaurants
- 2 are non-for profits
- 1 is a convenience store

Current restrictions and limitations include:

- Not allowing gaming at a liquor or tobacco store
- Certain stores have covenants for surrounding businesses
- Some retail corridors prohibit in their leases or may only allow if ancillary to the business

Contained in the memo are eight options for regulating gaming in the Village:

- 1) Capping the current number of gaming licenses approved or in the application process
- 2) Capping the current number of gaming cafes
- 3) Capping the current number of gas stations and convenience stores gaming licenses
- 4) Cap the number of gaming terminals. Truck stops would be exempt.
- 5) Only allow future gaming licenses if the gaming is ancillary to the type of business which is deemed to be either a bar or restaurant.
- 6) Require the establishment to be in business for a minimum of one (1) year before they can apply for a gaming license.
- 7) Require the establishment to provide food that is prepared on-site.
- 8) Prohibit two establishments, with a gaming license, from sharing a common wall.

The Board can decide to adopt all or some of these options.

Board and staff discussion focused on \$432,000 in revenue to the Village annually; only 5% of the gaming revenue comes to the Village; there's a market for this type of entertainment; needs some control; gaming cafes need to be controlled; don't want perception of neon signs and looking like Vegas; keeping the source of revenue; should not stop gaming for a restaurant; avoiding clusters of gaming; minimum distance between future businesses as opposed to capping; police are not called out to gaming facilities; perception; regulate through distance and signage; could be up to \$1 million in revenue; allowance for a 6th machine was added a couple years ago; number of licenses added last year; avoiding telling businesses what they can and cannot do; don't want to see the cafes everywhere; raising fees; Village's fees are higher than most communities; keeping cafes within a grid; free market issue; what can be done with signage; difficult to regulate words on signs; Village allows temporary signage; can't regulate content on signage; secondary signage; Delta Sonic has the highest revenue; residents don't like all the gaming; whether we are choosing money over residents; need to have options for entertainment; people traveling through Oswego; people haven't gone in cafes to see how beautiful they are and have the experience; 30 gaming licenses for 35,000 residents is enough; difference between 30 and twelve; previously, requests for licenses were presented to the Board; high performers making the money; supplementing business owners; \$18,000-\$25,000 per location with six machines; in favor of capping all licenses; stay family friendly; concerns with saturation; don't have a problem with gaming; like the cafes; effort and thought put into the cafes; would like the experts to tell us if we are saturated; non-cafes are not the drivers; over governing; future business need to be a certain distance away; need money for our roads; not in favor of raising taxes; need a revenue stream; overall saturation concerns; not specific to a type of business; complaints have come from all types of businesses with gaming; like regulation option #5; don't like the density; don't like cafes; total revenue generated impact; whether gaming is helping the community; economic impacts; having different venues; density makes sense; higher obligations than just money; be more transparent on how much revenue is coming in from gaming; don't know what the future holds. Board was asked to provide Administrator Di Santo and Clerk Touchette with questions. Staff was asked to bring back the following items for discussion at a future Committee of the Whole meeting:

- Whether there should be a cap on all or certain types of gaming licenses
- Options to discourage clustering
- Whether to have applicants present at a Board meeting before approving a license
- Breakdown on gaming revenue
- Total number of businesses verses number of businesses with video gaming

There was no further discussion.

CLOSED SESSION

There was no closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Tina Touchette
Village Clerk