

**MINUTES OF A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING  
OSWEGO VILLAGE PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OSWEGO VILLAGE HALL  
100 PARKERS MILL, OSWEGO, ILLINOIS  
July 18, 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, Karen Novy, Jennifer Jones Sinnott, and Andrew Torres.

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

**PUBLIC FORUM**

Public Forum was opened at 6:01 p.m.

Gerald Sternberg addressed the Board regarding the paying for bills on the Village's website; works pretty good; would like an option to choose a payment date.

There was no one else who requested to speak. The public forum was closed at 6:04 p.m.

**OLD BUSINESS**

F.1 Video Gaming- Follow-up Discussion

Clerk Touchette addressed the Board regarding options for regulating video gaming. There are several options for regulating:

- 1) Cap on video gaming licenses.
- 2) Cap on gaming cafes.
- 3) Cap on gaming licenses for gas stations and convenience stores.
- 4) Cap on the number of gaming terminals.
- 5) Require establishments to be a minimum of a ½ mile or one mile of other establishments with a gaming license.
- 6) Require gaming cafes to be a minimum of a ½ mile or one mile of other gaming cafes.
- 7) Prohibit two establishments from sharing a common wall.
- 8) Require future establishments to present their request, for a gaming license, at a Committee of the Whole meeting. Board will provide direction on whether to move forward for approval at a Regular Village Board meeting.
- 9) Require the establishment to be in business for a minimum of one (1) year before they can apply for a gaming license.
- 10) 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.
- 11) Require the establishment to provide food that is prepared on-site.
- 12) Require a minimum square footage for the establishment. For example, require the space to be a minimum of 1,000-2,000 square feet.

\*\*There are maps provided in the packet that depict the ½ and one mile radius.

## Signage

The Village cannot restrict language of a sign due to free speech regulations. A gaming establishment can have signage with words like “gaming” or “slots” if they wish.

- Village Code currently allows businesses to have wall signs and monument signs restricted by size and location based on the size of the building and location of public entrances.
- Establishments are allowed temporary signs four times a year, which could include flag signs and grand opening signs for a period up to two weeks per event.

If the Village were to prohibit temporary signs for establishments with a gaming license, it would also have to prohibit the temporary signs for all businesses under the equal protection requirements.

Additional information on current available spaces, distribution of revenue and the 2022 revenue report is included in the memo and packet. The Board can choose all, some, or none of the regulations and requirements mentioned.

Board and staff discussion focused on temporary signs versus permanent signs; temporary sign regulations were updated 12-15 years ago; most communities have temporary sign regulations; did not enforce temporary signs during COVID; have been enforcing as of late; there are less roadside ribbon signs now; window tinting; whether the Board is ok with not allowing temporary signs; regulating roadside ribbon signs; grand opening signs versus temporary signs; perception that we have more video gaming than what we do; not for capping any gaming; wanting a radius for gaming cafes; not ready to eliminate gaming; providing gaming revenue reports quarterly and showing the community what revenue we are getting, where it comes from, and where we are spending the revenue; some residents want to cap gaming; other gaming locations want a cap; residents have been reaching out about gaming; needing a balance; don't want the perception of a east Las Vegas; need to be family friendly; harming future business prospects; there are signs everywhere because there is gaming everywhere; currently 32 businesses with a gaming license; population is 35,000; that's one gaming license per 1,000 people; revenue can change on a dime; can't guarantee this income; not a stable income; can't use revenue for a fixed expense such as an employee; difference between gaming cafes, a bar/restaurant, and a gas station; there are three gaming cafes within a mile from her home; don't want anyone to lose a license; want to limit the future growth on the number of licenses; whether there has been increase or decrease in revenue to other businesses by gaming locations; tax on gaming is higher than sales tax; did not move to this community to have this much gaming; issue with gaming cafes; whether the gaming café owners live here; people want to come to Oswego to be successful; the people live in this area; nice gaming café in Mason Square; can gamble over the phone; would love to hear from people who don't like gaming; haven't had anyone complain; people can call the Board; no one has come to the Board to complain; not comparing gaming cafes to restaurant/bars; asking for a proforma from a business to show they need the additional revenue; approving licenses on a case-by case basis; not wanting to get into the habit of businesses needing to justify the need for the revenue; whether gaming is ok at every establishment; every Board member has the right to allow or deny licenses coming to them; show profit margins and where the money is going; can't see most of the gaming places; Board is public stewards of the perception of the Village; listening to the people we serve; not about signage; residents don't know the difference; families will go somewhere else that does not have gaming; need a family oriented community; limiting gaming cafes through distance of ½ mile or ¼ mile; ½ mile is sufficient; researched other towns and they are starting to limit gaming by only giving licenses where 50% of revenue is coming from non-gaming revenue; some home rule communities don't allow gaming at all; the Board is not going to come to a consensus.

A poll was taken on the following:

- Cap all gaming license types- 4 yes, 3 no
- Cap all gaming café licenses- 5 yes, 2 no
- Implement a buffer- 2 yes, 2 maybe

Additional discussion focused on population in the next 5-10 years; 1.5% population increase per year; whether to implement a moratorium; Attorney to look into the legal aspects of a moratorium; Clerk Touchette is letting applicants know the circumstances of the status of future licenses; revenue projections for past years; revenue

information was provided at the May meeting; putting revenue and license information in the quarterly newsletter so people know the revenue; business owner is responsible for making the business sustainable; perception not just revenue, it's signage; bringing an ordinance to the Board to provide regulations for gaming; how gaming affects the attracting of bigger businesses; concerned about families moving to Oswego; property values go down with negative perceptions; property values go down because of crime; people have to have options; appeal to a wide variety; restricted to 10 locations in 2013; restrictions eliminated in 2015; did have controls in place; signage and locations need to be tweaked; don't have issue with gaming; what the preferred outcome is; leave how it is now and handle on a case-by-case basis for the Board to approve; whether requests for gaming are being presented to the Board before approving; requests were brought to the Board under New Business, but were then moved to the Consent Agenda; staff vets the business before requests are brought to the Board; adding video gaming questions to the upcoming community survey going to residents in the Fall; last survey was in 2018; gaming revenue allocation can be wrapped into budget discussions; whether crimes increase by gaming locations; there is no correlation; do something with signage. Board directed staff to do the following:

- 1) Provide information on crime as it relates to gaming
- 2) Include gaming revenue, number of gaming licenses, and number of gaming cafes in the quarterly newsletter
- 3) Include gaming questions in the community survey
- 4) Temporary sign regulation discussion at future Committee of the Whole

There was no further discussion.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

#### **CLOSED SESSION**

There was no closed session.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Tina Touchette  
Village Clerk