

**MINUTES OF A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
OSWEGO VILLAGE PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OSWEGO VILLAGE HALL
100 PARKERS MILL, OSWEGO, ILLINOIS
April 16, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

President Ryan Kauffman called the meeting to order at 6:00 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 (attended at 6:01 p.m.).

Staff Physically Present: Dan Di Santo, Village Administrator; Jean Bueche, Asst. Village Administrator; Tina Touchette, Village Clerk; Jason Bastin, Police Chief; Jennifer Hughes, Public Works Director; Andrea Lamberg, Finance Director; Rod Zenner, Development Services Director; Joe Renzetti, IT Director; Kevin Leighty, Economic Development Director; Madeline Upham, Management Analyst; Lisset Padilla, CR Specialist; and Dave Silverman, Village Attorney.

PUBLIC FORUM

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

Brittney Keller addressed the Board regarding the drag show in Oswego and the comments made by a Village Board Trustee at the last Board meeting; Aurora Pride; transgender rights; inclusive environment; teaching children diversity instead of fearing; dangerous rhetoric; educating children.

Keri Davis addressed the Board regarding drag shows; currently a drag entertainer; transgender, non-binary are not going anywhere; will be at the drag show at Roadhouse 71; existing and being heard; quoted RuPaul- "If you can't love yourself, how in the hell you gonna love somebody else".

There was no one else who requested to speak. The public forum was closed at 6:06 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

E.1 Consider Adding Student Members to Advisory Commissions

Administrator Di Santo addressed the Board regarding the adding of students to commissions. At the March 18, 2024, COW, the Board discussed parameters of a program such as the nomination process, including one student from each high school, rotating students on commissions, and shadowing staff. After the discussion, the Board directed staff to consult SD308 and return to the COW for discussion. Administrator Di Santo met with SD308 Superintendent Khelghati and also reviewed a similar program in Naperville. Dr. Khelghati thought including students on advisory commissions was a great idea. SD308 already involves student members on their boards, where they include a section on the agenda for student comments, similar to our trustee remarks agenda section. SD308 staff also helps prepare the students before each meeting. Dr. Khelghati offered to have SD308 help in the selection process of students on our commissions and supported the idea of including one student from each high school. If in support of the ideas, we would need to act quickly to coincide for the next school year.

Board and staff discussion focused on love that the school is on onboard; getting the kids involved; supporting kids on the commissions; having a recommendation from a teacher or member of the school; teachers know what kids are committed; help them be more successful; kids must attend 75% of meetings; need a trigger for removing from commission; kids need to be residents of Oswego; involving both high schools to shadow Village staff; engaging kids with hands-on opportunities for a future with the Village; the trades are lacking; collaboration with schools;

Village did something similar with junior highs until the teacher retired; having good interaction and making it impactful; should do both the commission and shadowing as long as it is not too burdensome to staff; need schools to cooperate if doing a government day; sessions in the Board room and doing presentations; engage excitement with local students; dual opportunity; people don't understand the time and work elected officials go through; doing a mock government day and working with history teachers; involving schools in the election process; setting a day to shadow staff two times per year; would be too difficult if shadowing too often; staff to follow-up with schools; shadowing would involve high school students; should not be a pre-requisite to being on a commission; staff will bring back an ordinance at a future meeting. There was no further discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

F.1 Venue 1012 Ticketed Concert Pricing

Assistant Village Administrator, Bueche addressed the Board regarding Venue 1012 ticket pricing. The Village's Special Events Fund was established with the intent to be a self-supporting fund. Event costs mainly include entertainment, marketing, part-time, seasonal, and overtime related to staff (regular full-time employees' straight time is not included). Venue 1012's first season began in the summer of 2022 which dramatically increased the number of Village events. The 2022 overall events program resulted in a net profit of \$10,000, driven by Wine on the Fox and higher than budgeted revenues for Christmas Walk. The Venue event series operated at a loss of almost \$22,000. The overall events program for 2023 resulted in a net profit of \$16,000, driven by Wine on the Fox and Christmas Walk. The Venue event series operated at a loss of approximately \$10,000.

Staff received feedback from the Board and has made modifications to the upcoming 2024 season for the Venue. One noted suggestion was to hire higher caliber bands for the ticketed summer concert series. Staff selected multiple bands that offer more in terms of entertainment this year, but they do come at a higher cost. In 2023, the total cost for musical entertainment was approximately \$29,000 for four ticketed shows. This year, the total cost of musical entertainment has almost doubled to \$52,500 for four ticketed shows. With the original intention of the Village's Special Events Fund being self-sustaining, staff used last year's attendance estimates to determine if a higher price for ticketed concerts was warranted. Last year, for the four ticketed concerts, the Village sold 1,790 tickets (this does not include children 12 and under since they are free). In order to "break-even" with ticket sales and musical entertainment costs, at \$25 a ticket, the Village would need to sell approximately 2,100 tickets. At \$20 per ticket, ticket sales would need to exceed 2,625, and at \$10 per ticket 5,250. Other event expenses such as staff, marketing, supplies, etc. are funded through beverage, alcohol sales, and sponsorships. These revenue sources are split amongst all events (Movie's under the Stars, free concerts, Wine on the Fox, Christmas Walk, annual fireworks, etc.). Higher attendance will increase alcohol and beverage sales, however, with higher attendance also brings the need for additional staff (seasonal, PW, Police, and possibly even hiring the Fire Department).

	2023 Season	Anticipated 2024 Season
Ticket Pricing	12 and under - free \$10 active military/veterans \$15 ages 13 and up	12 and under - free \$15 active military/veterans \$20 advanced ticket purchase \$25 at the door \$65 (through June 22) 4-ticket bundle
Attendance	1,790	Approximately 2,100
Ticketed Concerts	4	4

Trustee Kuhrt has raised concerns that the ticket prices for ticketed concerts are too expensive and are deterring people from attending. Staff needs direction on whether to proceed with talking about ticket pricing and budget for 2025 or lower the ticket prices now.

Board and staff discussion focused on lowering the ticket prices to \$10.00; residents are saying the prices are too high; people don't know about the events until they are already over; higher ticket prices equals less people; we are

detering people with the higher prices; ticket prices were too high last year; we don't have big bands coming; already spending more money this year on bands; \$25.00 feels too high; hard to spend more money on bands and lower the ticket prices in the hope of getting more money; advance ticket purchase ends at 11:59 p.m. on the day before the show; last minute decision because of weather; whether we have done comparisons to other venues; everyone's financials are different; expenses for a concert; breakeven for concerts; this year's bands are highly acclaimed; what we need to cover costs; most communities are doing free concerts; it's a risk to keep going up with the types of acts; Venue is an amenity for the Village and we need to draw a crowd; comparing to other towns that have a venue they run; previous direction from the Board was to breakeven or make it profitable; can decrease the ticket price or have free concerts, but it will cost money and not be profitable; Venue was pitched as a use for the community to rent; River Edge charges \$15.00 for a cover band; what our philosophy is; staff to reach out to organizations and ask why they are not renting the Venue; NFP's cannot afford the rental; have to make the Venue profitable; need to buy bathrooms; have to build it and get more sponsors; what attendance would be needed if lowering the ticket price to \$10.00; would still lose money; only works if more people attend; other sources of revenue; how many people needed to make a profit; operating at minimum staff and security levels; this year, we are allowing people to bring their own food; no outside beverages allowed; last year, two food vendors did not show up because they weren't making enough money; fees charged to food vendors; many venues allow food to be brought in; not foregoing the revenue stream, but changing; ok with lowering the ticket prices; this is the third year at the Venue; trend is going in the right direction; concerns with making major changes; need more data points for comparison; need to know what to do next year; should have a bundle price for two people; no pre-sale last year; \$15.00 last year; pre-sale is always cheaper; five paid bands last year; cost for the five bands= \$29,000.00; \$23,500.00 more spent this year on bands; what sponsors are getting; if reducing the ticket price, refunds will need to be issued for tickets already sold; why there are no two person bundles; can do a two show bundle; whether we can offer a Venue pass; can talk about a pass for next season; software needs to be able to recognize tickets; could create a different ticket line for those with passes; Aurora Visitor Bureau Guide is out and it is hyping up the Venue; bring back the community use of the Venue; need to start booking bands for next year; will start booking in October; overall special event budget is breaking even or over. Board consensus was to set the ticket prices, for this season, to the following:

- \$15.00 pre-sale
- \$20.00 at the door
- \$10.00 for Veterans and active Military

There was no further discussion.

CLOSED SESSION

There was no closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Tina Touchette
Village Clerk