

**MINUTES OF A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
OSWEGO VILLAGE PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OSWEGO VILLAGE HALL
100 PARKERS MILL, OSWEGO, ILLINOIS
October 15, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

President Ryan Kauffman called the meeting to order at 6:02 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; Jean Bueche, Asst. Village Administrator; Tina Touchette, Village Clerk; Jason Bastin, Police Chief; Jennifer Hughes, Public Works Director; Curt Cassidy, Incoming Public Works Director; Andrea Lamberg, Finance Director; Rod Zenner, Development Services Director; Joe Renzetti, IT Director; Kevin Leighty, Economic Development Director; Bridget Bittman, Communications Manager; Maddie Upham, Management Analyst; Julie Hoffman, Events Manager; Lisset Padilla, Community Relations Specialist; and Dave Silverman, Village Attorney.

PUBLIC FORUM

Public Forum was opened at 6:02 p.m. There was no one who requested to speak. The public forum was closed at 6:02 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

F.1 Special Events Program Update and Planning Discussion

Asst. Village Administrator Bueche addressed the Board regarding the Village's 2024 special events program and upcoming 2025 program. The Village's Special Events Fund is intended as a self-supporting fund, in which event-related revenues cover event-related costs. Currently, the Village charges all direct event costs, seasonal and part-time staff time, and all staff overtime to the events program. Staff regular time is not counted for as part of the events program.

2025 Special Events Program

An estimated 20,000 attendees, across 12 events, attended events so far this year. Christmas Walk is the only remaining event to be held this calendar year with the event being cost neutral. Staff is projecting a profit of approximately \$30,000 due in large part by Wine on the Fox, the Village's most successful and profitable event. The 2024 Venue events program saw an overall increase in attendance. Staff believes this is largely due to the first concert, Sparks Fly: The Taylor Swift Experience. The free concert drew a crowd of approximately 3,500 people, setting a new attendance record for Venue 1012. The average attendance in 2023 was 317 while this year the average attendance was approximately 893 (not including Pouring for Pink).

Special Events Program Impacts

The Special Events Fund covers all associated over time and part time personnel costs, however the events program also requires a significant amount of regular staff time that is not charged to the program. The current events program impacts cost for other priorities, such as sidewalk inspections, tree pruning, strategic communication related to the water source, economic development marketing, sponsorship development, strategic human resources tasks, and more. In addition to special events, the Community Relations Department has several other events that take place during the year and require strategic marketing and communication, sponsorship, and other administrative work. These events include Community Kauffee, Village Board on Your Block, State of the

Village, the Oswego Community Yard Sale, Move with the Mayor, and other various events that sporadically occur such as informational open houses, Cultural Arts Commission events, street dedications, and many more.

2025 Special Events Program

Staff is seeking direction and clarity on the vision for events and Venue 1012. Special events can serve as an asset to the Village's reputation and residents' way of life. They can serve an economic development purpose, especially when patrons come from other town and spend money on food, gas and visiting other locations in the community. However, staff believes those same goals can be achieved through a pared down schedule of events. Staff recommends continuing with the most popular events in their current form, including Wine on the Fox and Christmas Walk. These community traditions are well established and profitable.

The following was presented:

History of Special Events

- Longstanding tradition events
 - Wine on the Fox (2007)
 - Christmas Walk (by Village 2005)
- In 2018 the Board gave direction to:
 - Move to a more self-sustaining model
 - Discussion of a Special Events Fund Policy
- 2022: First Venue 1012 Summer Event Series
 - Established Special Events Fund
 - \$360,000 transferred to the newly created Special Events Fund

- Transfer is from the General Fund to the Special Events Fund

Events Season Comparison



2022 Season	2023 Season	2024 Season
Wine on the Fox	Wine on the Fox	Wine on the Fox
Venue 1012 Free Concerts (9)	Venue 1012 Free Concerts (6)	Venue 1012 Free Concerts (4)
Venue 1012 Ticketed Concerts (4)	Venue 1012 Ticketed Concerts (4)	Venue 1012 Ticketed Concerts (3)
Fireworks	Fireworks	Fireworks
Movies at the Venue (4)	Movies at the Venue (3)	Movies at the Venue (2)
Wine Off the Fox	Wine Off the Fox	Pouring for Pink
Christmas Walk	Christmas Walk	Christmas Walk
2022 Sponsorship Total	2023 Sponsorship Total	2024 Sponsorship Total
\$56,900 in cash and \$8,635 in-kind	\$84,150 cash and \$8,300 in-kind	\$102,550 cash and \$17,175 in-kind (projected)
FY23 Net Income	FY24 Net Income	TY24 Net Income
\$41,835	\$23,768	TBD

Data on this slide does not include data from Saturday's Pouring for Pink Concert

- \$23,768 is the balance for the last two years
- Scaled down events over time
- More manageable workload
- Continue to grow the sponsorship program year over year

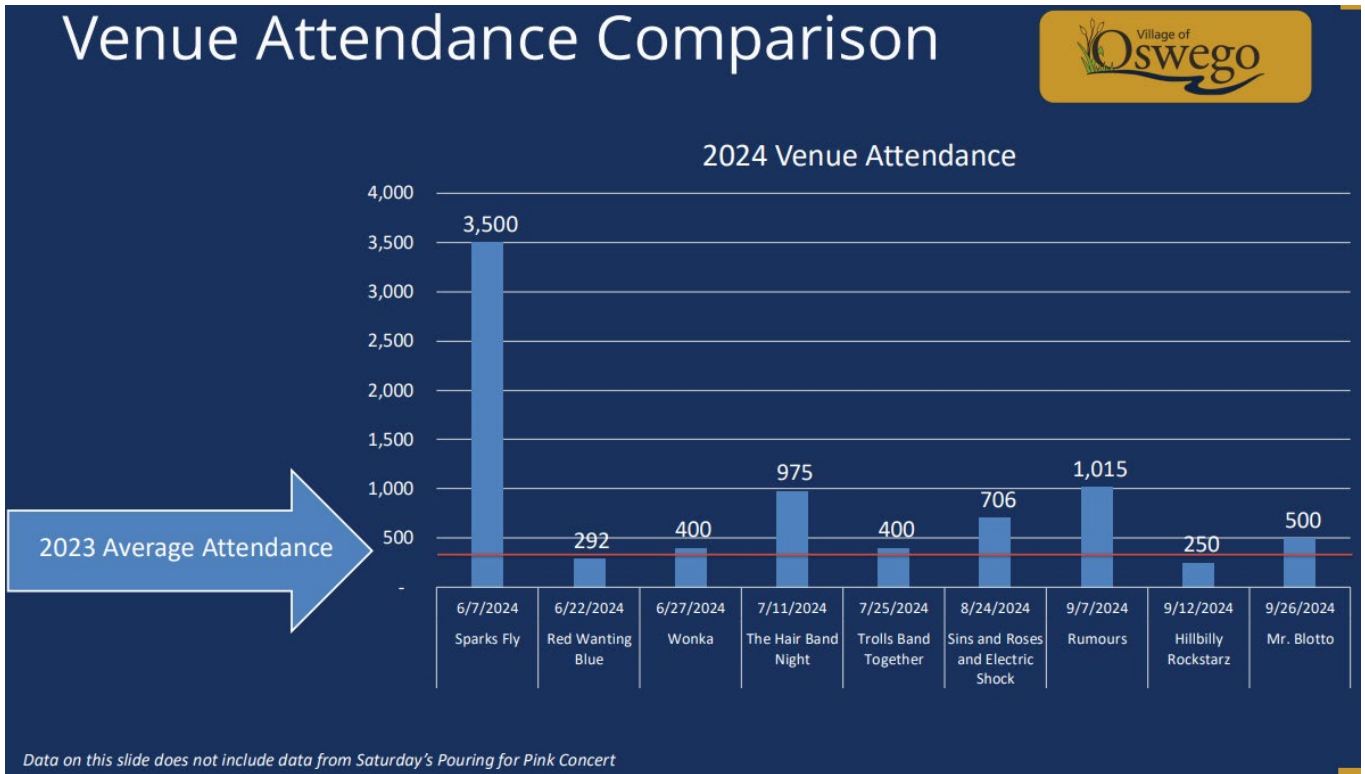
2024 Event Summary



Event	Expenses	Revenue	Net
Wine on the Fox	\$-92,596	\$166,074	\$73,500
Venue 1012 (YTD)	\$-118,701	\$82,892	\$-35,809
Fireworks	\$-30,597	\$0	\$-30,597
Christmas Walk (projected)	\$-42,681	\$6,625	\$-36,056
Sponsorships (projected)	\$-1,172	\$102,550	\$101,378
Total (projected)	\$-285,747	\$308,141	\$22,394

- Wine on the Fox
 - 6% less than last year; had to end early because it got rained out
 - Event is the money maker and carries the rest of the events
- Venue 1012
 - Higher caliber of bands this year
 - Trying to offset by beverage and ticket sales

- Fireworks
 - Every community is seeing an increase in the contracts
- Christmas Walk
 - Sponsorship and booth fees

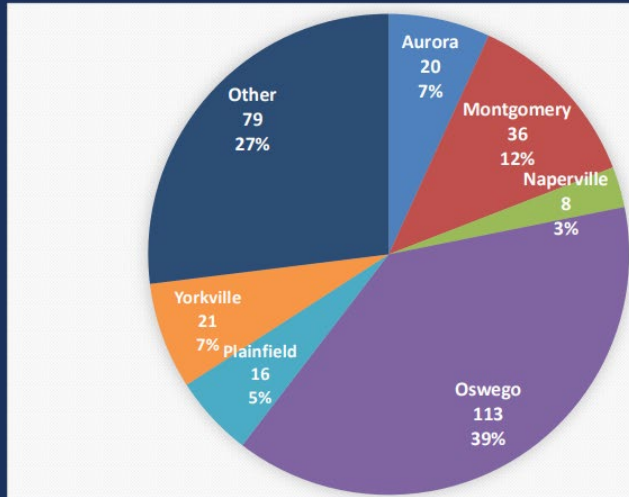


- Sparks Fly brought more awareness to the Venue
- Pouring for Pink had higher attendance

Survey Results Summary



- 293 Survey responses collected
- Overall results averaged over 3.6 on 1-5 scale with 5 being very satisfied for the following categories:
 - Beverages
 - Food
- Overall results averaged over 4 on 1-5 scale with 5 being very satisfied for the following categories:
 - Parking
 - Venue Cleanliness
 - Staff/Volunteers
 - Entertainment
 - Sound Quality



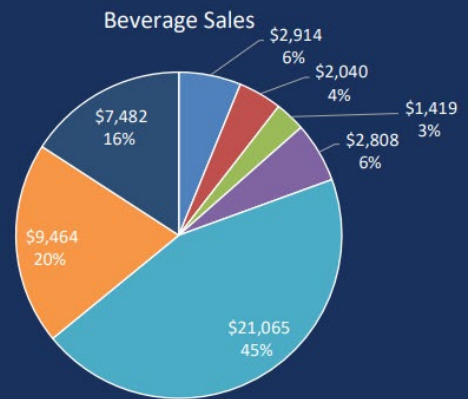
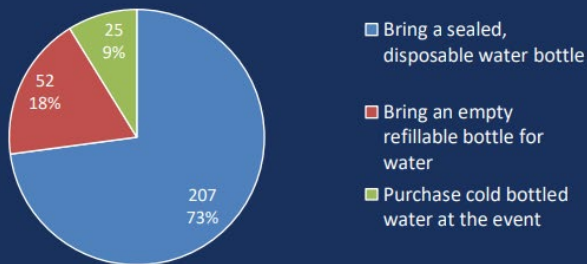
Data on this slide does not include data from Saturday's Pouring for Pink Concert

- Out of 8,000 surveys, 293 responded
- Positive feedback
- 39% from Oswego, 27% from neighboring communities, 27% from random other zip codes

Water at Venue 1012



- Question asked: Currently outside water is not permitted at Venue 1012. Please choose your preferred option below.



- Bottled Water
- Beer
- Soft Drinks
- Vodka Lemonade
- Lemonade
- White Claw
- Wine

Data on this slide does not include data from Saturday's Pouring for Pink Concert

- Water accounts for 6% of the beverage sales
- Staff recommends leaving this status quo until the revenue becomes self-sustainable

Other Considerations

2024 Calendar of Special Events

- **Season Schedule**
 - Staff is recommending the Venue season aligning more closely with the summer break
 - Last concert of the season taking place after Labor Day
- **Other Events**
 - Team works on other events such as Community Kauffee, Village Board Pop-ups, State of the Village, Hometown Expo, CAC banner recognition, Street Dedications, etc.
 - For every event, there are communications and marketing efforts that are integral to making the event successful.
 - For every event, there is significant time spent on obtaining sponsors and fulfilling sponsorship agreements.
- 2026 Laser Light Show exploring partnering with the Chamber

January Community Kauffee New Water Source Open House	February Hometown Expo State of the Village	March
April Community Kauffee	May Wine on the Fox Move with the Mayor	June 1 Free Concert 1 Ticketed Concert 1 Movie Board on your Block PrairieFest Booth Oswego Community Yard Sale CAC Public Art Displays
July Fireworks 1 Free Concert 1 Movie Village Board on Your Block	August 1 Ticketed Concert Community Kauffee	September 1 Ticketed Concert 2 Free Concerts Street Dedication
October Breast Cancer Awareness Benefit Concert Community Kauffee	November Village Board on Your Block	December Christmas Walk



- Would like to see higher attendance in October
- Staff recommends last concert to be after Labor Day and not into October
- Laser light show
 - Previously partnered with Oswego Chamber in 2017
 - Exploring partnering with Chamber for a show in 2026

2025 Proposed Season



What is the Board's vision for special events and Venue 1012 and do the proposed season options align?

Option 1

Staff Recommendation

- Wine on the Fox
- Venue 1012 Free Concerts (3)
- Venue 1012 Ticketed Concerts (3)
- Fireworks
- Movies at the Venue (2)
- Christmas Walk

Option 2

- Wine on the Fox
- Venue 1012 Free Concerts (3)
- Venue 1012 Ticketed Concerts (3)
- Fireworks
- Movies at the Venue (3)
- Christmas Walk

Option 3

Status Quo

- Wine on the Fox
- Venue 1012 Free Concerts (4)
- Venue 1012 Ticketed Concerts (4)
- Fireworks
- Movies at the Venue (2)
- Christmas Walk

Board and staff discussion focused on estimates and projections for Christmas Walk; Special Events Program fund balance is around \$400,000; Village chose to set-up and keep the funds in a separate account; fund is cash with no investments; revenue does not include sponsorships; sponsorships are not broken up by each event; highest sponsorships are with Christmas Walk; Village includes sponsors on banners; Venue keeps going up in

sponsorships; people are getting interested in certain events; need to be careful we don't saturate the sponsorships; Venue 1012 average attendance was 567 without the Sparks Fly concert; attendance average with Sparks Fly was 803; moving in the right direction; need to make the amphitheater self-sustaining; water costs \$2.00 plus tax; Community Relations works on other events, communication, marketing and sponsorships; ticket cost and price point; surveys do not include ticket pricing, but can include in the future; get rid of free concerts and include low cost concerts; need to get better bands; movies at the Venue are in connection with Yorkville; not all concerts are on the weekend; results on higher caliber bands; whether we will continue to contract higher caliber bands; balance needs to be struck with the cost and popularity; rely on research and information from other venues; be subjective; Oswego demographics is more family oriented; trying to target bands for beverage sales; have to be conscious of types of bands or genre in the area that have similar or even free concerts; we can't get a national act; need to get cover bands; need to consistently hit 1,000 people per concert; huge benefit that people got to see the Venue; reduce amount of bands with better choices; same amount of events and shift schedule so the season ends in mid-September; return on investment; movies are sponsored for the season and not per concert; minor tweaks, but not major changes; don't want to stress the employees; employees do a terrific job; should cut back on events; can evolve the events if able to pare them down; venue is a great asset; whether we have looked at cultivating the arts and music in the area; staff was given the direction to make the venue self-sustaining; staff can reach out to the schools, but need to know the vision and goal; reduced fee for NFP's renting the venue; there are no bathrooms or services at the Venue; making an event school related; revenue generated events; when the venue was designed, we worked with the school and arts; staff can reach out to ask why they haven't rented it; most schools don't want to do a band event in the summer; always have concerns with October events; reducing movies to make them special; one less night that staff needs to work; concerts had more sponsorships than movies; we ran out of sponsorship opportunities for movies; concerns with losing sponsors; could look at sponsorships per concert versus per season; whether there is an additional cost for ticketed versus free concerts; ok with reducing concerts; getting impression it's too much for staff; run the risk of getting it wrong; movies are less labor intensive; difficult for people to come to a free event during the week; switch to a free event on a Saturday; weekends are where we need to be; movies once per month; numbers have increased for movies; get rid of free concerts on Thursdays; movies once per month; River Edge, in Aurora, may be under construction next year; Public Works seasonal employees work May through August; whether to do concerts on Fridays; need to consider staff; need breakdown of expenses for staff and costs; reducing burden on staff; consulting with people in the industry; concert promoter; search engine marketing and optimization; could spend more on marketing and optimization; promote the rental of the venue; need to market the venue; get information out for sponsorships.

Board agreed on a 4th option:

- 4 ticketed concerts
- 2 free concerts
- 3 movies
- Shift schedule to end before October
- Keep selling water
- Outreach to the schools

Asst. Village Administrator Bueche thanked staff, Julie, and Public Works for the long hours spent on events; she also thanked Joe, Andrea, Kathy, Pam, and Trustee Kuhrt for their help; it's truly appreciated. There was no further discussion.

CLOSED SESSION

There was no closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Tina Touchette
Village Clerk