

**Elmwood Park Village Board Meeting Minutes**  
**3131 Taylor Avenue – Village Hall Building 3**  
**March 23, 2015 – 6:30 P.M.**

*All agenda items shall follow protocol including staff overview, Board discussion, questions by public, Board disposition of item. The public must be recognized by the President.*

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:** Meeting called to order by President Steiner at 6:32 p.m.

Present: Trustees Haas, Clouthier, Towery, Steiner, Al Bagg, Jeff Klimek, and Clerk Treasurer Tammy Ruggaber.

**Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance**

Al Bagg resigned from his current position as trustee filling Ellis Steiner's vacancy. President Steiner makes a motion to appoint Al Bagg to fill Brad Jaeck's position on the Board of Trustees. Trustee Klimek seconds the motion. There is no discussion. The motion passes unanimously.

The board has received a new offer from Evergreen Academy. Their offer expires on Thursday, March 26, 2015. They would like to purchase the entire Taylor Complex at 3131 Taylor Avenue, which does include 3207 which is the 5 acre green space at the south end of the property. They offer a leased purchase plan that would span four years. The offer is for \$700,000 to be paid quarterly, and continue to lease the 3554 Beebe school building for the 2015-2016 school year. Quarterly payments would be \$43750 beginning July 1, 2015 and ending April 1, 2019. During this time, Evergreen would take over all maintenance of the property. This offer is based on receiving financing and permits.

Trustee Haas states he has read the offer, understands it, and does not have any questions.

Trustee Clouthier states he has a few concerns such as the financing, the fact that it is a lease to purchase over four years, he is concerned about the price, that it include 3207 Taylor, and also about the contingencies. He wonders what would happen if they had trouble during their construction project, which would halt it. He is very concerned.

Trustee Towery states she believes we owe more money on the loan than what the offer is. Clerk-Treasurer Ruggaber informed the board that the amount due on the loan is approximately 638,000.

Trustee Bagg asks what is driving the urgency. He is concerned, as well, with the financing contingency.

Grant Meier states that they have been told by the builder that it will take a certain amount of time to get the building done in time to open for the 2015-2016 school year.

Trustee Klimek also asks about the financing and wonders if Evergreen has talked to the bank. He wonders how a lender would allow a customer to build on property they don't own.

Trustee Towery asks about the people who are already leasing here. They will be allowed to complete their lease.

Trustee Clouthier states one of the contingencies is getting permits and he asks what will happen if the permits don't go through.

President Steiner states that the proposed state budget reduced the per student voucher. How does that affect you? Grant Meier does not believe it will pass. But if it did pass, it would only affect new students, not existing students so the impact would be minor.

The Village's Attorney and a real estate attorney, Joe Muratore, are in attendance to assist us in our decision making today. President Steiner states that we will be going into closed session to discuss this offer.

**PUBLIC COMMENT AND INPUT**

*Pursuant to Wisconsin Statute 19.84(2) "the public notice of a meeting of the governmental body may provide for a period of public comment, during which the body may receive information from members of the public." Correspondence shall be read into record at this time.*

Laura Rude comments that we bought the complex for \$850,000 and she feels the offer is too low. She asks how much revenue the village gets from all the properties.

President Steiner states we are losing money on the property. Trustee Towery states that we lost about \$136,000 in 2013, and about 73,000 dollars in 2014. Looking at the current year, we would have to make another \$54,000 to break even.

Kathy Wells asks what kind of offer it is. Ellis states it is a lease to purchase. She wonders how it works.

Carol Hansen also thinks the offer is too low. She is worried about losing the barrier that is 3207 Taylor. Also, she worries about losing the cell tower income. Trustee Towery reminds her that we are still losing money despite the revenues it generates.

Leif Peterson states he is concerned about the land at 3207 Taylor Ave. He would like to keep the buffer. The city wants to put houses there. He says we shouldn't be in a rush to dump the property. The price should be closer to a million dollars as it is assessed at 1.1 million. He thinks that Trustee Haas may have a conflict of interest regarding Evergreen school.

Trustee Haas states that it is his understanding that we have not annexed anything. Regarding the money that was spent on the survey for that property, it was spent without board approval. Regarding the assessed value, the sale price is being confused with an assessed value. Trustee Haas states he has abstained from votes about Evergreen.

Tom Mills wants to know who the realtor is that is representing the village. He doesn't think that the municipality can be a mortgage holder. He doesn't believe the offer is high enough either.

Marcia Russell states she agrees with all the concerns that various people have raised. She states that two or three months ago there was a motion that a new valuation of the property that was going to be done. Was it ever done? She states that she would like to recognize the service that Brad Jaeck gave to the village over the years and asks for a round of applause. Lastly, she feels that the green space at 3207 should not be sold.

Charles Gasser states that he agrees that the green space at 3207 should not be sold.

Scott Russell speaks about the prospect of selling land and would like to keep a buffer. He says we need to have land to build a town hall.

Wendy Spencer speaks about her concerns of Evergreen possibly losing money when the voucher program is decreased. She states that the residents have nothing against the school but they want to protect themselves.

Grant Meier states that all they want is a piece of land to build a school. He asks the board to offer them options. He says he wants to work with the village. Hilary Huck states that the current buildings are not really conducive to making into classrooms.

Ellis reminds everyone that in the offer to buy Beebe School was contingent on the ability to convert the park into another location. That location is 3207. The DNR is required to sign off on that conversion. There needed to be an evaluation made, which was made without authorization, to spend thousands of dollars, to evaluate the property. The DNR is holding up the process. Ellis has been working closely with them to speed things along.

**Elmwood Park Village Board Meeting Minutes**  
**3131 Taylor Avenue – Village Hall Building 3**  
**March 23, 2015 – 6:30 P.M.**

He thanks everyone for their comments. And he invites everyone to stick around if they would like to comment again after our closed session. President Steiner then gives his thoughts about the pros and cons of selling the property. We would get rid of our mortgage, we would continue to retain the cell tower income, we would eliminate the board of trustees and the plan commission's responsibility and governance of unrelated functions of maintaining, renting and leasing property of the village. Freeing up funds spent to maintain these buildings will allow us to fix roads and other things that need to be done in the village. He states that Evergreen will allow us to use office space and the hall.

Elaine Ekes asks Evergreen a couple questions. In regards to financing, what she heard them say, was that you have financing to build a new school building you don't have financing for the purchase of the land. That's why you did the lease to own.. Secondly, what is your drop dead construction date?

Hilary Huck states that they have a fast track plan that is a span of twelve months. Elaine confirms that their deadline to begin construction then would be September 2015.

Jerry Kirkland, from Evergreen states they are looking for a home. He apologizes for urgency and expresses his appreciation for everyone's comments.

Tom Mills asks that if they aren't going to demolish or use any of the existing buildings, where would the school go? He cautions Evergreen to be aware of the easements, wetlands, and drainage areas that are on the property.

Elaine Ekes asks if Evergreen is for profit or nonprofit. They state they are nonprofit.

Leif Peterson speaks and suggests that the village consider selling a portion of the property rather than the entire thing.

President Steiner moves that the board go into closed session pursuant to Wisconsin State Statute 19.85 The board will entertain a motion to go into closed session pursuant to WI State Statute 19.85 1(e) Deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session. To discuss Evergreen's offer to purchase 3131 and 3207 Taylor. It is seconded by Trustee Bagg. The motion passes unanimously.

The Board returns from closed session. Roll Call: Haas, Clouthier, Towery, Steiner, Bagg, and Klimek.

The board has made this decision, with counsel. The only offer we can entertain is an outright purchase. Trustee Haas comments that we were advised by counsel against breaking the property into pieces; that it would devalue the property.

Grant Meier asks how quickly we could possibly get the DNR to approve moving the park. Ellis states he is hoping to have an answer by the end of the week on how long it would take.

Trustee Towery states that the amount we owe on the loan is 638,000.

Grant Meier states if they did push their project back a year, they would need to use Beebe school and building 2 at the Taylor complex in the meantime. The board stated that they didn't see a problem with that.

Tom Mills offers his resources to help expedite the project in any way he can to help Evergreen Academy. Grant Meier states he welcomes Tom Mills helping him.

Scott Russell apologizes for his outburst earlier in the meeting.

Leif Peterson asks about the park plan. He wants to know if his committee should get going or not. Ellis explains he is waiting for the DNR and to see if we are selling Beebe school at all.

**Elmwood Park Village Board Meeting Minutes**  
**3131 Taylor Avenue – Village Hall Building 3**  
**March 23, 2015 – 6:30 P.M.**

Wendy Spencer asks if she should continue to book the hall rentals given there is a chance the complex may be sold. President Steiner advises her to continue booking.

There is an AT&T contract to approve. The Clerk-Treasurer reports that this contract gives us the rates that the State of Wisconsin gets and we no longer will pay taxes as we have been in the past. We do not currently have a fax line. With this contract, we will have two lines, instead of one, and our bill will decrease by approximately \$40 per month. The board was reluctant to sign a five year contract. Trustee Bagg makes a motion for the President to sign the contract. Trustee Towery seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

Next on the agenda is the discussion of the accounting software. This is tabled until the next meeting.

The pay needs to be set for the election workers. The Clerk-Treasurer states that it needs to be established somewhere what the election workers make. She could not find it anywhere and no one knew the answer. She researched back in Quick Books and saw everyone was paid \$75 for the last election. She recommends that the election workers be paid \$9 per hour and the chief inspectors are paid \$9.50 per hour. President Steiner makes a motion as such and it is seconded by Trustee Bagg. The motion passes unanimously.

The Clerk-Treasurer swears Alan Bagg in as Village Trustee and as Village Plan Commissioner.

President Steiner makes a motion to adjourn, it is seconded by Trustee Klimek, and the motion passes unanimously.