

ONLINE VILLAGE BOARD MEETING OF MARCH 8, 2021

In response to Covid-19, the meeting will not be open to the public

JOIN MEETING ONLINE VIA ZOOM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83959727990?pwd=dkRIQkNTbm8waVdrazJOOFc1UUo2QT09>

Meeting ID: 839 5972 7990, Passcode: 216935

CALL IN: 312-626-6799, Meeting ID: 839 5972 7990, Passcode: 216935

PUBLIC COMMENTS: are required to be sent in advance via email to Clerk Linda Gould - lgould@hillside-il.org before 4:00 p.m. on meeting day.

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD-OF-A-WHOLE MEETING OF THE PRESIDENT
AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF HILLSIDE HELD IN THE
MUNICIPAL COMPLEX, 425 HILLSIDE AVENUE, HILLSIDE,
COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, ON MONDAY, MARCH 8, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by Mayor Joseph T. Tamburino. The following members responded as present at roll call:

Mayor	- Joseph T. Tamburino
Clerk	- Linda L. Gould
Trustees	- Herman L. Walter, Jr.
	- Frank J. Lomeli, Sr.
	- David V. Delgado
	- John N. Kramer
	- Valerie J. Farries
	- Marvin A. Watson
Absent	- None

Administrator Wajda, and Clerk Gould, were present at the Village Hall. Mayor Tamburino and Village Trustees attended remotely.

Also present via ZOOM were: Mayor Tamburino, Patrick Deady, Village Attorney; Ken Carling, Fire Chief; Joseph Pisano, Public Works Director; Sandy Lozano, Village Treasurer; Joseph Beckwith, 911 Director/IT Manager

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mayor Tamburino opened the Town Hall section of the meeting.

Clerk Gould read the following comments received via email:

Comment 1

I am Dan Adams 736 East End. I ask Mayor Tamburino to address the Illinois Department of Transportation's findings that dangerous, serious traffic accidents have doubled at the Hillside intersection of Roosevelt Road and Harrison Street, but the mayor is continuing to operate the SafeSpeed camera here. Why is this happening?

The Red-Light Cameras are supposed to reduce traffic accidents and improve safety. But at the Roosevelt-Harrison intersection, IDOT data shows accidents have doubled here since the mayor installed a SafeSpeed Company Red-Light Ticketing Camera ten years ago.

Before the camera was installed, the intersection had 3.33 accidents per year for the 3 years prior. Now ten years after the camera was installed, IDOT records show 6.14 accidents per year, a doubling of accidents and a far more dangerous intersection than before. How does Mayor Tamburino justify his continuing to operate a SafeSpeed camera here when Illinois drivers are in greater danger than before?

Will the mayor remove the SafeSpeed camera at this intersection due to the increased accidents and also in light of the outrageous, unacceptable corruption by SafeSpeed Company whose co-owner has pled guilty to FBI charges of bribing government officials across our state, solely to boost SafeSpeed's profits?

Also tonight, Mayor Tamburino needs to address serious concerns about the Village of Hillside staff person acting as the coordinator of the Hillside SafeSpeed cameras program. Is it true that the person is collecting both a village salary and village pension payments from previous service? If true, why wasn't this person simply transferred to the position of operating the SafeSpeed cameras program and paid his continued salary, instead of him now collecting both a village salary and a village pension?

Without any public notice or discussion, the mayor and trustees increased our village property tax levy by 5% percent this year. Previously, they spent over \$1 million dollars on secretive, unacceptable acquisitions of private properties, in one case to personally enrich a member of the mayor's administration who sits on the mayor's planning board.

This is unacceptable misconduct. Hillside residents work hard for our money, and the mayor and trustees failed to involve the public or present any justification for their tax increase, especially during today's pandemic recession with residents struggling to make ends meet. No one at Village Hall should be double-dipping and receiving both a new salary and a pension. No secret real estate acquisitions should occur, wasting millions in our taxes. Mayor Tamburino, you are called to address these questions tonight. Thank you.

(Adams wrote these comments and approved Romanelli sending them.)

Trustee Watson renewed his objection to reading comments from one individual who is submitting comments allegedly from other individuals who are either unable, unwilling or incapable of submitting their own comments. He continued by saying we would not allow somebody who is there in person to stand up and speak for a person sitting there. He asks why are we allowing somebody to submit comments from someone who allegedly told him it was okay?

Comment 2

I am Roger Romanelli 4406 Madison Street. Together with many Hillside neighbors, we're asking Mayor Tamburino to answer urgent questions about Hillside's SafeSpeed Red-Light Ticket Cameras. As many residents know, these cameras are controversial since false Hillside tickets are often issued to drivers making proper right stops at red lights.

Last year, there were many guilty pleas to U.S. Department of Justice charges against government officials and a former SafeSpeed owner of giving and receiving SafeSpeed bribes to influence government decisions. Will Mayor Tamburino support Governor Pritzker suspending all SafeSpeed cameras in light of these outrageous guilty pleas to federal corruption charges?

Former SafeSpeed owner Omar Maani pled guilty to FBI charges that he bribed government officials to install SafeSpeed cameras and boost SafeSpeed profits. These officials include former Cook County Commissioner Jeff Tobolski who pled guilty to taking \$250,000 dollars in bribes. Illinois Board of Elections records show Tobolski giving over \$9,000 dollars to Mayor Tamburino. Will the mayor return Tobolski's contributions since Tobolski pled guilty to receiving massive bribes?

Tobolski sent thousands directly to Hillside Village Hall, according to state records. \$2,000 dollars was paid to our village government. \$3,000 dollars was paid to the Proviso Municipal League. Will the mayor return these funds and apologize for operating the Municipal League from our village government building, since it is illegal for any government official to operate any political group from any government building?

The League provides no services or benefits to Hillside residents, and the village government website has no information about the League's directors, incorporation papers or address beyond Hillside Village Hall. Will Mayor Tamburino apologize for abusing his office and using taxpayer-funded buildings and staff to run the League for his own political benefit?

Will the mayor stop operating the SafeSpeed camera at the corner of Roosevelt and Harrison where traffic accidents have doubled since the mayor installed a SafeSpeed camera in 2011? Will the mayor apologize for putting SafeSpeed profits ahead of safety by operating this camera despite Illinois Transportation Department data that accidents have doubled?

Will the mayor apologize for allowing reckless, dangerous speeders to terrorize Hillside families, children and seniors as shown at the www.hillsidespeeders.com website? At previous meetings, the mayor has gone on and on about how the SafeSpeed cameras protect Hillside. But www.hillsidespeeders.com shows clearly that the mayor doesn't care about Hillside safety. Now Mayor Tamburino, will you answer these questions? Thank you. and improve public safety as needed.

Hillside residents are deeply troubled by you taking thousands of dollars from disgraced former Cook County Commissioner Jeff Tobolski who pled guilty to federal bribery charges and received \$250,000 dollars. Will you return these funds immediately?

Thousands in Tobolski cash was sent to the Proviso Municipal League at Village Hall. Will you admit that you are operating the League illegally from our village government building? Look at the evidence:

There are public Facebook posts from political candidates with Mayor Tamburino at Proviso Municipal League events endorsing political candidates. This makes running the League from Village Hall completely illegal.

The League's other events promote Democratic Party politicians and instruct people to send political donations directly to Village Hall to the mayor's taxpayer funded village assistant Evelyn Belmonte. Again, it is completely illegal under Illinois law for any government official to operate any political endorsements group from any government buildings.

Will the mayor apologize to Hillside residents for abusing his office and running the League from Village Hall? Will the mayor repay our village coffers for the time spent by Belmonte as a village employee coordinating the political League from the people's Village Hall? Will the mayor stop the dangerous speeders in Hillside with basic stop signs and sidewalks? We await your answer tonight. Thank you.

Comment 3

I am Amy Woodrick 4610 Butterfield Road. Together with many Hillside neighbors, we're asking Mayor Tamburino to answer serious questions.

I live on Butterfield Road between Forest Avenue and Wolf Road. Day after day, reckless, dangerous speeders threaten our families, children and seniors. Will the mayor apologize for failing to prevent dangerous speeders on Butterfield? Will the mayor install at least two digital speed cameras on Butterfield between Wolf and Forest to prevent speeders?

For many years, residents asked for a traffic signal at the Butterfield-Forest intersection to urgently improve safety. This would prevent dangerous Butterfield speeders in front of my home and hundreds more, and this would provide a safe crossing for Prairie Path pedestrians and bicycles since vehicles don't stop for them. This signal would also provide a rush-hour turn for East Hillside neighborhood residents. Will the mayor install this traffic signal after years of failing to do this?

At previous meetings, the mayor claimed that our village government doesn't have funds for new speed cameras or a traffic signal at the Butterfield-Forest intersection. But the mayor spent over \$1 million dollars to buy two private properties in Hillside without any public benefit for Hillside residents. And this year without public notice or discussion, the mayor raised our property taxes by 5% percent.

If there are no village funds for digital speed monitors on Butterfield or the Prairie Path traffic signal, the mayor and trustees should personally repay over \$1 million dollars to our village coffers for their unacceptable decisions to purchase the former Stimacs Restaurant and enrich the Stimac family and to purchase the church property for no public purpose.

Hillside residents are disgusted by the federal guilty pleas by a former SafeSpeed owner and government officials of giving and receiving SafeSpeed bribes. Will the mayor support the governor suspending all SafeSpeed cameras in light of these federal charges? Will the mayor return thousands of dollars he took from SafeSpeed operative Jeff Tobolski who pled guilty to federal charges of receiving bribes?

Finally, will the mayor apologize for allowing reckless, dangerous speeders to terrorize Hillside residents as shown at the www.hillsidespeeders.com website? The website shows that the mayor doesn't care about our safety, and the mayor should

apologize for his failure to protect us. Mayor Tamburino, will you answer these questions? Thank you.

(Woodrick gave Romanelli permission to email her comments on her behalf.)

Comment 4

I am Keegan Goss 4506 Madison Street. Together with many Hillside neighbors, we're asking Mayor Tamburino to answer serious questions tonight.

The mayor has ignored neighborhood safety in Hillside, especially in the East Hillside Neighborhood where we don't have sidewalks. I live on Madison between Forest and Wolf. Speeders are threatening our families, children and seniors constantly. Will the mayor apologize for failing to prevent these speeders? Will the mayor install all-way stop signs on Madison between Forest and Wolf to stop the speeders?

In our East Hillside area where we don't have sidewalks, a young girl named Judy Simpson was killed by a speeder in the past. Will the mayor install sidewalks around Thiele Park, so thousands of residents living in East Hillside have somewhere safe to walk?

Our village surely has funds for basic safety improvements. The mayor and trustees have wasted over \$1 million on insider real estate deals enriching at least one member of the mayor's administration, and the mayor and trustees raised our village taxes by 5% percent this year without public notice or discussion.

Hillside residents are deeply troubled by the mayor receiving thousands of dollars from former Cook County Commissioner Jeff Tobolski who pled guilty to federal bribery charges and admitted to receiving \$250,000 dollars in bribes. Will you return these funds immediately?

Thousands in Tobolski cash was sent to the Proviso Municipal League at Village Hall. There are public Facebook posts from political candidates showing Mayor Tamburino at Proviso Municipal League events and endorsing political candidates. By Illinois law, the mayor's operating the Proviso League from Village Hall buildings is illegal.

The League's events promote politicians and tell people to send donations directly to Village Hall, in care of the mayor's taxpayer-funded assistant. Will the mayor apologize to Hillside

residents for abusing his office and running the political Proviso League from Village Hall? Will the mayor stop the dangerous speeders in Hillside with basic stop signs and sidewalks that residents deserve? We ask for the mayor's answers tonight. Thank you.

(Goss approved Romanelli sending these comments on his behalf.)

As there were no further comments from the floor, Mayor Tamburino entertained a motion to close the Town Hall Meeting.

So moved by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee Kramer. All voting aye, motion carried.

VILLAGE CLERK:

Clerk Gould reported mail-in Ballot Applications for the April 6, 2021 Election are now available at the Village Hall or online at the Cook County Clerk's website at cookcountyclerk.com. Completed forms must be received at the Cook County Clerk's Office by Thursday, April 1, 2021.

Clerk Gould also reported the last day to register to vote in person at the Village Hall is Tuesday, March 9, 2021. Last day online is Sunday, March, 21, 2021.

Clerk Gould further reported Early voting is March 22 to April 5, 2021. The nearest polling places to Hillside are the Villages of Bellwood, 3200 Washington; or Melrose Park, 1000 N. 25th Avenue.

DEPARTMENT HEAD OPERATING REPORTS:

Police Chief: (Joseph Lukaszek)

Chief Lukaszek provided information from Illinois Department of Transportation on the Red Light camera at Roosevelt and Harrison. This is aggregate data and shows significant decrease in accidents. Before the cameras were installed 38.09% of the accidents were westbound, after installation 18% of accidents were westbound. Which is a 20% decrease. Since 2008 there have been 76 accidents at Roosevelt and Harrison of which 14 have been westbound.

Fire Chief: (Ken Carling)

Chief Carling reported the last day to donate water for Jackson, Mississippi is Wednesday, March 10 at noon. Mayor Tamburino said many Mayors of Proviso Township are collecting water to be sent to Jackson as they have major problems. He thanked Joe Nimry from Hillside Liquors for donating 80 cases of water.

Public Works and Building Services Director: (Joseph Pisano)

No report

VILLAGE TREASURER: (Sandy Lozano)

No report

VILLAGE ENGINEER: (John Nelson)

No report

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR: (Russ Wajda)

Administrator Wajda reported the following to be on the agenda for action at the Regular Board Meeting of March 22, 2021.

- A. Approval of the acquisition of 499-501 N. Wolf Road from the Cook County Land Bank Authority for a total of \$15,000.00.

This is the former Elite Realty which has been vacant since the owners walked away. Village of Hillside can purchase for administrative costs.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance and Administration Committee: (Trustee Kramer)

Trustee Kramer reported the following are to be on the agenda for action at the Regular Board Meeting of March 22, 2021.

- A. Approval of gross payroll for period February 13 through February 26, 2021, in the amount of \$320,802.57.
- B. Approval of bills for the month of March, 2021.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance and Administration Committee: (Trustee Kramer)

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- B. Approval of bills for the month of March, 2021.

Public Services Committee: (Trustee Walter)

Trustee Walter reported the following to be on the agenda for action at the Regular Board Meeting of March 22, 2021.

- A. Approval of one year street sweeping contract extension for 2021 in the amount of \$2,657.40 per service sweep as submitted by Waste Management, 700 E. Butterfield Road, Suite 400, Lombard, IL 60148. It is anticipated we will have twenty-six (26) service sweeps for 2021, and the proposed cost for extension is a three (3) percent increase over last year's service sweep rate. The increase is due to rising fuel costs, labor cost increases and expected maintenance cost increases.
- B. Approval of payment in the amount of \$17,830.00 to Cerniglia Co., 3421 W. Lake Street, Melrose Park, IL 60160 for emergency work performed to repair leaking water main valve, replace valve vault and repair water main break at the intersection of Taft and Electric.

Public Safety and Education Committee: (Trustee Watson)

Trustee Watson reported the next Community Awareness Meeting is Wednesday, March 31, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Zoning Committee: (Trustee Lomeli)

No report

Technology Committee: (Trustee Delgado)

Trustee Delgado reported the following to be on the agenda for action at the Regular Board Meeting of March 22, 2021.

- A. Approval of annual maintenance contracts with Harris Computer Systems, P.O. Box 74007259, Chicago, IL 60674-7259, for utility billing and accounting software in the amount of \$13,714.79. Last year's cost was \$14,051.78.

Community Services Committee: (Trustee Farries)

Trustee Farries reported the Village of Hillside, along with the Hillside Youth Commission, is sponsoring a coloring contest for all ages in place of the annual egg hunt. The pictures will be available on the website, Facebook in the "Herald", or at the Village Hall. Deadline to submit the artwork to the Village Hall is Thursday, March 25th at 5:00 p.m.

VILLAGE PRESIDENT:

Mayor Tamburino responded to comments to a recent article in West Cook News which highlighted issues brought up by Mr. Keegan Goss of Hillside Forward.

The first item concerns the Proviso Municipal League (PML). This question has been asked and answered in Freedom of Information requests by Hillside Forward. The response was sent to the Public Access Bureau of the Illinois Attorney General's Office.

The second item Mr. Goss brought up is his taxes. Mr. Goss states that his taxes increased from \$6,300.00 to \$9,000.00 in just two years. This is just not true. When Mr. Goss purchased his house in 2018 (billed 2019), his property tax bill was \$6,044.58. In 2019 (billed 2020), his tax bill was \$6,115.27. That is an increase of \$70.69 from 2018-2019, or 1%. His first installment for 2020 (billed 2021) is \$3,363.40. This information is available on the Cook County Treasurer's website. Mayor Tamburino also pointed out that Mr. Goss has not applied for his Cook County Homestead Exemption which would reduce his property tax bill.

The last issue is his fence. Mr. Goss was requesting a fence that did not meet the Village Code and would have caused a potential safety hazard by blocking the view of the home to the north of traffic from the intersection on Madison Street. Employees of the Village, including myself, had numerous conversations with Mr. Goss and his mother.

Mayor Tamburino has not heard anything back from the West Cook News about his submitted comments.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Tamburino announced the next Regular Meeting of the Village Board is scheduled for 7:30 P.M. Monday, March 22, 2021 via Zoom.

As there was no further business before the Board, by Mayor Tamburino entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session for the for the purpose of:

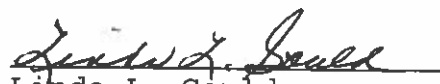
1. Purchase/lease of real estate, Section 120/2(c)(5).
2. Discussing a personnel matter, Section 120/2(c)(1).

So moved by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee Delgado

Roll call vote resulted as follows:

Ayes: Trustees Walter, Lomeli, Delgado,
Kramer, Farries, Watson
Nays: None
Absent: None
Motion declared carried

Adjourn to Executive Session 8:02 P.M.


Linda L. Gould
Clerk