

**Special Village Board Meeting  
October 31, 2017**

Board Present: Trustee Benkowski, Trustee Trentadue, Trustee Wanggaard,  
Trustee Dobbs, Trustee Wishau and President Bradley

Absent: Trustee Willing was excused

Staff/Others: Administrator Tom Christensen and Attorney Elaine Ekes

**1. Call the meeting to order.**

President Bradley called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. at Village Hall, located at 5043 Chester Lane, Racine, Wisconsin.

**2. Discussion Among Board Members Including Presentations By Village Trustees Interested In Being Appointed To The Office Of Village President Intended To Be Effective November 7, 2017**

President Bradley announced that the meeting is for the Trustees who are interested in filling the Presidents seat to answer questions submitted from Board members. No public comments will be taken during the meeting.

**Question**

What are your thoughts regarding the sewer and water attainment district boundaries, now and in the future?

**Answers**

Trustee Wanggaard thought the district boundaries are good. As the Village grows it will need to be looked at. As far as the rural areas, he doesn't see anything coming anytime soon. The future will hinge on what comes to the Village as far as development. He feels it's important to keep the rural areas rural.

Trustee Dobbs is a supporter of keeping and maintaining Caledonia's identity with designated areas for agriculture, residential, manufacturing, retail, parks, etc. Due to the recent expansion of sewer and water in the I-94 and Hwy K corridors, he has no inclination to introduce an extension expansion of the current boundaries.

**Question**

By Wisconsin State Statute the CDA has the ability to be an independent and in theory non-political self governing body. However, in Caledonia the CDA has limited authority under the Plan Commission. Do you feel the highest and best interests of the Village regarding tax base regeneration, economic development and quality of life issues are met by a "weak" CDA?

**Answers**

Trustee Dobbs said the Village is using multiple sources to accomplish economic development goals such as Racine County Planning and Zoning office, Plan Commission, CDA, RCEDC, and studies. The Board should look at ways for the CDA and the Plan Commission to function at the highest level possible. The Board may need to revisit this topic and is willing to look at other options.

Trustee Wanggaard said the Plan Commission is required by Statute. The CDA was created with wide latitude and has the responsibility to bring in development, work with developers and to utilize the Plan Commission with their authority. Both bodies may need to be involved to find ways they can help and work with each other.

Both Trustees are willing to explore the sewer and water boundaries in answer to Trustee Benkowski's clarification request.

**Question**

What are your thoughts about increasing citizen participation/ engagement on some of the Villages committees that have very limited membership and occasionally have membership attendance issues?

**Answers**

Trustee Wanggaard said it is important. There is nothing better than the heart of a volunteer. The Board standing committees are what vet the issues that come to the Board. Citizen input is appreciated. The standing committees are pretty well attended and someone is always willing to sit in during an absence. Citizen attendance depends upon the topic.

Trustee Dobbs said that unfortunately very few people show an interest in local government. It is hard to find volunteers. Most Trustees run unopposed. Each member of the Board needs to help identify and encourage talented Village residents to seek positions when available.

Trustee Benkowski doesn't feel staff should be admitting policy. More citizens should be involved.

**Question**

The Village Board has adopted the 2035 SEWRPC Regional Land Use plan. This plan has superceded the Caledonia Neighborhood plan. The Board has been told that the 2035 plan has incorporated most of the provisions of the Neighborhood plan but not all of them. A reconciliation of the plans has not been done.

As Village President, what action would you take to reconcile the Neighborhood plan with the 2035 plan?

If the findings of the reconciliation show that there are elements of the Neighborhood plan that are not included in the 2035 plan would you support Board action to update the ordinances accordingly?

**Answers**

Trustee Dobbs thought maybe the CDA can be tasked with reconciling any differences between the 2035 plan and the old Caledonia Neighborhood Plan and work toward the 2050 plan.

Trustee Wanggaard said the plan was combined with the 9 criteria for use in the 2035 plan. A list of concerns was to be gathered and added to the 2050 plan. As a joint Committee, the CDA and the Planning Commission could look for the differences between the two plans and incorporate them into the 2050 Plan which should be completed within the next couple of years.

**Question**

Based on the recommendation of the Racine County Economic Development Corporation the Village Board approved funding to complete a market analysis study of the Douglas Avenue corridor. RCEDC hired a consulting firm known as the CLUE group to complete the study. As Village President, what if any action would you take regarding the CLUE group study recommendations? Do you have other specific thoughts on what action the Board should take with regard to the Douglas Avenue Corridor?

**Answers**

Trustee Wanggaard thought the Board needed to review recommendations and decide what best supports the community. He felt that we needed the beautification of the Hwy 32 corridor to attract future businesses, and best utilize vacant properties in that area. He thought the study should be reviewed and extract what's beneficial. He felt there were plenty of things the Board could do to assist, and felt there should be focus on Green Tree and K-Mart.

Trustee Dobbs talked about the new study on Douglas Avenue and I-94, with I-94 being done first. Personally he felt skeptical about spending more money on the new study. A wish list is challenging to create with what's already established. The America free enterprise will dictate what goes in the area. He felt if businesses thought they could profit in the area, they would purchase small parcels of land to develop and the Village would be there for guidance. He felt the real push would come from these businesses. Trustee Benkowski asked if Trustee Dobbs felt it was a financial and not a zoning issue, and if he then would create any incentives, possibly through the CDA? Trustee Dobbs felt that the area is already zoned appropriately, but he Board would discuss any opportunity or zoning changes. Trustee Benkowski asked what proactive actions he will take on the 32 corridor issues. Trustee Dobbs felt a small TID would be appropriate. Trustee Benkowski felt a TID was inappropriate and wanted to know if each candidate would be willing to give the CDA more authority to investigate the Douglas Avenue corridor. Trustee Dobbs agreed that we should investigate anything that might bring potential business to the area. Trustee Benkowski wanted to know if he would give it to the CDA or if it would go through the Board. President Bradley reminded Trustee Benkowski that the CDA is involved with the Douglas Ave corridor already. Trustee Wishau explained that he opposes

another study and thinks that Douglas Avenue needs to be revived, and designate a committee or Board to move forward with contacting the DOT for accessibility, etc.

Trustee Dobbs answered that he is for contacting the DOT for better access into and out of the Village.

Trustee Wanggaard answered in order to be more attractive to new businesses, the current businesses need to be sustained and help foster growth to be competitive. He is not against incentives for Douglas Avenue, and felt something needed to be done.

Trustee Wishau felt it's time the Douglas Avenue corridor got the same attention that I-94 had.

### **Question**

The Village Board has met with the Racine Unified School district Board on several occasions to address what many consider to be less than optimal performance. In June of 2008 the Board authorized funding to conduct a Caledonia School study to determine the viability of leaving Racine Unified in order to create a Caledonia School district. The study, titled "The Fiscal Impacts of Creating a Caledonia School district" was completed by the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance and presented in June Of 2008. More recently, the Board approved funding to update the 2008 study however the Board has not moved forward with authorizing the update. As Village President would you recommend moving forward with an update to the 2008 study?

### **Answers**

Trustee Dobbs stated when the 2008 study was discussed a few years ago. He was not in favor, because it was not legally possible to create our own school system at that time unless Unified agreed. He felt if Mount Pleasant and Sturtevant would benefit from Caledonia doing the study, that we should do it together and share that cost. However, the State may come in and do its own study based on the heat being put on Unified. He felt this study should be tabled to see what happens with the State first.

Trustee Wanggaard wanted to clarify that Mount Pleasant did not approve their share of the study, only Caledonia and Sturtevant. The 2008 study brought beneficial information to the Village, and gave us an insight to where we were at. He felt the study should be done, based on the majority vote and budget. Although he wants Unified to be successful, the Village needs to know their options going forward and the study may give the numbers needed to progress. He thinks regardless of the outcome, we should continue to press Unified and as a Board should adopt that tone.

### **Question**

Do you feel TIDs are the way forward in Caledonia, or only an occasional tool to spur growth?

### **Answers**

Trustee Wanggaard stated that TIDs can be a necessary tool but need to be closed out ASAP. They are not a cure all, are designed to address a specific area and have to be supportable. He doesn't feel that's the way to go but if they are supportable, needed, and designed for a certain area, can be beneficial.

Trustee Dobbs understood that TIDs are important; he felt it was a necessary evil, and is the way development occurs. He doesn't necessary want to do them but agreed they need to be looked at.

**Question**

Past presidents made becoming a Village a primary goal, or getting sewer and water out to the interstate. What is one of, or the most important goal you have over the next year and a half?

**Answers**

Trustee Dobbs is committed to the infrastructure of the community, and felt it was primed for growth. He expects new business, residential areas and further developments to come to the area. With that growth Police and Fire may warrant expansion or relocation. Park systems are currently being reviewed and have good ideas on the table. His long term goals for roads have been something he's been interested in for a while. He stated that Hwy 32 and Hwy 38 need to have roadways fixed. And felt that we need services from the east and west into the community.

Trustee Wanggaard would like to take advantage of economic development while upholding the Village's rural character. He felt that he has upstanding relationships with those in the community, and thought it was a helpful. He thought sustainability is important, and that existing businesses need our support to compete. He thought the plans currently in motion, like the Police Department, will determine a number of things and help us focus on growth. He felt that Bob and the Board did a wonderful job keeping the Village in the forefront of development phases on something he never thought we'd see, and similarly felt opportunities available needed to be captured.

Trustee Benkowski asked the candidates if it was better to have tax base growth through planning and action; or if it was better to have infrastructure growth. Both answered tax base is more important than infrastructure.

**Question**

What is one distinct improvement you feel can/should be made in how the Board or Village conducts business?

**Answers**

Trustee Wanggaard expressed a desire to keep the Village Board continuously informed. He believed that now that there is water out to I-94, we have to be flexible and open to different ideas/opportunities. He felt all resources need to be utilized, including the CDA, Planning Commission or any other outlet/staff that might provide insight to better facilitate opportunities.

Trustee Dobbs stated that the Village needs to become more developer friendly. He felt some progress had been made with staff, including the two new positions that have been created. He thought the restructure and recommendations from the new positions could help obtain that goal.

**Question**

Will you place on the agenda, and support an independent Caledonia study on the feasibility of our own school district? (\$15,000 already budgeted, but not spent - \$15,000 more needed)

**Answers**

Trustee Dobbs would put it on the agenda, and would want to have a debate on the topic.

Trustee Wanggaard would put it on the agenda.

**Question**

Do you feel committees, as they are run now, address our needs appropriately? Are there changes or additional committees you'd like to see take on certain issues?

**Answers**

Trustee Wanggaard believed the committees address the current needs but there is always going to be adjustments needed and made to adhere to the process. Committee effectiveness is vital to operations and they need to be left to do their jobs. He respects committees who are committed and felt there is nothing greater than the heart of a volunteer.

Trustee Dobbs hoped that more citizens would be interested in joining the Committees. He is open to suggestions and is willing to talk further on implementing changes.

**Question**

Our protective services are stretched incredibly thin. Further demands appear ready to spike in the immediate years ahead. Do you have any ideas for how we can do this, and possibly sell the idea of a revenue increase to the public to pay for it?

**Answers**

Trustee Dobbs expected the need to increase coverage in infrastructure for at least the Fire Dept. and I-94/Hwy K corridor, through the business and residential development he anticipates to incur. He believed the new growth would pay for the cost and hoped there would be a land donation for the new Fire Dept. building. He thought that consolidation of services could be looked at as well.

Trustee Wanggaard realized that efficiencies could be refined in any operation. He felt involvement communication with the chiefs should continue, as their input and vision is vital for response times and the like. He thought we needed to prepare for the upcoming opportunities, by potentially setting aside funds as we progress. He felt we would have to increase protective services, and felt that needed to be done through an increased tax base (not just for the sake of raising taxes.) He felt that the potential growth is astounding, and would hopefully transcend into more opportunity.

Trustee Benkowski commented that the TIF areas are farmland, and do not have excess service calls. Extra services don't come out of the TIF; it comes from the general levy and those who pay into it. He felt the solutions weren't as simple or direct as the candidates had thought, and ultimately wouldn't be facilitated through development.

**Question**

Will you support all or most of the capital improvements plan of the Caledonia Parks, as proposed this last budget? What is the area of most importance to you?

**Answers**

Trustee Wanggaard would like to see a community center for citizens to utilize, and potentially grow our campus. He felt the Parks Commission would be able to assist in the most cost effective way to bring this goal to fruition.

Trustee Dobbs had sat on the Parks Commission and was ashamed and appalled at the way the parks looked when he initially became a trustee. He worked with the Board and secured a part-time parks employee to assist in upkeep. He supports most of Trustee Willing's capital improvement plan, and felt the funds on hand would be able to assist with that. The community center is something he likes, but would be lower on his agenda because he felt the cost and need would be a hard sell to the public.

**Motion by Trustee Benkowski to vote at the November 6<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. Seconded by Trustee Trentadue**

Trustee Benkowski – aye  
Trustee Trentadue – aye  
Trustee Wanggaard – aye

Trustee Dobbs - aye  
Trustee Wishau – aye

**Motion carried unanimously**

**3. Adjournment**

Motion by Trustee Willing to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Benkowski. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karie Torkilsen  
Village Clerk