

**Southern View President and Board of Trustees
Agenda for the Special Meeting**

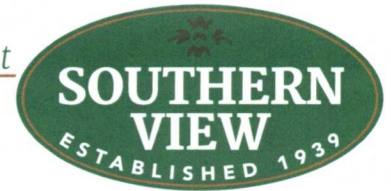
Wednesday / November 13, 2024 / 6:00 p.m.

- 1) CALL TO ORDER: Mike Patsche, Village President
- 2) ROLL CALL: Greg Bourland, Trustee
Nate Briggs, Trustee
Robert Eskew, Trustee
Rebecca LaRussa, Trustee
Betsy Richbark, Trustee
Mike Tavernor, Trustee
- 3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mike Patsche, Village President
- 4) CITIZEN REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD:
- 5) OLD BUSINESS DISCUSSION: a) Discussion and Approval of Ordinance 24-10-04 An Ordinance Authorizing Cancellation of an Agreement with Southern View Neighborhood Watch Committee
- 6) NEW BUSINESS DISCUSSION: a) Update on Public Works Employees

President's Comments-

- 7) EXECUTIVE SESSION:
 - a) The Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of a Specific Employee or Legal Counsel for the Public Body (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1))
 - b) Discussion of Minutes of Meetings Lawfully Closed Under the Open Meetings Act for Purposes of Approval by the Body (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21))
 - c) Discussion Relating to IDOT Condemnation of Village Property (5 ILCS Exemption 2(c)(6))
- 8) ADJOURNMENT:
Any subject matter placed on the agenda, regardless of how the matter is stated on the agenda or where it is placed, may be acted upon by the President and Board of Trustees.

Posted: November 11, 2024 11:00 a.m.



Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Village of Southern View Board

CALL TO ORDER: The Board of Trustees held A Special Meeting on Wednesday, November 13, 2024, at the Southern View Municipal Building, 3410 South Fifth Street, Southern View, Illinois. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm.

ROLL CALL: The following were present:

Mike Patsche, President
Greg Bourland, Trustee
Nate Briggs, Trustee, arrived at 6:03 pm
Robert Eskew, Trustee
Rebecca LaRussa, Trustee
Betsy Richbark, Trustee
Mike Tavernor, Trustee

Also Present:
Lisa Cave, Village Treasurer & Clerk

OLD BUSINESS: President Patsche opened for discussion and approval of Ordinance 24-10-04 An Ordinance Authorizing Cancellation of an Agreement with Southern View Neighborhood Watch Committee. President Patsche stated that he moved this discussion to a separate meeting due to the long meeting in October. President Patsche read the Ordinance in its entirety. *"BE IT ORDAINED BY THE PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF SOUTHERN VIEW, SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS, AS FOLLOWS: SECTION 1: In December of 2023, the Southern View Village Board approved an agreement with Southern View Neighborhood Watch Committee. (Exhibit A) SECTION 2: Southern View Neighborhood Watch Committee has not complied with the terms of that agreement. The Village has not received quarterly reports. In addition, the 'Committee' which claims to be in charge of the Neighborhood Watch has voted to remove the Board designated liaison from the Committee, and has disregarded the advice of the Southern View police chief. For these reasons, the Village President is authorized to send notice of termination of this Agreement to Southern View Neighborhood Watch. SECTION 3: In the future, the 'Committee' should contact the Village office to reserve any space in Village Hall or the parks, and will be required to pay for the use of those spaces, as do all other community groups. SECTION 3: This Ordinance is effective immediately."*

Motion to discuss Ordinance 24-10-04 An Ordinance Authorizing Cancellation of an Agreement with Southern View Neighborhood Watch Committee by Trustee Bourland and 2nd by Trustee Tavernor

Trustee Tavernor asked when it comes to the Ordinance what rights does that give the Village overseeing the Neighborhood Watch group? Does that give them control over everything they do? Attorney Craven stated that as he understands it the committee has registered as a non for profit entity and they would be allowed to do whatever they want under Illinois law. Trustee Tavernor stated then what is the purpose of this Ordinance? President Patsche stated in the past we have had trouble with Neighborhood Watch with fighting amongst themselves. The Neighborhood Watch Committee has outgrown their britches by telling the Police Chief what he will do. That is not what Neighborhood Watch is about, President Patsche went on to say he feels Neighborhood Watch should be helping people in the neighborhood and all he has seen has been fundraising activities, President Patsche stated he appointed a liaison to the Neighborhood Watch and they fired him, Anna Berkley has been with the Neighborhood Watch for decades and she was outcasted since she does not live in the Village proper. This is a community, you should not be shucking people down the road.

Anna stated that there was a rumor going around that she heard from 4 different people that if I did not step down, they were going to remove me. I have been on Neighborhood Watch since 1986. Neighborhood Watch before covid had a great committee.

President Patsche read the following from the Chief: *"After being given the guideline and template on how to operate the program from the National Organization, those ideas were discarded. Meetings were changed to quarterly and that was ignored. The department is placed in the middle between the committee and the village. Questions asked and information needed, which the president could ask but instead uses the silence as a tool to discredit the Clerk and Trustee. Misinformation was given out about retiring a member-Forced. Money not spent in the last 2 years to benefit the residents of the community. I requested we stop all the fundraisers making money for unknown projects or projects that are not community related. (developing a library for the school) Wanting to purchase signs, which were not needed, and I am unsure of the status of that. Not being informed about meetings, since I don't monitor the Facebook page, but was told I am an administrator, so I guess I am supposed to know. My job is for the village and not the neighborhood watch and questioned why I now show interested. Was accused of being controlled and manipulated by the clerk and trustee. Since being involved another trustee who supported the PD and my administration now questions what I am doing and has clearly showed an attitude towards the Chief. Expected to get information from the village that is not under my jurisdiction. (I maintain and control the PD). We developed a means of all the committee communicating via text, but they no longer use that and have other sources of communication I am not a part of. The department is under some type of scrutiny based on comments and behavior. This has caused great stress dealing with something I am passionate about, that now I need to walk away from. If we disband the Committee, does the Village maintain control of Southern View Neighborhood Watch and can we ban or need board approval to allow the committee members to participate."*

Cyndi Tavernor responded by stating that Chief Maki met with Neighborhood Watch Committee without Trustee Eskew. Each committee member was allowed to speak with Chief Maki to address any issues or questions they had. Chief Maki went around and located each sign in the neighborhood. President Patsche stated that there was a lack of communication. Cyndi stated that there was nothing in the rules that there needed to be a liaison that they needed a sponsor. The Police Chief is our sponsor. A bunch of people on the committee did not feel that they were able to speak up and be scrutinized with a liaison on the committee. The committee met and removed the liaison and neither the Chief nor Trustee Eskew showed up. Cyndi stated that Chief Maki referred to "they" in text messages. Chief Maki spoke up and stated who is they, as he has the text messages and that is what Cyndi referred to the Clerk and Trustee Eskew. An email went out to the Chief about the duties the Committee felt the Chief would need to do. The Committee charged for tables, and we had asked Trustee Eskew if that was ok and he stated yes that is ok. Cyndi stated that Trustee Eskew is stating that we had met several times regarding the spring fling without him and he didn't know about it and that is not true he was at the meetings when the committee talked about it. Trustee Eskew stated no, that is a lie that there were meetings with Patty, Jamie and Cyndi planning the Spring Fling without him several times. Cyndi stated that was a lie. Patty stated they had met only 2 times without him. Trustee Eskew stated that is two times too many. Patty stated that Trustee Eskew stated he was going to back off after Spring Fling for unknown reasons.

Trustee LaRussa stated with all the energy we are using for this instead of community, think of where we would be and what we could accomplish. Trustee LaRussa stated that she knows how it feels to be slandered and excluded from something, and she would not like it to be done to anyone else. This is childish and when the ordinance was presented to the Board last year, she felt it was ridiculous as they come to the Village Board and we have never needed this to begin with. Trustee LaRussa stated that she feels the ordinance was allowing the person who picked the committee members perceived power and therefore picked the committee members, that is sad. I have never received a public apology or anything from last year. If we are going to continue having community involvement this pettiness has to stop.

Patty Tucker read a letter from Chris Baughman, Neighborhood Watch should be a unifier of the Village.

Trustee LaRussa stated that Neighborhood Watch is about the community, and she has found memories of meeting with Chris and his wife when they moved into the Village and seeing the joy on childrens faces. There was never my name is on it woohoo, this should not have happened last year, Neighborhood Watch has been ruined this last year.

Trustee Eskew stated that he selected committee members to help gather ideas for speakers. The bylaws state that they are to coordinate with the Police Department and the Village of Southern View. Trustee LaRussa asked who created the bylaws? Trustee Eskew stated that all the committee members added what they wanted, and it was voted on. Cyndi Tavernor stated this was set up as a separate entity. The 501c was set up by the direction of the liaison.

Anna Berkley stated that as an old timer, she wanted to thank Trustee Robert Eskew for getting Neighborhood Watch back together. Anna stated it was not him picking everyone, he asked for suggestions on who to ask to join the committee. I want a little bit simpler Neighborhood Watch where we did things and have support from the Board. Anna stated no offense, but she would like to see less fundraising and use the donations we would receive. There is nothing wrong with fundraising but what are you going to do with all that money? Things need to be done to show the Village that we have this money this is what we are going to do. I hate that it is so complicated. The committee is good hard workers, Robert is a good guy, she wants to see all working together and no power plays. Covid killed a lot of interest. The Neighborhood Watch lost a lot of block captains. We need to do more free things, and we need to get back to togetherness. Anna stated she would like to see Rebecca get more involved and working together. There does not need to be we don't want you here, because it sounds like a click you will lose block captains and neighbors that way. Anna stated she does not want to see that. What about the food pantry?

Rick Allen stated that it should be about what we can do for you, not the Board as a neighbor. The spaghetti dinner was a great meal for \$5.00 and neighbors were rekindling their friendships. Trustee LaRussa stated that the good is being overshadowed by the malice. It should be the greater good.

Patty Tucker stated it was events, but they were asked to change it to fundraisers. Trustee LaRussa asked who asked to change it to fundraisers? Chief Maki stated he did. Trustee LaRussa stated that the problem is that it is in-house fundraising, or if you are fundraising for another cause, example the school. Rick Allen stated they had talked about signs and stickers. Trustee LaRussa stated yes, understand that but not every event should be a fundraiser. We are supporting them but what are they using the funds for? President Patsche stated saying it goes back in the community is a broad statement it needs to be more specific.

Trustee Richbark asked how much is in the account? Rick Allen passed out bank statements to the Board.

Anna stated that the committee was always in charge, the Police Chief never told us we couldn't do something. The Police Department was never over us, the Board was, the liaison was. The funds come out of the Police Department.

Trustee Bourland stated he feels that the committee can do their own thing and Neighborhood Watch can go back to the way it was before where they come to the Board if they need funds for an event. Trustee LaRussa stated there is two line items, special events and neighborhood watch line item from the police department. Anna stated that we would have donations and the funds they asked from the Board was for signs.

Trustee Richbark stated she likes that everyone works together, for the 85th event, for example most of the Board was there and worked very hard to set the event up and Rick Allen and Brayden came, no one else. Trustee Richbark stated she had heard comments that we would fall on our face since Neighborhood Watch wasn't there to help. It's not all one sided, the Board may want to do something else, and everyone is mad at the board. Trustee Richbark stated she has been to every event they have had. She would like to see more porch lights on and more safety.

Trustee Bourland stated it is what is best for the Village and to keep your feelings out of it. My feelings get hurt and I go back to normal. No more drama.

Cyndi Tavernor stated the committee does not want to be without a liaison and can we ask for Trustee LaRussa to be the liaison? President Patsche stated yes, we can ask her. Southern View school has always been in the Village and whether they live here or not we should support them. Cyndi is going to ask for people to donate books. President Patsche would like to encourage the Neighborhood Watch to help the seniors maybe help with attaching their gutters back on their house. President Patsche stated we pay more money in property taxes to the schools, I want to help them, but I would rather help the residents that can't help themselves. President Patsche asked the committee is it just the committee or is it everyone in the Neighborhood Watch? For example, the committee acts like a board and everyone that comes into the meeting is Neighborhood Watch and can talk and hear what is said. Cyndi stated no, the committee acts as a board, but their meetings are closed to the public.

Trustee LaRussa stated I understand how some meetings could be private but what if one of the block captains walked in, I would hope you would allow that. Trustee LaRussa stated if they want her to be the liaison then let's get together and see what we can plan for 2025. Patty Tucker stated they would need to know what the expectations are moving forward so there was no issue in the future. Trustee LaRussa stated again that the ordinance should never have been put in place last year, there was no reason for it. Trustee Tavernor stated the Board should never tell Neighborhood Watch they have to do this or that. Trustee Richbark stated who said that no one has said that. Trustee Tavernor stated that the whole situation we are talking about is in front of us the Board, there has been a person roughshotting over the whole neighborhood watch, how can they get block captains if they can't get their email on the website? Trustee LaRussa asked so you think someone was sabotaging the Neighborhood Watch? Trustee LaRussa stated the Clerk is doing things not in the best interest of the Village. Clerk Cave stated she added the Neighborhood Watch email address without anyone telling her or approval to add it to the website and when Clerk Cave saw on Facebook that Cyndi had posted dates were wrong on the website, she removed that date and the email address. Clerk Cave stated she had spoken with Trustee LaRussa and stated that Clerk Cave had removed the email address from the website and during the call Trustee LaRussa stated it should not have been on there. Trustee LaRussa denied having that conversation. Clerk Cave also stated she had spoke to attorney Don Craven also about it.

Donna Bragg stated this is the first time she has gotten involved in Neighborhood Watch, and she loves Aarup Street. Donna stated that Robert has been great to her, Robert took her information and gave it to Cyndi. Donna stated she knows Lisa and Cyndi are good people too this needs to stop. I have participated in several events with the Neighborhood Watch. If we do not have the Neighborhood Watch committee who will do the National Night Out? Trustee LaRussa stated she had done the National Night Out in the past. Donna asked if she could use some help? Donna stated Neighborhood Watch will not succeed if they do not have the support with the Southern View Board and the Police Department. People will not join the Neighborhood Watch. Trustee LaRussa stated that there was a personal vendetta against her last year from a Trustee.

Trustee Briggs asked with this ordinance we are just not giving them money? President Patsche stated that yes, if the Neighborhood Watch needed funds, they would come to the Board for approval, if they wanted to host an event they would come to the Board for waiving of the rental fee. Attorney Craven stated that someone would need to make a motion to repeal the Ordinance 23-12-03. Trustee Briggs stated the Neighborhood Watch was the first thing he did and had dinner with Mike Patsche and Nora Petrosky. Trustee Briggs stated he voted for the ordinance last year and we gave it a try and it does not appear that the Neighborhood Watch needs the ordinance any longer. Trustee Briggs stated he felt Trustee LaRussa has a big heart for the community and didn't deserve what happened last year and if she is willing to try again, bless her. Trustee Briggs stated we are all here for the Village and he thinks we all can work together. Trustee Briggs asked Chief Maki if he was still sponsoring it? Chief Maki stated his issue is what we have all seen tonight, he has the Village to be concerned about not the bickering back and forth with the Committee and then with the Board he felt he was in the middle. Chief Maki stated that he does not want to be in the middle. Chief Maki also stated he is 1,000% behind Neighborhood Watch going forward.

Motion to approve repeal of Ordinance 23-12-03 by: Trustee Bourland and 2nd
by Trustee Richbark

Upon roll call vote, all voted AYE;

MOTION PASSES.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion was made by Trustee Eskew to go into Executive Session to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of a specific employee or legal counsel of the public body (5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(1)); Trustee Bourland seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, all voted AYE;

The Board went into Executive Session at 7:10 pm.

The Board returned from Executive Session at 7:45 pm.

ADJOURNMENT: With no further business, President Patsche asked for a motion to close the meeting at 8:24 pm. Motion was made by Trustee LaRussa and 2nd by Trustee Bourland.

PREPARED BY: Lisa Cave, Clerk

DATE APPROVED: November 26, 2024