

Village of Peoria Heights
Board of Trustees
October 7, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Mayor Wigginton noted the Village had lost a giant of the community, Mr. Ray Picl, recently. Mr. Picl, besides being the youngest mayor, was the longest serving with seven terms during his tenure. Everyone stood for a moment of silence and the Pledge to the Flag.

Upon calling roll, the following Trustees were present: Nate Steinwedel, Elizabeth Khazzam, Teresa Symmonds, Sarah DeVore, Brandon Wisenburg, and Jen Reichert. Others present included Mayor Matt Wigginton, Village Clerk Stephanie Turner, Fire Chief Tony Ardis, Chief of Police Chris Ahart, Superintendent of Public Works Chris Chandler, and Village Counsel Mark Walton.

Trustee Khazzam made a motion to approve the Board minutes from September 16, 2025. Trustee Symmonds seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0.

Mayor Wigginton announced the Village of Peoria Heights will convene a Public Meeting on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, at 5:30 pm at the Peoria Heights Village Hall, 4901 N. Prospect Rd., Peoria Heights, Illinois, regarding the possible establishment of the Proposed Peoria Heights Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District No. 4. The purpose of the Public Meeting will be to enable the Village to advise the public, taxing districts having real property in the redevelopment project area, taxpayers who own property in the redevelopment project area, and residents in the area as to the Village's possible intent to prepare the Redevelopment Plan & Projects, and designate a Redevelopment Project Area for the Proposed TIF District No. 4, and to receive public comment.

Mayor Wigginton opened the meeting to public comment.

Mr. Adrian Cabnor came forward to speak about his experience with firefighting service and departments. He noted he has volunteered with small fire departments, and he expressed concern about the automatic aid agreement with the City of Peoria. He stated it's outside of his experience, and he encouraged the Board to vote against the agreement.

Hearing no additional public comment, Mayor Wigginton closed the meeting to public comment.

Mayor Wigginton invited Mr. Jim Jones, of the Peoria Heights Community Band, forward to provide him with a proclamation for his many years of service as conductor of the community band. He wished him many more years of fun. Mr. Jones thanked the Mayor, the Board, and the Village for their support.

Mayor Wigginton invited Ms. Barb Milaccio forward to provide her a proclamation celebrating Exhibit A Gallery's 30 year anniversary. He noted the business' history and Ms. Milaccio's active involvement in the community and supporting the arts in the Village. Ms. Milaccio spoke about her love of the Village and the support of the Board. She stated she was proud to say she owes a small business in the Village.

Mayor Wigginton invited Hanson Professional Services forward to speak about the Prospect Road Phase I engineering. Mr. Bryce Beckstrom, representative from Hanson Professional Services, spoke to the Board about analysis which has been completed so far, decisions which the Board will need to consider in the near

future, and the impact of alternate transportation and pedestrians on the road planning. He shared renderings of potential designs and spoke about the benefits and issues with each. Ms. Cathy Poole provided more ideas on the details of the design highlighting the many options available to the Village. Mr. Beckstrom noted Hanson did recommend the Board consider reducing traffic to three lanes in order to provide more options for sidewalk, parking, and other design elements. Mayor Wigginton thanked Mr. Beckstrom and the team for the detailed information. Mr. Mark Lee, the Village's consultant from Farr Associates, noted his recommendation differed slightly from Hanson. As someone working in the community, he recommended additional angled parking to maximize space though he noted it might not be best aesthetically. Trustee DeVore questioned their recommendations. Mr. Beckstrom noted it was a close decision, but they'd erred on the side of providing more room in lanes. The Board discussed the specifics with Mr. Beckstrom and Mr. Lee providing more details. Trustee Steinwedel expressed concern reducing lanes with the amount of traffic the road receives. Mr. Beckstrom noted they had considered the traffic. Trustee Steinwedel questioned if moving to fewer lanes would reduce traffic to the Village. Mr. Beckstrom stated he didn't believe it would. Trustee Khazzam spoke about reducing drive through traffic, avoiding traffic traveling through the Village as a cut through, in order to create a destination. Mr. Lee explained Hanson needs to know from the Board if they should design the project as 5 lanes or 3 lanes as well as the type of parking to design. The Board needs to provide a decision by the end of October. The Board has time to discuss the decision, and Mr. Lee will work with Hanson to complete the design. Mr. Kurt Bialobreski, lead of the project from Hanson, came forward to speak in more detail about the impact of reducing lanes with the amount of traffic noting the designs all meet IDOT, urban, and industry standards for pedestrians. He believes cut through traffic won't be reduced by the lane changes. The City of Peoria's engineering department has stated to Village representatives in meetings that the City will support moving the traffic to three lanes. The Board and representatives from Hanson spoke the current political environment and options for funding. The project is still early in the design phase even let alone funding and construction.

Mayor Wigginton invited Mr. Steven Cook, President of the Chamber of Commerce, to provide the Board of Trustees with updates on the Chamber of Commerce. Mayor Wigginton asked Mr. Cook to combine his updates and proposal together. Mr. Cook thanked the Board for help with the Taste of the Heights. He reported restaurant sales, so far, were \$66,000 which was a 25% increase from the last year though the Chamber is still tallying all figures. He asked the Board for annual funding to support a mobile app for the Chamber of Commerce and support new initiatives. He provided a demonstration of the app. The Board spoke with Mr. Cook briefly about the details. Mayor Wigginton questioned the next steps. Mr. Cook requested the Board would vote on the proposal at the next meeting.

Mayor Wigginton announced two trustees had requested Ordinance 2025-1770: An Ordinance Adding New Article E To Chapter 3 Of Title 3 Of the Peoria Heights Village Code Implementing a Municipal Grocery Tax on the agenda. Attorney Walton stated all sales tax ordinances take effect either January 1 or July 1. The Village has not met the deadline to meet the January 1 effect date. Attorney Walton stated the Board had until around the end of the year to put together an advisory referendum question on the ballot. The election would be very close to the next deadline, only a few weeks away, but it was possible to revisit after a referendum. Mayor Wigginton provided more information about advisory referendum questions on ballots advocating the Village would lose nothing by placing a question on the ballot. The Board spoke about the process with Trustee DeVore and Trustee Wisenburg both requesting the advisory question be added to the next agenda. Mayor Wigginton noted the Board must vote at this meeting to overturn the veto; otherwise, the Board will not be able to override the veto. Trustee Steinwedel made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-1770: An Ordinance Adding New Article E To Chapter 3 Of Title 3 Of the Peoria Heights Village Code Implementing a Municipal Grocery Tax. Trustee Symmonds seconded the motion. The Board discussed implications of overriding Mayor Wigginton's veto. Trustee Wisenburg advocated asking the residents via referendum. Trustee Khazzam advocated

overriding the veto as well as putting a referendum question on the ballot. The mayor's veto was overridden by a vote of 4-2 with Trustee Wisenburg and Trustee Reichert voting nay.

Trustee Steinwedel made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-15: A Resolution Approving City of Peoria Fire Department Automatic Aid Agreement. Trustee Khazzam seconded the motion. Trustee Khazzam noted the topic was very important, and she didn't doubt the Board needed to vote on the agreement. She stated it was very dangerous, and the Village was popular because it is a safe place. She stated not recognizing the safety in approving the agreement flew in the face of the Village dedication to safety. She noted it was not about a coup, a deep fake, or any other issue other than improving the Peoria Heights Fire Department and putting the safety of the residents as the utmost importance. Trustee Symmonds expressed there were holes in the agreement, and the Village needs to hire a fire chief before signing an agreement with the City of Peoria. She stated the Village needs to talk to the fire department members, local volunteer chiefs, seek grants, organize recruitments, and move away from a career fire department to a hybrid volunteer model. Fire Chief Ardis spoke with Trustee Symmonds about the fire department training and opportunities that are available. Trustee Symmonds spoke about grant opportunities and stressing she feels safe in her home. Trustee Steinwedel stressed the Village would retain its PHFD service. He noted he would continue support the PHFD, and the agreement wasn't about losing control but about saving lives. He stated the agreement would better protect the residents and the firefighters. He spoke about NFP standards, and the Village's PHFD resources. He noted seconds matter, and the Village can greatly increase response times with the agreement. He drew the Board's attention to litigation filed against a local municipality with a volunteer fire department due to the death of a minor child in a fire. Fire Chief Ardis noted the Board's concern for the matter. He expressed it was unfortunate he wasn't approached with questions prior to the meeting. He noted that training and funding didn't address back up issues, safety of firefighters, decrease response times, or address public safety. Fire Chief Ardis questioned Chief Ahart briefly on police response policy highlighting the need for back up for safety and policies that fit the community. Trustee Wisenburg stated the agreement was unprecedented. He expressed concern of the costs. Trustee Wisenburg noted the PHFD's growth and improvement over the years and requested the next agenda also contain a nonbinding referendum to ask the residents if the Village should pay the City of Peoria for fire services. Trustee Khazzam expressed agreement with Trustee Symmonds that the Village should explore grant opportunities. However, she noted the situation is immediate. She also disagreed it was a blank check noting the agreement includes quarterly reports and check ins. Trustee Steinwedel clarified although it had been referred to as a contract, but the document is an agreement much like purchasing other services. Trustee Steinwedel rebutted the idea the agreement was expensive citing other Village expenses. The Board discussed with Attorney Walton the difference between a contract and an agreement. Trustee Reichert asked Fire Chief Ardis to detail the difference between automatic aid opposed to mutual aid. Fire Chief Ardis summarized it as quicker response time before providing more detail of the process and the time savings. Trustee Reichert expressed she was opposed to the agreement overall even though she did approve of the amendments Trustee Wisenburg was going to propose. Trustee DeVore noted the differences of opinions in the Board, but she believes the Board wants the same goal. She noted the Board may not have made perfect decisions, but tried to do the best they could at the time. She noted the Board can continue to improve the PHFD while providing more safety with the agreement with the City of Peoria. She requested the Board keep in mind that goal is to provide public safety even if approaching from different perspectives. Trustee Steinwedel noted the agreement would reduce response times to increase survival rates. Trustee Wisenburg made an amendment to amend section 3 by adding language providing quarterly renew and renewal subject to termination upon a goal of 4 staff per shift. Trustee Reichert seconded the amendment. Trustee Khazzam objected to the frequency of a quarterly sunset. Trustee Khazzam asked Attorney Walton if

the agreement could be terminated immediately with him agreeing. Trustee Steinwedel agreed noting the PHFD already provides a monthly report. Trustee Symmonds expressed support of quarterly review for the first year. The Board discussed revising the amendment. Trustee Wisenburg requested language change with Trustee Reichert as second agreeing. Mayor Wigginton repeated the changed amendment as adding language for a quarterly review with termination of the agreement upon the stated goal of maintaining 4 trained firefighters per shift. Trustee Wisenburg and Trustee Reichert agreed. Trustee Steinwedel noted the goal didn't address the issue of back up. The amendment passed by a vote of 6-0. Trustee Wisenburg made a motion to amend the agreement adding language in a section 5 the Village will maintain mutual and MABAS agreements and nothing will keep the Village from requesting and/or providing mutual aid to other departments which shall be dispatched concurrently as the situation warrants. Trustee DeVore seconded. Trustee Steinwedel asked Fire Chief Ardis about mutual aid and MABAS. Fire Chief Ardis spoke about the strain mutual aid puts on surrounding communities. Trustee Wisenburg expressed his desire to see the PHFD continue to maintain its regional influence and participation. He noted his concern about maintaining relationships with other communities. Fire Chief Ardis spoke about the dangers of training on active emergency scenes. Mayor Wigginton and Attorney Walton spoke about legalities in regards to existing agreements for mutual aid. Trustee Steinwedel objected to the amendment noting the fire chief should use MABAS and mutual as they see fit. The amendment passed 5-1 with Trustee Steinwedel voting nay. Trustee Wisenburg made an amendment adding section 6 stating the agreement Peoria Heights fire chief / assistant shall have sole command for incidents within its boundaries though the Peoria Heights command officer may choose to designate incident command to another officer. Fire Chief Ardis stated it was redundant as it's built into incident command structure. Trustee Symmonds seconded the amendment. Trustee Khazzam commented the Board was taking an unprecedented level of action dictating procedure when they're not experts calling it ridiculous and disrespectful to the fire department. Trustee Wisenburg disagreed saying the agreement was unprecedented. The amendment passed 6-0. Trustee Wisenburg made an amendment to add section 7 which would authorize the Village Administrator to implement all procedures and agreements necessary to recoup costs for any incident where fees are incurred by the City of Peoria for services provided to a nonresident of the Village whether reimbursement is by the responsible party or their insurance. Trustee DeVore seconded the amendment. The Board discussed the legal implications. The Board voted 6-0 to approve the amendment. The Board voted 3-3 to approve the agreement, as amended, with Trustee Symmonds, Trustee Wisenburg, and Trustee Reichert voting nay. Mayor Wigginton voted he had been convinced by former fire chief Mr. Reichert who had commented the PHFD had previously had a similar agreement with the City of Peoria in times of need. Mayor Wigginton voted aye to break the tie. The resolution passed 4-3.

Trustee Khazzam made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-1774: An Ordinance Changing the Zoning Classification for Certain Real Property Located on East Duryea Avenue in the Village of Peoria Heights, Illinois. Trustee DeVore seconded the motion. The Board vote 6-0 to approve the zoning change.

Trustee Khazzam made a motion to approve the site plan filed by King/Donnellan Joint Venture, LLC/William King seeking approval of a site plan for the development of a multi-family townhome complex consisting of five townhomes on the property located at 1201 E. Duryea Avenue, Peoria Heights, Illinois 61616 (PIN No. 14-22-330-030), which property is currently zoned B-2 (General Retail Business District) and R-3 (Multiple Family Residential District). Trustee DeVore seconded the motion. The Board has the site plan included in their packets. Trustee DeVore noted the Zoning Board of Approval had approved the plan with stamped approval regarding to civil engineering and drainage. Attorney Walton and the Board spoke about the conditions placed by the ZBA. Trustee DeVore made an amendment that the approval of the site plan includes the civil engineering verification required by the

ZBA. Trustee Wisenburg seconded the amendment. The amendment was approved 6-0. Trustee Khazzam noted the project is a very important initiative by providing housing which is an issue the Board has been discussing for years. The Board approved the site plan as amended by 6-0.

Trustee DeVore made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-16: A Resolution Approving Proposal from Hermann & Associates, LLC for Engineering Services. Trustee Khazzam seconded the motion. Trustee DeVore provided an overview of the project that Hermann and Associates would be engineering. Mayor Wigginton reminded the Board and the community that the project is primarily funded by Tri-County Regional Planning fund, and Hermann and Associates was independently selected. Ms. Hermann noted the project will bring the sidewalks into ADA compliance and is the first step for the Village to seek funding for a mill and overlay of Glen Avenue. The Board approved the resolution 6-0.

Trustee Khazzam made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-1772: An Ordinance Authorizing the Establishment of Tax Increment Financing Interested Parties Registries and Adoption of Registration Rules for Such Registries for Proposed Peoria Heights Tax Increment Financing District 4. Trustee Steinwedel seconded the motion. Trustee Khazzam noted the ordinance was the first step to establishing the fourth TIF district below the hill. Attorney Walton noted there would be many more to come. The Board approved the ordinance 6-0.

Mayor Wigginton asked for miscellaneous business.

Trustee Symmonds thanked the VFW for the newsletter and acknowledged the Honor Flight was today. She reported as of Friday the Village had 131 lead line service lines replaced at no cost to the property owners. There were two addresses that have not replied any of the Village's attempts to reach them. An additional address has declined to have their service replaced. The replacements have occurred from Toledo Avenue south, and the project is drawing to a close as funding is getting low.

Trustee Khazzam shared she had met with Mr. Lee and Mr. Wayne Aldrich to discuss the upcoming projects. It was suggested the Board meet with both at a special meeting to review the ongoing projects and their status. Trustee DeVore requested the Board receive updated financial commitment information at that meeting. She noted she had also met with local business owners, and requested having wayfinding signs be added as soon as possible. She noted she has spoken to the Riverfront Museum regarding the Illinois 250 celebration the Village will be sponsoring.

Hearing no additional miscellaneous business, Mayor Wigginton opened the meeting to public comment.

Mr. Gary Goffnoit asked about trucks unloading under the new proposed designs for Prospect Road. Mr. Beckstrom came forward to speak to Mr. Goffnoit's concerns.

Hearing no additional public comments, Mayor Wigginton closed the meeting to public comment.

Trustee Steinwedel made a motion to adjourn, and Trustee DeVore seconded the motion. The Board of Trustees voted 6-0 to adjourn at 8:33 p.m.

Matthew Wigginton, Mayor

Stephanie Turner, Village Clerk