

APPROVED
Reinventing Government Committee Minutes
Tuesday, November 8, 2011
Village Hall, Room 130
6:30 p.m.

Meeting Called to order at 6:50 pm.

Roll Call – Present, Trustees Salzman, Tucker and Hedges

Others Present – Manager Barwin, Acting Village Attorney Boutet

In light of starting meeting late Committee asked to set aside previous minutes for approval until the committee's next meeting.

Illinois Risk Management Authority IRMA

Committee discussed previous meeting with representatives of the Illinois Risk Management Authority (IRMA) and consensus that although IRMA has several good programs and policies that could benefit Oak Park, current IRMA rate structure is not favorable to Oak Park joining for 2012 budget year.

The committee felt the Village should check back with IRMA throughout 2012 to learn if and when IRMA adjusts rate structures to attract communities the size of Oak Park with good risk management experience.

The committee suggested staff explore the availability of IRMA risk management and training services as a separate service which might be available to the village or as a lead in to possibly joining IRMA in the future.

The committee requested a summary report be prepared on the Village's current/recent risk management training efforts beginning with Police, Fire and DPW as well as summary of litigation reports for board level monitoring of cases from start to finish including attorneys retained and costs.

Village Law Department

Manager Barwin reviewed his experience in the Council-Manager form of local government, highlighting that the Village Attorney position serves both the Managers office in the day to day administration of the Village and the Village Board in policy and legislative matters. Manager Barwin noted recent surveys of comparable Illinois Municipalities and feedback from Managers found that outsourcing legal may be less expensive with broader specialized knowledge bases if procurement and management of services was done well. Prior to Ray Heise becoming the Village Attorney, Art Thorpe, the highly esteemed past Village Attorney, was actually from an outside firm.

Manager Barwin noted that he has also worked in municipalities where the majority of legal work was done in house and also in communities where 100% of legal work was outsourced, with outsourcing having several benefits due to an array of multi-faceted work within the specialized municipal realm. His experience with outsourced firms was very positive due to the responsiveness, ongoing

accountability and regular review of the firm's services and contract. Currently no contracts for legal services have been located as working relationships and fees have evolved over recently retired Attorney Heise's tenure.

Attorney Boutet discussed her perspective and experience that in-house law departments serve as the nerve center and hub of municipal government by providing checks and balances within the government and how her office catches many issues thereby avoiding having staff having to call expensive outside specialists, with such services including processing contracts.

Trustee Hedges discussed his experience as the Director of the Parks District where outside law services worked well.

Trustee Salzman mentioned that the D-97 school district utilized contracted attorneys and in his experience that his impression was that the approach served the district well.

Attorney Boutet made the point that the size and scope of a local government has an impact on the approach to legal services and that an on site law department for example, with working knowledge of the Village helps with audit questions, interrogatories and even the coordination of things like vicious dog hearings.

Committee consensus was to recommend moving forward with a solicitation of firms with experience in providing good, solid municipal legal services.

Manager Barwin presented the committee with an example of a legal services Request for Qualifications and Proposals he utilized in a prior committee.

The committee provided some suggestions for modifying the solicitation and suggestion targeting approximately up to 30 firms to make the evaluation process reasonable.

The committee consensus was to not necessarily solicit to have one single firm propose for all village law services, although that is an option, but to look to the 4 main categories and approach each as to quality of service and costs. The categories being General Municipal, Labor.

Manager Barwin suggested a December solicitation pending full board input, and requested either Committee help in short listing firms and full board assistance with final interviews of short list.

Question of in house blend with outsourced possible firms would have to continue to be evaluated and some of decisions could depend on transitions and ability of any firms selected.

Meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.