

Minutes  
Village of Orchard Park  
Board of Trustees

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Orchard Park was held on Monday, May 9, 2022 in the Municipal Center, 4295 South Buffalo Street, Orchard Park, New York. Mayor Clinton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Members present:

Mayor Jo Ann Litwin Clinton  
Deputy Mayor Matthew J. Hartung  
Trustee Lauren A. Kaczor  
Trustee Dale T. Pyne

Others present:

Clerk-Treasurer Mary Beth Jensen  
Manager of Public Works Wittmeyer  
Code Enforcement Officer John Gullo

Members excused:

Trustee Francis Hogenkamp

Mayor Clinton made the following announcement:

“Fire exits are located at the rear in the Board Room and at the doorway to the lobby. In the event of a fire, you will be notified by announcement on the public address system. If notified, please move in a calm and orderly fashion to the nearest exit.”

Moved by Trustee Kaczor, seconded by Trustee Hartung to accept the minutes of April 25, 2022 as presented.

On the question:	3 voting “Aye” Trustee Hartung Trustee Kaczor Trustee Pyne	0 voting “Nay”	Carried
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Moved by Trustee Hartung, seconded by Trustee Pyne that the vouchers numbering 4629 to 4645 in Batch #147 of fiscal year 2021-2022 in the amount of \$42,873.86 be paid as presented.

On the question:	3 voting “Aye” Trustee Hartung Trustee Kaczor Trustee Pyne	0 voting “Nay”	Carried
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Comments from the floor of items not on the agenda:

Residents spoke regarding proposed capital projects by the Orchard Park School District, primarily those plans at the Middle School and South Davis Elementary School. Mayor Clinton asked each speaker to print their name and address on the paper at the podium and stated that each speaker would be limited to 3 minutes.

- Josh Repp (112 Thorn Ave) passed out handouts (attached), which he referred to in his comments. Among his comments were:
  - He acknowledged that he is in favor of many aspects of the proposed projects, but has concerns.
  - He focused on loss of green space and traffic issues.
  - The project has been in development for about five years and the residents have been aware of it for about three months.
  - He requested that SEQR be done in a meaningful way.
  - He commented on the traffic study that was done.

- He questioned how the space is being utilized and suggested that currently it appears there is adequate parking.
- Pat Gorman (120 Thorn Ave) spoke on his disappointment in the lack of transparency by the OPCS District and their Capital Campaign Project plans.
  - The school has proposed a road several times onto Thorn Avenue over the past 20 years and met resistance by the residents of Thorn Ave and South Lincoln St., and residents are in opposition of the current proposal.
  - Residents have met with representatives of the School District and have suggested alternatives.
  - It is in everyone's interest to provide the best environment, facilities and resources to the students; parents are responsible to provide them in the safest way and not subject them to added pollutants, vehicles and another commercial street crossing.
- Jeff Bonerb (106 Thorn Ave) agreed with the points made by previous speakers. He noted his disappointment in loss of green space and the length of the proposed driveway, feeling it will have a negative impact on Thorn Avenue.
- Sharon Stillman (79 Thorn Ave) had concerns regarding sidewalks, crosswalks, crossing guards and the students walking. She was told that these are Village responsibilities and wanted the Village to know that Thorn Ave residents will address them if/when necessary.
- Joan Humphrey (118 S Lincoln Ave) recently observed buses exiting the middle school and many were empty or had very few students. She questioned the need for an additional roadway when so many parents are driving their children. She asked that no more green space be removed in the Village.
- Theresa Gallagher (130 S Lincoln Ave) questioned the utilization of space at the Middle School and the need for more parking. She was not happy with the disorderly Building and Grounds area and she opposes the project.
- Megan Bach (95 Thorn Ave) thanked Josh Repp for his expertise and clarifying information. She felt it imperative that the project be held to high standards and that attention to the data be a basis for the decisions being made.
- Eileen Riter (119 S Lincoln Ave) sent an email to the Village Board regarding the parking restrictions she feels should be considered on Thorn Avenue. On-street parking restricts traffic flow during sporting events and church functions and she feels it's better to be proactive rather than reactionary and avoid a tragedy.

Mayor Clinton thanked everyone for sharing thoughts and assured residents that the Village Board takes the project very seriously. The Capital Projects proposed need to be voted on first and if they pass, final engineering and studies will be done; the Village will hold the schools accountable for them. The project as a whole is supported by the Board, but aware that there are concerns because Thorn Avenue is a residential road and viable solutions need to be worked out together to resolve the traffic issues. She is confident this is possible.

Moved by Trustee Hartung, seconded by Trustee Kaczor that the reports of the Village Justice, Water Department and Treasurer for the month of April 2022 and the reports of the Associate Village Justice for the months of March and April be received and filed.

On the question:	3 voting "Aye"	0 voting "Nay"	Carried
	Trustee Hartung		
	Trustee Kaczor		
	Trustee Pyne		



School Superintendent, David Lilleck spoke on the Capital Projects proposed district wide, focusing on the questions regarding Middle School/South Davis plans.

- He appreciates the advocacy of the Village for its constituents and the Village's partnership with the school district.
- Lack of transparency and deception was not the intent of the School District, information was shared about the project as soon as it was appropriate. Not familiar with history of proposed driveways onto Thorn Ave.
- Traffic patterns have been studied for years and reducing congestion on South Lincoln and 20A and Thorn Avenue, especially during an event at the Middle School and South Davis Elementary, is a concern.
- Review process and the State Education Department required studies do not start until the project is voted on and approved.
- He appreciates concerns over green space, but the schools are tied to the existing footprint and trying to do what is best for students, programs and community:
  - the number of students in the classrooms is growing, partly because bringing programs back in house, and this is driving a need for additions to the buildings.
  - adding parking
  - moving the tennis courts
- The driveway onto Thorn Avenue is a possible solution to safely redirect traffic flow.
- Will continue to follow all rules and regulations as outlined by SED.
- Negative SEQR declaration is most commonly used methodology by school districts for projects.
- Agrees with the safety issues of parking on both sides of Thorn Avenue and will partner with the Village to resolve issues with crosswalks, sidewalks, etc when the opportunity presents itself.
- Both parties have ideas of what is best for the kids and the future campus and program; will continue to collaborate for a solution.

Mayor Clinton stated that the lines of communication must continue to be open. First the project needs to pass a vote.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 23, 2022.

Moved by Trustee Hartung, seconded by Trustee Kaczor to adjourn at 7:45 p.m.  
On the question: 3 voting "Aye" 0 voting "Nay" Carried  
Trustee Hartung  
Trustee Kaczor  
Trustee Pyne

Respectfully submitted, Mary Beth Jensen,  
Village Clerk-Treasurer