

**Village of Oak Park Board of Trustees**  
**July 5, 2016**

Suzanne Davis,  
Observer

7:30 Open Session

In attendance: Mayor Abu-Taleb; Trustees Lueck, Salzman, Tucker, Button Ott, Brewer, Barber.

**Public Comment:**

A large and spirited group of persons supporting the Fight for Fifteen movement, calling for a \$15 minimum wage, was in attendance. Four persons spoke in support. An eight-year employee of McDonald's, speaking through a Spanish interpreter, stated that she earns \$9.75 per hour and pointed out that the City of Chicago now has a \$10.50 minimum wage. Professor Ron Baiman of Benedictine University stated that a community like Oak Park, which prides itself on being progressive, should be at the forefront of change. Darlene Smith, representing State Representative La Shawn Ford, stated that most Oak Park employees live in Ford's district, including in communities such as Austin, in which many residents are among the working poor; these persons shop in Oak Park, so it is only fair to pay them fairly. Smith also cautioned that increasing poverty in Austin due to depressed wages could trickle over into Oak Park. The Reverend C.J. Hawking, pastor at United Methodist Church and Executive Director of ARISE Chicago, also spoke in support of raising the minimum wage.

**Appointment:**

A motion passed to appoint Debra McQueen a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

**First Reading of Ordinance:**

There was a first reading of an ordinance that would amend the Housing and Human Rights chapters of the Village Code. For buildings with more than three rental units, there would be a graduated scheme whereby gold, silver, or bronze licenses would be awarded following building inspections, depending on the results. Buildings performing well would have to renew less frequently, thereby creating an incentive for optimal property maintenance. Grants from the Village may be available to help owners satisfy requirements following inspections. Building owners would also be given the option of charging tenants a move-in fee not to exceed \$500 instead of collecting a security deposit. Finally, the ordinance would eliminate the requirement that landlords ask tenants about race, as adequate information on race in a given area can now be obtained from existing statistical surveys.

**Consent Agenda:**

A number of items were approved without discussion. There was considerable discussion, however, of the recommendation for an ordinance authorizing the execution of a redevelopment agreement between the Village and Robinson's Bar & Grill on Madison Street. The Village purchased Robinson's current property on Madison Street, and Robinson is relocating to another property, also on Madison Street. The agreement is for the Village to give Robinson's a grant of \$100,000 to

improve the new property, as the costs have exceeded what was anticipated. Robinson's had sold its property to the Village at a below-market price, foregoing better offers, and the possibility of this sort of agreement had been contemplated as a possibility at the time of sale. Trustee Lueck voted against the agreement, concerned about the lack of guidelines as to when a business can obtain a \$100,000 grant, and that without an explanation or rationale in the ordinance, there is an appearance of a favor or second bite at the apple following an arm's length transaction. All others voted in favor.

**Regular Agenda:**

A motion passed directing staff to prepare a Living Wage Ordinance establishing a minimum wage rate of \$12.00 per hour for Village employees and certain employees of contractors for Village services. A phased implementation would begin in 2017 and would apply to vendor employees whose contracts exceed \$25,000 per year.

The Village Manager proposed examining how much vendors are actually paying their employees, including privatized custodial staff. The living wage requirement would be incorporated into the Village's contracts with contractors.

The Village Attorney indicated that municipalities cannot pass a "minimum wage ordinance" because courts have held that to be a matter of "statewide concern." He opined that the City of Chicago minimum wage law was subject to legal challenge. The proposed ordinance is more limited than a full-scale minimum wage law, yet is intended to be a "step in the right direction."

Meeting adjourned: 9:00 p.m.