

**MINUTES
WINNETKA VILLAGE COUNCIL
STUDY SESSION**

March 8, 2022

(Approved: April 5, 2022)

A record of a legally convened meeting of the Council of the Village of Winnetka, which was held at Council Chambers on Tuesday, March 8, 2022, 2022 at 7:00 PM.

- 1) Call to Order. President Rintz called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. Manager Bahan called the roll of the Village Council. Present: Trustees Robert Apatoff, Andy Cripe, Tina Dalman, Bob Dearborn, Kim Mancini, and John Swierk. Absent: None. Also present: Village Manager Robert Bahan, Assistant Village Manager Kristin Kazenas, Village Attorney Ben Schuster, Deputy Village Clerk Berina Gradjan, and Economic Development Coordinator Liz Dechant, and approximately 11 persons in the audience.

- 2) Public Comment. None.

- 3) Seasonal Street Closures for Outdoor Dining Policy Discussion.

President Rintz states that Council will be discussing a new approval process for seasonal street closure regarding outdoor dining. President Rintz commends the vibrancy and enjoyable experiences brought by outdoor dining.

Kristin Kazenas briefs Council on the mitigations that were placed, by both the State and County, due to the global pandemic that allowed for outdoor dining that helped aid businesses during restrictions on indoor dining. As the demand for outdoor dining continues, Village staff is seeking Council's guidance regarding adopting a separate approval process for seasonal street closure.

Economic Development Coordinator Liz Dechant presents three proposals for Council's consideration; 1) continue to approve street closure requests as part of the existing (no-fee) Outdoor Seating Area Permit, 2) discontinue any temporary seasonal use of public streets, or 3) create a new Council approval process (License Agreement) specifically for seasonal street closure requests and separate from Outdoor Seating Area Permit approval. Liz Dechant reviews the terms and conditions within the agreement that will need to be considered.

Village Council deliberates various policy initiatives, administrative processes, and the effects on property value and revenue. Liz Dechant informs Council that staff has been reaching out to municipalities around the region to obtain information on their policies and procedures and reviews the fees and discussions that are being discussed by surrounding communities.

Public Comment.

- i) John Macarow commends Village Council on the policies set in place due to COVID and acknowledges the success Winnetka restaurants have had within the past few years.
- ii) Bruno Abate expresses his appreciation and gratitude for what the Village has done for the business owners and states that he will respect any decision that the Council decides on. Mr. Abate reflects on the positive impact Tocco has had on the

Winnetka Village Council Study Session March 8, 2022

community and hopes that he can continue to bring a positive experience to Winnetka.

- iii) Theresa Lucas shares her observations regarding parking, advantages and disadvantages between businesses due to outdoor dining, and her frustration regarding the Streetscape Project.
- iv) Liz Nestler thanks Council for the thoughtful approach on outdoor dining and expresses her admiration for the positive vibrancy that outdoor dining has brought to Winnetka and the community.
- v) Terry Dason thanks Council for their considerations regarding outdoor dining and commends the positive atmosphere that outdoor dining brings, specifically Chestnut Court. Ms. Dason expresses her support and hopes that all restaurants succeed.
- vi) A Winnetka community member compares the success and positive atmosphere of the first annual music fest to the outdoor dining experience.
- vii) Representative from Little Honeycomb informs Council of the hardship the past few months and expresses the importance for outdoor dining.
- viii) Glen Deutsch expresses his gratitude for Council's responsiveness throughout the pandemic. While Mr. Deutsch commends the restaurant business for growing within the Village, he also indicates his thoughts on the unfair advantages that businesses have due to outdoor dining.

Trustee Cripe states that he disagrees that it is an unfair advantage between businesses but rather that the location of certain businesses played in favor of outdoor dining.

- ix) Dawn Rants believes that Chestnut Court should utilize the outdoor dining as it has recently become livelier.

Council discusses various ways that potential fees may be assessed due to the additional seating that outdoor dining has benefited businesses with, potentially ranging by business square footage, number of outdoor seats, and by a combination of property taxes paid.

Council consensus is option 3) creating a new Council approval process via license agreement specifically for seasonal street closure requests is the preferred option. A majority of the Council agrees that no fee should be charged for seasonal street closures. However, Trustee Swierk advocates for charging a fee.

Village Manager Bahan affirms that all license agreements for seasonal street closures will be considered by the Council.

- 4) Closed Session. None.

- 5) Adjournment. Trustee Dalman, seconded by Trustee Apatoff, moved to adjourn the Village Council meeting. By roll call vote, the motion carried. Ayes: Trustees Apatoff, Cripe, Dalman, Dearborn, Mancini, and Swierk. Nays: None. Absent: None. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.

/s/Berina Gradjan, Deputy Village Clerk
Recording Secretary