



VILLAGE OF BARTLETT COMMITTEE MINUTES JULY 17, 2018

President Wallace called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 7:27 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairmen Camerer, Carbonaro, Deyne, Gabrenya, Hopkins, and President Wallace

ABSENT: Chairman Reinke (Joined the meeting at 7:43 p.m.)

ALSO PRESENT: Groot Representative Shawn McDowell, Assistant Village Administrator Scott Skrycki, Management Analyst Sam Hughes, Finance Director Todd Dowden, Community Development Director Jim Plonczynski, GIS Specialist Kristy Stone, Management Analyst Tyler Isham, Public Works Director Dan Dinges, Public Works Engineer Bob Allen, Building Director Brian Goralski, Food and Beverage Manager Paul Petersen, Chief Patrick Ullrich, Deputy Chief Geoff Pretkelis, Village Attorney Bryan Mraz and Village Clerk Lorna Giles.

PUBLIC WORKS, PRESIDENT WALLACE

Groot Customer Service Issues

President Wallace asked the Assistant Village Administrator for a brief overview.

Assistant Village Administrator Scott Skrycki stated that the Village had been with Republic Services for a long time, prior to entering into a contract with Groot Industries. In the fall of 2017, Groot Industries purchased several routes from Republic Services as well as their station in Elgin, thus making Groot the Village's new waste hauler. When Groot took the route over in the fall, there was no spike in complaints or issues. Also, in the fall of 2017, the Village of Bartlett went out for bids through an RFP process. Groot's bid was substantially lower than the other submittals and lower than the current prices residents were receiving and it included e-recycling and the new brush services. The new contract would save the average resident about \$55 per year.

Since January, upon entering into an agreement there have been several challenges with the billing department, thus spilling over into their customer service department and daily operations. The original mistake that occurred the first week of January was on nearly every single bill. Groot reported an error in the system that applied a \$5 service fee to each account. With many residents calling at once, wait times increased and the calls flooded Village Hall for approximately two weeks with Groot issues. These included questions about the fee itself, common issues such as missed pickups that would normally be worked out between the contractor and the resident, as well as the first couple of weeks of electronics pick-up. This mistake also hit several neighboring communities that Groot services. Staff spoke to Groot the day the mistake was made and Groot agreed to reverse the charge and credit accounts the following billing cycle.



VILLAGE OF BARTLETT COMMITTEE MINUTES JULY 17, 2018

The second billing error affected roughly 700 accounts. Due to an automatic setting in some customer/resident accounts, a \$5 late fee was charged to 700 accounts. Again, Groot notified staff and agreed to reverse all charges that same day. The programming error was created by having a past due amount and a credit that canceled each other out. This program error did create frustration once again. However, it was fixed very quickly and occurred to far less accounts, thus staff time spent on this issue was minimal.

The last billing issues occurred on the July bill which went out on June 30th/July 1st. This bill had a due date of July 4th giving residents two business days to pay. Groot notified staff that most of the bills were on autopay and they would not charge a late fee to any residents that paid the bill within 60 days.

The billing errors that created long hold times caused residents to contact the Village, where normally they would just speak to the waste hauler. During this time staff acted as a conduit to the operations department. Once the hold times were decreased residents still contacted Village Hall due to their initial bad experience. Village staff continued to see to it that issues were fixed, but still redirected the residents to Groot. Calls and complaints to Village Hall have decreased since Groot agreed to make several changes per the staff's request.

In addition to the billing issues, residents have also been having trouble with the brush program and leaving brush out on the street edge improperly bundled. After discussing the issue with Groot, they will be starting to tag the improperly bundled brush piles each week instead of just once. Their drivers will also be marking down those addresses so the customer services team can contact those homeowners directly and inform them that they need to bundle the brush.

He stated that although there have been several issues, we see improvement with Groot and they have been willing to meet with us on a few occasions to go over the issues we have been having and are always available by phone. The mistakes have been significantly higher than they should be, but Groot has fixed each mistake. When there has been conflicting information from the resident and the driver, Groot has always taken the side of the resident. Shawn McDowell from Groot is also here to answer any additional questions.

Shawn McDowell stated that he is the general manager for Groot. He was previously a manager for Rock River Disposal which are both owned by Waste Connections, which is the third largest refuse company in the United States behind Waste Management and Republic Services.

Mr. McDowell explained that Republic Services was going to shut down their Elgin location and lay off their staff that worked there. Right before closing, Groot purchased Republic Services routes in that area and Aurora and kept the facility open. Many of the staff members working there were already told they were going to be laid off before Groot



VILLAGE OF BARTLETT COMMITTEE MINUTES JULY 17, 2018

informed them that they could keep their jobs. Many of the issues have stemmed from this and they are working on rebuilding the culture in the organization. To help reduce the call times and improve the services, Groot has hired more customer service reps and has significantly dropped the call time down to around one minute and thirty seconds. Shawn stated that Scott has asked them to do additional reporting to the Village on complaints they receive. This was part of the contract but had not been enforced in previous years. The drivers and operations department people are the same people your residents have had for years, the newest employee was hired in 2014. Since the first billing issue that affected about 5,000 residents, we have been moving in the right direction and are continuing to improve.

Chairman Hopkins asked how strict Groot was with their brush collection.

Mr. McDowell stated that safety is their main priority, but as long as it was within a foot or two of the required size, they would take it.

Chairman Reinke joined the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

Mr. Skrycki stated that Mr. McDowell is wrong about contract enforcement. The complaint reporting that he asked Groot to send to us was not formally enforced in previous years because the complaint volume was so minimal and an e-mail was suitable enforcement. With this new contract, complaints have been significant so that is why we are formally asking for a report. Shawn does a good job communicating with staff and residents. If there is a "he said/she said" between Groot and the residents, the residents always win, however, the initial mistakes need to decrease.

Review of Proposed Amendments to Local Adjudication Procedures

Chairman Carbonaro asked staff to please explain the proposed changes.

Deputy Chief Geoff Pretkelis stated that he and GIS Specialist Kristy Stone are more than happy to discuss or answer any questions you have in regard to the proposed amended and newly created ordinances including the highlights that were contained in the Committee of the Whole board packet. The changes are necessary to comply with the requirements of the Illinois Comptrollers IDROP program and Section 11-208.3 of the Illinois Vehicle Code. After reviewing our current ordinances we identified the need to separate the current administrative adjudication process for parking and vehicle compliance violations from the non-vehicular ordinance violations. Also, updated the Villages current parking, vehicle compliance and local adjudication citations, and creating additional notification forms required under Section 11-208.3 of the Illinois Vehicle Code.

Village Attorney Bryan Mraz commended Deputy Chief Geoffrey Pretkelis and GIS Specialist Kristy Stone for the work they did on this project. He stated that this whole project started with the IDROP process. The provisions were very involved and as they



VILLAGE OF BARTLETT COMMITTEE MINUTES JULY 17, 2018

went through the code, more and more items needed to be changed. Overall, it made for an improved Bartlett Municipal Code.

Mr. Pretkelis stated that some additional changes are that the code will now provide individuals the option to settle and compromise certain minor local adjudication offenses by ceasing and or abating the violation and paying a \$25.00 fine. Additionally, the Bartlett Municipal Code Title 1-4-11 Section C, would be amended to include only ordinance violations governing the condition or use of equipment on a vehicle or non-moving vehicular regulations. All moving violations would be relocated to the newly created, Chapter 12 entitled "Vehicular Compliance Citations."

He stated that the Administrative Adjudication of Non-vehicular Ordinance Violations allows the administrative hearing officers to vacate or set aside a default judgement within 21 days and provide a petitioner with a notice of a new administrative adjudication hearing if a petition is received and there is a determination of a good cause for the petitioner's failure to appear at the original administrative adjudication hearing. It eliminates the option to allow individuals cited for fighting to avoid an appearance at an administrative hearing and it eliminates the option to allow individuals to avoid an administrative hearing for windblown refuse violations and grass and rubbish prohibited in public streets violations. These violation subsections would be relocated to the procedures for setting minor local adjudication offenses with payment of a \$25.00 fine described in the proposed amended Chapter 4 entitled General Penalty.

Chapter 11 -1300 of the Bartlett Municipal code identifies the proposed authority and procedures for the issuance of parking citations, the penalties and settlement of penalty procedures for parking citations, and the second notice parking violation issuance and mailing procedures pursuant to the proposed newly created Chapter 20 of the Bartlett municipal code. He continues that the police department proposes to amend the Illinois Vehicle Code violations that were adopted by reference in Title 1-4-11 Section C entitled "General Penalty" of the Bartlett municipal code to include only ordinance violations governing the condition or use of equipment on a vehicle or non-moving vehicle regulations. We propose to relocate these particular vehicle compliance violations to the procedures described in the vehicular compliance chapter.

Deputy Chief Pretkelis went on to say that additional changes include allowing Bartlett residents the option to contest a parking citation or a vehicle compliance citation in writing instead of having to attend an administrative adjudication hearing. It formalizes the "request for parking citation review" process to allow a person to have his or her violation reviewed by the chief of police. An additional change allows a person to contest and challenge the accuracy of the certified report that is sent to the Illinois Secretary of State when a person fails to pay ten or more parking violations.

Chairman Reinke asked what the most common citations were.



**VILLAGE OF BARTLETT
COMMITTEE MINUTES
JULY 17, 2018**

Deputy Chief Geoffrey Pretkelis stated cannabis possession and underage drinking were the two most common citations.

Chairman Hopkins asked what the fines were for those offenses.

Mr. Pretkelis stated that they can be up to \$750 or community service can be given. Typically for a first offense, an underage drinking citations is \$100 and a cannabis possession citation is \$200.

Chairman Reinke asked if violators are brought back in to local adjudication to make sure they have complied.

Mr. Pretkelis stated that sometimes they are, sometimes they pay the fine at the main office and the local adjudicator is made aware of this during the proceedings.

Chairman Hopkins asked how often we have local adjudication.

Mr. Pretkelis stated that it is once per month.

Chairman Hopkins recommended it be moved along to the Village Board.

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Deyne moved to adjourn the Committee of the Meeting and that motion was seconded by Chairman Carbonaro.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO ADJOURN

AYES: Chairmen Camerer, Carbonaro, Deyne, Gabrenya, Hopkins, Reinke

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Sam Hughes
Deputy Village Clerk