

**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting of the Committee of the Whole was called to order by Mayor Jim Holland on Saturday, September 13, 2008, at 8:39 a.m., at the Heritage Hall, 14 S. Hickory St.

Those present for the meeting included Mayor Jim Holland, Trustees Cindy Heath, Mike Stevens, and Dick Trevarthan. Also in attendance were Attorney George Mahoney, Attorney Kevin Yusman, Assistant Fire Chief Larry Rauch, State Fire Marshall Richard Crum, Senior Community Relation Director of Nicor Bernard Anderson, State Representative Renee Kosel, District Representative Nella Piccolin, Police Chief Rob Piscia, Village Administrator Jerry Ducay, Assistant Village Administrator Howard Sloan, Public Works Director Terry Kestel, Building Department Director Craig Eyer, Cliff Janeluinas, Tom Bartnik, Mary Canino, and Secretary Alice Schomburg.

Residents and reporters were also present. Representatives from local banks and insurance agencies were also present to offer support to residents affected.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion (#1) was made by Trustee Trevarthan, seconded by Trustee Stevens, to approve the minutes of May 5, 2008 as presented.

Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion carried.

SYCAMORE STREET RESTORATION EFFORTS

Sycamore Street Restoration Efforts: Comments by Officials

Mayor Holland stated that the purpose of this meeting was to update residents affected by the Sycamore Street explosion and to answer any questions that they may have.

Assistant Fire Chief Larry Rauch reported that the court has locked down the scene of the explosion until September 17th. He stated that no information can be released since it is still considered a crime scene.

Arson Investigator for State Farm Insurance Richard Crum reported that he is here to determine the origin and cause of the explosion. He offered to assist homeowners and answer any questions.

Police Chief Rob Piscia reported that the Police Department is providing security at the scene and officers are doing foot patrols of the entire area. They will continue to do so until the homes are reoccupied.

Mayor Holland thanked the Public Works Department and the Utility Department for their help cleaning up the area.

Craig Eyer stated that the building department is trying to help people that were displaced by the explosion get back into their homes.

NICOR Senior Community Relations Director Bernard Anderson extended his sympathies to the Frankfort community. He stated that the investigation is ongoing. He stressed the importance of residents calling NICOR if they smell gas.

Aaron Fundich from Robinson Engineering reported that John Gorsky from a structural engineering firm has been contacted to review the safety of structures surrounding the explosion site.

Attorney Kevin Yusman from the Village's Law Firm, Mahoney, Silverman and Cross LTD, stated that residents should work with and keep in contact with their insurance providers.

Various local bank representatives offered any assistance. The Old Plank Trail Community Bank has a donation fund set up for those who wish to help.

Representative Renee Kosel commended the Village, fire department, and police department. She informed residents that there is a Homeless Protection Fund, run by Catholic Charities, available for those who may need help. She also reported that the State of Illinois has a Department of Insurance that handles complaints regarding insurance companies. She also stated that low interest loans are available for disabled or Veterans

Will County District 1 Representative Nella Piccolin stated she is a Frankfort resident and is sorry for the loss and destruction and offered any help.

Attorney Ken Gray, representing the Reils family, reported that the court date is September 17th and asked for names of any affected parties who have not already contacted their insurance company prior to that date. He thanked everyone for their help and sensitivity. He asked rumors be stopped but any information regarding this incident be supplied.

Jim Shanahan, Insurance Broker, stated that there is coverage for living expenses in insurance policies.

Mayor Holland stated that our community is concerned about all of you. He asked for a moment of silence for the Reils.

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

Questions from the audience were as follows:

- Should green-tagged homes have gas pressure checked?
Yes.
- Do general contractors need to be in contact with the Building Department?
Yes.
- Do all tradesman have to be registered with the Village?
Yes.

- How strict is the Village going to be if a homeowner has to match existing brick for repairs?
The Village will work with the homeowner.
- Are there gas alarms, just as there are smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors?
Fire Chief Rauch will check on this.
- At what pressure should a gas line test at?
Stated you should have an expert check the lines.
- How do homeowners find independent inspectors?
The homeowners insurance company may be able to recommend an inspector.
- Who is responsible for the gas lines?
Up to the gas meter outside is NICOR's responsibility, from there into the home is the homeowner's responsibility.
- Did NICOR check the whole area?
Yes, exterior inspections only and no gas leaks were found.
- Questioned maintenance of the gas lines in the area.
NICOR representative stated that maintenance is an ongoing situation.
- Will residents be notified of the outcome of the investigation?
Yes.

Mayor Holland stated:

- The Village will waive all permit fees for the affected homes.
- The Fire Department will issue a public statement when a cause of the explosion is determined. The press will be notified and the Village will notify all affected homeowners.
- Another public meeting for the homeowners will be planned within a few weeks.
- The Village wants this site cleaned up soon and some semblance of order returned to the community.

Officials from the Fire Department, NICOR, and Insurance Agencies stated that the integrity of the scene must be maintained. No one has been allowed into the scene and no independent testing is presently being done. The investigation must be done correctly and standards must be followed.

They asked for the patience of the effected residents, as it will take time to get a final report.

OTHER BUSINESS - None

ADJOURNMENT

A motion (#2) was made by Trustee Stevens, seconded by Trustee Heath, to adjourn the Committee of the Whole meeting of Saturday, September 13, 2008.
Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m.