

Village of Germantown Hills
Village Board Meeting Minutes

November 21, 2019 6:00 p.m.

- 1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance-** Mike Hinrichsen, Village President, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Village President/Trustees	Roll Call	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14-16
Mike Hinrichsen – President	Present														
Julia Miller	Present	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Stephanie Chaon	Present	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Dick Hartman	Present	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Jim O’Laughlin	Present	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Marty Clinch	Present	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Todd Rice	Present	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				

Also, in attendance:
 Bill Streeter and Chuck Urban, Village Attorney’s
 Scott DeSplinter, Village Engineer
 Rich Brecklin, Superintendent of Public Works

Everyone stood and said the Pledge of Allegiance. Mike Hinrichsen stated that he would like to do a moment of silence thanking those serving our Country both near and afar.

2. Minutes Approval

- a. October 17, 2019 Village Board Meeting-**A motion was made by Jim O’Laughlin to approve the October 17, 2019 Village board meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Marty Clinch. **Motion passed #1.**

3. Public Comments on Any Action Item on the Agenda- The public comments are intended to be a summary and not verbatim. Mike Hinrichsen stated he wanted to make sure everyone knows what the board is considering at the meeting today and what has happened up until this point. Mike shared a power point presentation identifying the process.

Jeff DeGroot asked if there would be a visible store front.

Bill Streeter explained the State has regulations on signage and other requirements.

Tim Beechler stated there’s been some misinformation and hopes the board understands as people need to be properly educated on the substance. Tim noted with it being legal come January he doesn’t really care either way but the education starts at home and he would like to see the tax revenue if possible.

Julie Grant stated as a parent and School Administrator her immediate thoughts went to the kids and the concern about the sale of marijuana and impact on the youth. Julie discussed how she sees in her field students turn to marijuana to handle their stress. She stated she took an anonymous poll with her 29 students and 62% stated they smoke often, 79% said their friends use and 83% said it would be much easier to get it. She stated she doesn't want our youth to pay the price for village revenue and feels we are blessed with a community as a perfect place to raise your family.

Holly Figg stated she gathered signatures opposed to a dispensary. She noted she is too late to stop the State but wants to stop Germantown Hills.

James Herr noted he is dealing with a person that uses it now. He stated marijuana is a safer drug than alcohol and it can be an addiction for some people. He explained we still don't know enough about it and there still needs to be some more thought on the issue. He feels this is not a safe and appropriate thing to do.

Bret Walton noted the legal age to buy come January.

Bill Streeter stated it will be a huge violation to sell to a minor.

Rita Demask thanked the board and everyone for showing up. She came across some Federal regulations the House passed yesterday. It's a comprehensive approach to fix the cannabis law. She explained the bill and provisions. She noted there are other addictions out there and there are agencies to help.

Dana Deshone stated she has lived in the area for over 20 years and is a nurse practitioner that has seen the ill effects of the drug. As a provider she is very concerned with it getting down to the youth.

Mike Hasselbush stated actions speak louder than words, Germantown Hills has a DARE program and to remember kids do look to adults.

Josh Kamel noted there are already problems at the High School and we don't want problems at the Middle School. He noted a lot more people do this than people realize. He stated vaping is a big problem too.

Annette Burnett is a nurse at a dispensary and she stated she agrees with a lot of what was said. The new law is coming that cannabis will be legal. She stated she has been a user all her life to help with the symptoms of cancer because nothing else would help. She stated it doesn't have the side effects of other medications and alcohol. She noted it is better than alcohol and it will be available to help people. She noted the need to educate.

Mike Burton asked the board to not do it for the taxes and let people go elsewhere.

Melissa Walton stated she is not here to debate the morality and not here to debate if people are going to use it or not. The debate is whether to allow someone to apply for a dispensary. She stated she has seen great things in a dispensary. The facilities aren't dirty, they are heavily regulated, and the people working there are highly knowledgeable. She noted she does care about the youth but a dispensary is not a negative presence in a community and can actually be a positive presence as they are typically great business owners.

Mike Axelson stated he has friends that live in Denver and they can't go downtown because of the nuisances it creates. He stated big cities have issues and the social aspect has ruined a lot of young kids' lives. He stated we shouldn't normalize this. The village is doing a great job and feels East Peoria can sell it but we don't need to have it here.

Linda Hartman noted unfortunately there are pros and cons. The majority of the public is opposed to a dispensary and the only advantage is the revenue but no one can tell us what it would be even if it is approved. This will be detrimental to people looking to come to Germantown Hills. She stated to the board, that they took an oath to do what's best for the community and begged the board to do what's best. Linda told the story of a High School student that was on drugs that t-boned her and she is now having to deal with chronic pain because of the accident.

Kevin Abbott stated he is against it because of the safety issue.

Chris Enders is with Youth for Christ and is opposed to this. He told of a friend that is a quadriplegic from an accident and went to prison for using marijuana. He's gone through years of medical treatment but chooses not to use it. He stated to not just look at the tax benefits but the long-term effects.

Phillip Parrish stated he is 30+ year resident and knows there's value to the medical marijuana but is opposed to a dispensary.

Chip Wilmot noted he is adamantly opposed and asked the board to follow the direction of the County as we don't need it in Germantown Hills.

Brittany Durst stated she grew up in the area, has 4 kids and is a nurse. She stated she doesn't feel there's enough data to make a decision.

Charles Bugel, Pastor at Christ Church talked of the addiction programs.

Mike Baker, a pediatric physician at OSF stated he is opposed to a dispensary in GH. He noted there will be people using in our community. There are facts showing where a dispensary went in the youth accidents went up, which is a big concern to him.

Tammy Poppen noted we have a great community. She has gone to Seattle several times and was amazed they were given a map out on their vacation to show where you could smoke marijuana and everywhere, they went there was a disgusting smell. She noted this is just the beginning and asked for the board to please say no.

Cheryl Wilmot noted people move here for family values and they don't move here for conveniences. Why bring something here as you could turn people away from the community? Why bring something in controversial? She asked the board to take the majority of what you are hearing and vote with the people that voted you in.

Rosemarie Randolph noted she implores the board to vote no. She stated you have heard from the medical people and counselors and now the board has the opportunity to do what the people want and we don't want this in our town.

Veronica Axelson, President of the Germantown Hills Chamber and owner of Michael's Italian Feast was with Denny Kouri, operator of Kouri's in Germantown Hills. She stated they are both against this. Veronica noted she has dealt with this and it's hard to manage people when they are high.

Denny stated unfortunately it is more common than you know with the kids you hire and he has had to deal with problems in his business.

Veronica noted the Planning Commission and Zoning Board both said no and it appears 95% of the community is against it as we don't need it or want it.

Karl Figg stated he chose Germantown Hills because it is a great place to live and raise kids. He knows the Village Board cares about the kids. He is against this as in Colorado the youth usage and traffic deaths increased.

Jake Mills, Pastor at Great Oaks stated he loves the community and in everything people have said no one has mentioned the Bible. Jake read a scripture. Jake noted that this is going to be a detriment to the children and the board should consider the decision-making effects on the kids. There will be indirect and direct causes, which is not a good idea.

Garret Blunier has been a Sergeant of a police department and has seen first-hand the kids and the marijuana use. He asked to not make it easier on the kids to get access to mind-altering drugs. He noted there are facts to increased petty crimes because of this.

Carol Youngman stated she taught at Germantown Hills for 27 years and she doesn't have the facts and figures but is opposed to this and asks to vote no for the children.

Steve Rudolph noted it is the function of this body to serve the public and the public has been heard. It is overwhelming the people here are opposed. He explained there are only going to be 75 licenses given out and Germantown Hills will not get a license in the short term. He asked how do we want to position ourselves in the future.

Nigel Strickfaden stated he is against it but they could put a dispensary next to the State Police station.

Tim Demask noted he is in favor.

Tim Beechler noted he feels we want to be progressive and there may be an advantage to draw other businesses to Germantown Hills.

Mike Axelson stated he employs over 100 people and he sees all age groups. In the last month he lost two employees that are single moms because of their addiction and it's only going to get worse in January.

Julie Grant noted she has no doubt that the building will be beautiful but worries about the students that will be using.

Karl Figg stated he canvassed Whispering Oaks and has over 120 people that signed a petition against a dispensary.

James Herr stated he is in favor of legalization but we don't know everything and there will be consequences.

Jake Mills noted initially they didn't think there would be a problem with vaping but now we know there is. He stated he doesn't want to live in a progressive place and he likes living in a bedroom community.

Kevin Abbott stated the facility is going to be highly regulated.

Veronica Axelson noted we don't know what the outcome is going to be but we see what's happening in other states and asked that this isn't brought to our community.

Mike Hinrichsen explained the rules for the board speaking.

Todd Rice stated he is in favor of this and doesn't see it any more dangerous with other addictions such as alcohol, vaping, tobacco etc. He noted there have been many powerful comments tonight but he is planning on voting to approve with the intent to put this on as a referendum for a public vote on the November election.

Jim O'Laughlin state he has been talking about this with a lot of people and the response most of the time is that they don't care either way. He is very passionate about kids and doing what's best for the community but it's going to be here as it's going to be the law but is agreeable to put it on the ballot.

Marty Clinch indicated he has been doing a lot of research on this and going to talk to people face to face at homes, restaurants, and the library to get their fair and open opinion. The Chamber has called it unfair and that the people are trash that use it. The people that are for it aren't coming here because of the stigma and they would feel like there was a firing squad against them if they did. Marty noted he has looked at the advantages with the tax revenue but also the possibility of funding to help with education and more police protection. Marty stated he is voting for it to protect the village in order to regulate it. Right now, there is no place in town a dispensary could be in order to meet the requirements. Currently they would have to look in the unincorporated areas and annex. His best guess that it is at least 3 years out before there would be any possibility.

Stephanie Chaon stated she agrees with the others. She is a parent of 3 children. There are a lot of valid points being stated but the board has to make the right decision for the right time.

Julia Miller stated she has listened to all of the public comments with respect and didn't make any gestures or comments under her breath as some members in the crowd have done. She noted she is a social worker and she works with parents and kids every day that have addictions. She noted it's not a gateway drug but the use is associated with other trauma or pain in their lives. She indicated the board is charged with doing what's best for the community as a whole due to the changes in the law and down the road things can be changed if we see a potential problem. It's not just about the people in this room, but the people outside of this room, and the majority of the comments she has seen on social media have been in support of regulating the way this new law affects the Village. Julia is supportive of putting the question on the ballot in November.

Dick Hartman thanked everyone for attending. Dick stated he has looked at the good and the bad. We don't know how much revenue there could be or when it could happen. The negatives are that it is a risk. A risk to the safety of the children. Dick referenced the decision to construct a sidewalk on Somerset as the best solution for the safety of the children and feels there's a double standard to not do what's best for the children. Dick noted he feels we should say no now and can always change it later.

A motion was made by Dick to not approve the Ordinance to amend the zoning ordinance. The motion failed for lack of second.

Todd Rice wanted to clarify possible misconceptions. Todd indicated the village has been talking about this issue since July. In the times it has been discussed, it hasn't been about the money. The financials for the village are very good. The board hasn't raised taxes in several years and this issue isn't about the village needing money or tax dollars.

Stephanie Chaon indicated the ordinance puts the regulations in place to protect the kids and the community.

Jim O'Laughlin stated this has been one of the hardest things he has had to do. The village didn't ask the state to pass the law but we have this in front of us to protect the village and is in favor of putting this on the ballot.

Marty Clinch stated he has looked at other states' legislatures and they had to be careful on how they drafted the bill. They will need to look at the policing and educating around the issue. Marty noted he will continue to monitor the marijuana law because there will be several amendments that could affect municipalities in the future.

Mike Hinrichsen stated he is not in favor of the ordinance but he doesn't get a vote on this. He noted the likelihood of a dispensary coming is limited to almost nothing. Mike explained the costs to build one and hold a license. The cost to justify putting one in Germantown Hills is that we aren't going to even be on the radar. Mike noted the costs to police this versus tax dollars. Mike noted the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals did not recommend the ordinance and currently there's no place a dispensary could locate in the village with the proposed regulations. Mike questioned why we can't say no now. Will a dispensary in Germantown Hills move us closer to who we are or further away? Mike explained according to our code there will need to be 4 votes from the board members for the ordinance to pass.

4. Public Comments on Any Non-Action Items-None

5. Current Agenda Items

a. Approval of an Ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance (Cannabis-Dispensaries; Application Fees)

A motion was made by Marty Clinch to recommend Ordinance #819 an Ordinance amending the Zoning Ordinance) Cannabis Dispensaries; Application Fees) and to put this on as an advisory referendum as a public question in the November 2020 election. The motion was seconded by Jim O'Laughlin. **Motion passed #2.**

Todd Rice left at 8:23 p.m.

b. Approval of the contractor's application for payment #6 for the WWTP #1 Peak Flow Phase 2 Project

A motion was made by Marty Clinch to approve the contractor's application for payment #6 in the amount of \$163,260.00 for the WWTP #1 Peak Flow Phase 2 Project. The motion was seconded by Jim O'Laughlin. **Motion passed #3.**

c. Approval of the IEPA Loan Disbursement Request #6 for the WWTP #1 Peak Flow Phase 2 Project

A motion was made by Jim O'Laughlin to approve the IEPA Loan Disbursement Request #6 in the amount of \$176,090.27 for the WWTP #1 Peak Flow Phase 2 Project. The motion was seconded Julia Miller. **Motion passed #4.**

d. Approval of the Tax Levy Ordinance for FY 19-20

A motion was made by Marty Clinch to approve Ordinance #820 the Annual Tax Levy Ordinance for FY19-20. The motion was seconded by Stephanie Chaon. **Motion passed #5.**

e. Discussion and approval to update the Germantown Hills website

The finance committee approved the recommendation to update the website.

A motion was made by Julia Miller to approve updating the Germantown Hills website for \$2,500. The motion was seconded by Marty Clinch. **Motion passed #6.**

f. Discussion and approval of an employee Christmas bonus

The personnel committee recommended the same bonus as last year.

A motion was made by Dick Hartman to approve a \$250 employee Christmas bonus for all employees. The motion was seconded by Jim O'Laughlin. **Motion passed #7.**

g. Discussion and approval to modify the employee job titles in the Village code
Defer

h. Discussion and approval to purchase new cell phones

The personnel committee made a recommendation to purchase new cell phones and change our service plan to Verizon.

A motion was made by Jim O'Laughlin to approve the purchase of new cell phones for the employees. The motion was seconded by Stephanie Chaon. **Motion passed #8.**

i. Discussion and approval on the employee compensation study-Defer

6. Ongoing Agenda Items-None

7. Presentation of Bills

a. General/Sewer/Audit/MFT-A motion was made by Jim O’Laughlin to approve the general, sewer, audit and MFT bills. The motion was seconded by Marty Clinch. **Motion passed #9.**

8. Reports of Standing Committees

a. **Finance**-Stephanie Chaon had nothing new to report.

b. **Streets/Equipment**-Todd Rice was not in attendance.

c. **Personnel**-Julia Miller stated she would be scheduling a meeting before the next board meeting.

d. **Police**-Marty Clinch stated he had nothing new to report.

e. **Parks**- Dick Hartman stated Rich Brecklin will give the update on what’s going on with the construction on the welcome lot during his report.

f. **Sewer**-Jim O’Laughlin had nothing new to report.

g. **Storm Water**-Jim O’Laughlin noted he will be having a meeting in January.

h. **Economic Development Council**-Ann Sasso reported Rotary had received the \$2,000 grant for the trees on the welcome lot. Anytime Fitness will be opening soon.

9. Reports of Special Committees-None

10. Reports of Officers

a. **Zoning Officer/Village Clerk/Village Administrator**-Ann Sasso noted Tri-County Planning Commission is checking with IDOT on the information that is being discussed with the Germantown Hills to Metamora Trail. Ann Sasso reported on the grant reports that are being generated each month as required.

b. **Superintendent of Public Works**-Rich Brecklin reported he is still trying to coordinate the construction work on the welcome lot. He noted they are repairing and winterizing some of the equipment. The sewer project is going great but they have been spending a lot of time on repairing lift stations. Scott and Rich will be looking at updating the facility plan including replacing lift stations.

c. **Village Attorney**-Bill Streeter stated the board will need to talk about cannabis possession and use and also personnel regulations.

d. **Village President**-Mike Hinrichsen reported on the Woodford County Revolving loan fund allocations to municipalities. Mike indicated we can now start applying for the Natural Hazard Mitigation project grants. Mike reported he is going to serve as the GPEDC Chair one more year.

11. Communications to the Board-Ann Sasso read a thank you note from Michaels Run for Life and a thank you from a resident for the Woodland Knolls street overlay.

12. Adjournment-A motion was made by Jim O’Laughlin to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 p.m. The motion was seconded by Stephanie Chaon. **Motion passed #10.**
Ann Sasso, Village Clerk