

Did you catch the beauty of Cuba Marsh, every tree dressed in ice with the sunshine exploding into a glorious prisms of light—well, why do we never have a camera when we need one! But we do have other new photos on our web site, <http://deerparkneighbors.com>.

Go to the events page to see the Agenda for Monday's meeting (7pm, at the Barn). Since the agenda wasn't posted online (due to computer issues, we all know what that's like), Deer Park Neighbors trudged out in the snow to photograph the Village Hall bulletin board. You'll want to be at this meeting, to hear the discussion of the proposals for police service offered by Kildeer and Barrington police departments.

While we were at the "municipal campus," we noticed the windmill is installed. Amazing how quickly that windmill went up. Was the foundation afraid the board might rescind its approval for this frivolity? Or did the foundation need a "what we have done for you lately" to support its request to manage the property for five more years?

Can the board seriously consider extending the foundation's contract? What is the rush? The contract isn't up until February. Is it fair for the trustees who sit on that foundation board also to vote on the village board about its contract? Shouldn't the foundation be given a performance review (other than the one they give themselves monthly)?

Here's our review: Half a million over budget (more or less) on the Barn; two years late; few paid rentals (although there is a new events coordinator who will report to Jim Connors); one contractor fired and still no reimbursement from his bonding company (if there is any money for that bond); no end date to construction announced yet; no itemized summary of all the project's costs to date.

Look at the project itself. The floor tiles don't match (check out the staircase), the sump ejector pipe is not to code, the wall sconces in the main room are delaminating, the modern hanging light fixtures are dust catchers and hardly authentic. Most of you have never seen the barn; why not make your own tour, because its cost is approaching the \$250/square foot President Gifford said it would have cost us to start from scratch.

Good news: Your Homeowners Association can use the Barn rent free for your meetings (perhaps other non-profit groups as well); if you want to eat or drink during the event, there may be a charge, but we bet if you're willing to set up and clean up for yourself, they'll be happy to forego the rent.

Vehe was a frequent topic during questions at last week's Special Meeting on the Sales Tax among questioners. If you want to judge for yourself what was said, see the gavel-to-gavel DVD (free at the Barrington library and to DPN subscribers; \$10 to others).

Trustee Rotter said that in his opinion, the upcoming referendum is really a referendum on the village's stewardship of its finances. Trustee Kizior thought that was politicization of the sales tax question. Trustee Pratscher doesn't think board actions need to be validated. Trustee Thrun was reluctant to articulate a definition of "infrastructure" (as used in the language of the referendum); he said that trying to be precise "could come back to bite us later." Thrun is the same trustee who, during the Red Seal deliberations, argued that a 4-foot-high, 20-some-foot-long, solid brick structure was "not a wall, it's a sign." So his assertion that infrastructure is like pornography—"I know it when I see it"—is not reassuring to us.

President Gifford was more engaging and inclusive than we have ever seen him. Near the end of the meeting, he said that if he could, he would segregate the new tax receipts, to make clear how those dollars were expended. We applaud that kind of leadership. President Gifford also said that he would circulate materials to answer the attendees' questions, and post those on the website, too. (We'll share these when we get them.)

Kudos, too, to Trustee Plautz who was so well prepared and had the best understanding of the Illinois statue as it pertains to non-home rule sales/service tax increase. (Attorney Keller was not at this meeting to clarify the legal questions.)

There was no formal presentation, as we expected. What we did see, projections on road/drainage repair/maintenance costs for upcoming years, did not include engineering fees (potentially 7-12% additional). Nor were there projections from Trustee Kizior, village CFO, on other village spending anticipated for the next five years.

Here's a number that keeps getting batted around. President Gifford asserts that only 5-10% of Deer Park

shoppers live in Deer Park. He uses this to support his theory that "other people would be paying for our infrastructure." But there are no hard numbers, and it's obvious that since there are only a bit over 3,000 residents in Deer Park (maybe half of them the family shopper), of course we are only a small percentage of all shoppers, given the populations of the surrounding communities. We can say this; 100% of Deer Park shoppers will be assessed the extra half a percent.

Next month's special meeting on the sales tax, Wed., Jan. 9, 7pm, the Barn, will be your last opportunity to ask questions. We hope the village will begin to blast meeting notices to their email list; we can all use reminders in our busy lives.

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