

Subject: YouTube, referendum, VFF contract, counting to 4

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From: Al Barry, President | Deborah Barry, Secretary <info@deerparkneighbors.com>

To: "Al Barry, President | Deborah Barry, Secretary" <info@deerparkneighbors.com>

Conversation: YouTube, referendum, VFF contract, counting to 4

Category: DEER PARK

Lots of news...and a goodly dose of opinion, opinion based on our attendance at public meetings, research and listening to our neighbors. If you're not interested in opinion, you need not read on.

ALSO NOTE: First, documents and links to news stories go up almost daily at <http://deerparkneighbors.com>. So you don't have to wait for a blast. We welcome your suggestions for things to include. Second, please change your address book to info@deerparkneighbors.com, our primary email, so you do receive our blasts.

Speaking of primaries, Tuesday, Feb. 5 is the primary. NOTE: You do NOT have to declare for any party in order to vote in this primary. If all you want to do is vote on the sales tax referendum, you can request a NON-PARTISAN ballot. You must not miss this opportunity to change the course of Deer Park.

We received an email directing us to <http://YouTube.com/deerparkwatchdog>

We clicked on that, and there are a number of video clips of your Village Trustees and President discussing current issues. For those of you who do not have time for village meetings or to watch the meeting DVDs, this is a short course in reality. And you can always see the complete DVDs if you want to see more. This set of postings are clearly positioned against the Sales Tax Referendum.

And so are we—after attending ALL the meetings, reading all the documents, speaking at public comments and listening to answers...

WE RECOMMEND VOTING NO ON THE SALES TAX REFERENDUM! See the exact wording on our web site. We have asked directly—time and again—precisely what projects the trustees would vote for in the future using the funds from the new sales tax. They don't want to be “pinned down.”

In other words, we see nothing to stop the new revenues from being spent at Vehe—the “floating island,” the bridge over the wetlands, the \$45,000 “McTot Lot” (ask Village Hall for the drawings!), and so on. Or on any other “public infrastructure.” Remember Trustee Kizior's \$400,000 plans for Town Center Park ball fields?

In our opinion, the board—as presently constituted—cannot be relied on to disperse new monies wisely. As one of our neighbors so succinctly put her opposition to the sales tax: “It’s not the money, it’s the principle.” We concur.

And we can support our recommendation, even if based only on Tuesday night’s meeting. See also: Deborah’s public comments, posted on the “Editorial” page of our web site.

ITEM>>At Tuesday’s board meeting, the trustees voted to approve the draft contract with the Vehe Farm Foundation. President Gifford ignored the written request from Trustee Rotter—duly submitted in the agenda packet and posted on our web site (click on the eyeglasses)—to table the contract the full board was present. Our understanding from reading this document—please read it for yourself—is that some code violations might prevent the board from recovering from a bonding agent. We believe the bonding Joel refers to is that which was in place during the previous contractor’s failed efforts.

ITEM>>The Vehe project manager asserted that everything done at the Barn in the last four months was part of the original budget. True—but he failed to mention that public funds already paid for that work, and now public funds are being spent on the do-over. To the tune of almost and additional \$700,000 in the last four months.

ITEM>>Because only four trustees were present, and the number “four” is the majority required to pass any votes involving spending, President Gifford had the responsibility to cast his votes Tuesday night. According to our notes (and you can request the DVD), President Gifford put his vote to \$117,136.39 ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS to Pepper Construction. Even Trustee Dave Kizior voted for the spending, despite his “heart-felt” speechifying about the ongoing financial bleeding: “I still don’t see the end.” Lone no vote: Trustee Bob Kellermann.

ITEM>>President Gifford put his vote to \$9,846.55 ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS TO HPZS, which is the architectural firm. That firm’s request was justified by the recent work of Pepper being “out of scope” of the original project. Yes, because the project went two years over schedule and \$700,000 over budget, the architects feel justified to charge all over again. Lone no vote: Trustee Bob Kellermann.

ITEM>>President Gifford put his vote to approve the draft contract between the Village and the Vehe Farm Foundation. Read the indemnification clause in the contract, which is posted on our web site—just click on the eyeglasses. READ RECITAL FOUR, which lists “the best interests of the Foundation” as the basis for a sweeping indemnification of Foundation members, past, present and future. Al Barry asked in Public Comments that the board should add a clause to permit termination by either party with 60 days notice; Al has signed hundreds of such contracts in his 30 years as an independent sales representative. This was NOT done. We urge you to read the contract, which is followed by pages of the

Foundation's hopes and dreams. Hundreds of thousands if not millions of dollars of hopes and dreams—the very Foundation that oversaw the project to date, and that has been denied its recent Oslad Grant request. (We might not object so vehemently to the contract had it included a clause that restricted all future spending to private funds and grants.)
Lone no vote: Trustee Bob Kellerman.

ITEM>>Trustee Maureen Pratscher took the public commentators to task for what she said was impugning the reputation of Attorney Keller for representing both the Village and the Foundation on this contract. Maureen, you are incredibly bright and verbal; however, you again misunderstand a simply point that was made. It is the reputation of the BOARD that suffers when it agrees to dual representation.

ITEM>>Richard Chay asked that both Trustee Pratscher and Trustee Howard Thrun recuse themselves from the vote on the contract, since they sit on both the Foundation and the Village boards. The issues is not that they stand to gain personally from the contract; it's that they vote on both sides of each and every request. First to make the request on the Foundation side, and then to fund the request on the Village side. In other municipalities we are familiar with, trustees or councilmen sit on boards, but only as liaisons; they do not vote!

ITEM>>At the meeting, Trustee Dave Kizior, who is also CFO of the village, actually talked about going out for bids of about \$500,000 on the roads program for 2008, but with the understanding that those bids may not be funded. Todd Gordon wisely counseled that it's not proper to go out for bids you don't fully intend to honor, or words to that effect.

This board simply doesn't know how to do business. This president simply rolls over the opposition—because, frankly, he can. At least, up until now. But President Gifford and the rest of the board will have to be very, very fiscally conservative and especially economical when this sales tax fails—there will be sufficient funds in the Village treasury for the current year. As long as nothing is spent on Vehe.

For those of you who are newer to the village, you should know that in 2009, three seats plus the President's chair will be up for election. Those seats are currently held by Trustee Pat Plautz, Trustee Howard Thrun (of I'll-know-infrastructure-when-I-see-it fame) and Trustee Dave Kizior, as well as President Scott Gifford. So it's only about one year before we might see a very differently constituted board. Think about that before you give the current board any more funds to move around.

ROADS FORUM: This will be a casual, open forum to bring YOUR road and drainage issues directly to Trustee Bob Kellerman. Monday, Jan. 28, 7-9 pm at the Barn. Deer Park Neighbors will record the entire proceedings. Bob asks that if you cannot attend, be in touch with him by phone or email. Contact information is posted on our "Events" page.

SPEAKING OF NEWS AND NEW PEOPLE:

So many of you who have recently subscribed to DPN wonder about the lime green ribbons you receive with your membership. These are yours to hand on your mailbox post (not box) or a tree or lamp to signify your support of the idea that “every voice counts in Deer Park.” Keep your eyes open, these are the highly visible greetings of one neighbor to another.

A number of breaking news stories are linked from our Site. Ela Township is again without an assessor, due to ignorance of the law. District 95 continues to look at the condition of its schools, and there is a “Stakeholder’s Survey” available—please answer this internet survey, it takes only a few minutes. Link available on our “Events” page.

The “Police Blotter” in the Lake Zurich Courier now includes a listing for Deer Park. We thank the Pioneer Press for this additional effort to keep our residents informed. Aware is alert, we always say.

We welcome Yvonne Keith, the new Vehe Barn Events Coordinator. She introduced herself to the Board Tuesday evening, and has already had a great deal of success showing the property and booking events. She has a great background in marketing, and she is enthusiastic about the opportunities. Her contact information is listed on our web site on the VODP page.

CN RAILWAY CONGESTION:

Funny, not a word was spoken by President Gifford on this matter, at least not that we heard. This potential acquisition of the EJ&E line by Canadian National is a crisis for this region, from everything we’ve read and what we learned at the public forum. You must comment to the Surface Transportation Board no later than Feb. 1. Links and information available at our web site. Don’t miss the video interviews on our CN page. And please, email us your comments for inclusion on our “Editorials” page.

INFORMATIVE MAILING FROM THE VILLAGE:

Your President and Board voted to spend \$600 to send out a mailer this week to tell you about the Sales Tax Referendum. We find nothing to complain about in this document (as presented in the agenda packet). But remember who wrote the questions and provided the answers. We have tried to provide some balancing information, and with YOUR PAID SUBSCRIPTIONS, we could do paper mailings as well.

THIS WEB SITE IS YOURS. Please print out anything you see here that you want

to share with neighbors who don't have an internet connection. Please call your friends and neighbors and recommend our web site to them.

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