

Subject: Litigation on Vehe? Budget meeting--at last! What is LNCl? In the News

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Conversation: Litigation on Vehe? Budget meeting--at last! What is LNCl? In the News

Greetings, Neighbors

DATELINE DEER PARK, FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 2010—we would have blasted on April 1, but we were afraid you might think the content was a prank.

HAPPY EASTER, JOYOUS PASSOVER

First and foremost, we send Easter and Passover greetings to all our Neighbors. This is indeed the season of new beginnings. Most cultures share the symbolism of eggs, representing the endless circle of life.

BUDGET MEETING, MONDAY, APRIL 5, 2010, 7pm, at the Barn

Public Comments are at the top of the agenda; you need to sign up before the meeting begins, and please, when you go to the podium, bring the microphone right up to your mouth. We don't understand why those mics effectively have to be swallowed to work, but it is what it is.

This is NOT a continuation meeting, there is a new agenda for Monday, which is posted at Village Hall, but NOT online. DPN is cognizant that there is a lot going on in the village, and that we have a new Village Clerk. However—we simply cannot understand that agenda postings (and, by the way, postings of the approved 2010 minutes) are not a priority. Transparency begins with public meetings, and the documentation thereof.

WHAT'S ON THE AGENDA?

Ohmigawd, there is an Executive Session scheduled. We called President Bob Kellermann and asked directly if the board would get past the executive session, and on to the business of the day. He told us that the session should be brief, and he estimated that the Public Meeting should reconvene about than 8:15pm.

Nevertheless, in addition to our video camera, DPN will be bringing a deck of cards, just in case. We have to wonder: Are these endless closed-door discussions further evidence of a deadlocked board or a strategy of the majority to wear out the audience?

LITIGATION AND SPECIAL COUNSEL?

From the 4/5/10 Agenda

5: Executive Session to discuss litigation which is probable or imminent.

6: Action items based on executive session:

A) Action to initiate one or more civil action(s) relative to the Vehe Farm and Barn

B) Engagement of Special Counsel to pursue litigation relative to the Vehe Farm and Barn

Yes, yet another executive session, but this time, a vote is slated as an action item. Two votes in fact. Is this litigation above and beyond what's already in play against the bonding company and RW Clarke (original contractor, Barn interior)?

It will be interesting to watch these votes; every trustee will be on the record with his or her yea or nay. Assuming, of course, that President Bob Kellermann can avoid the endless wrangling over the agenda itself. Will any trustee try to remove those votes from the proceedings, after so many hours behind closed doors? Or is this board at last ready to take action and move on?

The voting record should be top of mind for the three trustees who would have to run in 2011, if they want to continue on the board: Trustees Dave Kizior, Maureen Pratscher and Barb Evans.

BUDGET TALKS, AT LAST

With a commitment to zero budgeting, the board is reminded not to count its chickens before they've hatched. We asked our readers so many times to come to this year's budget meetings, and every time, we've been frustrated by executive sessions, making it an exercise in futility to show up at the Barn. (For those of you who haven't attended a meeting, Executive Sessions are, in general, closed chamber meetings related to litigation and matters of staff review/remuneration.)

But the village's financial future is on the line, with Roads & Drainage the priority. We have asked Trustee Keith Olson, Chairman, Finance, that a sufficient number of hard copies of the draft budget be available at the meeting. In past years, the budget has been projected on the Barn's AV screen, so that everyone can watch real-time re-calculations updates as the discussions proceed. However, to be frank, that system has failed more often than not. (DPN offers its non-digital projection screen as backup, if needed; please let us know.

In the previous administration, the president was pretty generous to allow questions from the floor as each line item was discussed. We hope Kellermann

will do the same.

BARN UTILIZATION SURVEY

Which comes first, the Barn Utilization Survey or the budget talks? As former Trustee Pat Ekstrom pointed out, in past years, funding for Vehe was always done (and sacrosanct) before other budget items were discussed. The Vehe Farm Foundation no longer has a permanent place on the agenda (as a presenter, that is). Perhaps this one park (Vehe is just one of 17 parks) will take a proportional place on the budget this year.

At the last meeting, we heard that Trustee Dale Sands expects to have all the responses to the resident Survey summarized by the May BOT meeting. In our opinion, that's too late, much too late. We urge him to summarize the results no later than the regularly scheduled April 19, 2010, meeting. Even if the number of surveys returned is not yet statistically significant, surely a "sense of the residents" would be apparent. Should the results be delayed, the new budget could be formulated without reflecting the desires of the residents on this very contentious subject—maintenance and further development of the Vehe property.

VFF AND/OR LNCI—INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW

The more DPN (and you, our faithful readers) look at this issue, the more questions we have. We welcome answers from any of our readers—or any of you who read these emails as forwarded from a friend.

Are the Vehe Farm Foundation (VFF) and the Leave No Child Inside Consortium of Greater Barrington (LNCI) much closer than arm's length? Is the VFF using its own treasury to fund LNCI? Would that be proper? Ethical? Would using VFF funds for LNCI contravene any terms of the contract between the village and the VFF?

(Gee, wouldn't it be helpful if the Ethics Committee had been formed and be meeting regularly?)

Whatever the actual amount of money left in the VFF treasury, to whom does that money revert, upon dissolution of the foundation? Did donors intend their gifts exclusively for the Vehe property?

Trustee Barb Evans mentioned at the last meeting that she believed that VFF monies ought to come back to the village. We agree, if that's possible legally, that's the best thing to do. And we also believe there should be a fence around those dollars, to be used only on that property. (We know, the monies came out

of the General Fund, but—even if you don’t agree with the actions of previous boards regarding funding the VFF, the money was already line-itemed.)

We’ve always asked: Are there any “outside” donations to VFF, or did all the money come from the very close-knit VFF board members? In all this time, has one single donor stood up to be identified by name? Of course, donations to a public charity can be made anonymously, which makes it hard to gauge the support for the mission of the VFF. It’s moot now; VFF is “going out of business.”

But according to online sites, the VFF and LNCl share the same phone number and mailing address: 847-331-0967, 23570 W. Cuba Road, Deer Park
<http://funoutside.org>
<http://vehefarmfoundation.org>

We know from the expensive LNCl brochure that the steering committee, 14 people in all, comprises 4 VFF supporters:

- Trustee Maureen Pratscher (who is listed as representing the Village, but that was never approved by any Board vote)
- VFF President Pat Winkelman
- VFF VP Teri Bridge (who seems to be treasurer of both VFF and LNCl)
- VFF Board member Tom Benjamin

A fifth steering committee member, listed as an “area resident” is in fact a Deer Park Resident.

The domain name owner of <http://funoutside.org> is Kent Smith, also a VFF board member.

Domain ID:D154518534-LROR
Domain Name:FUNOUTSIDE.ORG

And one of the big partners of LNCl enterprise is the Barrington Area Development Council; according to the Barrington Area Library web site, Jim Peterson, the architect of the Barn and VFF board member, is BADC’s president.

Their own “Comprehensive Plan,” posted on the funoutside.org web site lists this contact information:

If you would like to get in touch with the Consortium or request more information, please contact:

Teri Bridge or Pat Winkelman
Vehe Farm Foundation
23570 W. Cuba Road

Deer Park, IL 60010
(847) 331-0967
info@funoutside.org or
info@vehefarmfoundation.org

Is there no greater diversity available among this so-called “consortium,” “45 community leaders and organizations”?

Is the above information all up to date? We welcome updates and rebuttals from anyone, and will publish those in their entirety.

Once more, let’s be very clear. Who could be against fresh air and sunshine? But since almost all of us live on one or more acres, isn’t our children’s relationship to nature a matter of family values?

Are the prodding and pro-action at previous meetings by Trustees Barb Evans and Maureen Pratscher aimed at future funding for LNCl? DPN asks the Board of Trustees to reject that course, firmly and finally.

Above all, we hope and expect the Village of Deer Park Board of Trustees to fully understand the consortium before taking any further votes, theoretical or fiduciary, regarding LNCl.

COYOTES IN THE NEWS

Pioneer Press, 2/15/10, “Kildeer Police Chief Robert Zujewski said his department wants to hear about wild animal calls and responds to them, but would use force only in an emergency situation....Zujewski added people who are concerned about coyotes should call the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, which maintains a list of private trackers.” Full story

<http://www.pioneerlocal.com/lakezurich/news/2117249,lake-zurich-kdcoyote-032510-s1.article>

VEHE FARM IN THE NEWS

Daily Herald, 3/30/10 “Inside the barn the hand-hewn beams are still a visible testament to John Vehe's work. The Vehe Farm Foundation recently donated Vehe family farm implements and photographs to the Lake County Discovery Museum to continue the preservation of the Vehe's story.”

What equipment and artwork belongs to the Vehe Farm Foundation, that they can make a donation? Isn't everything that was on the property when the village acquired Vehe the property of the Village of Deer Park? Why doesn't VFF

President Pat Winkelman come to Monday's meeting and explain this donation?

Full story:

<http://www.dailyherald.com/story/?id=368653&src=61>

CONSOLIDATED ELECTEDS AND STATE PRIMARIES—from the Lake County Clerk
Governor Pat Quinn recently signed legislation to move Illinois' even year primary elections to the 3rd Tuesday in March for even year elections effective for 2012. The Illinois 2012 primary will be on March 20....Please note that Consolidated Elections for local government are held in odd-numbered years. The Consolidated Primary is always held on the last Tuesday in February and the Consolidated Election is held on the first Tuesday in April.

For your convenience, consider enrolling to vote by mail for future primaries, as well as the November 2, 2010 General Election. Enrollment forms are available at www.VotingByMail.info or call (847) 377-2406. Early voting is offered at convenient locations and begins 22 days prior to traditional Election Day.

MAX AND ERMA'S

Max and Erma's in Deer Park Town Center is closed. Loyal customers with frequent diner points and coupons can use them at other Max and Erma's. We have really enjoyed this family restaurant. We hope that the Town Center is way out front in finding a great attraction for the Rand Road destination—one where whole families can eat together at reasonable prices.

<http://maxandermas.com>

RAIN BARRELS AND COMPOSTERS

We wonder why composting wasn't part of the negotiations with Groot—certainly should have been a conversation before a 5-year commitment was signed by the village. But if you'd like to proceed on your own, there are many opportunities, including:

The 2010 Rain Barrel & Tumbling Composter Sale will be held this spring with orders being taken until April 30th. This is a pre-sale only event, all orders need to be in by 4:30pm on Friday, April 30th. The sale pickup will be held on Wednesday, May 12, from Noon to 7pm and Thursday, May 13, from Noon to 7pm at the new Lake County Fairgrounds in Grayslake. For more information and to check barrel availability please contact the District Office:

847-223-1056

lcsxcd@sbcgobal.net

TALK TO YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS—in fact, put these numbers into your speed dials

President, Robert Kellermann, bobkellermann@sbcglobal.net, 847-526-7266
Public Safety, David Kizior , kiz.family@comcast.net, 847-382-3125
Roads & Public Utilities, Dale Sands, dalesands@aol.com, 847-381-8353
Finance, Keith Olson, keithdolson@comcast.net, 847-438-2274
Health & Sanitation, Maureen Pratscher, mpratscher@aol.com, 847-381-2341
Planning & Zoning, Joyce Trost, joycetrost@gmail.com, 224-456-5509
Parks & Recreation, Barbara Evans, BJEVANSC3@aol.com, 847-540-7479

Remember, together, we are stronger!

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Deborah Barry, Secretary | Al Barry, President
847-867-1867 <http://deerparkneighbors.com>
Deer Park Neighbors, 412 Bramble Lane, Deer Park, IL 60010

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