



**Village of Oak Park Board of Trustees  
March 3, 2008**

*Gail Moran, Observer*

The meeting convened on time with all Trustees present. One individual offered public comment followed by the Village Managers Report. Of note was the fact that AT&T will be working in various alleyways throughout the village installing equipment for high speed digital service. President Pope then made a few brief comments about the increase in down payment requirements from some mortgage providers, indicating that this was a countywide initiative by some lenders, in response to the ongoing mortgage crises, and not focused just on Oak Park's zip code 60304.

Citizen Involvement Commission appointments were approved without controversy. The Chair of the Commission made her customary plea for commission volunteers. Housing Program Advisory Commission recommendations for Security Improvement Grants were approved.

The agenda then turned to a recommendation to approve a Retail Support Grant totaling \$24,800 for Wells Street Popcorn, soon to be opened in downtown Oak Park. After some discussion, the recommendation was approved with the sole dissenting vote cast by Trustee Johnson. Trustee Johnson voiced his concerns that the grantee's establishment, in his view, did not satisfy the requisite retail mix for a downtown Oak Park concern. Going forward, the Chair of the Commission charged with making recommendations on these grants concurred that it will be revising its guidelines to more closely scrutinize the appropriate retail mix with respect to grant applicants.

The Consent Agenda involved approving appropriations consistent with the 2008 budget for the Oak Park Regional Housing Center and Oak Park Development Corporation.

Another budget item involving the Oak Park Shuttle was the subject of extensive conversation. Trustees Hale, Johnson and Hedges voiced strong opinions in opposition to approving this item due to fiscal concerns. Trustee Hale felt there was no public policy benefit for this program as it did not adequately achieve any sustainability initiatives and current levels of ridership did not support the cost, which was increasing by 37%. President Pope and Trustee Marsey spoke in support of funding the shuttle, advocating its use for underserved populations. Trustee Marsey, in fact, advocated expanding shuttle services to cover the northeast and southeast parts of the Village with expanded hours to capture commuters traveling to train stops. Trustees Pate and Johnson proposed a compromise position that would fund the shuttle for a six-month period while the Center for Neighborhood Technology evaluated its use in achieving sustainability initiatives and further study could be done about its economic viability. An amended motion in this regard passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned shortly before 10 p.m.