

VILLAGE OF DOLTON BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
EMERGENCY MEETING  
July 3, 2016

CALL TO ORDER Mayor Riley H. Rogers called the Emergency Meeting of the Board of Trustees to order in the New Village Hall at 10:12 a.m.

Village Administrator Stan Urban announced that the meeting was called at the request of Trustee Stubbs with Trustees Brown, Henyard, and Hunt concurring.

The village clerk posted notice of the meeting at 9:50 a.m. on July 1, 2016, and emailed notice to requesting media pursuant to statute.

ROLL CALL The following trustees were present: Stanley Brown, Robert E. Hunt, Jr., Duane Muhammad, Trustee Robert E. Pierson, Jr., and Valeria Stubbs. Trustee Tiffany Henyard was absent.

Also present: Village Attorney John B. Murphey, Village Administrator Stan Urban, Chief Robert M. Collins, Jr., Supt. Matt Stacy, Chief of Staff Elizabeth Collins and Executive Assistant to the Mayor Ashahed Triche.

A quorum was present.

Trustee Henyard arrived at 10:19 a.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/  
PRAYER Led by Elder Edward Crayton.

OLD BUSINESS None

NEW BUSINESS

A. MELANIE FITNESS CENTER

Trustee Stubbs explained that she asked for the special meeting this morning to address residents' concerns regarding the improper rental of the Melanie Center. It was brought to her attention by residents and a videotape that was sent to her that there was a splash party in June where alcohol may have been served, no life guard was present, no insurance was provided, and ladies in bikinis were shaking their butts. She said that a resident had reported seeing liquor bottles in the trash the next day. Trustee Stubbs said that the fitness center was named after a young Dolton resident who died and was intended to be built for the youth.

Trustee Stubbs asked Melanie management to provide any documentation of insurance or a life guard being present.

Trustee Stubbs asked the board to close the Melanie Fitness Center immediately until Tuesday, July 5<sup>th</sup>, and to require board approval of events to be held at the center going forward.

Trustee Hunt said he saw the video taken at the event on Facebook. Trustee Brown asked to see the video. Mayor Rogers asked the media director if he could obtain and play the video at the meeting. Trustee Muhammad objected to requiring the media director to leave the camera and encode a video from another format, which takes time.

Trustee Muhammad said that he authorized the event. Security was present. Mr. Williams, a Melanie employee, is a certified life guard. Attendees were instructed that there was to be no alcohol. Ladies and gentlemen were dressed in bikinis and minimal attire because it was a pool party. There was no more "gyrating" than what is seen at Steppin' at the Fountain or even at the recent Mother's Day event. Trustee Muhammad said he had not received one phone call since the event from any trustee expressing concern, and said that calling a special meeting was unnecessary when a phone call to him could have resolved concerns.

Mayor Rogers said that he received a call regarding the event and telephoned Trustee Muhammad. Mayor Rogers said that his main concern as expressed to Trustee Muhammad was over liability, and that he believed a certificate of insurance from the promoter should have been required.

Trustee Muhammad noted that Melanie promotional literature advertises that the facility is available for rental. The revenue is dedicated to bringing Melanie "out of the hole" in which it has been operating since it opened in 2001.

Trustee Hunt said that he joined the request for a special meeting upon seeing the video and learning that another event was scheduled for later today. He said he was unaware of parties like that going on at the fitness center and was concerned about the potential liability.

Trustee Muhammad said he has been associated with Melanie since 2003 and parties have been going on since at least then. The center is insured, but insurance does not mean the village cannot be sued. He said that his integrity and the integrity of his son is being besmirched by this meeting for political purposes.

Ishmael Muhammad, Melanie's general manager, said that a patrol officer stopped in the day of the event and said everything looked fine.

Mayor Rogers said that events of that size should require a certificate of insurance. He read from a flyer circulating about today's event for "Baddies and Bodies" with a cash bar.

Trustee Muhammad said that flyer was issued in error. He said that the promoter is present and will address the error. Trustee Muhammad said that he met with Mayor Rogers and Ms. Phillips of licenses and permits to make sure the events at the

Melanie conform with village requirements. He was told that there is no special event license required for rentals at the Melanie. Mayor Rogers noted that special events licenses are required for events at which alcohol is to be provided. Attorney Murphey said that anyone who wants to use village property for a special event, such as the June event promoted as "Dayhem," should provide insurance. Mr. Urban noted that the deductible on the village's insurance is \$100,000. In response to Trustee Henyard's question, the promoter confirmed there was no insurance provided. Trustee Muhammad noted that the issue of insurance for rentals had not been raised before this week.

Trustee Henyard said that insurance should be provided for any event on village property.

Trustee Pierson said that these types of parties should not be held on village property. He said he takes Trustee Muhammad at his word that there was no alcohol and Trustee Stubbs at her word that alcohol was brought in. He said he does not believe that board approval should be required for events because the board takes too long in making decisions. He said that the board was imposing requirements after the fact.

Trustee Muhammad noted that there are events at the fitness center on a daily basis. Individuals who use the facilities are required to sign waivers. The dumpster is regularly used by others.

Mayor Rogers said that he received a text message promoting a pool party on July 16<sup>th</sup> with liquor to be served. He asked if Melanie management was aware of how these events are being promoted, and that steps need to be followed to prevent this type of promotion. Trustee Muhammad repeated that there were errors in the events' promotional flyers. He said that if the board is interested in bringing business to the village and bringing Melanie out of the red, this is "bad optics."

Mayor Rogers said he had first contacted Trustee Muhammad and Mr. Muhammad when he saw motorcyclists racing in the Melanie parking lot at an event last week. The promoter at that event said that Mr. Muhammad was aware that the event was a motorcycle stunt show but promoted it as a car was fundraiser.

Trustee Muhammad said that reports on the center's activities are turned in every day. He has had conversations with Mayor Rogers, Mr. Urban, and Finance Director Redmond on what the village required. He noted that the \$500 rental fee is "a steal" because it is designed to bring business and activity to the center.

Mr. Urban confirmed that the village's insurance broker had told him that small private parties with no admission charge were covered under the village's insurance but that promoted events which charge admission require a \$1 million certificate of insurance. He added that as of Thursday, there had been no payment for the event deposited in the village's account.

MOTION TO CLOSE MELANIE FITNESS CENTER at 4 p.m. today until the regularly scheduled opening hour on Tuesday, July 5, 2016.

Motion by Trustee Stubbs. Second by Trustee Brown.

ROLL CALL

AYES: 5 Trustees Brown, Henyard, Hunt, Pierson, Stubbs

NAYS: 1 Trustee Muhammad

ABSTAIN: 0

ABSENT: 0

Motion passed.

MOTION TO REQUIRE BOARD APPROVAL for Adult Private Parties of this Type at the Melanie Fitness Center.

Motion by Trustee Stubbs. Second by Trustee Henyard.

Trustee Hunt said that he did not feel right trying to manage day to day operations and the board should make sure management is in order. Trustee Henyard noted that contracts require board approval. Trustees Pierson and Muhammad agreed with Trustee Hunt. Mayor Rogers asked for clarification of parties "of this type." Attorney Murphey suggested that he write up rules for facility use which the board would then approve. Trustee Stubbs withdrew her motion.

CITIZENS ADDRESS

Ishmael Muhammad, general manager of the Melanie Fitness Center since 2015, noted that under his tenure membership at the center had increased from 300 to 1800. He reminded the board that the center has a contract with the promoter of today's event and deposits have been made. The flyers were printed from another template and were in error, but the description of the event on FaceBook and EventBrite have been changed. He said that there was no alcohol at the June event. Non-alcoholic beverages were served and there were ten security guards present from 5 p.m. to 12 a.m. In response to Mayor Rogers question, he said that he will no email the police chief and assistant police chief as well as the fire chief of future events.

Odell Williams, aquatics and fitness manager at the center since its opening, said that upcoming events should not be penalized. There would have been no need for a meeting if management had been informed of the need for insurance.

Event promoter said that no one had told her about insurance. She said that she had proven herself with a recent event at Nzuri. Further, as a result of having events at Melanie, she has brought in clients to join the center.

Karen Hicks said that as a black woman she urges residents to pay attention to who is in office. The board is not educated and always at division.

Clinton Jenkins, resident and Melanie employee said that he has not seen alcohol at Melanie since he began working there in 2014.

Demetrius Walker, Fathers and Blessings, said that business owners know that insurance is required. The problem is with management.

Member, Melanie Fitness Center for nine years, said that the atmosphere at the facility has become more welcoming and professional under current management, and that the facility has attracted a more eclectic membership. He noted, as a Muslim, that Muslims take great pride in order, decorum, and law, and warned of "pulling strings of black men and women."

Christopher Smith asked if the decision to close the center today was final. If so, he had no reason to speak.

Kenny Williams, said that the problem was a miscue in the village administration. The lack of insurance is a board omission and cannot be put on management. The board of trustees should have committee meetings on these issues before bringing them to the main meeting.

Edward Crayton, resident, said that it seems like the village had no policy. The attorney offers a good strategy but that if the contract with the promoter of today's event did not stipulate insurance, it is hard to hold the promoter accountable.

Jerry Jones, Dolton Bears, said he is familiar with the requirement for insurance from holding an event at the former Dolton convention center. He said that management has good intentions but that the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

Resident said that both sides need to have documentation in place for these events.

Ms. Crayton, resident, agreed that insurance is needed but that not everyone knows that. She said that the media is propagating a negative image of Dolton which limits business. She credited Mr. Muhammad for reaching younger adults who are underserved in Dolton.

(Trustees Brown, Henyard and Hunt left the meeting during address by the next resident.)

Mrs. Crayton, resident, said when she served on the Dolton Youth Commission, policies and procedures were in place. The board is holding young people accountable without telling them what is expected. The promoter can sue the village for breach of contract.

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board of Trustees, on a motion by Trustee Stubbs to adjourn the Meeting of the Committee of the Whole, second by Trustee Pierson, Mayor Rogers asked for a roll call to adjourn.

Roll Call

AYES: 3 Trustees Muhammad, Pierson, Stubbs

NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

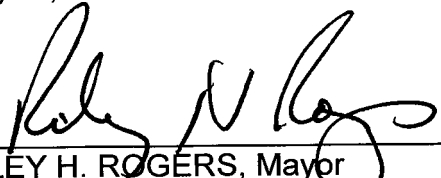
ABSENT: 3 Trustees Brown, Henyard, Hunt

Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

  
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MARY KAY DUGGAN, Village Clerk

APPROVED by the Board of Trustees this 1<sup>st</sup> day of August, 2016.

  
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RILEY H. ROGERS, Mayor