

Request For Board Action

REFERRED TO BOARD: April 17, 2017

AGENDA ITEM NO: 5

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Approval of a Resolution Amending the Policy for the Dedication of Benches and other Memorials in Village Parks.

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND OF SUBJECT MATTER:

In August 2013, the Village Board asked that staff to develop a dedication policy for the community that deals with benches, trees and memorial plaques. That policy was created and adopted in July of 2014. Since the creation of the policy numerous memorials have been put into place around community parks.

In the fall of 2016 a local family requested a bench that was granted by the Village Board. After the approval, the family was deciding what their dedication would say and during that process asked for additional verbiage that was not allowed under the current policy.

At the February 2017 COW the board was asked to consider the idea of changing the dedication inscription to provide families the opportunity to craft a more personalized message. The resulting language would provide the opportunity for families to personalize a message while still restricting the type of messages that can be placed. It also provides staff with the ability to approve the message without having to come to the board a second time. The official amendment was provided to the board at the April 2017 COW and is included in the supporting materials of this request.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

1. Resolution
2. Exhibit A-Dedication Policy

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Move to approve a resolution amending the policy for the dedication of benches and other memorials in village parks.

RESOLUTION 17 - _____

**A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE POLICY FOR THE
DEDICATION OF BENCHES AND OTHER MEMORIALS
IN VILLAGE PARKS**

WHEREAS, the Village Board in 2014, had been approached with requests from private individuals to put benches in certain parks in memory of specific individuals; and

WHEREAS, the Village Board wishes to accommodate such requests, when appropriate and fitting, and in order to do so, wishes to establish a reasonably uniform, but flexible, policy and criteria to use in considering them. A policy was adopted in July 2014; and

WHEREAS, the Village Board was asked to consider an amendment to the memorial inscriptions providing more leeway to what was allowed and provide staff the ability to approve inscription requests; and

WHEREAS, the Village Board has considered the proposed policy attached as Exhibit A hereto and finds that the same is reasonable, respectful, flexible and provides an appropriate balance between the wishes of individuals, the moral structure and composition of the community and the obligation of the Village Board to act as the overseer of the public's interests and of the proper use of the public parks, and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Village of Antioch, Lake County, Illinois, as follows:

SECTION ONE: The amended policy attached as Exhibit A hereto is hereby adopted and Staff is directed to put it into effect immediately, and to take all necessary steps to ensure that the public can access this process with a minimum of difficulty.

SECTION TWO: This resolution shall take effect immediately upon passage.

PASSED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF ANTIOCH, ILLINOIS,
ON THIS ____ DAY OF _____, 2017.

ATTEST:

LAWRENCE M. HANSON, MAYOR

LORI K. ROMINE, VILLAGE CLERK

Exhibit A

Dedication Policy

The purpose of this policy is to accept donations for the purpose of establishing memorials, planting trees and installing benches within the parks in honor of a departed family member or friend, or to commemorate a special occasion. The approval of suggested memorials is one that is uniquely suited to the corporate authority and is accordingly reserved to the Village Board on an individualized basis.

The General Dedication Policy

- 1) All applications for memorials on Village property shall be completed on the official service request form and be signed by the applicant.
- 2) The Village Board will consider all applications on an individual basis. There are no set criteria for the Board's approval or rejection of suggested memorials. The Village Board will take into consideration factors such as:
 - a. The civic contributions of the honoree;
 - b. The place of the honoree and his or her family within the Village;
 - c. The length of time the honoree or his family have been members of this community;
 - d. The character of the individual honoree;
 - e. The reputation of the individual honoree;
 - f. Any stated purpose for the dedication, such as to inspire others by example or to remember a particular civic leader;
 - g. The age of the honoree at the time of his or her demise;
 - h. Any other factors the family may wish to bring forward;
 - i. Any other factors the Board finds appropriate to judging this application.
- 3) The Village Board expressly reserves the right to exercise independent judgment and discretion in passing on all applications, and affirmatively states that granting an application is a strong statement of the entire Village in honor of that individual honoree, and as such, it should not be granted lightly or without appropriate consideration for all factors that might be applicable to that individual or his or her contributions to the common good of this Village.
- 4) It shall require the affirmative vote of 5 of the sitting members of the Village Board and Mayor to approve an application.
- 5) In the unusual circumstances that sometimes befall individuals, should it ever become known after a dedication that the honoree was undeserving of the honor, the Village reserves the right to revoke the approval and remove the dedication. Recognizing that this is certain to evoke emotional responses and upset expectations, the Village Board will take this action only when it finds that it is truly necessary to protect the public reputation of the Village or the morals of the community.

Village of Antioch, Illinois

- 6) The entire cost of all memorials must be paid for in full by the applicant before installation begins.
- 7) Memorials will be positioned to maximize the benefit and development of the property, but staff will make reasonable attempts to accommodate the wishes of the applicants. The Village may limit the number of memorials in a particular area or park.
- 8) The Village will notify the applicant in the event that the memorial is damaged, whether repairable or beyond repair.
- 9) The Village reserves the right to remove any memorials that have been damaged and are beyond economic repair or have not been repaired within 4 weeks of notification referred to in (4) above.
- 10) The Village accepts no liability for damage to any memorials from vandals, their parties or while the Village carries out routine maintenance on Village property
- 11) The Village will not grant applications for memorials to pets.
- 12) The number of memorials shall not detract from the prime recreational purpose of the facility in which they are located. Therefore, the size and location of the Village property shall limit the number of plaques, bricks or benches permitted. The Village reserves the right to refuse applications on this basis.
- 13) A ceremony or gathering at the time of a memorial placement or tree planting is permitted, but must be arranged in advance with Village Staff.
- 14) The Village maintains the right to relocate memorials in order to accommodate maintenance and improvements within the parks and adjoining public property. No property right interest is granted by allowing any application, nor shall any such right develop or ripen, no matter how long the monument, bench or tree may be in place. The parks and adjoining areas shall permanently remain public spaces primarily dedicated to the enjoyment, beauty and recreation of the citizens of the Village of Antioch.
- 15) All costs associated with the installation, including materials and labor, will be the responsibility of the petitioner. The total cost of the installation of a memorial bench, plaque or tree will be dependent on the design and materials of the memorial or the species of the tree and the type of fittings required. The Village will provide estimates for the materials, and labor associated with installation. The applicant shall post 120% of the full amount of the estimate with the Village to ensure payment. The Village will thereafter procure the all materials and supply the labor, and ultimately account for the expenditures. Any shortfall shall be promptly paid by the applicant and any overage shall be promptly refunded to the applicant.

Benches

- 1) Benches will be of the type and color specified by the Village to be in keeping with the look and feel of the park they will be located. Generally speaking benches should be uniform within the parks they are located.
- 2) The bench will be fitted to a concrete pad with a slab area directly in front of the bench to allow for the ease of use by the public. Village Staff will carry out all installation work.
- 3) Memorial plaques fitted to benches shall fit in the center of the upper most lath of the back of the bench.
- 4) ~~Memorial inscriptions on a bench are to be restricted to “In the Memory of” the name of the person, recognition of public office (if appropriate) and the dates of birth and death. (Wording such as or similar to “Forever in our thoughts” or “Beloved husband and father of” will not be accepted).~~
Memorial plaque inscription may be a specific name or message per the request of the applicant. Village staff reserves the right to review and approve all submitted names and messages to ensure that they are not inappropriate or offensive. Approved names or messages will be utilized so long as sufficient space is available within the marker design. Applicants are recommended to avoid the following items when creating their inscriptions.
 - a. Religious Text
 - b. Political Topics (other than political offices held by individual)
- 5) In accordance with the current maintenance regimen for benches, the Village will maintain the bench. However the Village will bear no responsibility for replacement for the plaque or the bench at the end of its useful life. Any replacements of benches or plaques will be the responsibility of the original applicant.
- 6) No additional mementos e.g. vases, statues, flowers or wreaths etc., shall be permitted on or around the bench.
- 7) No maintenance shall be carried out by a third party except strictly as permitted in writing by the Village.

Memorial Trees, Bricks and Plaques

- 1) Plaques are to be fitted at ground level on a concrete pad by Village staff
- 2) ~~The inscription on a plaque associated with a tree is to be restricted to the name of the tree or plant. “Planted in the memory of” the name of the person, recognition of public office (if appropriate) and the dates of birth and death. (Wording such as or similar to “Forever in our thoughts” or “Beloved husband and father of” will not be accepted).~~
Memorial plaque inscription may be a specific name or message per the request of the applicant. Village staff reserves the right to review and approve all submitted names and messages to ensure that they are not inappropriate or offensive. Approved names or messages will be utilized so long as sufficient space is available within the marker

design. Applicants are recommended to avoid the following items when creating their inscriptions.

- a. Religious Text
 - b. Political Topics (other than political offices held by individual)
- 3) The Village will bear no responsibility for the plaques once installed and the cost of any replacements will be the responsibility of the original applicant.
 - 4) No additional mementoes e.g. vases, statues, etc... shall be permitted around memorials.
 - 5) Plaques shall be made of cast bronze, black and must be purchased through the Village to ensure consistency. Similarly, the Village shall approve the supplier and style of memorial bricks for consistency and ease of installation and maintenance.
 - 6) The Village shall not be responsible for the replacement of old or diseased trees and plants.
 - 7) Plant species shall be subject to the discretion of the Village, and may be rejected for any reason, including, but not limited to location, types of similar trees in the immediate area or intangible aesthetics.

Donation Policy

This policy is intended only to deal with dedications of memorials in honor of persons or important events. Nothing herein is intended to deter or dissuade individuals, corporations or groups from donating equipment, outdoor furniture, buildings or other tangible things to the parks accompanied by simple tags and placards identifying the donor of the equipment or other things, provided that all such donations must still be approved by the Village Board as overseer of the public parks.