



**Village of El Portal  
Public Works Committee Meeting  
Date: 3/3/20  
Meeting Start: 8:58 PM  
Meeting End: 9:28 PM  
Meeting Length: 30:19**

**Councilwoman Roman:** Ready? Okay. Today is Tuesday, March 3rd, and we are calling the Public Works Committee meeting. The time now, it's 8:58 PM. We already had a moment of silent meditation and a pledge of allegiance. Madam Clerk, can we get a roll call.

**City Clerk Jacobi:** Roll call, Chairperson Roman.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Here.

**City Clerk Jacobi:** Vice-Chair Urbom.

**Councilman Urbom:** Present.

**City Clerk Jacobi:** Member Nickerson?

**Vice Mayor Nickerson:** Here.

**City Clerk Jacobi:** We have a quorum.

**Councilwoman Roman:** May I get an approval of the agenda? We're just going to go over the tracking report. I don't have anything else to add.

**Vice Mayor Nickerson:** Madam Chair, I'll make a motion to approve the agenda.

**Councilwoman Roman:** We have a motion. Do we have a second?

**Councilman Urbom:** I will Second. Okay. All in favor?

**All:** Aye.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Excellent. Approval of the minutes. I did not review the minutes. I didn't see minutes. Did anybody--

**Councilman Urbom:** I did not for this video, I'm sorry.

**Mayor Nickerson:** I did not for this- [crosstalk]

**Councilwoman Roman:** Okay, we will--

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**Vice Mayor Nickerson:** Motion to table to table the minutes to the next committee meeting, Madam Chair.

**Councilman Urbom:** I'll second the motion to table the minutes.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Perfect. Okay, we'll move that over. All in favor?

**Vice Mayor Nickerson:** Aye.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Aye. Great. Tracking agenda. Let me give you all. No, I have the updated one, the one I sent you. Oh, excellent. Okay, perfect. Thank you. All right, so I just updated today the tracking report. I want to go item by item. The first item is the streetscape and village signage. We discussed the tracking report a little bit last meeting, and then what I did was from the notes that I had from that meeting, I then went ahead and revised the tracking report.

What I have here new is that the manager has started to order all new signs. She's making sure that the colors and the branding are all in line. We included a sign for the home of the month program. Is there anything else that you'd like to add, Manager?

**Village Manager Alou:** No, except that the signs are going to be delivered in about a week, and they should be installed by the end of next week.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Oh, excellent. All right.

**Village Manager Alou:** They are lovely.

**Councilwoman Roman:** End of next week. Perfect. Installed. Which signs exactly are those?

**Village Manager Alou:** Those are the two bird sanctuary signs. There is a home of the month sign, as well as a welcome sign. That is to go on North Miami Avenue.

**Councilwoman Roman:** The welcome sign is which one?

**Village Manager Alou:** That is the blue one that-- Oh my God, I can't remember. Let's see if I have my sample with me, but it says, "Welcome to the village of El Portal."

**Councilwoman Roman:** Is it going to be placed where?

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**Village Manager Alou:** It's going to replace the sign that's hanging off of someone's backyard on 86 and North Miami Avenue. It's a green sign now that just says "El Portal Village." I think it says "El Portal Village."

**Councilwoman Roman:** I just wanted to know which street so that-- okay. Excellent. Any questions from the committee on that?

**Councilman Urbom:** No, that sounds great.

**Councilwoman Roman:** No?

**Village Manager Alou:** I do. I mean I can pass this, but this is what it looks like.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Okay, perfect. I think we got an email. Everybody should receive the email on that. Excellent. Thank you so much for doing that.

**Village Manager Alou:** You're welcome.

**Councilman Urbom:** Sincerely.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Okay, second item is El Jardin Stormwater project. We all know that that was passed on the January 7th meeting, so I just updated this. The new design has been approved if you guys didn't notice that from the village manager's report, but it was approved by FDP, and the village is in good standing. Do you have anything to add to that?

**Village Manager Alou:** No, I don't.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Excellent. Any questions?

**Vice Mayor Nickerson:** No.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Parks and maintenance improvement. I was really happy to see this on the report from the manager. It seems that we're getting proposals for the parks. Is there anything that you want to update us on that?

**Village Manager Alou:** Just that we are waiting to get these. It's very difficult to get quotes to get people out, but we are awaiting them anxiously. Our public works and maintenance staff are Angel Hernandez is taking the lead on and getting those quotes, but we're moving forward.

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We have five parks and we want to know what it will cost to improve them per the annexed areas, Kavista project development agreement. I'll keep you posted when we get those.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Okay. Excellent. Thank you so much. Do you think you'll have an update before our next committee meeting?

**Village Manager Alou:** Absolutely, yes. We're hoping to do that sooner than later since those wheels are turning already for the Kavista project.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Excellent. And then the Little Library, the mayor mentioned this at the last council meeting. She's waiting to hear from the artists, and there is going to be some landscaping taking place?

**Village Manager Alou:** Yes, as I wrote in my report that we are going to be making the Little Library park. It's a little cove that's going to be just at the opening of the tot lot here.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Is it going to be outside of the gate?

**Village Manager Alou:** Outside of the gate, yes. It's going to be on the other side of the walkway. The plan is to have this beautifully painted library, that's larger than the other one and sturdier, and we'd like to have that very old chipped away door, also a part of the artwork, and there will be a bench and some landscaping. We have to wait to get the library to build the items around it because you put that in first--

**Councilwoman Roman:** Is it going to be wood?

**Village Manager Alou:** Yes, it is wood. It is treated and all that. Since we were talking about parks, I know that this was mentioned as-- I don't remember whom, but I will put this to this committee to perhaps consider naming the tot lot something besides tot lot.

**Councilwoman Roman:** I love that.

**Village Manager Alou:** I know what it was. I met with some residents, the mayor and they kept calling the tot lot, the peacock park and I said, "What is peacock park?" Because I didn't know we had that, but it just brought up the fact of maybe we should consider naming it and making it a contest or something. I'll leave that to the committee to think about, but I think it would be a nice opportunity for us to put our own touch on our little tot lot.

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**Councilwoman Roman:** I like that. Is that something that perhaps we can discuss at the next - I think by then we should have our new library. I'd like to discuss the naming of it perhaps at the next committee meeting, if that's okay. Is it okay with the committee?

**All:** Yes.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Okay. Excellent. All right. Anything else in the park from the committee? Okay. The next is the septic to sewer project. Do we have any updates since your last report?

**Village Manager Alou:** No, we don't have an update because we're still awaiting the engineering firm to come back with their reasoning rationale behind the increase in fees. I know the village attorney has a little more insight on that. Again, we're all waiting to see what justifies the increase in price.

**Councilwoman Roman:** What does this mean in terms of getting the pump station started? Like, continue?

**Village Manager Alou:** Well, when I say the engineer, I'm talking about Pennoni. This is the remaining 8% left on design. That's all we have to finish this negotiation out, and once the design is complete, then we take that to the state FDP, and then we apply for the construction, so that's one contract, but right now we're still in design phase.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Okay, so the design, so that's what I mean. Basically, we're on hold until they decide to come back to us with a number?

**Village Manager Alou:** I can let the attorney speak.

**City Attorney Powell:** It's actually two steps. I mean, we have to finalize the plans, and then OASDI has to approve the plans. Then they also have to be then submitted to the state for the funding, the balance of what we need. Our last conversation with Mr. Elias from Pennoni was that he was, as the manager just stated, supposed to come back with an itemization as to why there is an increase in the original fee that was proposed to close out everything.

What we got over the phone was generally that the time has changed things, people have changed, you have to go back to make sure that the new orientation. We say, just put it in

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writing so that we could look at it and then have our consultant review what they're proposing to see if it's something that comports with what justifies the fee.

**Councilwoman Roman:** What's the due date for them to get this to us?

**City Attorney Powell:** The conversation we had was about two-plus weeks ago. We were promised that we'd have it the following week. I've emailed Mr. Elias to get status reports on it, which I've not really gotten an answer on that. In fact, I emailed them today. Hopefully, we'll get something by the end of the week. Without it we're fairly stuck because we need to bring whatever their proposal is back to this committee and then to the full commission for approval.

**Councilwoman Roman:** I'll come to you, Councilperson. It's 8% that it's still outstanding, and where we left off was that they were waiting to see if we were going to get the Eastman and the approval and everything for the pump for the location because that time nothing was discussed about them changing their fees?

**Village Manager Alou:** No, no. Let me refresh your memory.

**City Attorney Powell:** I think the history of might be helpful, if I may.

**Village Manager Alou:** Yes, go ahead.

**City Attorney Powell:** You may recall when they were before us the last time, there were issues concerning surpassing the budget without-

**Councilwoman Roman:** Coming to us.

**City Attorney Powell:** -coming to us. The resolution that we had reached with them was that they were going to complete all the remaining work, which is the 8% of the drawings that we had to be completed for submission to us and then to the state. During the presentation, they notified that if for some reason, the orientation of the changes-

**Councilwoman Roman:** Changes, there may be other additional fees.

**City Attorney Powell:** -there may be other additional fees. At that point in time, the item was tabled to allow us to go and actually get the commitment from the school board as to where the location was going to be.

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**Councilwoman Roman:** Has the orientation changed is my question.

**City Attorney Powell:** Yes, yes.

**Village Manager Alou:** Not so much out of-- Now if you may remember, Pennoni gave us seven or eight different configurations. It's change to--

**Councilwoman Roman:** This is supposed to be the first one.

**Village Manager Alou:** Yes.

**Councilwoman Roman:** If this is the first one, they already have it. In reality, the orientation has not changed. Is that correct?

**City Attorney Powell:** It's not changed to something they haven't drawn before or prepared before, generally. That's why we've asked for a statement in writing as to why there's a change in the fee. Because based upon what they've presented and based upon the consultant has presented to us is that there's been so many drawings over the last several years where they've been doing this, that they pretty much have self-ready drawings for any location on that side because there's so many drawings that they can tweak. Again, they just have come back to us and give us the breakdown as to why there's a change in the fee from what they said was a \$40,000 to complete the 8% that was needed to be done.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Does that \$40,000 include the previous balance that they went over the contract and we didn't approve?

**Village Manager Alou:** As I recall, they went way over and we've already run out of money. They went over I think about \$80,000. We negotiated through our attorney down to \$40,000. That would include the drawings. That would just be to complete everything, the 8%. However, that's when he said, "Well, if the orientation changes, there may be more money." We said, "Well don't do it thing. Wait till we get the easement and then you proceed."

**Councilwoman Roman:** That \$40,000 right now, what did they ask for?

**City Attorney Powell:** What did they what now?

**Councilwoman Roman:** What did they ask for?

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**City Attorney Powell:** In addition to the \$40,000?

**Councilwoman Roman:** Correct?

**City Attorney Powell:** \$80,000.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Now they want total \$80,000?

**City Attorney Powell:** Correct.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Then that's what we're waiting for to get the list of where that \$80,000. Why did that \$40,000 double?

**City Attorney Powell:** Become \$80,000. Exactly.

**Councilwoman Roman:** We're waiting, and we've followed up and we haven't heard from Pennoni.

**Village Manager Alou:** Correct.

**Councilwoman Roman:** The last time you contact him was today?

**City Attorney Powell:** Yes. I sent an email today. Like I said, we had a conference call between myself, Christie and Mr. [unintelligible 00:13:49] the consultant, and Elias. We made it clear that we needed a breakdown as to why is there an additional cost of the foyer that was proposed before.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Then the last question I have just to clarify. It's my understanding that if we don't come to an agreement with Pennoni that basically this whole project goes to Psh, and then excuse my-- Because a new engineer would have to start all over.

**City Attorney Powell:** From scratch.

**Councilwoman Roman:** They would not utilize what's already been done with Pennoni. Is that correct?

**Village Manager Alou:** It's correct.

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**City Attorney Powell:** There's no engineers going to certify.

**Councilwoman Roman:** We're basically at their mercy to negotiate that down.

**City Attorney Powell:** I wouldn't put it that way. I would pretty much say that once they come back to us, that we're back to negotiating. We do have rights under the contract. When they came before us the last time, we were-- I don't use the word adversarial, but we were close to being an adversarial posture. What we negotiated was pretty much a complete resolution of the issues that we had with the relationship and with the fact that they failed to complete the work at that time.

We're still in that posture because we're committed to spend several hundred thousands of dollars, and we still don't have complete plans. We don't have anything that we can submit to either OASDI or the state of Florida for the project.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Do they owe us what they have not delivered on what they promised for the contract?

**City Attorney Powell:** That would be my position. I've stated out on the phone that my position is that you have been in the position where you've prepared numerous drawings, not knowing exactly where the definitive location was going to be. I think I use the word on the phone, you treat like a stock. You should have known at some point that if you did not have the location, you should have stopped preparing drawings because all you would do is preparing drawings for a location that you didn't have confirmation is going to be the actual location.

The next step is to see what they come back with. If they don't come back with something fairly soon, we need to start giving deadlines from Mr. [unintelligible 00:16:32] because we're on a funding cycle. We need to make sure that the village gets its proposal in with the final drawings and approvals from the county before we can go back to the state of Florida for its approval.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Do you have anything to add, Manager?

**Village Manager Alou:** Probably shouldn't add it on the record, so no. I can speak to you offline, but we're back at the position we were in when we had a situation where they went over and outside of the contract. Now we'll just see what they-- maybe they are coming to their

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senses. It's taken them a minute, but who knows. I'm being optimistic, but I would just wait to see what they're going to come back with and then we can make a decision from there.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Urbom?

**Councilman Urbom:** My question is a little bit cautionary as well. I don't want to give them any ideas about how to invent the line of necessary to get to the dollar amount they're talking about. I do have a general question in terms of failing to get an easement for outflow to the Little River. Would that in any way be part of the calculus here in terms of having to redraw plans?

**Village Manager Alou:** I'm sorry, that's stormwater. That's not subject to stormwater. That's a different piece. We had two easement opportunities I'd say generally.

**Councilman Urbom:** Very good. With the pump station and then because that does not affect these plans whatsoever.

**City Attorney Powell:** I can't say whatsoever. That's something that we'd have to get Mr. [unintelligible 00:18:19] them to come back and tell us. From discussions, they've not raised that issue. They're separate.

**Councilwoman Roman:** We know it's two separate issues in two separate areas.

**Councilman Urbom:** Very good.

**City Attorney Powell:** I hate to give the weasel words, but that's not my expertise.

**Councilwoman Roman:** All right. Anything, Vice Mayor, on this subject?

**Vice Mayor Nickerson:** No.

**Councilwoman Roman:** I'd like to hear from Pennoni sooner than later because we do have deadlines and things that we need to move on. I know that today you reached out, but I asked that someone reach out again by Friday if you have not heard back. At that point, if you have not heard back, then please let me know because I will reach out personally to Pennoni, see if that helps. Thank you.

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Let's move on. We have next the North Miami medians. The trees were removed. The county has promised to have an arborist or landscaping professional come and at the end of the project to replant something that they will maintain. Is that correct?

**Village Manager Alou:** That is correct.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Great. Good news is that we will no longer have to maintain those medians, which we were maintaining because we had planted those trees which we got approval of but weren't necessarily correctly approved.

**Village Manager Alou:** Right.

**Councilwoman Roman:** We believe that this is going to take place about 12 months to plus.

**Village Manager Alou:** Yes, it's stated 12 months, but you know construction.

**Councilwoman Roman:** The only thing I've seen so far is that trees were removed. I haven't seen anything else.

**Village Manager Alou:** I can state that the next thing was there was a break in the sprinkler, so we alerted them so it's their median and they alerted us that we need to take the electrical out. We had to remove the electrical and then they-[crosstalk]

**Councilwoman Roman:** That was \$5,000 or something, right?

**Village Manager Alou:** No, no. That was over \$900.

**Councilwoman Roman:** \$900.

**Village Manager Alou:** We did have the electrical the wiring taken out of those medians that supported the sprinklers and the lighting, and now they've taken out the plumbing part or the water part so they can move forward with the construction. I haven't seen much construction over there, but they wanted it.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Perfect. We'll just leave that there until the project is near completion to make sure that the county follows on their promise to help us get that beautified.

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**Councilman Urbom:** I do believe that they've put up like a flashing sign or a sign. I'm not sure what the official name of these signs are, but the electronic sign 24/7 sits in one spot. I believe that they have put up signage notifying people traveling along North Miami Avenue that they're going to be beginning bridgework soon. I would expect that--

**Councilwoman Roman:** I didn't see that over the weekend.

**Councilman Urbom:** I think I saw it even just today coming north, yes.

**Councilwoman Roman:** It's probably brand new. Okay, perfect. Anything to add, Vice Mayor?

**Vice Mayor Nickerson:** No, no.

**Councilwoman Roman:** The next is the tree trimming just left it here ongoing taking place in July, correct?

**Village Manager Alou:** That is correct. It will be the first week.

**Councilwoman Roman:** We're going to coincide that with both pick up?

**Village Manager Alou:** Yes.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Excellent. Just so you know, the new tree committee advisory board has talked about working on a-- and we're having our first meeting soon. That's further down, but the tree trimming came up and so we're looking to maybe discuss the future of the village down the line in terms of the canopy, the care of trees and everything. That includes the tree trimming just because I think there's a lot of different concerns, and I did tell them, I reassured everybody they are arborists who are cutting our trees, and they're doing the best they can.

One of the concerns were that certain trees should be cut or pruned at certain times, and so that's one of the concerns. I'll come to the committee as I get more information because perhaps before we get this, it is a long term huge project. We can look to modifying the tree trimming in order to, as I learn more about the trees and what we have and the different times of the year that it's proper to cut trimming them, I'll bring it to the committee to see if we can modify that. Any questions? Okay. All right.

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We talked about the Little Library, we can skip that over. Next is the Northwest Third Avenue landscaping. This is great there. Through Robert Rona, the village received the Neat Streets Miami. I was very happy because I was at the board meeting this week, and we appeared on the list as one of the municipalities who received the matching grant. That was really nice to see, this is the first time that El Portal gets the neat streets matching grant, so I was very happy about that.

This cycle provides us with 37 trees to be planted in various locations throughout Horace Mann Middle School on the west side, and it will create a green route to the school. That's very exciting. Do we have a date as to when we are expecting to have those trees?

**Village Manager Alou:** No, I don't know the date yet. I did get the award letter, but it's a matching grant, and we do have some funding for it.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Great.

**Village Manager Alou:** I guess we just need to coordinate that and find out more.

**Councilwoman Roman:** You did get the final letter because I saw those at the board meeting, I saw that we were on the, they were pending. It was pending, they needed some additional information from the village.

**Village Manager Alou:** Let me check. Let me see what I have.

**Councilwoman Roman:** If you could just double check that because it could be that by the time we had the board meeting, and you probably got the letter, I'm not sure. I happened to see it on a different list.

**Village Manager Alou:** I know I did provide some information, some follow up.

**Councilwoman Roman:** All right. If you could just follow up on that and then just give us an idea at the next committee meeting as to when we can expect this project to start.

**Village Manager Alou:** Absolutely.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Any questions from the committee or additions? Okay. Next is we did pass the resolution, the full council approving the tree advisory board. Again, the residents that were appointed to this board are Hugh Gladwin, Adam Old, Blair Walker, Fernandos

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Vasquez, Amy LeBron. I'm very excited to see that this number of residents are interested in participating on this board, and everyone has different backgrounds and strengths that they bring to the board, so I think it's definitely going to be excellent in moving the future of El Portal, and looking long term to keeping our tree canopy and doing what we can with that.

Our first meeting is going to be on Tuesday, March 10th, at 6:00 PM here in the village hall. I am going to double-check with the committee. I think it was difficult for them to get here at 5:30 PM because we do have committee meetings that day. I'm going to give them the option to start at 5:30 PM, and I will let the clerk know because we do have to advertise this meeting. They do fall under the Sunshine, and we do need to advertise there are meetings. We're looking to meet once a quarter, so we're looking at four meetings for 2020. Any questions on that? Okay.

The next is to sea wall, we said at the last meeting that we had in January, we said that we would table that, leave it there, inactive in case we had a resident that lived along the sea wall that wanted to perhaps start something along with the other residents that live on the river. I'm leaving it there just for that. There is one item that was mentioned at code enforcement. Lights on 87th Street not working. Are some of the lights not working on 87th Street?

**Village Manager Alou:** Not that I'm aware of. We ask the people to report lights because we aren't around at night, but whenever they let us know about the lights, we contact FPL and have them replaced.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Okay. Can we just double check that and have maybe the officers look and see us?

**Village Manager Alou:** Yes, I'll ask.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Thank you.

**Councilman Urbom:** If I can just add as the discussion is in terms of the FPLs, the new lighting is a potentiality or an eventuality.

**Village Manager Alou:** Yes.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Though, I need to add that to the tracking report.

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**Village of El Portal  
Public Works Committee Meeting**

**Date: 3/3/20**

**Meeting Start: 8:58 PM**

**Meeting End: 9:28 PM**

**Meeting Length: 30:19**

**Councilman Urbom:** I just officially again want to say my vote is for the lowest level lighting even though law enforcement might disagree with me because again as you go along 87th is a good example at night it is well lit. However, if you think about the lighting in terms of the ground, it covers a lot of ground. It lights up a lot of area, but anywhere that you have a direct line of sight to the light, the light is then so bright that it completely eliminates all night vision and the ability to pick out silhouettes and things like this.

For pedestrians moving along-- I've walked 87th at night and even it's difficult to even see another fellow pedestrian walking because of how many deep shadows are created and then the intense brightness of the lights themselves. I would just say that not to be afraid of lower lighting because it could actually improve night visibility. That's all I say.

**Village Manager Alou:** We'll just [unintelligible 00:28:55] to that.

**Councilman Urbom:** Say that before I say to you.

**Village Manager Alou:** I provided you all a detailed list about the wattages and what have you. They have not started the pilot. FPL will bring it to us, we've told them where we want what. We've requested the medium, the mid-level, for the majority of the village, but Sherwood Forest would have the lowest because of the canopy and the animals. That is where we are right now. They've assured us that there won't be no light pollution and that it is friendly for even the animals, even the middle level and the high levels. We won't have high-level on any of the streets, but we'll have the medium and the lower wattage only in the village.

**Councilman Urbom:** Sounds great.

**Councilwoman Roman:** I'm going to add that to the tracking report just as a temporary so that we can know. We just could continue talking about it until it happens. That's that. Does the committee have anything else that you'd like to discuss?

**Vice Mayor Nickerson:** No.

**Councilwoman Roman:** All right, do I have a motion to end? To adjourn?

**Vice Mayor Nickerson:** Motion to end the meeting, Madam Chair.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Do I have a second?

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**Vice Mayor Nickerson:** I'll second the motion too.

**Councilwoman Roman:** All in favor?

**All:** Aye.

**Councilwoman Roman:** The time now is 9:28 PM, the Public Works Meeting ends.

**Vice Mayor Nickerson:** I was trying to remember the word adjourn. I couldn't remember the word adjourn, that was what it was.

**Councilwoman Roman:** Thank you.

**Vice Mayor Nickerson:** I messed one of my mistakes.

**[00:30:19] [END OF AUDIO]**

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