

# The Glencoe Village Trustees' Response to Inaccurate and Misleading Claim

## ISSUE #1: TRANSPARENCY

### Claim:

"Glencoe needs transparent, accountable leadership now to navigate the challenges of the next four years. It can't wait. We can't continue to make decisions in the dark." (Website: Why Laurie, and Why Now?, March 7, 2017).

### Response:

The Village Board has not made any decisions "in the dark." When asked to provide even one such decision, none were identified by Ms. Morse.

In fact, the exact opposite is true. Glencoe has been recognized as the most transparent local government in Illinois by the Illinois Policy Institute, a citizen watchdog group. Village Staff and the Board continually develop new communication tools to provide up-to-date and easily-accessible information to residents. Examples include: online Village e-news, community meetings and updates, utilizing social media and the just launched and improved Village website. All of these measures are designed not only to communicate information, but to solicit comment, feedback and suggestions.

## ISSUE #2: NEW WATER PLANT

### Claim:

"I plan, with the help of the Village Board, to take the option of building a new water treatment plant on Glencoe's beaches off the table . . . without building on its beaches. The options include partnering with neighboring communities (Highland Park) for water supply *or rebuilding a new water plant within the existing structure.*" (Issues and Positions, Website, March 7, 2017, emphasis added).

### Response:

A decision on water treatment options is likely a decade away, but planning for such a capital expenditure is critical to long-term budgeting.

Initial steps included an engineering review of every option, including remodeling the current plant, building a new one (on or off the beach) and purchasing water from another source. After preliminary investigation of that report, public meetings were held to advise citizens on status and to seek community input going forward.

The cost differential between some of the options will be tens of millions of dollars. No one can confidently predict today what the relative costs of a new water plant might be, what financial constraints the Village might face, what actions might be taken by other North Shore communities on water that might benefit Glencoe, and what changes there might be in water plant technology years from now.

**The Village Board would be derelict in its duties if it were to take options off the table now before they are vetted and all relevant facts known as Ms. Morse suggests. And it will not do so.**

A fundamental responsibility of every Village Trustee—and its President—is to evaluate every option and to seek input from every quarter to determine what is best and most prudent for the entire community, not to restrict analysis at the outset based on personal preference. Doing so, and thus preventing full debate on options, is the opposite of transparency.

Ms. Morse repeatedly proclaims that she will "protect" the beach, yet one of the two options she supports is keeping the water treatment facility *on the beach* by building a new water plant *within the existing structure.* In a campaign touting "transparency," Ms. Morse should explain this discrepancy.

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### ISSUE #3: WYMAN GREEN STUDY

#### **Claim:**

"I think \$50,000 is too much to pay for a consultant's study of Wyman Green. . . . Further, I don't support development of Wyman Green. Glencoe doesn't need to add permanent fixtures to Wyman Green, or spend thousands to study the prospect." (Issues and Positions, Website, March 7, 2017).

#### **Response:**

Wyman Green is the area between the library and Village Hall. The consensus of the community supporting the preservation and enhancement of Wyman Green as a green space was identified through public comments as part of the process followed to develop the Downtown Comprehensive Plan update that was passed by the Board in December 2016 (after years of work by the Plan commission).

There was never any suggestion that Wyman Green be changed from public parkland to an alternative use. The Village Board subsequently authorized a \$50,000 line item in the budget for a consultant to study options for enhanced use of Wyman Green. That line item is a placeholder only—the amount that will be spent for the consultant may be considerably less.

There is unanimous agreement that Wyman Green is an important green and open space in our Village. *No one suggested that permanent fixtures should be installed there. No one.* However, there was a strong consensus that this green and open space is under-utilized: few people actually visit and enjoy Wyman Green, except for events like the Farmer's Market. There is very little seating, and it does not invite pedestrians to linger.

There is also interest in Wyman Green from the library as a place for children's programs or other events on the green space. The opportunity to enjoy a Library cultural event outdoors was received positively by all who considered the possibility.

Transparency in local governance is listening to community input and gathering options for discussion. That is exactly what is happening, and the process should not be thwarted before even discussion points are developed.

### ISSUE #4: NEW GOLF CLUB

**Claim:** "Glencoe Golf Course needs investment to preserve its value and competitiveness. Plans should include features that appeal to non-golfers and financing that will not increase our tax burden." (Website: Why Laurie, and Why Now?, March 7, 2017).

#### **Response:**

Any implication that this is not happening is knowingly false. As Ms. Morse knows, but does not state in her materials, one-half of the golf course is on Cook County-owned land. Several years ago, the County demanded that use of its land and the "rent" to be paid by the Glencoe Golf Club be renegotiated. As Ms. Morse knows, those negotiations have been vigorously pursued by the Village, but responses have been slow from the County, although we are now close. No solicitation of private money or public input on desirable features for a new clubhouse can reasonably occur until agreement is reached.

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### ISSUE #5: POWER OUTAGES

**Claim:** “She is concerned that people living on the west side of Glencoe are still experiencing devastating power outages. In the winter, this means they go without heat. Glencoe Village maintains a franchise agreement with ComEd, and needs to be more aggressive in helping this area of town.” (Next Door, Debbie Jha).

#### **Response:**

Neither the Board nor Village Staff have been contacted by residents of Glencoe’s west side (or elsewhere) complaining that they are without heat because of power outages or seeking help with ComEd. No one likes power outages, and years ago there were far too many. But outage data for 2013 through 2015 (the 2016 data is not yet available) show that Glencoe’s reliability, in terms of both the frequency of outages and the duration of outages (excluding major storms), is comparable to that of the region. There has been significant improvement by ComEd in the number and extent of outages, as well as in ComEd’s communications with the public about them. At the direction of the Board, Staff is constantly in contact with ComEd about ComEd service, particularly in times of outages and it actively works in an ombudsman role with utilities.

For further information about the candidates slated by the Caucus, and the issues in the election, please visit the Caucus website:  
**[GlencoeCaucus.org](http://GlencoeCaucus.org)**.