



**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 1, 2017
NORTH AURORA VILLAGE HALL - 25 E. STATE ST.
(Immediately following the Village Board Meeting)**

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

DISCUSSION

1. Quiet Zone

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. Personnel

ADJOURN

Initials SB

Memorandum



To: Village President and Village Board of Trustees
From: Steven Bosco, Village Administrator
Date: 4-27-17
Re: Quiet Zone – BNSF Railroad Line

Staff has received questions and complaints regarding train horn noise on the Burlington North Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad line that passes through North Aurora along Route 25. Though the train line only has a few trains a day, there is a train that periodically travels the line in the early morning hours. Federal regulations require that trains blow their horns at public at-grade crossings when there is no quiet zone in place. Trains would still blow their horn at a crossing if a quiet zone was in place when there was a safety risk on the track, such as a pedestrian, worker or vehicle. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) oversees these regulations, including the establishment of a quiet zone.

There are three public at-grade crossings along the BNSF line in North Aurora. The crossings are located on South, Grant and State (Route 56) Streets. In addition, north of State Street there is one closed public at-grade crossing north of Village Hall and a few private crossings. The private crossings are located in front of a residence and the Red Oak Nature Center.

To establish a quiet zone, public at-grade crossings first need to have pre-requisite safety equipment installed. This equipment includes gates, lights and a constant warning time system used to detect oncoming trains. In addition to the prerequisite safety equipment, each crossing is given a quiet zone risk index rating. The rating is determined by a formula that includes; the number of daily vehicles at the crossing, the number of daily trains at the crossing and the crossing's accident history. In a quiet zone, the individual crossing's risk index rating is blended together. The blended quiet zone risk index rating has to be below the FRA's threshold to qualify for a quiet zone. If the rating is too high, a municipality can install additional safety measures, such as a non-traversable median at the crossing to help lower the risk.

After a preliminary review, staff determined that the crossings at South, Grant and State Streets appear to have all of the prerequisite safety equipment in place. Collectively, they also appear to meet the risk threshold to establish a quiet zone. Staff has already visited the crossings with the FRA to determine if there were any additional concerns that may arise during the establishment of a quiet zone. Should the Village continue to pursue the quiet zone, the next step would be to assemble a diagnostic team for review. The diagnostic team would include the Village, FRA, BNSF, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and Illinois

Commerce Commission (ICC). It should be noted that staff is not pursuing a quiet zone through the crossing at Route 25 to the north (quiet zones have to end at a public at-grade crossing) due to concerns about some of the private crossings in between State Street and Route 25 that do not have signalization and the status of the currently closed crossing just north of the Village Hall.

Prior to assembling a diagnostic team review, staff is seeking input from the Village Board as to whether the Village should pursue a quiet zone for the crossings at South, Grant and State Streets.