

**Bellaire Village Council
Meeting Minutes
February 5, 2020**

1. **Call to Order:** President Pro-Tem Ciganick called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
2. **Roll Call Attendance:**
 - Present:** Council Trustees David Ciganick, Eldon McPherson, Bryan Hardy, Pat Boyd and Helen Schuckel.
 - Absent:** President Dan Bennett & Trustee Trish Drollinger.
 - Staff Present:** Lori Luckett, Clerk, Cathy Odom, Treasurer, Bill Drollinger, Chief of Police & Brad Keiser, DPW Supervisor.
 - Also Present:** Terry VanAlstine, Gary Lockwood, Linda Gallagher, Mark Berreth & Jennifer Hodges.
3. **Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved with additions.

Motion by Schuckel, seconded by Boyd, to approve the agenda with the additions of new business item h, Health Benefits, Wage Start Date, Merit Pay, FY2020-21 Budget, item I, Vector Truck Deposit & item j, Consumers Energy Contracts-Streetlights. Motion carried by voice vote.
4. **Conflict of Interest:** None presented.
5. **Consent Agenda:** The consent agenda was approved.

Motion by Schuckel, seconded by Hardy, to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.
6. **Public Comment on Agenda Items:** None presented.
7. **Old Business**
 - a) **County Update:** Mr. VanAlstine informed Council that the County hired a new finance director. They are meeting with a representative that will be speaking about affordable housing. They will be having a meeting on the 2nd amendment sanctuary at 9:00 am on February 6. The DNR purchased about an acre of land in Milton Twp to expand the Torch Lake boat launch area and there is a meeting scheduled for Friday, February 7 @ 10:00 am on the facilities master plan. He also noted that there are census jobs available and if anyone is interested, they can apply at census.com.
 - b) **DDA Update:** There is nothing new to report.
 - c) **Maple St. Property:** The sale of this property was discussed at the last meeting, but a motion was never made. We have \$8,800 invested in this property. We need to clear that much as we cannot sell it for less than what is invested. It will need to sell for \$9,600 to clear that amount.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd, to sell the property for \$8,800 plus realtor fees. Motion carried by voice vote.
 - d) **Resolution #01 of 2020, Street Millage:** This resolution will allow for the allocation of the street millage to local and major streets.

Motion by Schuckel, seconded by Hardy, to approve Resolution 01 of 2020, allocating the street millage to major & local streets. Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: Schuckel, Hardy, Boyd, McPherson & Ciganick. Nays: None Absent: Bennett & Drollinger.
 - e) **Deer Population:** Chief Drollinger presented more information that he gathered from Big Rapids, who is also dealing with a deer population problem in their community. He provided their resolution and said they are targeting the lead deer, which is 5-15 deer. They are not doing this internally; they are using the Department of Agriculture at a cost of approximately \$6,000. He stated if something needs to be done about the excessive deer population, bird feeders need to be put away and we should stop feeding them. The other option is to eliminate the lead deer. He explained that there is a permitting process that needs to be completed if we proceed. He also noted that we should not proceed unless we have a list of people who

will take the deer. Trustee Ciganick said transparency with the public is crucial. Trustee McPherson said we could use a survey to get public opinion. There was a discussion about how to get the word out.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd, to send this item to the Public Safety Committee to determine the next step. Motion carried by voice vote.

8. New Business:

- a) **Ice Rink Banners/Signs in the Right of Way:** This item addresses signs that were placed on the fence at Richardi Park for the ice rink. Mr. Lockwood gave an update on the success of the ice rink. He explained that there were banners placed along the fence over the last five years and it was previously not an issue. He said he received permission to use an open/close sign. Since then, the Rotary has contributed to the ice rink, as well as the Bellaire Youth Initiative, and banners were placed on the fence to recognize their involvement. He stated that they are both 501c3 organizations. He said to run the rink, utility companies are also needed. Amerigas has helped with the supply of propane, at no cost, and to recognize their contribution, a banner was placed along the fence for them. He said he received a call asking him to remove the banners due to complaints received. The next morning, he took them all down. He is now asking for permission to place all three banners back up. He is also asking that Council review their sign ordinance on publically used property in support of entities that assist the community now and in the future. Trustee Ciganick noted that we have to be aware of our own rules and they should be followed. To do so, the banners had to be removed. He said that our current ordinance discusses the size of a banner not being more than 24 square feet and also about not endorsing a specific business. Trustee McPherson stated that non-profit banners should be allowed with Trustee Boyd agreeing. Mr. Keiser noted that there was not a problem with the Rotary or BYI sign. He said the only problem was the for-profit sign. Trustee Ciganick said the request is to review and/or amend the ordinance, which is a fair request. He said he hopes to review it and come up with a better way to let people know whether the ice rink is open or closed. He suggested this be sent to the zoning department to review the signage language to see if there is an appropriate change that needs to be made. He said we make mistakes and wants all to know there was no malice intended with this issue. We may have missed the signs in the past, but it doesn't mean we can forego the rules when we do notice. It is simply a matter of following the rules. The question was asked about placing the non-profit signs back up and it was noted that they can as long as it doesn't exceed 24 square feet. However, if they are larger than that, Council can approve an exemption. Trustee McPherson asked about recognizing the businesses that are making donations. It was noted that this is one reason why the ordinance needs reviewing.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Schuckel, to allow the placement, on a temporary basis, from now until the end of February, the two 501c3 banners that were previously placed on the fence at the park for the sake of advertising the ice rink. Motion carried by voice vote.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd, to refer this to zoning for consideration of signage for this and future events. Motion carried by voice vote.

- b) **ORV's-Trestle Bridge:** Mr. Berreth understands that snowmobiles are allowed to cross the trestle bridge on the walking path and he would like Council to consider allowing ORV's to do the same. He explained that he was helping with the ice rink and needed to get gas for the ORV. He said it would have been easier to use the bridge to get there instead of going completely around town. Trustee Ciganick noted that ORV's have evolved into several different types, but the walking path was never intended to be for motorized vehicles. He stated there is a concern for the mixed use, proper signage for the bridge and for people that may also be using the bridge. Trustee Ciganick suggests sending this to the Public Safety Committee for review. Mr. Keiser noted that he spoke with a couple of people and found that if there is no other way to cross a body of water, ORV's are allowed to cross the bridge in town, but then they would have to cut through the alley by Fischer Insurance.
- c) **Cemetery Agreement:** it is time to renew the cemetery agreement between Forest Home Township and the Village of Bellaire. There are no changes made to the agreement except for the dates.

Motion by Schuckel, seconded by Hardy, to renew the cemetery agreement between Forest Home Township and the Village of Bellaire and have President Bennett & Clerk Luckett sign it. Motion carried by voice vote.

- d) **Craven Park Seasonal Rate:** Currently we have a seasonal rate for camping on a full hookup site. However, according to the rules, the cost for the monthly rate is less expensive than the seasonal rate. The rules state the seasonal rate is from June – October. We open April 1 making the camping season from April 1 – October 31.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Schuckel, to amend the rules for a full hookup seasonal rate to be from April 1 – October 31. Motion carried by voice vote.

- e) **Downtown Tree Lights:** Trustee Ciganick stated that the lights downtown look nice. He said we can take the garland and the lights off of the poles but keep the lights on the trees. It creates a nice, warm feeling and thought that it would nice to leave the lights on the trees year-round. We could then leave them turned on until the foliage is back on the trees and then turn them off. The foliage would cover them up so they wouldn't be seen. The following winter, we plug them back in and if the lights work, it's one less tree that has to be done. If it doesn't work, then we replace them. Trustee McPherson noted that most don't seem to work if left up that long. How long the lights are left up was questioned and it was noted until the Chamber ice festival the Chamber is over, which this year is the end of February.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd, to leave the lights up until they burn out. Motion carried by voice vote. Ayes: 3 Nays: 2

- f) **Car Show Request:** There is a group, the Pontiac Solstice & Saturn Sky, which would like to host a car show on June 17, 2021 from 6 to 9 PM. The set-up time and blocking the road procedures were discussed.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson, to approve their request for the car show. Motion carried by voice vote.

- g) **Water/Sewer Rate Study:** In anticipation of the waterline replacement project, the Michigan Rural Water Association (MRWA), completed a rate study for the Village. On the sewer side he removed the USDA loan we previously had in the study and added the pre-closing costs we have to pay back. Currently, there is not a recommendation to increase the sewer rates. On the water side, we included the anticipated cost projections for the waterline replacement in the budget and it is recommended that we increase the water ready to serve fees for a ¾" line from 12.22 to 16.95 and the per thousand-gallon fees from \$2.76 to \$4.29. Treasurer Odom reminded Council that this increase was just for the ¾" lines; there are also suggested increases for all of the other line sizes. She also noted that these rates do not include any capital improvement funding. The cost increase is projected to increase revenue by approximately \$103,000. Mr. Keiser noted that our hope is to self-fund the waterline replacement project. The timeline needed to begin the new rates and how to inform residents was discussed. Treasurer Odom noted that this could be tabled if Council wants all members to review it. She explained that we can send out letters, put a notice on the bills, in the paper and place a notice on our social media pages. Implementing the new rates created a discussion on a timeline for the process. Trustee Boyd suggested having a public meeting to inform residents of the impending project and the reason for the new rates. Ms. Hodges from Gourdie-Fraser suggested developing a PowerPoint presentation. Trustee Ciganick suggested we have Ms. Hodges develop a brief PowerPoint for the next meeting in March and we place a notice in the newspaper to inform residents of the proposed rate increase. Trustee McPherson would like to see an individual letter go out to all residents. No further action was taken.

h) Administration Committee Recommendations

- **DPW Employee:** The Administration interviewed candidates for the vacancy at the DPW. The committee would like to recommend that Council offer the job to Jesse McLellan.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Hardy, to hire Jesse McLellan for the position in the Department of Public Works pending completion of the requirements in the hiring policy at a starting wage of \$15.46, and after 30 days, based on performance, the rate be increased to the one-year rate of \$16.41. Motion carried by voice vote.

Trustee Ciganick noted that the cost of living increase is already included in the rate provided and will not be given again at the beginning of the new fiscal year.

- **Wage Scale:** The FY2020-21 wage scale is recommended for approval.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd, to approve the FY2020-21 wage scale as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.

- **Cemetery Maintenance Worker:** Our current cemetery maintenance worker will not be returning. The Administration Committee recommends we begin the hiring process for a new worker.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Hardy, to direct the Department of Public Works Supervisor to post a job opening for a part-time cemetery maintenance person. Motion carried by voice vote.

- **Health Benefits:** After lengthy review and consideration for trying to change to a different policy but have it not affect the employees, the Administration Committee made the determination to stay with our current community blue plan.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Hardy, to continue to offer the same plan that is currently in place for the 2020-21 budgets. Motion carried by voice vote.

- **Wage Start Date:** The Administration Committee had a discussion about when the approved cost of living increase begins. The committee recommends that it begin on the 1st day of the fiscal year.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Hardy, any cost of living increase, if approved, will occur on the first day of the fiscal year and other increases shall be as previously stated on the employee anniversary date. Motion carried by voice vote.

- **Merit Pay:** The committee also discussed merit pay and when it is and should be paid.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Hardy, to distribute up to \$5,000 for merit pay for the fiscal year ending February 29, 2020, the specific distribution to be determined by review scores and gross pay annually per person. Motion carried by voice vote.

- **FY2020-21 Budget:** The committee reviewed the proposed budget and is recommending its approval.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd, to have the proposed FY2020-21 budget as presented scheduled for public hearing. Motion carried by voice vote.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Hardy, to post and schedule a public hearing and special meeting for the budget on February 19, 2020. Motion carried by voice vote.

- i) **Vector Truck Deposit:** Mr. Keiser has found a vector truck which is critical for the waterline replacement project for \$138,000 instead of the \$200,000 original cost. He explained that it will be shipped from California. It is fully refurbished; it has 30,000 miles with no rust. They do have to install a hydrovac package on it, but that is included in the \$138,000 cost. To hold it for us, they require \$1,000 deposit and he would like to get approval for it.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd, to authorize the Village Treasurer to pay the \$1,000 down payment and sign the contract on the vac truck. Motion carried by voice vote.

- j) **Consumers Energy Contracts-Streetlights:** We received two new contracts for the streetlights from Consumers due to some of the lights now being LED. Trustee Ciganick noted that contracts usually state some consideration of a dollar amount and there is no reference to that in either of the contracts. He said technically they are asking us to sign a blank contract. Each contract lists the specific lights that are covered, noting that the list can change on a daily basis as the old lights are replaced with LED. Treasurer Odom noted that one contract is for five years and the other for two. She contacted Consumers for clarification, but has not received a response yet. This was tabled for further review.

9. Discussion Items:

- a) **Antrim County Board Vacancies:** Antrim County has several open board positions available is anyone is interested in serving. A list is included in your packet.

- b) **FY2020-21 Proposed Budget:** The FY2020-21 budget was presented for review. A public hearing and special meeting date will have to be determined. Mr. Keiser noted that there may be a minor change as he is receiving new quotes for the paving of Broad St., also taking into consideration for the repaving of Hickory Lane. Mr. VanAlstine suggested approaching the County for help with that cost.
- c) **Special Council Meeting-Budget:** Council scheduled the Budget Public Hearing and Special Meeting for February 19, 2020 at 6:30 pm and 7:00 pm respectively.

10. Department/Committee Reports:

- a) **Committee Reports:** Committee minutes were included in packets for review for those committees that have met.
- b) **Clerk/Zoning Administrator:** Nothing presented.
- c) **Treasurer/Deputy Clerk:** Nothing presented.
- d) **Department of Public Works:** Nothing presented.
- e) **Police Department:** Chief Drollinger presented Chapter 16, which pertains to bridges and would like Council to review and possibly amend it. This would be in reference to the jumping off of a bridge and also throwing things over one. He said he will have the Public Safety Committee review and recommend any changes to Council.
- f) **Planning Commission:** Nothing presented.

11. Closing Member/Public Comment: Nothing presented.

12. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:31 P.M.

Compiled by Cathy Odom
Minutes are subject to approval.

Approved: _____

Date: _____