

**Bellaire Village Council  
Meeting Minutes  
February 2, 2022**

1. **Call to Order:** President Bennett called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
2. **Roll Call Attendance:**

**Present:** President Dan Bennett, Council Trustees Dave Ciganick, Trish Drollinger, Bryan Hardy, Pat Boyd, Eldon McPherson, & Helen Schuckel.

**Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Cathy Odom, Treasurer, Bill Drollinger, Chief of Police & Bradley Keiser, DPW Supervisor & Nicole Essad, Clerk.

**Also Present:** Terry VanAlstine & Doreen McGuire.

3. **Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved as presented.

**Motion by Schuckel, seconded by Boyd, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.**

4. **Conflict of Interest:** Trustee Drollinger noted her conflict with new business item a, the wage scale and with the proposed public safety budget that will be discussed at the next meeting.

5. **Consent Agenda:** The consent agenda was approved.

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by Hardy, to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.**

6. **Public Comment:** None presented.

7. **Old Business**

a) **County Update:** The County sent a letter to the DNR about their interest in an undeeded 20-acre parcel (island) in the Intermediate River north of the dam. The County said they would buy it for \$1.00 and will see if the purchase goes through once the DNR process is complete. There is a meeting on February 9 at 6:00 pm via zoom to discuss the status of the TCE plume. The Conservation District will be looking to fill and executive director position. They will be approving a logging bid to complete a selective cut on the Pete Wilks property to clean up the area. Hazardous waste dates for 2022 are tentatively scheduled for June 2, July 16 and August 10 and September 16.

b) **DDA Update:** The DDA was able to livestream their last meeting viz zoom. They are continuing to work on the map and have decided that it will of the DDA district only. They discussed the content of the map and once it is completed, they will present it to the Village Council. Mr. Irwin has completed his term and thank him for his service.

c) **Downtown Restroom Update:** Mechanical will begin this week. The gas lines are in, and Mr. Keiser meets with Arndt electric to discuss service.

## 8. New Business

### a) Administration Committee Recommendations:

- **Wage Scale:** The 2022-23 wage scale includes the 7.5% cost of living increase, which comes to \$1.39 per hour. The Administration Committee is recommending it approval. Trustee Ciganick noted a concern with the wage scale increase in conjunction with how the budget currently appears going into the next fiscal year. It appears that we are spending more money than we are bringing in. With this in mind, we are not yet ready to present a balanced budget for next year without significantly dipping into the fund equity. He noted that we had previously decided to leave our fund equity with a balance of 30% of annual expenditures. To consider the \$1.39, we may want to first take a hard look at the budget. He explained that he was an advocate for the public safety increase and then had to withdraw the decision based on the expenditures to the budget. We are also considering absorbing the increase in health insurance. With these increases also comes an increase in payroll taxes. He stated we may not be able to keep absorbing these increases due to not having the same increase in revenue to help cover the costs. He stated that our most valuable asset is our employees, but we all know that labor is the biggest expense of any business. Trustee Boyd would like to revisit how the cost of living is calculated for employees next year. He doesn't feel it should be based on the median salary but based on each individual wage. Treasurer Odom noted that the reason the current way was put in place was because there were several employees all doing the same job. Trustee Drollinger noted however, that it would then be based on years of service.

President Bennett made a couple of recommendations. One is to work on only one project a year. The second is to look at total compensation, which includes wages and benefits. He then moved on to short term disability.

Returning to the discussion of the wage scale: Trustee Drollinger said if we are short on funds, we should look at not filling the part time mower position, since most of his wages come from general fund departments. Mr. Keiser asked how this job would get done if they don't hire someone. The DPW has the waterline project and 7 days a week testing at the wastewater treatment plant. It was noted that this is not an add on position, it's a replacement of an existing position. Contracting it out was discussed, but costs were higher this way. Trustee Drollinger stated that she just feels we should pay attention due to the tight budgets. Treasurer Odom stated that in looking at the \$1.39 per hour, she will say it one more time, as the general fund budget currently sits to finish both projects, the restrooms and Craven ballpark, it is estimated to be at a \$200,000 shortfall in the 2022-23 fiscal year. If everything finishes up as proposed, even though there are almost always fluctuations, whether that be changes in revenue or expenses, the fund balance after 2022-23 is projected to be \$222,000. Once the projects are completed and they are removed from the budget, there is still a projection that expenses will exceed revenue in the following years. It will have to be made up from somewhere. The \$222,000 is not at the 30% required per the Village policy. The projections are showing that nothing else will be going into fund balance because expenses are exceeding revenues received. Council will have to take a good look at the budget now and into the future. She said we are expecting approximately \$20,000 more in tax revenue but it still doesn't exceed the expenses in the budget. The hourly wage for the mower position was discussed.

**Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd, to pay the seasonal worker \$15.75 per hour. Motion carried by voice vote.**

**Motion by McPherson, seconded by Hardy, to accept the recommendation of the Administration Committee for the \$1.39 across the board. Motion carried by voice vote with one nay vote from Trustee Ciganick.**

- **Health Benefits:** The Administration Committee is recommending that health benefits stay the same as they are now. The additional cost for benefits this year is \$16,652.00.

**Motion by Hardy, seconded by McPherson, to stay with the current Blue Cross Blue Shield plan. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- **Short-Term Disability:** President Bennett said we have been supplying short term disability since 2009 but found, although intent was presented, there was never a motion to do so. Trustee Drollinger noted that there are many employers who provide long term disability but not short term and asked why we provide it. She said employers offer short term disability to their employees but at the employees' expense. President Bennett said leave time can be used before long term kicks in. Mr. Keiser said, depending on the injury, employees are back to work by the time long term disability kicks in, leaving employees with no income during the short time they are off. He also asked if Council decides to discontinue providing the short-term disability, could the current policy stay in place but have the employees pay their own premiums. Mr. Keiser also said we may want to check our workman's compensation policy because he found that the cost could be lower if a short-term disability policy is in place. The cost for our short-term disability is \$3,300 a year with Trustee Drollinger stating that it is an amount we can save. Trustee Drollinger started to make a motion with President Bennett stating that she may have a conflict of interest. After discussion the following motion was made. Trustee Ciganick said if we are going to make adjustments, leave this alone and take a hard look at the \$1.39 per hour. This way there are no surprises to employees about short-term disability, and we look elsewhere for cost savings. We can relook at health benefits, which is worth \$.72 per hour, and relook at the cost-of-living increase as well.

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson, that the Village still offers but no longer pays for short-term disability for employees effective with the new budget beginning on March 1, 2022. Motion carried. Yeas: Boyd, McPherson, Hardy & Schuckel. Nays: Bennett & Ciganick. Abstention: Drollinger.**

- **Resolution #02 of 2022, Street Millage:** There was discussion at Admin about the allocation of tax revenue for streets. Currently we put 30% into major streets and 70% into local streets, however, with the waterline replacement project, we are finding that local streets is more in need of this revenue than major streets. This resolution proposes that 90% be put into local streets and 10% into major streets.

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by Hardy to approve Resolution #02 of 2022 as presented. Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: Boyd, Hardy, Ciganick, Drollinger, McPherson, Schuckel & Bennett. Nays: None**

- b) **Correction to Resolution #25 of 2021:** This resolution was drafted in 2021 but approved in 2022 creating a clerical error in its numbering. The resolution itself stays the same but it should be 1<sup>st</sup> resolution of 2022, not the last one of 2021.

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by Hardy, to accept the clerical corrections of the resolution.  
Motion carried by voice vote.**

- c) **Resolution #03 of 2022, Crusecom Tax Abatement:** This resolution will discontinue the tax abatements for Crusesom. The agreement that was put in place for 5 years ends in March. However, when looking at the two resolutions that created the abatement, the expiration of the abatements isn't until December of this year. This resolution states that the tax abatements will be discontinued as of December 30, 2022.

**Motion by Hardy, seconded by Boyd, to approve Resolution #03 of 2022 as presented.  
Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: Hardy, Boyd, Ciganick, Drollinger, McPherson, Schuckel & Bennett. Nays: None.**

- d) **Sewer Line Insurance Claim-Hickory Lane:** We have still not received the funds from the Hickory Lane sewer main claim. We have been in contact with the contractor's insurance company, and they are telling us the claim is under investigation, but they don't feel that it is the fault of their insured. Mr. Keiser noted that the claim extends to more than just our sewer line. Several other businesses had back up issues due to this incident. Treasurer Odom explained that she contacted our insurance company who can open a claim and the subrogate against the contraction company. Our agent said there is no cost to do this, but he couldn't guarantee our rates would not go up. He did say that any increased rates are more based on losses, but it doesn't mean this wouldn't cause an increase. The invoices have been paid. Trustee Boyd said if the contractor's insurance company is not going to pay the claim, do we then speak to the property owner. We could also contact our attorney and get his opinion. There was discussion about which option to proceed with, noting that we could possibly collect attorney fees along with the amount of the claim. The location of the accident, who owns the line, who owns the property where it occurred and who else might be responsible was also discussed.

**Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd, to pursue legal action with the Village attorney.  
Motion carried by voice vote.**

## 9. Discussion Items:

- a) **FY2022-23 Budget:** Now that the wages health benefits are approved, the final draft of the proposed budget will be completed, and a copy will be sent to you in the next day or so. A reminder that the public hearing for the budget is scheduled for Thursday, February 24 at 6:00 pm.

## 10. Department/Committee Reports:

- a) **Committee Reports:** Committee minutes, for the committees that have met, were included in packets for review.
- b) **Clerk/Zoning Administrator:** Clerk Essad explained that there is a public hearing coming up for a drive through convenience store located on the vacant lot next to M-88 Morning Grind.

- c) **Treasurer/Deputy Clerk:** None presented.
- d) **Department of Public Works:** Mr. Keiser hauled snow this week. Another layer of ice has been put on the ice rink. We are seeing a higher number of back orders on supplies which sometimes delays our work, so we are adjusting our workday on occasion. Supplies are coming in for the bathhouse so once mechanical is done, we will start installing toilets and other things. The 2016 plow quite working. We had to have it towed for repairs.
- e) **Police Department:** Officer Gray is doing well, and they are keeping busy.
- f) **Planning Commission:** Nothing presented.

**11. Closing Member/Public Comment**

- **Trustee Drollinger:** Trustee Drollinger presented information on some new chairs for the chambers. It was noted that Admin, when reviewing the expense budget, removed them from the proposed budget.
- **Trustee Ciganick:** Trustee Ciganick asked about the new police vehicle. The projected date for the purchase is November of 2022. The Treasury report shows the current amount of the CD and they are hoping that the sale of the 2013 vehicle will cover any additional costs of the new vehicle. Chief Drollinger reminded Council that we will also purchase the extended warranty.

**12. Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 8:17 P.M.

Compiled by Cathy Odom  
 Minutes are subject to approval.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_