

**Bellaire Village Council  
Meeting Minutes  
May 5, 2021**

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 Eldon McPherson, Trish Drollinger, Pat Boyd, Dave Ciganick & Bryan Hardy.
  - Absent:** Helen Schuckel
  - Staff Present:** Cathy Odom, Treasurer, Nicole Essad, Clerk, Bradley Keiser, DPW Supervisor & Bill Drollinger, Chief of Police.
  - Also Present:** Louise Wenzel, Terry VanAlstine, Jennifer Hodges,
3. **Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved with the additions of old business item f, Downtown Restrooms and new business item k, Property Tax Deadline.

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by Ciganick, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried by voice vote.**
4. **Conflict of Interest:** None presented.
5. **Consent Agenda:** The consent agenda was approved.

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson, to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.**
6. **Public Comment:**
  - **Seth Garnot:** Mr. Garnot informed Council that he is in favor of the restroom project. He said he learned that there is funding available for this kind of project. Parks, tress, etc. are other projects that could also be done with more money. He suggested Council pursue these other funding options before we spend money on one project.
  - **Jenn Wright:** Ms. Wright agreed with Mr. Garnot. She said one project that could be look at was Richardi Park. New playground equipment could be purchased, making it more family friendly. She also suggested looking into natural playgrounds and she would be happy to talk with us about them if it is something we might be interested in.
  - **Mark Irwin:** Mr. Irwin also agrees with the above comments. He would like the Village to use available funds for a much larger use.
  - **Josh Todd:** Mr. Todd works for Bee Well and is a local resident and he said Bee Well restrooms are open to the public and thinks the Village should use the fund for other things.
  - **Trish Fox:** Mrs. Fox said there is a need for public restrooms, especially for some that are more family friendly. She thanked the businesses that do allow the public use of their restrooms and the Council for the use of the community hall restrooms.
  - **Shelly Dalton:** Ms. Dalton informed Council that she did a survey of the downtown businesses asking which business offer restrooms that are open to the public. She supplies the results of that survey with most not allowing the use of their restrooms to the general public.
  - **Taylor Sutherland:** Mr. Sutherland said it is difficult to say no to someone who needs to use the restroom, but it is challenging to allow it. With this in mind, he would like to see the restrooms built.

## 7. Old Business

- a) **County Update-Mr. VanAlstine:** Mr. VanAlstine first thanked the DPW and Council for their help with the bank property landscape work. Household hazardous waste is scheduled for June 5 in Elk Rapids, August 14 in Bellaire & September 11 in Mancelona. There were some increases to the cost of some items and a decrease in other items. The State of Emergency is until May 31<sup>st</sup> and they will address it again at that time. The next board meeting is scheduled for May 6 and you can attend in person or via zoom. The County installed a BS & A program for residents to search online for department records, property taxes, etc. that they might need. They approved a resolution to move forward with broadband service.
- b) **DDA Update:** The DDA received a Village update, had a lengthy discussion about the restrooms, but would like to delay their construction to see if there is the possibility of obtaining additional funds and to determine if it is the best use of the funds. They discussed the parking map that had been distributed, which was made in an effort to get staff and owners of the downtown businesses to park elsewhere, other than prime spots for customers & guests. It will also show visitors where allowable parking is located. They are currently working on a possible DDA boundary expansion. They are working on updating their way finding signage and are looking for vendors. The DDA was looking at providing a newsletter, but are now placing updates that will be published with Destination Bellaire's publication.
- c) **Unified Action Plan Update:** Mr. Irwin provided an update of the Unified Action Plan from the Steering Committee. They approved a final action plan, which includes three projects as wanted by the community. It includes the progress of each of those projects, which are in various stages of completion. They have itemized the next steps and are looking into grant opportunities for funding sources. They are passing the plan on to the community partners and once reviewed by them, the committee will present it to the DDA and Village Council in June for approval. They will look for a resolution to be able to act on the plan to complete the projects.
- d) **School-Work Program:** Mo Denoyer, an employment specialist with the Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) explained she is working with students to provide a work based learning experience for them to transition into the work place after they exit high school. The age group they work with is from high school to 26. They partner with TBAISD. She has three identified Bellaire High School students and would like to offer them a community based opportunity to support their training needs. The program runs from June 21 through August 13. They are looking for work on projects that would require minimal direction. They provide a job coach that supervises the students on site at all times. The program is paid through them. She said they offer the pilot program, as in, they typically cover most of the wages, but they could certainly talk about any type of shared experience financially at a later date. The schedule is usually 2-4 days per week for 4-hour shifts. They have had success with the program and would like to the Village to consider becoming a designated work site. Trustee Ciganick asked for clarification on liability coverage for the students. Ms. Denoyer explained that they are all covered by their third-party payee but one reason the workplace is asked to also provide liability is because the ISD likes to know it exists. She said it goes on file at the ISD to cover an audit. Trustee Ciganick noted that much of this will fall to the DPW Supervisor to identify projects that are a fit for the students. He is not opposed to the idea, but it still falls on Mr. Keiser.

**Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Hardy, to approve the concept of the students to work program and defer whether or not this can actually happen to Mr. Keiser for the sake of coming up with the work list. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- e) **Resolution #15 of 2021, Motor Pool Fund:** At the last meeting Council discussed going forward with moving the motor pool fund into the general fund. This resolution will approve that action.

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson, to approve Resolution #15 of 2021, moving the motor pool fund into the general fund. Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: Boyd, McPherson, Ciganick, Drollinger, Hardy, Bennett. Nays: None Absent: Schuckel.**

- f) **Downtown Restrooms:** Mr. Ciganick provided an overview of the project, explaining that the drawings provide a front view, side view, layout of the building, but doesn't list detail such as siding, color, etc. Mr. Keiser explained the plans to Council. The plan provides an overview of ADA 22 X 50 pavilion/gazebo style restroom with three ADA compliant unisex family stalls. A mechanical room in the back with a boiler system. There will be 4-4" PVC pipes run to the front of the building for the possibility of future heated sidewalks. The front of the area will be a covered pavilion with picnic tables and a heated floor area for year round seating. The engineer didn't put finishes on the plans so we could use whatever we decided to use. Trustee Ciganick asked about the heat in the restroom facilities. Mr. Keiser said it would be a radiant heating system. We could possibly add another blower into the stalls if needed. Snow guards will be placed as needed and a shuttle area would be available for the Shanty Creek shuttle. He explained the roof line. The lot is 26' wide so we are not using the entire width of the lot. Trustee Ciganick asked Mr. Keiser to speak about the informal poll that Shelly Dalton mentioned in public comment and about his conversations with business owners. Mr. Keiser thanked Shelly for providing the information that she gathered and explained. He said there was an overwhelming "yes" to building the restroom facility. Clerk Essad provided the numbers to the polls taken. She noted that restrooms have been in the Master Plan since 2017-2018 with 73% of the people who took the survey at that time, wanted restrooms downtown. Trustee McPherson has been working with the Steering Committee and with the surveys they did, restrooms were wanted. If Council moves forward, we can begin work this year. Trustee Drollinger asked if we research finding funds for the project. Grants were discussed and it was noted that due to our median household income level we do not qualify for grants.

**Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd, to proceed with the plans presented by the architect, Jim Barnard, to build the public restrooms. Motion carried by voice vote.**

## 8. New Business

- a) **Pavilion Use Request-Dee Lynch:** Mrs. Lynch explained that she is working to provide free clothing to people in the County who need it. She would like to use the pavilion on June 5, 2021 until 2:00 pm, but would like Council to consider waiving the rental fee because they have no funds to pay for it. The Rotary and Bellaire Women's Bible Study Group are two of the sponsors for this event. President Bennett informed her that he will pay the fee so rules set by Council will not be broken. She thanked him for his generosity. Mrs. Lynch also provided an update on BYI and the youth community garden. No further action was taken.
- b) **Gazebo:** This was originally asked to be placed on the agenda by a resident to discuss some potential repairs and tree removal needed by the gazebo at Richardi Park. Since that time some repairs have been completed. No further action was taken.
- c) **Bridge Flowers:** We received a call from Ruth Basch who helps with planting the bridge flowers and she wants to make sure the Village is still willing to help fund the cost of the flowers. She also asked about increasing the amount for flowers as the cost of them has been increasing. We have budgeted \$175 for the flowers. Mr. Keiser explained that the parks committee puts the flower barrels on the walking path do not spend more than that for 10-12 barrels. There are only 4 bridge boxes and we put in the mulch and dirt for them. We agree they are beautiful, but the cost doesn't seem needed. No further action was taken.
- d) **Resolution #16 of 2021, Millage Rates:** It is time to set the 2021-22 millage rates. The rates in the resolution support the FY2021-22 budget.

**Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd, to approve Resolution #16 of 2021, setting the 2021-22 millage rates. Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: Ciganick, Boyd, Drollinger, Hardy, McPherson & Bennett. Nays: None Absent: Schuckel.**

- e) **Village Clerk Contract:** It is time to renew the Clerk's contract. It will be a 3-year contract.

**Motion by Hardy, seconded by Boyd, to approve the Clerk's 3-year contract, effective may 18, 2021. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

- f) **Little League Contract:** The Little League will be playing this year and the contract needs to be renewed. The dates of the contract were updated as well as a section pertaining to the player fees.

**Motion by Ciganick, seconded by McPherson, to approve the Little League contract as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- **Parks Committee Recommendations:** The Parks Committee would like to redo the ball fields at Craven Park. We will be reconfiguring the fields and go from 3 to 4 ball fields. Two softball fields and two baseball fields. The hope of having four fields is that we could possibly bring back tournaments, possibly provide kid's tournaments and make the necessary field improvements for the high school. With those improvements, the school may be able to host district and regional game play, which can potentially bring in revenue. Mr. Keiser noted that this is included in our Master Plan and our Parks & Recreation Plan and has been for many years. He also noted that if this moves forward, we will not have to renew the lease for the little league fields because Craven Park will be able handle all of the leagues at the new fields. This will also help with maintenance costs. Phase one is the reconstruction of the ball fields. It will not include a new concession stand or restrooms. The other phases will fall in place.
  - **Ball Field Improvements Project-Using Fund Balance:** The Parks Committee is recommending that Council approve the use of \$150,000 of the fund balance to put toward the first phase of the reconstruction of the ball fields. The projected costs of the first phase will be approximately \$200,000. We have talked with local contractors who will donate their time. President Bennett noted that this would put us at our minimum of acceptable fund balance if approved.
  - **Ball Field Improvement Project-Fundraising:** We have the support of Jeff Hebden, who has offered to help with fundraising. He has already made some contacts and is ready to move forward if Council approves. The Parks Committee is recommending that Council authorize Jeff Hebden of Bellaire Athletics to head up fundraising for all other needed funds for the improvement project.
  - **Ball Field Improvement Project-School Donation:** We have also asked the school to donate \$50,000. We have not heard back, but they seemed receptive. They sent the request to their committee for review. The parks Committee is recommending that if the school donates money for the project, then the Village would suspend the annual fee for use of the park based upon the donation amount.

**Motion by Drollinger, seconded by Boyd, to approve the use of \$150,000 from fund balance to improve the ball fields at Craven Park, that we allow Jeff Hebden to spear head the fundraising for all of the ball field improvements and to waive the annual fee for the school's use of Craven Park for 25 years if they donate \$50,000. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- **Movable Warming Shed:** The group that has done the work on the ice rink the last few years has asked that we keep a warming shed by the rink. It will be at their cost. The committee does not want a permanent shed; they would like it to be moved during the summer months. The committee recommends allowing Rotary to place a moveable 10' x 10' warming hut near the skating area in the winter. Trustee Drollinger noted that the current shed is an equipment shed and it is permanently mounted. Trustee Ciganick stated that he thought the equipment shed was supposed to be transferred to the Youth Center community garden. Mr. Keiser said that never happened. Trustee McPherson likes the idea of the

warming shed and if we don't want two sheds in the park, the equipment shed could be removed.

**Motion by Drollinger to allow the warming shed as long as it is moveable, to be there while the skating rink is in business and that we remove the tool shed after winter is over. Motion withdrawn and item tabled for further review**

Mr. Keiser asked if this could be tabled so he can show the parks Committee Chair some things at the park. Trustee Drollinger agreed and withdrew her motion.

- **FOV Flower Pots:** The Friends of the Veterans would like permission to place two flower pots next to the flagpole at Richardi Park. They will maintain them.

**Motion by Drollinger, seconded by Ciganick, to allow the flower pots by the flagpole. Motion carried by voice votes.**

- g) **Financial Audit Statement-Draft:** The draft financial statement is ready for review and approval. We will accept the draft, send in the approval letter, the final copy will be completed and sent to the state with the Village receiving copies when done. Ms. Wenzel asked to be able to review the DDA portion of the financial statement before Council approves. Treasurer Odom said she would send a copy to her for review.

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson to accept the draft copy of the financial statement. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- h) **ZBA Board Resignation:** Mrs. Stanish has tendered her resignation on the ZBA. Trustee Drollinger would like to send her a thank you letter.

**Motion by Drollinger, seconded by McPherson, to accept Mrs. Stanish's resignation from the ZBA and thank her for all that she has done. Motion carried by voice vote.**

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson, to allow staff to place an ad in all proper spots to fill the position on the ZBA Board. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- i) **Sweeper:** Mr. Keiser explained that the original company we were supposed to rent the sweeper from could not rent to us because they are not the supplies of the Elgin brand. After further research we can have one here on May 17, 2021 at cost of \$19,500, which is \$7,500 more than we budgeted for. Due to the increase cost to the budget, Council should approve the cost. He looked at several other options but this was our only way to go.

**Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd, to go ahead with the sweeper. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- j) **Property Tax Deadline:** Treasurer Odom explained that we currently turn our tax roll into the County after the September 14, deadline. Once we turn in the tax roll, the County reimburses the Village for all real property delinquent taxes. The funds we receive are for the budget we are currently working with. Due to new legislation, we are allowed to keep our tax roll until March 1, which means we would collect the interest earned on taxes paid between September 14 and March 1. Our interest rate is 1% per month. She explained that one problem with waiting until March 1 is that the revenue for delinquents would not be received until the following fiscal year and would not be recorded in the fiscal year we are not currently working with. This would create a receivable the auditor would complete in the audit. The auditor suggested we keep it as is. The potential revenue we could gain was discussed. Trustee Drollinger would like to wait until March 1 to gain that extra revenue. Treasurer Odom stated that she did not foresee all the delinquents being paid by March and reminded them if they agreed to collect the interest, our revenue for this year's budget would diminish by the amount of the delinquents. Trustee Ciganick asked if there was enough in fund balance to cover the potential revenue loss and it was noted that there should be enough to offset the timing of this first cycle.

**Motion by Drollinger, seconded by McPherson, to approve Resolution #17 of 2021 as presented. Motion carried by voice vote. Ayes: Drollinger, McPherson, Boyd, Ciganick & Hardy. Nays: Bennett Absent: Schuckel.**

**9. Discussion Items:** None presented.

**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 we received a complaint letter from a resident, which he wanted read to Council. She said we are investigating a zoning ordinance and nuisance violation in the Broad St/Cayuga St area and other violations throughout the Village. We are trying to gather evidence to move forward. They are not responding to letter that are sent to them.
- c) **Treasurer/Deputy Clerk:** Treasurer Odom informed Council that we received the Paddle Antrim annual report and an invitation from them for the water trail ribbon cutting ceremony. If anyone is interest in reading the report or attending the ceremony, let her know and she will get the information to them.
- d) **Department of Public Works:** Mr. Keiser informed Council that the rough draft for the sewer line from Holiday Dr. to the lift station is ready. He will receive that so it can be finalized and get it out for bid. The parking lane downtown is completed.
- e) **Police Department:** Chief Drollinger explained he is busy and will be for a few weeks.
- f) **Planning Commission:** Nothing presented.

**11. Closing Member/Public Comment:**

- **Nicole Essad:** Clerk Essad read the complaint letter from the resident discussed above. He has concerns about potential zoning violations and would like them looked into.
- **Seth Garnot:** Mr. Garnot informed Council that he understands we do not qualify for grants due to our community income level, but in speaking with the MEDC, the community hall project has 1-1 or 9-1 matching grants as long as that project was serving a low to moderate income community if that community took a survey afterwards. He said a call to them might be beneficial.
- **David Ciganick:** Trustee Ciganick asked Jennifer Hodges to speak about potential grants. Ms. Hodges discussed the low-moderate income issue and explained that there is an extensive census survey that communities can do to see if they would qualify for the low-income category, but it is lengthy and costly. Based on current information we do not fall into the low-income category. The Village's current household income is approximately 40,000, which is higher than the low-income base.

**12. Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 9:04 P.M.

Compiled by Cathy Odom  
Minutes are subject to approval.

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