

**Bellaire Village Council
Meeting Minutes
November 4, 2020**

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 David Ciganick, Eldon McPherson, Trish Drollinger, Pat Boyd, Bryan Hardy and Helen Schuckel.
 - Absent:** None
 - Staff Present:** Cathy Odom, Treasurer, Nicole Essad, Clerk, Brad Keiser, DPW Supervisor & Bill Drollinger, Chief of Police.
 - Also Present:** Louise Wenzel, Jennifer Hodges, Terry VanAlstine, Christy Wilson, Maggie Maul, Sue Alber, Joe Short & Shelley Dalton.
3. **Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved with the additions of old business item e, Art Work and discussion item c, DDA Complaint.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by McPherson, to approve the agenda with the additions of old business item e, Art Work and discussion item c, DDA Complaint. Motion carried by voice vote.
4. **Conflict of Interest:** None presented.
5. **Consent Agenda:** The consent agenda was approved.

Motion by Hardy, seconded by Boyd, to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.
6. **Public Comment:** None presented.
7. **Old Business**
 - a) **County Update-Mr. VanAlstine:** Mr. VanAlstine explained the cause of the 2020 election issue. He stated there was a malfunction with the electronic transfer of data from the disc drive to the computer causing votes to be miscounted. They are currently working through the tapes; votes will be recounted and submitted to the State. There was a donation of \$250,000 made to the Antrim County Youth Center. They are looking to use the funds to purchase a place to create a youth center. The County accepted a bid from Bert's Excavating for snow removal services. There was a discussion about combining the Abstract department and another department stating that we are the only County with a separate abstract department. David Emmel replaced Andy Hayes as the new director for the NLEA. The Torch River RV Park issue is being worked on and Heidi Shafer from the Conservation District will provide a soil erosion update. The County Planning Commission is looking for a member to serve on their Board.
 - b) **DDA Update:** Louise Wenzel noted that at the DDA meeting on October 28, 2020, the board discussed the Unified Action Plan Steering Committee update. They discussed the SBC contribution dollars of \$34,000, which they approved returning the funds to SBC. A Buy Local Group report was provided. The Buy Local Group has decided to separate from the DDA because they would like to operate on their own. As Council is aware, the DDA was going to return the tables and chairs purchased by a donation for social distancing, but after discussion they will remain with the DDA. The DIA art removal was also discussed with the DIA requesting that the art work remain up throughout the next year. The DDA agreed. The DDA also had a candid discussion about board membership and all felt that they would like to keep the number of members the same, but have 100% participation from the current board members. There was also discussion about changing the boundaries of the DDA with no action as more information was needed. She said she was also contacted about being on the committee for the non motorized trail project between Bellaire and Central Lake.

- c) **Playground Equipment Bid:** This is to inform Council that we will not be receiving the playground equipment due to not having the highest bid.
- d) **Grant Application Approval:** Clerk Essad explained that we need authority to apply for the MDARD (MI Department of Agriculture and Rural Development) 2021 Rural Development Grant. There is a grant award of up to \$100,000 dollars and it requires a 30% match. If Council would like to apply, then a decision on which project will have to be made. The choice is between downtown restrooms or to finish the kayak launch. We have preliminary plans for the restrooms and we have plans for the universal kayak launch on River St. The grant deadline is November 19, 2020 and if Council wants to proceed, she will need authorization to apply. Trustee Ciganick asked what amount is needed to finish the kayak launch. Mr. Keiser noted that we will need roughly \$68,000-\$70,000 to finish it. Trustee Ciganick said we should finish the project that is already started before moving on to the next project. Mr. Keiser also noted that we already hold a permit for the kayak launch, which is good for approximately another 3 years. Trustee Boyd agreed that we should finish the project already started, but also noted that we need to look seriously at downtown restrooms. Ms. Hodges from Gourdie Fraser informed Council that there is the DNR Trust Fund grant which can produce a higher award. The Village would just have to make sure that their parks and recreation plan is updated to include the bathhouse.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Hardy, to direct the Clerk to proceed with the grant opportunity to complete the kayak launch knowing that there is a necessity for a 30% match if we acquire the grant. Motion carried by voice vote with one no vote from Trustee McPherson.

- e) **Art Work:** The DIA would like to keep the art work in place through next fall.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd, to continue our relationship with the DIA and allow the art work to stay in place until next fall. Motion carried by voice vote.

8. New Business

- a) **Non-Motorized Trail:** Maggie Maul from Central Lake is in the beginning stages of looking at developing a non-motorized trail between Central Lake and Bellaire. She would like to invite the Village of Bellaire to have representation on a stakeholder committee which will investigate whether this will be possible. We have many outdoor enthusiasts that walk and bike. She also feels it could be economically beneficial for both communities. She is working with Jennifer Hodges from Gourdie Fraser on the project and would like to seek input from the public. If there is positive feedback, we could explore potential grants that would provide us with a feasibility study to see the possibility of building the trail. She has already been in contact with other local entities to serve on the committee and has also contacted some major trail experts. Trustee Boyd said he is already on board due to the nature of his business and is willing to serve as the Council representative.
- b) **Glacial Hills Agreement:** The agreement is almost due for renewal and Council is asked to review it for any changes before approving next month. Trustee Boyd informed Council that the Glacial Hills Board would just like to see the addition of contact information. No further action was taken.
- c) **Monument Rededication:** Trustee Hardy informed Council that on November 5, 2020 at 1:00 pm. in the front of the community hall, Carl Griffith will be honored for serving our country and for his involvement in the restoration of the WWII monument. At 1:00 pm on November 11, 2020, there will be a rededication ceremony for the restoration of the monument. Trustee McPherson suggested posting a picture of the monument and the ceremony on the Village facebook page as a thank you from the Village.
- d) **DDA-Table Storage:** President Bennett asked Council for permission to store the DDA tables, chairs and umbrellas on the stage in the community hall. The tables can be broken down and

should all fit on the stage. Mr. Keiser suggested using the storage at the dam. It has been cleaned out and there is room.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Hardy, to store the DDA tables and chairs on the stage at the community hall. Motion carried by voice vote.

- e) **Employee Evaluation Process/Forms:** The process for evaluating staff is being proposed. The Administration Committee is recommending that the supervisors evaluate their respective staff and the Administration Committee will evaluate the department heads. New evaluation forms have also been developed which include job related topics. Trustee Ciganick noted that this process helps to determine merit increases if offered, which will also need to be reviewed.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd, to proceed with the new evaluation process and new forms. Motion carried by voice vote.

- f) **Resolution #25 of 2020, Virtual Meetings:** This resolution will allow us to continue having our meetings virtually until December 31, 2020.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson, to approve Resolution #25 of 2020, allow for the continuation of virtual meetings. Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: Boyd, McPherson, Ciganick, Drollinger, Hardy, Schuckel & Bennett. Nays: None.

- g) **Resolution #26 of 2020, PA 152:** This resolution must be approved annually if the Council wishes to opt out or exempt itself from the requirements of PA 152, which deals with medical benefit plans and their costs offered to employees.

Motion by Bennett, seconded by Ciganick, to approve Resolution #26 of 2020, opting out of the requirements of PA 152. Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: Ciganick, Boyd, Drollinger, Hardy, McPherson, Schuckel & Bennett. Nays: None.

- h) **CVTRS Certification:** This certification is required annually for the Village to continue receiving their statutory revenue sharing from the State of Michigan. We must post a dashboard and projected budget for the public to view, allowing for transparency of the Village's financial position.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Hardy, to authorize President Bennett to sign the CVTRS certification. Motion carried by voice vote.

- i) **PC Appointments:** Bill Drollinger is required to step down as the Planning Commission Chairman because he is an employee. Fred Harris' appointment is due to expire and Lauryn Keiser is also interested in serving as a member of the Planning Commission.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by McPherson, to reappoint Mr. Harris and to appoint Lauryn Keiser to the Planning Commission. Motion carried by voice vote.

- j) **ZBA Appointments:** Clerk Essad informed Council that Mrs. Smalley's term is about to expire on the ZBA. She has expressed the possibility of discontinuing serving on the ZBA, but agreed to do so if she is needed. Therry Colombo has also expressed her interested in serving on the ZBA. There is an open alternate position. Discussion of appointing Mrs. Colombo to the full seat and moving Mrs. Smalley to the alternate position occurred. President Bennett would like to appoint Therry Colombo to the ZBA and Mrs. Smalley to the ZBA alternate position.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by McPherson, to approve the appointment of Therry Colombo to the ZBA and Mrs. Smalley to the ZBA alternate position. Motion carried by voice vote.

- k) **Sale of Fixed Assets:** DPW Supervisor explained that he has a couple pieces of equipment that they no longer use or need and he would like permission to sell them. One is a 3Point hitch finish mower and the other is the old sewer jetter. The approximate selling prices are \$800 for the mower and approximately \$2,500 for the sewer jetter.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Drollinger, to allow Mr. Keiser to sell the fixed assets for the prices as indicated. Motion carried by voice vote.

- l) **Fire Department Request:** the Fire department would like permission to use the Council chambers or their Firefighter 1 & 2 classes. Their classroom is not large enough to provide the training with proper social distancing. The classes will be held on Tuesday's and Thursday's in the evening.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Hardy, to allow the Bellaire District Fire Department to hold their fire training classes in the Council chambers including the open door for the schedule that is attached to the same correspondence. Motion carried by voice vote.

- m) **Village Well:** Mr. Keiser explained that we had two wells go down at the same time. We had a new pump and motor installed and are waiting for the variable frequency drive to finish the repair on well #3 and bring it back online. Well #5 is now back up and running and should be back online tomorrow as long as testing comes back clean.

9. Discussion Items:

- a) **Delinquent Water/Sewer Bills:** With the regulations pertaining to shutting off water accounts for nonpayment due to Covid coming to a close at the end of December, staff is looking for direction on how to handle those accounts that are in arrears. We have about a dozen accounts that are several months behind. Staff would like Council to think about how they would like to handle this and approve a plan at the next meeting. There are several options that we can consider. Shutting them off, allowing payment arrangements and sending out notices are some of the options to choose from. Trustee Drollinger suggested allowing a payment plan as long as they keep up with their current bill and continue to pay an approved amount toward their past due amount. Trustee Ciganick suggested 10% to the past due portion as well as their current bill should be paid to continue the payment plan and to avoid shutoff.
- b) **2021-22 Budget Preparations:** Staff would like to inform Council that it is time to begin the 2021-22 budget process. Committees can begin scheduling their budget meetings.
- c) **DDA Complaint:** The Village received a couple of complaints about unprofessional behavior at the recent DDA meeting. President Bennett suggested that everyone listen to the recording of the meeting so we can discuss a direction to move forward. Mr. Short explained that the meeting was heated at the beginning, showing passion for the discussion about the outdoor tables and chairs used for social distancing during the summer. He explained that both parties apologized to each other and as far as he is concerned and the issue is a closed matter. He apologized to those that it offended but is looking forward to the future success of the DDA.

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:** Zoning is picking up, we are working on a couple of zoning violations and some nuisance violations. The Steering Committee is also moving forward with discussion on the projects they would like to work on.
- c) **Treasurer/Deputy Clerk:** None presented.
- d) **Department of Public Works:** Two DPW staff went to take their test for their water license. Sand and salt is mixed and DPW is getting ready for the winter.

- e) **Police Department:** Chief Drollinger thanked those that he worked with on the Planning Commission and regrets having to step down. On the police side of the job, things are busy.
- f) **Planning Commission:** Nothing was presented.

11. Closing Member/Public Comment:

- **Jennifer Hodges:** Ms. Hodges informed Council that she has been sitting in on EGLE webinars about their clean water initiative so she will be up to date on possible grant opportunities. Gourdie Fraser has also just completed some GIS training for the Village employees.
- **Louise Wenzel:** Ms. Wenzel clarified that all is resolved with the issue at the DDA meeting and apologized for the unprofessional behavior. The rest of the meeting went smoothly and the DDA is moving forward toward their goals. Trustee Ciganick noted that the Village operates on a Council form of government so complaints are not tasked to one individual but should be brought to the entire Council for review.
- **Trustee Ciganick:** Trustee Ciganick stated that the downtown restroom cost of \$275,000 seems quite high. He explained that a restroom used in Ellsworth is portable in nature and would like to research other options.

12. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:20 P.M.

Compiled by Cathy Odom
Minutes are subject to approval.

Approved: _____

Date: _____