

Village of Bellaire

ADMINISTRATION & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Dan Bennett, Chairman

Dave Ciganick

Bryan Hardy

COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

January 14, 2022

2:00 PM

I. Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM

II. Roll Call - Attendance:

Present: Bryan Hardy, Dave Ciganick, and Dan Bennett

Absent: None

Staff Present: Nicole Essad, Clerk; Cathy Odom, Treasurer; Bradley Keiser, DWP Supervisor; and Bill Drollinger, Police Chief

Public Present: Terry McBee, Police Officer; Aaron Kirt, DPW; and Christopher Grnya, DPW

III. Approval of Agenda: The agenda was approved as presented.

Motion by Hardy, seconded by Ciganick to approve the agenda as presented. Motion Passed by unanimous voice vote.

IV. Approval of Minutes – December 29, 2021: The minutes of the December 29, 2021 meeting were approved as presented.

Motion by Hardy, seconded by Bennett to approve the minutes of the December 29, 2021 meeting as presented. Motion Passed by unanimous voice vote.

V. Conflict of Interest: None presented.

VI. Public Comment: None presented.

VII. Old Business: None presented.

VIII. New Business

- a. BCBS Options:** Treasurer Odom explained that the insurance representative was only able to get her what the current policy would cost with the new rates. She explained that the coinsurance and out of pocket maximums increased but that was the only change to the policy. She also stated that the representative has other options but did not get them to her in time for the meeting. Chairperson Bennett stated that the increased cost in insurance was \$1,210.67 per month, which would be about \$14,000 plus for the year. He stated that the rates went up 7.84%. Chairperson Bennett thought that the Village could get a plan with a higher deductible and then the Village could pay the difference. Treasurer Odom stated that this was addressed a few years ago, and she was not sure if the Village was allowed to do that. Trustee Ciganick and Hardy stated that they remaindered something like that as well. General discussion was held about if this has changed and if the Village could do that. Trustee Ciganick asked what additional expenses the employees would have if the Village absorbed the \$14,000 extra for the same plan. Treasurer Odom stated that the additional expense would be the out-of-pocket maximum and the coinsurance costs. Clerk Essad stated that the deductible would stay the

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same, but the out-of-pocket expenses and the coinsurance would be raised. She stated that the coverage would be the same. Trustee Ciganick stated that he was surprised that the insurance did not at least offer something that did not pass along extra expenses to the employees. Treasurer Odom stated that that plan did not exist. She explained that the current plan the Village has is not available. She stated that the name of the plan is the same, and the coverage is the same, but the coinsurance and the out-of-pocket expenses have gone up. Trustee Ciganick stated that the best the Village can possibly do is to absorb the \$14,000, and that is as good as it gets. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that Meadowbrook was able to appeal the rate increase because the employees did not use as much as the premium that was paid in. General discussion was held about the Village asking the insurance representative to see if the Village could appeal the rate increase. Treasurer Odom stated she will check with the insurance representative. She also stated that she is hoping that the insurance representative will have other options to look over. General discussion was held about having the insurance representative at the next meeting to answer questions and discuss options. Chairperson Bennett stated that he did not want to do anything to hurt the employee's insurance. Trustee Ciganick asked if this was a once-a-year decision regarding the coverage, and when is that done. Treasurer Odom stated that March 1 is the enrollment period. She stated that the decision should be made prior to March 1 for the new insurance to be effective as of that date. Trustee Ciganick asked when the insurance representative would have the options for the Village to review. Treasurer Odom stated that the insurance representative is working on the others. It was the consensus of the Committee to keep the insurance as close as possible to what it is currently and to keep the cost down for the employees. Trustee Ciganick stated that it seemed odd that the employees had to pay extra out of pocket and the employer does not have a choice to absorb some of that expense. Chief Drollinger stated that he would think that it could be rolled into the premium. Chairperson Bennett wanted input from the employees. Mr. Kirt stated that he appreciated the invite to the conversation, and that he was happy with the current insurance. He also stated that he understood that everything goes up and that it was out of everyone's control. Clerk Essad stated that she thought the plan that was presented was covering the same amount, and that even if she had to pay more out of pocket. Everything is going up because of inflation. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated he would personally see the pension and health insurance be left alone, and maybe adjust the cost-of-living raise. General discussion was held about property uncapping which will increase the revenue to possibly cover the amount BCBS was increased. Chairperson Bennett stated that vision was very cheap and dental was a little more expensive but he would not change it because it would not save the Village that much.

- b. **Wage Scale:** Treasurer Odom stated that the consumer price index was raised 7.5% for all items. She stated that the wage scale was included in the packets with this increase shown. She stated that there was also a sheet showing other percentages and what those would equal in dollar amounts. DPW Supervisor Keiser asked how Treasurer Odom reached the \$1.39. She stated that she took the average of the current wages and applied the percentage to get an amount that would be equal across the board. Trustee Ciganick asked if the 7.5% was applied to each position. Treasurer Odom stated that the \$1.39 was added to each position, and she got that number by taking the average of the current wages and applying the 7.5% to it. Trustee Ciganick stated that if it was done individually then a person on the lower end of the scale would not get the \$1.39 and a person on the higher end would get more than \$1.39.

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Chairperson Bennett stated that doing it that way would continue to spread the individuals because it would not be equal. He stated the person on the top would get more and that would increase faster than the person on the bottom. Treasurer Odom stated that is why when the wage scale was first put into place, that the average of the current wages was taken to get an equal increase across the board. Trustee Ciganick stated that they have always applied the average in the past but that the Village does not have to do it that way now. Treasurer Odom stated that is correct. Trustee Ciganick asked if the percentage was applied to each position individually for the last year to see how much it fluctuated. Treasurer Odom stated she did not, but she could. Trustee Ciganick did not think it would be that much. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that several employees are not at the four- and five-year mark. Chairperson Bennett stated that to match CIP the Village is looking at \$1.39. He also asked what the 5.7% was boxed. Treasurer Odom stated that was the CIP for All Items Less Food and Energy but the motion when this was first enacted was to take the higher of the two. Trustee Ciganick asked if it should stay at the flat dollar amount of \$1.39 per person or does the 7.5% be applied to each position individually. General discussion was held about what the rates would be if the 7.5% was applied to each step in the wage scale. Chairperson Bennett asked about offsetting the increased cost of insurance with the cost-of-living raise. General discussion was held about reducing the cost of living by 2% which would equal the increase in the health insurance costs. Trustee Ciganick stated that the Village has always done an average in the past, and it seems like pennies in the grand scheme of things to apply the percentage to each step in the wage scale, so he is comfortable with the \$1.39 across the board. Trustee Ciganick also stated that in the past insurance and cost-of-living were looked at separately. Trustee Ciganick stated that the Village wants to attract and retain quality employees, and that the Village needs to be competitive when it comes to the wage scale and insurance. He also stated that if it turns out that the budget cannot handle the increases then it will have to be tweaked. Clerk Essad stated that she gave the Michigan Municipal League wage surveys for the General Law Villages, so that the Village can stay competitive with other similar villages. She also asked if the Committee wanted to stay at the \$1.39 across the board or if they wanted to change the wage scale to fit the information that was given to them. She stated that there was information from the Michigan Municipal League for wages for the same positions and there was an article about police wages. She stated that the Committee should look at the taxable values of the municipalities when comparing wages because taxing requirements are different for each. Chief Drollinger suggested that the starting rate for a police officer be \$20 per hour. He stated that the Village is out of line with what others in the State are paying. He stated that there are very few below the \$20 - \$25 start out rate. Chairperson Bennett stated that region 6 be looked at because that is where the Village is located. Clerk Essad directed everyone's attention to the packet for MML wage survey for Police Officers for the General Law Villages. She stated that of the General Law Villages the starting rate is \$18-\$20 per hour. She also directed everyone to look at the taxable values for the municipality. She stated some are \$300 million as a taxable value with a starting rate of \$23 per hour. Clerk Essad stated that the Village is at a taxable value of \$35 million, and she wanted to make sure that the Committee is comparing similar villages. Chairperson Bennett asked if the starting rate was increased to \$20 per hour would it then be increased by the cost-of-living. Chief Drollinger stated no, that would be including the cost-of-living raise. He stated that everything is around the \$20 per hour start out. Trustee Ciganick stated that he would like to take the police officer wage scale attached to the article, which was handed out for a Council meeting, the new column under that wage scale and

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substitute that in to the 2021-22 wage scale, and once that is substituted in, then he would like to give the \$1.39 cost-of-living increase and apply it across the board. He stated that would put a starting officer at \$20.45 per hour, scaling up from there. He stated that you can look at regions and taxable values, but it comes down to what is the competition in the surrounding area, what type of services does the Village offer. He poured over the calls that the police department has done and the Village is right up t here with what Elk Rapids has. Trustee Ciganick also stated that he looked at what the officers are dealing with, everything an officer does is risky, but some are obviously risky, and a lot of the calls were risky stuff. Trustee Ciganick stated why would you come to work in the Village when you could go two blocks down and work for the County. Chief Drollinger stated that there were a few officers that the Village has lost because of that. Chairperson Bennett stated that the Village looks good and is busy but that causes police problems as well. Chief Drollinger stated that calls are going up, not at a massive rate but it is going up. He stated that if you compare Elk Rapids to us, there are only two officers for the Village and five for Elk Rapids. Officer McBee stated that the biggest thing is the liability that the officers have. He stated that they have no protection at all besides the prosecutor or the village attorney if they ever get into a shoot out or fight. Clerk Essad stated that there is qualified immunity and the Village insurance attorneys as well. Officer McBee stated that the County and State have their own unions and union attorneys, that deal with this stuff all the time. He stated that with the wage scale as low as it is now and wit the way everything is now its out of whack. Clerk Essad stated that she believes that if the Committee is going to raise the police department wages this significantly, then the other departments should be looked as well, so that it will be fair to those that have been here for many years. She also stated that if the dangers and liabilities are going to be discussed, then water operators and sewer operators need to be included because they are personally liable as well. Chairperson Bennett asked if there should be one wage scale for all positions. Clerk Essad stated that she did not think that one size fits all would work, because there are different risks and knowledge needed for each position. She suggested that it should be by department or by job. Chairperson Bennett wants to treat everyone equally and be fair. Chief Drollinger stated that he thought that this was what it was all about. He did not think it was just for the police department. DPW Supervisor Keiser explained that the one Trustee Ciganick was looking at was only for police. He also stated that the Elk Rapids DPW Supervisor makes \$60,000 per year and he only does streets and parks, he does not do water and sewer. He also stated that a water operator in Elk Rapids makes \$50,000 per year, and our water operator does not make that. DPW Supervisor Keiser also stated that the water operator is on the line if there is a bad test or lead in the water, not the Council. He stated that if the sewer operator over treats and contaminates the river he is liable not the Council. Chairperson Bennett stated that he would like to pay those wages. Clerk Essad stated that the article talks about what different states are doing not what similar municipalities are doing. She explained that the Michigan Municipal League gave information about similar municipalities. She did not know how accurate the proposed new police department wage scale would be compared against all the General Law Village information. She stated that Elk Rapids has more taxable value than the Village. She also stated that Boyne City is a city, and their taxing scheme is different. Trustee Ciganick stated that he did not care what Oklahoma pays. He thinks that what is most important is the competitive wages in this area. He stated that if no matter where you live and you work in Bellaire now what is a legitimate driving distance to a competitive employer in the area. He stated that he did focus on just our area and the competitiveness of our area. He stated

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that what a clerk makes in Kalamazoo and a similar size municipality, he will not put a ton of weight on it. He stated that the Village should look at all the wage, but his first focus was the police department, because he thought they were way behind. Trustee Ciganick also stated that the additional package the Village offers is solid. He just thought that the police department wages were way behind and that is why he supports the proposed new wage scale for them and add the \$1.39 which puts the new starting officer at \$20.45. Chairperson Bennett stated that one thing there are people on our insurance because the stipend for not taking it is only \$400 per month. Mr. Kirt stated that the insurance is very good here. Trustee Ciganick stated that the Village tries to do other things for the employees such as the end of calendar year compensation, and merit pay. He stated that he hopes to be able to pay the merit pay at the end of the fiscal year, but he was not sure if that would happen.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Hardy to recommend to the Village Council that it absorb the price increase to Blue Cross Blue Shield; that the insurance representative give options for employee; and secondly, that the suggested new rate scale for the Police Department be applied into the current year wage scale and then in reference to cost-of-living increase for 2022-23 apply \$1.39 to all categories. Motion Passed by unanimous voice vote.

Discussion on the motion proceeded. Chairperson Bennett stated that this means that the fund balance will have to be looked at again. Trustee Ciganick stated that may not be the case because the Village does not know the revenues coming in for this year yet. Trustee Hardy asked about when the last time the taxes were raised. Treasurer Odom stated that the taxes have been lowered slightly based upon the Headley Amendment. She stated that taxes have need been raised since she started working for the Village, that she knows of. Chairperson Bennett asked about a millage for the police department. Treasurer Odom stated that that is an option that might have to be taken depending on how the revenues go. Clerk Essad asked if the only increase to wages would be for the police department or was the Committee going to discuss the other departments as well. Trustee Ciganick stated that at this point only the police department and the cost-of-living increase would apply to everyone. He also stated that he would like to look at it further as well. He stated that there was a lot of information to absorb in a short period of time. Chairperson Bennett suggested that one department a year be adjusted. Clerk Essad stated that she did not think that the employees would be happy with that. She suggested talking about this at the next meeting. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that the Committee is going to base the police scale on region 6 driving distance, and he turned down a job at Elk Rapids for \$60,000 a year that Mr. Kirt could have had. He stated that Mr. Kirt could have just left for Central Lake's supervisor's job but he did not, but you are going to base the police department on municipalities within driving distance that are \$100 million a year more taxable value than Bellaire is, but tell DPW oh sorry. Clerk Essad stated that the Committee is basing the new police department wage scale off of East Jordan, Petosky, Elk Rapids, Boyne City, Gaylord, Antrim County Sheriff's Department, Kalkaska, and Ottawa Sheriff's Department. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that he could walk out this door and take \$1.00 pay cut to drive a truck, and have no responsibility no meetings, no budgets. Clerk Essad stated she only wanted the Committee to be aware of this. Trustee Ciganick stated that the argument is all or nothing. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated yes, if there will be a significant wage increase then it should be across the board. He stated that if this Committee is going to look at the Elk Rapids and Boyne City and all of them then you look at those for all positions.

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Clerk Essad stated that staff can get those numbers for the next meeting, but she wanted was trying to get the Committee to look at similar Villages. She wants to compare apples to apples. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that if the Committee is going to base wages off drivability, then it needs to be done across the board. Trustee Ciganick stated that he was not saying that they won't, but he is saying that you must start some place and he saw the greatest hole as the place to start. Treasurer Odom stated that her concern is if the Village can afford it. Trustee Ciganick agreed and stated that until we have projected revenues they would not know. He stated that they may have to come back to this and say that it won't work. Treasurer Odom stated that you should keep in mind that Antrim County has a fund balance of about \$22 million, the Village has one of \$200,000. Chief Drollinger stated that comparing the Village to the County is comparing apples to oranges once again. He stated that total income between the two entities is completely different. Treasurer Odom agreed and stated that it is also hard to compare the Village to Elk Rapids because they have more revenue. Chairperson Bennett stated that this was something he was afraid of, he supports paying the employees a good wage, which is why he was talking total compensation. Chief Drollinger stated that there will be another meeting in the next few weeks and what was presented for the police department for the other positions as well. Clerk Essad wanted to be sure that the conversation for the other departments was still going to be open. Chief Drollinger stated that there needs to be a wage assessment for the other positions before the cost of living. He stated that the wage scale was not kept up with those around the Village. Chairperson Bennett stated that the group cannot be apples and oranges. Clerk Essad stated that that was what she tried to do. She gave the General Law Village wages from around the state so the Committee could compare, and narrow it down by population, taxable values and so forth. She stated that way the Village of Bellaire was not compared to Petosky. She asked if the Committee wanted her to get the wage information for Petosky, she can do that. Trustee Ciganick stated that was irrelevant. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that that was what was done for the police scale. Trustee Ciganick stated he did not look at Petosky. Clerk Essad stated that Petosky was included in the average. Chief Drollinger stated that that was average and Petosky's start was apart of the average. Clerk Essad asked if the other positions should include the municipalities that were included in the police scale to make the average, or should the Committee be comparing apples to apples. General discussion was held about Petosky's pay scale. Trustee Ciganick stated that he was comfortable with what he has recommended for now. He stated that it was a step in the right direction, and to try to do all of it right now – hey if we can continue to move forward great, but he thought there was a huge gapping hole in the police department, and this raise was catch-up. He would rather catch-up than be flagrantly behind and have no public safety in place. He stated that if we can move forward and get the DPW and administration raises then awesome. Chairperson Bennett stated that it will be tough but if it is done correctly, we won't have to worry about it in the future. Trustee Ciganick stated that the Village will always have to look at it. Chief Drollinger stated that was what happened here. Trustee Ciganick stated that when everyone saw the \$21 per hour in the fast-food windows, they went what? Clerk Essad asked if the question was called for Trustee Ciganick's motion. Chairperson Bennett called the questions and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

- c. **FY 2022-23 Budget:** Trustee Ciganick stated that it is always like the Village is shooting blind a little bit because the Village does not have the projected revenues numbers when it is trying to set its budget, so the Village does not know how much money it is working with. Chief

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Drollinger stated that he gave the Committee what Central Lake receives -it shows how much money is in each bank account and he stated that what money is in CDs is not in the budget. Treasurer Odom stated cash accounts, like CDs, are not included in the budget. She stated that the only thing in the budget is revenues and expenses. Chief Drollinger stated that the Council needs to know how much money they are working with. Treasurer Odom explained that cash accounts are included in her Treasurers Report that the Council receives. Treasurer Odom asked for clarification on the report that Central Lake receives. Chief Drollinger stated that it is the monthly status of what is in the bank. Treasurer Odom stated that would be the cash accounts and it tells them what is available it does not tell them what is going against that. Trustee Ciganick stated that he is all for simplifying the reports because the Council struggles with them. He also stated that there is seasonal fluctuation in everything, which needs to be taken in to account when trying to simplify the page. Chairperson Bennett stated that knowing where the Village is at is key, but the fund balance was very high. Treasurer Odom stated that on page 6 of the budget sheet, there are updated fund balance numbers. She stated that it breaks down what was used thus far. She stated that this is prior to the end of the fiscal year – so there will be more revenues and expenses. She went on to explain that there was a deficit in the General Fund and there were still outstanding costs associated with the bathhouse, which gave a projected fund balance of below the 30% of expenses for 2022-23. Trustee Ciganick stated that it comes down to that the Village never knows what the revenues are going to be when doing the budget. He stated that the Village tries to make conscious decision for labor, projects, plow trucks, whatever the Village is going to do, but until the final revenue numbers come in it is a shot across the bow. Chairperson Bennett thought that a 30% fund balance was quite high. Trustee Ciganick and Trustee Hardy stated that it was not high. Chief Drollinger stated that 60% was the maximum of what was supposed to be in fund balance. Trustee Ciganick stated that when the fund balance was researched that there was everything from 10% to sky high. It is whatever the Council is comfortable with, and the Council decided that 30% was the number it was comfortable with. Treasurer Odom stated that the fund balance number will be adjusted because the fiscal year is not over. Trustee Ciganick stated the Village tries to make conscience, logical decision that are in the best interest of the Village. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that this year is tight because the projects are being finished. Trustee Ciganick stated that this year the Village puts the brakes on and finish the projects already started

Treasurer Odom stated that the budget worksheet was in front of them, and it is not finalized. She stated that the BCBS rates are not in there, the short-term disability, increased wages. She stated that she has emailed the assessor to get the taxable values, and she normally cannot get those until April. She has talked to the County Treasurer and the multiplier is approximately 1.033%, which means that the taxable value will be going up slightly. Treasurer Odom stated that she did not know how much that would generate, and that once we do know those numbers then a budget amendment can be done to adjust accordingly. She also stated that in the projected fund balance for 2022-23 there is a deficit of \$115,172, which will change once the restrooms, wage scale, BCBS rates are in. She also stated that the projection is approximately \$218,000 for fund balance for next year. She stated that will change once the new information is added. She thought it would be lower. She stated that she was not too concerned about the other funds because they have their own fund balance. Treasurer Odom stated that the project to pave S Genessee can in at \$50,000 more than projected. This project may not be done next year because of that. Treasurer Odom also stated that currently it is 30%

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into major streets and 70% into local streets, and due to the waterline replacement projects and having to repave a lot of local streets this should be changed. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that the quote was about \$50,000 higher than last year because of oil prices going up. He stated that the quote was \$221,250 when they were thinking it was going to be about \$150,000 last year. He stated that the issue is that the state mandates that there has to be a certain number of waterlines done each year, so the roads have to be tore up to do that but then the roads must be repaved. General discussion was held about what fund should be paying for the repaving and asking the Townships to help pay for repaving roads. Trustee Ciganick asked if shifting the money, the 70/30 would that help get S Genessee paved, because the Village can keep avoiding the repaving projects but sooner or later it will have to be done. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that he is trying to find an area that does not cross under a road, but most waterlines go under a road. Clerk Essad asked if changing the percentages to local and major would help with the repaving projects. Treasurer Odom stated that it would give the local streets about 30,000. Trustee Ciganick asked if there was anything to take off the plate to help get that paved. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that that project was the only thing on for local streets for this year. Trustee Ciganick asked if the current number reflected the extra cost. Treasurer Odom stated that the current numbers for the project in the budget are about 70,000 shy. Trustee Ciganick stated that we could get about 30,000 more by shifting the percentages. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that that was the lowest quote for S Genessee. He also stated that there are about 30-40 waterlines on that road. He stated that they had to do about 19 waterlines done a year, and you cannot get ahead. He stated that the Village must do a minimum of 5% a year. Trustee Ciganick asked about doing half of it. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that a lot of the cost is mobilization. Trustee Hardy stated to look at the long goal of getting them all done. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that maybe this is where the Village asks the Townships for help. General discussion was had about how the water fund was looking. Trustee Ciganick stated that he would not hesitate to tap the water revenues for this repaving because it is why it is being done. He stated that both townships should be asked but guess that they will not help. Trustee Ciganick asked if a recommendation to move the percentages need to come from this Committee. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that he thinks it should because there are a lot more local streets than major. Treasurer Odom stated that right now it is 70/30 and there is approximately \$100,000 in tax revenues - \$70,000 to local and \$30,000 to major. She suggested 90/10. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that most major streets are M-88 which MDOT helps with. Trustee Hardy thought 90 to local and 10 to major.

Motion by Hardy, seconded by Bennett to recommend to the Village Council to allocate 90% to the Local Streets Fund and 10% to the Major Streets Fund. Motion Passed by unanimous voice vote.

Trustee Ciganick stated he hated that part of government when you must take it out of your left pocket and put it in your right. Treasurer Odom stated other than that there are not any other major concerns in the other funds. She stated Motor pool is now in General Fund now. She stated that her only major concern is in the General Fund. She and DPW Supervisor Keiser are trying to get a water rate study done to finish the water lines. She also stated that the Village has received half of the AARPA money for the water line replacement. She also stated that there is a class to be able to do the rate study. DPW Supervisor Keiser stated that he wanted two people to go and that you get the software to do it at the class. General discussion was held about the class. Treasurer Odom stated that the Village Council must approve a balanced

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budget. She stated that if the difference between the revenues and expenses is negative then there must be enough available fund balance to cover it. She stated that if there is not enough fund balance to cover the deficit then the budget cannot be approved legally. She stated that that was her concern. She also noted that if the Village keeps using the fund balance there is none going in, which means that it will run out if revenues do not start to exceed the expenses. She thought that after the 2022-23 fiscal year, once the projects are completed the budget should be back to even, but she would know more once she puts the numbers in, and finalized.

- IX. Correspondence/Reports:** None presented.
- X. Member/Public Comment:** None presented.
- XI. Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 PM to the call of the chair.

Minutes compiled by:
Nicole E. Essad, Clerk

Minutes are subject to approval.

Approved: _____

Date: _____