

**Bellaire Village Council  
Meeting Minutes  
February 7, 2024  
7:00 PM**

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 Patrick Boyd, Dave Ciganick, Trish Drollinger, Eldon McPherson & Helen Schuckel.

**Absent:** Bryan Hardy

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

**Also Present:** Terry VanAlstine, Chrissy Stahl, Shelly Dayton, Don Hoyt, Steve Elandt, Matt Adamek, Mark Barreth, Jennifer Graham, Sara Toth, Colleen Jordan, and Suzie Clovis

3. **Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved as amended to add the following items under New Business: n) Employee Resignation.

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

4. **Conflict of Interest:** Trustee Drollinger stated that she has a conflict with the Police Fund Budget.

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

**Motion by Schuckel, 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 states he is running for another term at the county board of commissioners. Mr. VanAlstine gave a county update. The outside of the county building is still on schedule and under budget. The windows are scheduled to be here on February 20<sup>th</sup>. Mr. VanAlstine states that Progressive and Spence Brothers have been wonderful to work with in completing this project.

The Sheriff's department has moved into the one side of the Health Department.

Sheriff Hoke has brought to the attention of the County that your pistol license can now be mailed to the office via the PO Box 569 in Bellaire.

Mr. VanAlstine states he was re-elected for another term by the board of commissioners as a board chair for another year. Don Lavanway was elected as Vice Chair.

Mr. VanAlstine states they received a letter from the State Court Administrator stating that he was not in favor of unified trial court, but we have the state legislature people

behind us and they are the ones who make the final decision. Mr. VanAlstine spoke to them and states they are still moving forward to getting the bill drafted to move forward with the unified trial court.

The state court administrator was not in favor of Marquette County getting another judge, but the legislature voted yes.

The Bellaire Dam operator of dams has submitted an application to EGLE for a Dam Risk Reduction Grant in the amount of \$50,000 for engineering to use with some repair on the spillway.

On forestry, the county purchased a 20 acre lot out by Mohrmann Park that will connect Mohrmann Park to the other forestry property the county owns. This will increase some trails for walking paths.

The county conservation district has expressed interest in returning soil erosion to the county. The county is looking into this. Mr. VanAlstine states they have had issues with this before and will try and address that. They have a year to get this figured out.

- b) **DDA Update:** Ms. Dayton gave a DDA update and states that two board members are leaving and they are in the process of recruiting new members.

Ms. Dayton states they are moving forward with the public art exhibit. The call for artist has been extended for a couple weeks. They have received about 8-10 applicants thus far and expects to have a few more applicants trickle in as we get closer to the deadline. The jurors have been selected, so once all the applications have been submitted, they will start the process of selecting which applicant to use.

Art Sweet and Bake off is scheduled for March 9<sup>th</sup>. Tickets are available in stores. Next event is Flip Flop and Flamingos scheduled for April 20<sup>th</sup>. There may be another event added as well.

Ms. Dayton requested the DDA be allowed to apply for a grant for the upcoming art exhibit. Ms. Dayton states they have the matching funds for this event, but the additional grant will help with any additional expenses including advertising.

**Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd to allow the DDA to apply for the grant. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- c) **Ball Field Update:** DPW Supervisor stated that Dale Farmer is no longer working on the project. Nicole has drafted the letter of termination for Mr. Farmer and this will be delivered to him by Feb 8<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Farmer will have one week to remove his equipment off the site. The Village owns all the materials so those will stay on site. A meeting was conducted with AA Hometown Builders who will be completing a quote for the village on the cost of completing the project. The DPW supervisor states that Mr. Farmer was paid half up front to start the project, however, he did not receive the full payment. Some of the work was completed by Mr. Farmer including slabs poured and about 2 dugouts completed upon the termination of his contract.

## 8. New Business

- a) **All Seasons Motel Water Bill Request:** Suzie Clovis was present with some concerns regarding her water bill due to an internal leak at the property of the All Seasons Motel. Her January meter read came back as high usage and we contacted the DPW crew immediately to investigate the reason. The leak was found internally due to running toilets into the sewer system. This in return created an abnormally large read along with a large bill in the amount of \$3,517.04. The normal monthly bill for the All Seasons Motel is usually around \$500. Ms. Clovis is requesting to be placed on a payment plan to ensure the total amount is paid. Ms. Clovis along with her representative Colleen Jordan were both present. Ms. Clovis states her bill was 7 times larger than normal due to 2 running toilets that she was not aware of. Ms. Clovis states she cannot come up with the full amount due and asked to be considered for a payment plan. Mr. Ciganick questioned what length of time would be needed to complete this payment plan. Ms. Clovis stated that she would like a year to complete. A donation was made to help pay off her balance in the amount of \$1,000 bringing her total bill current bill to \$2,517.04. A general discussion was made regarding a payment plan for Ms. Clovis.

**Motion by McPhersen Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd to allow a payment plan with the following terms: must pay \$500 by February 10th, then starting in March, must pay the current amount owed plus \$250 for three months, then must pay the current amount owed plus \$300 a month until the overage balance due is paid off. All penalties will be waived. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- b) **302 Stueben Refund Request:** Nicole states she received an email from Seth Gernot regarding his water bill at the address of 302 Stueben. Mr. Gernot states they have sold this property and did not stop his automatic payment for the water bill at this property after he sold this property. No check number was given by Mr. Gernot. The billing period was from Mid- November through Mid-December and due January 10<sup>th</sup>. No final read was requested by Mr. Gernot before the sale of his home. Mr. Gernot will need to contact the new owner of the home to resolve this issue.

No action taken.

- c) **Archery Request at Ballfields:** Sarah Toth was present with a request to allow an archery class at Craven Park. Ms. Toth was advised per Nicole that there is currently an ordinance that states no weapons on all public property. Ms. Toth is asking the council to reconsider this ordinance. Ms. Toth states she has been teaching target archery for children for about 9 years. As of the Fall of 2023 the Bellaire Youth Initiative has asked for her to teach children archery as part of their program as well. Ms. Toth states she has been using the Bellaire Conservation Building for indoor archery lessons but would like to have the ability to practice and have lessons outside. However, there is not enough space at the Bellaire Conservation Property which promotes her request to use the property at Craven Park. The Chain of Lakes has given Ms. Toth permission to use their property, but she is concerned with the possibility of having to move all the equipment back and forth between the Conservation Building and the Chain of Lakes Property. Ms. Toth takes pride in teaching a sport to children who can learn to be successful and boost the confidence in children. Ms. Toth states the way she understood the ordinance is they were lumping gun shooting and archery shooting together in one category; however, she states they are very different regarding the threat they present to the public. A general discussion was made regarding the safety of archery and guns compared to other sports we allow on the field. A discussion was made regarding the change of ordinance. Bill Drollinger states that if the council is looking to change this ordinance, we also need to

look at the issue of the deer population within the Village Limits. A general discussion was made regarding charging a fee for classes given.

**Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd to change the ordinance to allow educational archery & archery deer population control. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- d) **Chamber Request for Events 2024:** The 2024 Chamber Event schedule was given to the council to review. The only change was moving the Music on the Street to Thursday nights instead of Monday.

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by Schuckel to approve the list of events. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- e) **Food Pantry Lease:** Nicole states the food pantry lease is up this year. The renewed lease is the same as used in the past, only the dates were changed to reflect the new lease. This new lease is another 5 year agreement.

**Motion by Drollinger, seconded by Schuckel to approve the lease. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- f) **Utility Easement Agreement:** The county is granting the village an easement for the water main extension over their ACT property. Shanty Creek is also granting the village an easement for the water main extension for Tractor Supply.

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by Drollinger to allow President Bennett to sign both agreements. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- g) **Cherry Capital Cycling Club request:** The Cherry Capital Cycling club would like permission to use the restrooms at Craven.

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson to approve the request. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- h) **CWSRF Loan:** Nicole states we need permission from the council to open a new checking account to deposit the monies given from the CWSRF Loan because this money needs to be separated from all the other bank accounts. A general discussion was made regarding the Gourdie Fraser letter of engineering costs.

**Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd to open a new checking account at Alden State Bank for this loan. Motion carried by voice vote.**

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson to approve Gourdie Fraser letter of engineering costs and milestones for the loan. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- i) **Hazard Mitigation Plan:** The County is asking us to approve the Hazard Mitigation Plan, so if a natural or manmade disaster may ever occur we may be able to receive FEMA funds. Matt Adamek was present to add to the general discussion of the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by Ciganick to accept the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- j) **Police Chief Paid Leave Request:** Mr. Drollinger states he has 40 unused hours left over from last years acquired leave he would like to rollover to the current 2024 Paid Leave.

**Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Schuckel to allow Chief Drollinger to carry over 40 hours of paid leave. Motion carried by voice vote; Trustee Drollinger abstained.**

- k) **Resolution 1 of 2024, BIP Bridge Grant:** A general discussion was made regarding fund to repair Warner bridge along with the bridge on Cayuga Street.

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by Bennett, to approve Resolution #1 of 2024, BIP Grant. Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: Boyd, Bennett, Ciganick, Drollinger, McPherson & Schuckel. Nays: None. Absent: Hardy**

- l) **Administration and Personnel Committee Recommendations:** The administration committee has recommended that the current health insurance of Blue Cross Blue Shield remain the same with no changes for the Village Employees. A general discussion was made regarding the health benefit plan.

A general discussion was made regarding the wage scale and cost of living increase for the 2024-2025 year.

**Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd to keep the current BCBS coverage at the new rates. Motion carried by voice vote.**

**Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd to approve the 2024-25 wage scale as presented with the 4.1% cost of living increase. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- m) **Village/DDA Budget FY 2024-25:** A general discussion was made regarding the DDA Budget and the Village Budget along with the date for the public hearing. A discussion was made regarding a new laptop for the Clerk / Treasurer along with a new desktop computer for the Treasurer office. This was added into the 2024-2025 FY budget. A discussion was made regarding the purchase of the field groomer in the current FY budget.

**Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd to hold the public hearing for the budget on February 21, 2024 at 6:30PM. Motion carried by voice vote.**

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by Drollinger to purchase the field groomer in the current fiscal year budget. Motion carried by voice vote.**

- n) **Employee Resignation:** Nicole Essad discussed her resignation as Village Clerk. Her last day will be on February 21<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Essad states she has 10 hours of personal time along with 12 hours of comp time that she has not used and would like to be paid out for that time. A discussion was made regarding the hiring process and the different platforms for add placements.

**Motion by Boyd, seconded by Bennett to accept with regrets Clerk Essad's resignation, and to pay her personal time, and comp time on her last paycheck. Motion carried by voice vote.**

**Motion by Bennett, seconded by Boyd to post the Clerks position in the Antrim Review, Record Eagle and MML as a maximum of 32 hours a week. Motion carried by voice vote.**

**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:** The council regrettfully accepts the resignation and thanks Nicole for all she has done for the Village. Nicole states we are wrapping up the year end items and trying to prepare Nora as best as she can before she concludes her last day. Nicole thanks the Village for her time and wishes the best for the Village.
- c) **Treasurer/Deputy Clerk:** Continuing training with Nicole and trying to gain as much knowledge of the job while Nicole is finishing up her last days.
- d) **Department of Public Works:** Bradley states they have been doing a lot of work in the WWTP. The mild winter has allowed more time to work on the WWTP.
- e) **Police Department:** No monthly report from the County.
- f) **Planning Commission:** Nothing presented.

**11. Closing Member/Public Comment:** Don Hoyt brought up the discussion on having exit interviews with employees as they are resigning to possibly help identify areas of improvement needed within the Village.

**12. Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 8:23 P.M.

Compiled by Nora Stead  
Minutes are subject to approval.

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

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