

**Bellaire Village Council
Meeting Minutes
November 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 Trish Drollinger, Bryan Hardy, Pat Boyd, Eldon McPherson & Helen Schuckel.

Absent: Trustee David Ciganick

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

Also Present: Terry VanAlstine, Shelly Dayton, Lynn Keller, Linda Gallagher, Jennifer Hodges, Tyler Pickard & Christa Brenner.

3. **Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved with the addition of new business item i, DPW Employment.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Schuckel, to approve the agenda with the addition of new business item I, DPW Employment. Motion carried by voice vote.

4. **Conflict of Interest:** Trustee Drollinger noted her conflict with new business item h, additional compensation.

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

Motion by Schuckel, 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 will be interviewing 4 applicants for the administrator position. They hired a construction management firm for work on the County building. They are researching options to fund a law enforcement center. The County has added lock boxes to the jail and to the admin building to be used in case of an emergency. The clock tower has been repaired. They purchased new election machines at a cost of \$20,000. They have interviewed for an airport manager and are waiting for a reply from the candidate who is currently working there. As of December 31st Sherriff Bean will no longer be the director of animal control. They are looking at establishing a new department that will work underneath the County Board.

b) **DDA Update:** The DDA approved funds for the Buy Local Group for their events & advertising. They are still working on Wi-Fi. The DDA Parking Committee took down the temporary signs and are looking into more permanent signage. They are also working on ways to continue with the outdoor art displays. They are looking at a display of local artist Charles Culver. They would like to apply for a \$4,000 grant to help with costs and would like permission from the Village to begin the registration process. The deadline for the grant is December 15.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Hardy, to allow the DDA to move forward and start the process for the grant. Motion carried by voice vote.

- c) **Craven Park Ball Field Update:** Mr. Keiser provided an update. The fence company said they would be done by this Saturday. Site one is looking at the grass, it has not filled in as expected. We had expected to mow it before the fall fertilizer, and we have not mowed it yet. The coaches have seen it. DPW is putting the fence back up by the parking lot so nobody can drive onto the fields. He also noted that we received an \$84,000 bid for the dugouts.

8. New Business

- a) **Short's Anniversary Party:** Tyler Pickard & Christa Brenner from Short's Brewing Company informed Council that they will not be having their big, close the block anniversary party next year. They have decided to host something small within the pub on April 29, 2023. They may have music across from the pub. They would like to suggest that some of the local groups, possibly the DDA or the Village, host a block party downtown Bellaire for that day. This could be something to get all the local businesses involved.
- b) **Resolution #24 of 2022, Water Sewer Rates:** Council approved water & sewer rate increases at the last meeting. ON the water side, we only increased the per thousand-gallon cost, but we missed the ready to serve rate increases. The ¾" line ready to serve didn't change but the rate study showed that the other size line ready to serve fees increased and that was not approved. The council discussed and the following motion was made.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd, to approve the water ready to serve rates based on the current rate study. Motion carried by voice vote.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Drollinger, to approve Resolution #24 of 2022, water/sewer rates, as amended. Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: McPherson, Drollinger, Boyd, Hardy, Schuckel & Bennett. Nays: None Absent: Ciganick.

- c) **WWTP Project Funding Options:** With the required projects for the wastewater treatment plant coming up, funding options were discussed. Andy Campbell, a financial advisor from Baker Tilly, attended the meeting remotely and explained the different types of funding options, their terms, and rates. There are three potential funding options. One thing to keep in mind when deciding which option to choose is to consider the timeline for your project. Project timelines could change what options would be available. One option is through the open bond market, which is the easiest way to go, but interest rates could be higher as well as annual debt service payments. Another option would be through the USDA Rural Development. If we do not plan on beginning the project before 2024, we could go with this option. The process is relatively easy but includes some red tape. With the median household income of the Village, we would most likely qualify for a poverty interest rate, which is currently 2.125%. The third option is the State Revolving Fund (SRF), which he says may be the best option financially for us if we can start construction in 2024. The full application, which would be completed by the Village engineer, is due May 1, 2023. We would be notified by October of 2023 if we are approved for SRF funding. If approved, we would complete the rest of the process needed to begin the projects by 2024. The revolving fund would seem to be the best option financially for the Village. The interest rate would be approximately 2% with a 30-year term. There is also the possibility of loan forgiveness for part or all the loan in the form of a grant. The biggest question of course is if we could get the funding. It is a very competitive process and in the last cycle, only about ¼ to 1/3 of the applicants received funding. He explained that funding is based on a scoring system. The more points you earn, the higher on the list you are to receive funding. Based on the scoring system, we check off many items on the list giving us more points. He noted that even if we do not qualify for any grants funds, the interest rate and terms still save the Village money. The poverty median

household income was discussed as the Village didn't previously qualify for it. Mr. Campbell stated that our income level is below the required \$41,000 and we have a letter of compliance with the State, which are the two qualifications for the poverty ruling. He said we could verify this information when we choose a funding option. Mr. Keiser said we may not have the compliance letter for at least a year. He also stated that the disinfection system can't wait until 2024. Mr. Campbell also mentioned that if we didn't qualify for funding through the SRF, we can always change the funding source we use. The council discussed the funding options, the requirements for them and the amount of funding that will be put into the application processes before we even knew if we would qualify to receive funding. Mr. Keiser said we may have to look at getting the UV disinfection system into next year's budget and then decide which option to use for the balance of the projects. Ms. Hodges noted that with the USDA & SRF, a preliminary engineering report will have to be completed at a cost of approximately \$30,000. She said we could investigate being able to use the report that was previously presented during the last USDA Loan process. One thing to remember is if we try for the SRF and do not qualify for funding, we will still have time to fund the balance of the projects through the open bond market. No further action was taken.

- d) **CVTRS:** The report is required by the State of Michigan and is completed annually for us to receive our revenue sharing. The council will have to approve the report so we can get it sent into the state and get it posted on the website.

Motion by Hardy, seconded by Boyd, to approve the CVTRS report as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.

- e) **Little League Lease Notification Letter:** With the status of the new fields at Craven Park, we are not expected to need the little league fields any longer. The agreement with the County says a notice not to renew the lease needs to be completed 6 months prior to lease end. There was discussion about postponing this letter until the status of the turf at the new fields is looked at, just in case we need to use the old fields for one more season. Clerk Essad explained that if notice is not given, the lease will be renewed for another 10 years, and early termination of the lease would have to be negotiated because there isn't any language allowing us to do that in the current lease. This was tabled until the next meeting.
- f) **Richardi Park Design Plan Contract:** We received an updated contract with Williams & Works & the Township. This contract has the Village listed as a signee and it basically says they will work with the Village through the park design process and that the Township will be paying for it. The Parks Committee is recommending that Council approves.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Schuckel, to approve the contract with Williams & Works. Motion carried by voice vote.

- g) **Parks & Recreation Plan-Draft:** There have been updates made to the Parks & Recreation Plan draft. Pictures, the map and the budget still need to be updated. The council now needs to review it for any changes they would like to see and set the required public hearing to receive public comment. There is a 30-day requirement for public comment, so the draft has already gone out. Any public comment made will be brought to the public hearing. Council set the public hearing for December 7, 2022, at 6:00 PM.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd, to set the public hearing for December 7, 2022, at 6:00 PM. Motion carried by voice vote.

- h) **Additional Compensation:** Last year Council agreed to address the giving of additional compensation to employees on an annual basis. Additional compensation consists of \$100 and \$200 depending on years of service. Trustee Boyd asked if we could afford the \$1,200. Treasurer Odom noted that it is currently a little difficult to know where the budget stands and if it can be afforded with 5 months still to go in the fiscal year. The general fund budget is tight. The restroom project is complete, but it was approximately \$44,000 over budget and Craven Park is not yet complete.

**Motion by McPherson, seconded by Schuckel, to approve the additional compensation for 2022.
Motion carried by voice vote.**

- i) **DPW Employment:** The Administration Committee interviewed several applicants and is recommending that Mr. Jerry Wingo be offered the job at a pay rate of \$19.50 per hour and on his anniversary, he will move to the third year on the pay scale. Mr. Keiser explained that he is the most qualified for the position.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson, to accept the recommendation to hire Mr. Jerry Wingo for the DPW position at a starting rate of \$19.50 per hour and then move him to the third level of the pay scale on his one year anniversary; if he doesn't accept the job, offer the position to Mr. Christian Fleminger at a starting rate of \$18.09 per hour, moving to the second year level of the pay scale on his one year anniversary, if he doesn't accept the job, offer the position to Mr. John Forbes at a starting rate of \$18.09 per hour, moving him to the second year level of the pay scale on his one year anniversary. Motion carried by voice vote.

9. Discussion Items:

- a) **FY2022-23 Budget:** Treasurer Odom noted it was budget time and reminded Council members to think about the items they would like to see in the budget. Committees will need to set up their budget meetings if one is needed.

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 Parks & Rec plan is almost complete. There is a new Sparks grant with a due date of 12-19-2022. She will get with Mr. Keiser & Parks to see what it could be used for.
- c) **Treasurer/Deputy Clerk:** Treasurer Odom noted she was unable to complete an updated budget report for the meeting but will send it to them when it is done.
- d) **Department of Public Works:** Sand & Salt is mixed, and we are ready for when the snow flies. Trucks are all fixed and ready for plowing snow. The truck involved in the accident last year is now fixed and ready. Selling it was discussed, but with rates as high as they are now, it wouldn't be a good time for a new purchase. The fence by the parking lot is going up so nobody can drive onto the fields. He met with the DDA about banners. Working with the Buy Local Group was discussed. Hello Vino purchased Nifty Thrifty so this block will be used a little more and part of the discussion led to streetlights.

- e) **Police Department:** Halloween went well and there are lots of deer and geese within the Village limits. There was discussion about the repair to the curb at the M-88 intersection was discussed.
- f) **Planning Commission:** Nothing presented.

11. Closing Member/Public Comment:

- **David Harmony:** Mr. Harmony explained that this was his first time at a meeting, and he was going to ask about the high water bill. Now that he has listened to everything we do, he thanked us for doing what we do. He asked about the projects that are coming up and asked how they might be notified about increases. It was noted he could check the website and Village Facebook page. Information could also be put on the water bill itself.

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

Compiled by Cathy Odom
Minutes are subject to approval.

Approved: _____

Date: _____