

**Bellaire Village Council
Meeting Minutes
March 3, 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 and Helen Schuckel.
 - Absent:** N/A
 - 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, Bev Isenbarger, Kathy McPherson, Debbie Jones, Curtis Myers, Abby Baker, Shelly Dayton, Libby Hiser, Yarrow Brown, Haley gray, Terry McBee, Tim Reicha, Kelly Downard & Scott Smith,
3. **Approval of Agenda:** The amended agenda was approved with the deletion of new business item d, public restrooms-GFA agreement and the additions of new business item k, meeting dates and item l, water/sewer bill adjustment.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried by voice vote.
4. **Conflict of Interest:** Trustee McPherson noted a conflict with new business item g, the E. Broad St. property.
5. **Consent Agenda:** The consent agenda was approved.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd, to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.
6. **Public Comment:**
 - **Bev Isenbarger:** Mrs. Isenbarger presented some history of the Bellaire Food Pantry and noted they receive tremendous support from the community & appreciate all of the support.
7. **Old Business**
 - a) **County Update-Mr. VanAlstine:** Mr. VanAlstine updated Council on County business. There will be updated Covid information available tomorrow, including case numbers and vaccination numbers. They are working on a strategic 5-year plan. The Building Department will continue surveys of builders to determine how the department is doing. They conducted Park Director interviews. They had a discussion about the County board helping with road repair and also had a conversation with Wayne Schmidt seeking help for Derenzy Rd. They received a savings by using LED lights and placed some of that savings into an energy account. Hazardous waste pick up is scheduled for June 5 in Elk Rapids, August 14 in Bellaire and September 11 in Mancelona.
 - b) **DDA Update:** Ms. Wenzel provided an update of the Steering Committee and the Kegger Campground. They discussed the DDA board size agreeing not to change it. They addressed village parking and will be sending a letter, with a map attached, asking business owners to have their employees park away from the spots located in front of the businesses. They received a presentation from Hometown Heroes for their banner program and supports it. They approved a letter of support to Glacial Hills for their trail connector grant application. They elected a new treasurer and approved their meeting schedule. They also approved researching the process for extending their boundaries. They will also look at costs for new way finding signs. A Buy Local Group representative will be providing an update to the DDA at their monthly meetings.

- c) **Property & Building Committee-Village Property:** The committee is recommending that Council turn down the offer from Joe Short to purchase the Village owned property next to his building.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd, to not accept the offer from Joe Short. Motion carried by voice vote.

8. New Business

- a) **Hometown Heroes Request:** Abby Baker from Hometown Heroes gave a presentation about the banner program they provide. They are seeking approval from Council to move forward with their banner program here in Bellaire. They are a for profit business but do give \$20 per banner sold, back to the DDA & a local veteran program. It is an interactive program with each banner costing \$400. There is no cost to the Village, they will do all of the work in placing the banners on the poles and maintain them for the two years they are up, but will customize the program to fit Village needs. Veterans honored will be local veterans from our area. Trustee Ciganick noted that the Friends of the Veterans are doing a fundraiser and verified this would not hinder the progress on their project. Mr. Keiser informed Council that our current sponsor banners would have to come down. Our poles wouldn't support two banners. Trustee Drollinger likes the concept of this program but we support our local businesses and don't want to remove the current banners. Council felt more research is needed and it was sent to the streets committee for further review.

- b) **Resolution #05 of 2021, Housing North:** Yarrow Brown from Housing North explained the resolution and their goals. Their goals are to build awareness, influence policy and expand capacity so communities can create housing solutions that meet their unique needs. According to a study, Antrim County is in need of approximately 900 housing units, mostly rentals with about 40 units needed in the Village of Bellaire. They are looking for support to advocate housing solutions.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by McPherson, to approve Resolution #05 of 2021, to support housing options within the Village of Bellaire. Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: Ciganick, McPherson, Boyd, Drollinger, Hardy, Schuckel & Bennett.

- c) **Ride Along Policy Amendment/Waiver:** The ride along policy was updated to include the DPW vehicles and it also includes some language changes to the police department sections. Addendums, the application process and waiver forms were also updated.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson, to accept the revised ride along policy. Motion carried by voice vote.

- d) **Public restrooms-GFA Agreement:** This item was removed during approval of the agenda.

e) **Administration Committee Recommendations:**

- **Merit Pay Rules:** The committee discussed setting the merit pay cap this year at \$6,000. They also discussed setting some rules to follow for future merit pay that they would like to see placed into a policy.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd, to direct staff to develop the merit pay policy. Motion carried by voice vote.

- **Part Time Cemetery Position:** The committee is recommending that the part time cemetery position be changed to a part time DPW position which will include an increase in work hours up to 32 hours per week for 23 weeks so that they could also mow the parks. They would like to offer this position to the current cemetery employee and if he doesn't accept it, they would like Council to direct staff to post the position.

Motion by Drollinger, seconded by Schuckel, to upgrade this position from being a cemetery position to a DPW position for 32 hours per week for 23 weeks in the summer and to post the position if the current employee doesn't accept the changes. Motion carried by voice vote.

- f) **Public Safety Committee-Third Full Time Officer:** The Public safety Committee met to discuss hiring a third police officer. Chief Drollinger explained that the Village is getting busier and call numbers are increasing. He would like to send a candidate to the academy as we have done in the past. Treasurer Odom explained that there is currently not a revenue source for a third officer. There is funding from the fund balance of the general operations account but it is not a continuous revenue source. The budget will have to be looked at for revenue to cover a third officer in future years to come. Trustee Ciganick calculated the potential loss the Village would incur if the candidate did not make it through the academy. The cost of the academy is approximately \$8,000 depending on the cost of the uniforms, plus wages they earn while at the academy, a physical and mental health exam will also be required for a total cost of about \$18,000. Trustee Ciganick would like to see the call numbers to review the necessity of the position. It was noted that we have 100 fewer complaints than Elk Rapids, but he will supply the numbers. Trustee Drollinger noted that if we send a candidate to the academy, we need to have them sign an agreement to work for us for five years.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Hardy, to approve the request and move forward with the third officer. Motion carried by voice vote.

- g) **Property & Building Committee-E. Broad St. Property:** The Property & Building Committee met to discuss the possibility of selling the property on E. Broad St., currently the parking lot and food pantry. The recommendation from the committee was to complete a market analysis; however this was completed at no cost, with the analysis coming in between \$150,000 and \$200,000. There is work to do before a decision is made, one being discussion about the food pantry and the other the parking lot, which both are being leased from the village at this time. The village is not using this property and if we move forward, the sale would help pay for projects that the village is trying to complete, one possibility being downtown restrooms. Trustee Ciganick noted that there is a difference between a market analysis and an appraisal. He also noted that he is opposed to selling the property due to its use for parking, and due to the food pantry which is a service to our community.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Bennett, to dismiss the idea of selling the property that encompasses the parking lot and food pantry. Motion carried by voice vote with one abstention from Trustee McPherson.

- h) **Parks Committee Recommendations:**

- **Craven Park Improvements:** The Parks Committee is discussing the reconfiguration of Craven Park to allow for four ball fields and to provide upgrades to the campground area. Their recommendation is to get Council permission to move forward with fundraising efforts and further assessment on how to proceed.

Motion by Drollinger, seconded by McPherson, to move forward with fundraising efforts and assessment on how to proceed with the reconfiguration of Craven Park. Motion carried by voice vote.

- **Glacial Hills Request-Grant Letter of Support:** Trustee Boyd explained that Glacial Hills is looking at purchasing a piece of property that will connect the trail on the north side of Orchard Hill Rd. into the Walker Patrick Forest area which is already designated as Glacial Hills. They will be approaching the school for an easement to access their property and would like to access village property by First and Second St. Mr. Reicha explained that they are requesting two things from Council. One is support from the Village for the general project to connect the trail to the Village in a more direct way so

trail users can potentially park in public parking lots. The second request is to approve the use of the property for access. If all works out with the property acquisition then they will approach the County to connect it to the current trail.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson, to provide a letter of support for the trail and allow access on village property. Motion failed due to lack of a vote.

Trustee Ciganick discussed the need for specifics or guidelines for the use of our property. It was noted that an easement agreement would have to be developed. Mr. Keiser noted that the area they are discussing is located by the well field, but there shouldn't be any problems with accessing it. After discussion the following motion was made.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson, to provide Glacial Hills with a letter of support for their fundraising opportunity. Motion carried by voice vote.

- i) **Paid Leave Requests:** Chief Drollinger and Treasurer Odom have paid leave hours they were unable to use due to Covid and would like permission to carry them over.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by McPherson, to allow Bill Drollinger and Cathy Odom to carry over the balance of their respective paid leave to the 2021-22 fiscal year. Motion carried by voice vote with one abstention from Trustee Drollinger.

- j) **Resolution #06 of 2021, Budget Amendments:** This resolution will amend the 2020-21 fiscal budget for a generator purchase needed in the sewer fund that was not in the original budget.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd, to approve Resolution #06 of 2021, approving a budget amendment for the sewer fund, retroactive for FY2020-21. Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: McPherson, Boyd, Ciganick, Drollinger, Hardy, Schuckel & Bennett. Nays: None.

- k) **Meeting Dates:** Council annually approves meeting dates for the current fiscal year so they can be posted for the public. They are scheduled for the first Wednesday of every month at 7:00 PM.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Hardy to approve the meeting date schedule as presented for the FY2021-22. Motion carried by voice vote.

- l) **Water/Sewer Bill Adjustment:** A resident at 410 E. Cayuga turned their service off for the winter. For some reason a valve let loose and water was leaking into the ground. The issue has been resolved but because their service was off they should not be charged usage fees. The amount of the credit will be \$119.42.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Hardy, to approve the adjustment of their account in the amount of \$119.42. Motion carried by voice vote.

9. Discussion Items:

- In-Person meetings were discussed based on the new orders by the Health Department. There was discussion of the amount of people allowed at an indoor gathering, which may cause a postponement of a meeting. There was discussion of the Open Meeting Act guidelines expiring at the end of the month, which will require in person meetings. If we think there will be more people than allowed, we may have to conduct meetings outdoors or find a way to provide a space that will allow us to remain inside. The County is also researching options. The other option is to see if the Open Meetings Act extends the virtual option.

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:** Nothing presented.
- c) **Treasurer/Deputy Clerk:** Nothing presented.
- d) **Department of Public Works:** Nothing presented.
- e) **Police Department:** Chief Drollinger said he is busy with complaints.
- f) **Planning Commission:** Nothing presented.

11. Closing Member/Public Comment:

- **Shelly Dayton:** Ms. Dalton discussed the unavailability of the restrooms downstairs. It was noted that they are open during the office hours of 8:00 am-4:00 pm, Monday-Friday. Discussion occurred about them being open on the weekend. Mr. VanAlstine noted that he considers it a cost of doing business to provide restroom facilities for his customers. He said Auto Value's restrooms are open until 6 pm 7 days a week and will allow its use to anyone. After discussing different options at length, this will be placed on the next agenda for further discussion.

12. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 9:15 P.M.

Compiled by Cathy Odom
Minutes are subject to approval.

Approved: _____

Date: _____