

**Bellaire Village Council
Meeting Minutes
September 7, 2023
5:00 PM**

1. **Call to Order:** President Bennett called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

2. **Roll Call Attendance:**

Present: President Dan Bennett, Council Trustees Trish Drollinger, Pat Boyd, Eldon McPherson, Dave Ciganick, Bryan Hardy & Helen Schuckel.

Absent: None

Staff Present: Cathy Odom, Treasurer, Nicole Essad, Clerk, Bill Drollinger, Chief of Police & Bradley Keiser (5:08 pm)

Also Present: Haley Gray.

3. **Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved as presented.

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

4. **Conflict of Interest:** None presented.

5. **Public Comment:** None presented.

6. **Old Business**

- a) **Administration Committee Recommendation:** Trustee Ciganick said he met with the office staff about their positions, and he let each of them know what he would recommend. He recommends that office staff hours be cut to 32 hours per week, and they would keep their benefits. Chief Drollinger spoke with both officers and their suggestion is to be part-time and keep benefits. He also looked at his budget and he could eliminate \$6,400 from the budget. He also spoke with a couple of people about our budget who said a cost benefit study can be conducted. This study would help to make sure we are putting items in the correct budget accounts. The union reopener was brought up, we haven't received a response yet. Trustee Ciganick spoke with the Elk Rapids Clerk and discussed relabeling positions so wages can be taken from different accounts. It was noted that our wages already come from other departments when we do the work for them. President Bennett said we could also address cuts in retirement and health benefits. Trustee Ciganick said nobody wants to address these things, but we are in a position where we need to. The Chief's cuts to his budget are a valid choice. We cannot afford the third officer. The office staff needs to be cut down to 32 hours a week as well as the second officer. We need to look at reducing the pension to 5% instead of 10% across the board. Hopefully this isn't forever, but for now we don't have a choice. As far as the DDA, we need to have a conversation with them before addressing that. Chief Drollinger said to evaluate vehicle rates and retaining fees. Increasing zoning fees was also discussed.

Motion By Ciganick, seconded by Boyd, to approve the cuts that the Chief has identified in the public safety budget totaling \$6,400. Motion carried by voice vote.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Hardy, to reduce the pension contribution to 5% across the board. Motion carried by voice vote.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Hardy, to reduce the hours of the Clerk, Treasurer and Officer McBee to 32 hours per week with the schedule to be worked out. Motion carried by voice vote with one nay vote from President Bennett.

Trustee Ciganick noted that the other thing to address at this time is the third officer position. The position could be eliminated, go to part-time or it could be a layoff. Chief Drollinger said Officer Gray would work 20 hours a week if she could keep her benefits. The savings for this option were discussed. It was also noted that if we layoff a union employee, we are required to give them 14 days written notice before the layoff can begin. The council reviewed the start date for the changes they are making.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd, that the reduction in hours and the reduction in pension begin September 28, 2023. Motion carried by voice vote.

Trustee Boyd asked that if we get the millage would we be able to recall the employee that may be laid off. He said if it passes this could all be reevaluated.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd, to eliminate the 3rd officer position. Motion withdrawn.

There was a discussion about whether to eliminate the position or to consider it a lay off. If we eliminate the position, it could always be reinstated if the millage passes. If it is a layoff, the employee could be recalled. Unemployment benefits were mentioned. Trustee Ciganick.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd, to lay off full-time Officer Haley Gray beginning September 28, 2023 and if we can bring back the third officer position, she is the first person we call. The motion further states that this motion is made with anguish. Motion carried by voice vote with one nay vote from Trustee Drollinger.

Other items left to consider are evaluating the cost of vehicle insurance, increasing the cemetery rates, evaluating zoning fees and investigating the cost benefit analysis to see what the cost might be to evaluate our budget. Trustee Boyd said the County is willing to have a conversation about policing their permitted parking and 50% of the revenue they receive would be given to the village. The vehicle insurance is included in our current policy and is grouped together with the cost of all our liability insurance. Trustee Ciganick asked if we can speak with our agent and see if there is anything that may help reduce our costs. Zoning fees were discussed and reviewed. Mr. Keiser said another possible cut would be to eliminate the clothing allowance for DPW. Discussion about moving it to the water and sewer department because water and sewer are the reason it was needed. The council also discussed the boot allowance for the police department.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Boyd, to eliminate the general fund clothing & boot allowance for DPW workers only and move it to water and sewer if allowable. Motion carried by voice vote.

Increasing the operating millage was discussed. It was noted that this would have to be done by election. We are running on a millage that was put in place many years ago and it is not keeping up with inflation. The council reviewed zoning fees, making some changes. Any change to the fees must be approved by resolution.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Hardy, to approve Resolution 20 of 2023, the zoning fee schedule for the Village of Bellaire. Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: Ciganick, Hardy, Boyd, Drollinger, McPherson, Schuckel & Bennett. Nays: None.

Chief Drollinger said Elk Rapids has a fee schedule for police department reports. This is something we can also look at. Discussion of police department fees occurred. Trustee Ciganick noted that the Chief could put a schedule together and the council can address it at a future meeting. Mr. Keiser noted that we have an old 1986 dump truck that we could probably sell for \$5,000. We currently use it for hauling brush in the summer and snow in the winter. He also noted that the wooden monster truck and fire truck are reconditioned enough to be able to auction off. It cannot be auctioned off for public use but can be sold privately.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Ciganick, to sell the dump truck and auction off the two wooden play equipment. Motion carried by voice vote.

7. New Business:

8. Discussion Items:

9. Department/Committee Reports:

- a) **Committee Reports:** Committee minutes, for the committees that have met, were included in packets for review.
- b) **Clerk/Zoning Administrator:** None presented.
- c) **Treasurer/Deputy Clerk:** None presented.
- d) **Department of Public Works:** None presented.
- e) **Police Department:** None presented.
- f) **Planning Commission:** Nothing presented.

10. Closing Member/Public Comment: None presented.

11. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 6:07 P.M.

Compiled by Cathy Odom
Minutes are subject to approval.

Approved: _____

Date: _____