

**Bellaire Village Council
Meeting Minutes
January 8, 2024**

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, Trish Drollinger, Bryan Hardy, Eldon McPherson, Helen Schuckel, and Andrew Turner.

Absent:

Staff Present: Nora Stead, Treasurer, Bill Drollinger, Chief of Police, Bradley Keiser, DPW Supervisor, Angela St. Pierre, Clerk

Staff Absent:

Also Present: Terry VanAlstine, Margie Boyd, Chrissy Langdon, Diane Bennett, Angie Les, Steven Folker, Dave Simcox, Larry Baumchen, Matt Whyman, Shelly Dayton, Daniel Wilson, Silvia Kalchek and three other unidentified.

3). **Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved as amended with the additions of items g) Parking on E Broad Street, and h) Parking Registration.

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

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

5). **Consent Agenda:** The consent agenda was approved as amended with corrections to the December 4, 2024 Village Council meeting minutes. Corrections included spelling errors, voting terms from “aye” and “nay” to “yes” and “no”, and the meeting adjourned time from 8:00 PM to 8:04 PM.

Motion by Schuckel, seconded by Turner, to approve the consent agenda as amended. Motion carried by voice vote.

6). **Public Comment on Agenda Items:** None Presented.

7). **Old Business**

a) **County Update:**

a. Terry VanAlstine was present to give an update on the County. The courthouse work is pretty much wrapped up. Some work has to wait until spring once it warms back up again.

b. Matt Wyman was present to give an update on the airport. Last summer Matt was present to give an update on the upcoming tree trimming project for the airport. They had a bid opening this morning, prior to that they met with 6 different firms to discuss the project. They have a couple of questions and will need to contact the firms prior to making a recommendation. They are moving forward with the tree trimming and cutting which has to be done by March 31st per the insurance due to being a federally funded airport. Dan Bennett asked how the car rental has been going with the airport. Matt answered that the car rentals have been going phenomenal and being used by not only airport users but people in the community.

- b) **DDA Update:** Shelly Dayton was present to give an update on the DDA. They did not have a quorum at the last meeting and were not able to make any decisions. She mentioned that they still have an opening on the DDA board for a new member. They are starting to get some artwork in for the Color Bellaire Program for the banners.
- c) **Sewer Project Update:** Bradley Keiser was present to give an update on the sewer project. He received word that the company will be mobilizing and this morning got inspected for pouring footings for the building. Grand Traverse Construction showed up and they are not slowing down. He met with the electricians today who have to get some work done before footings can be poured. Trustee Turner had questioned if it was advisable to pour concrete in the winter. Mr. Keiser stated that he trusts the professionals working on the project. Trustee Boyd mentioned that a chemical is added to the concrete in the winter to allow it to cure.
- d) **Resolution #17 of 2024 – Sewer Hydrant Hook Up Rates:** This item was postponed at the last council meeting. Changes have been made to section 3.b. regarding water pricing for hydrant hook up.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Schuckel for a roll call vote on Resolution #17 of 2024.

Yes: Boyd, Schuckel, Drollinger, Hardy, McPherson, Turner, Bennett

No:

Abstain:

Absent:

- e) **Marijuana Retail Businesses:** President Bennett spoke about the need to give the Villages Attorney permission to draft the language for an ordinance regarding marijuana retail businesses. It is recommended to have at least one public hearing on the matter before adopting the ordinance. Correspondence from the Villages Attorney was discussed and cleared up some confusion about the need for a public vote on the matter. President Bennett stated that he spoke with the Central Lake’s President who told him of the large amount of money spent on legal matters concerning their marijuana retail business ordinance. Trustee Turner voiced concern that he had heard the Villages Attorney is retiring and wonders what the big rush is. He is concerned that the attorney will draft an ordinance on his own opinions of what he thinks the Village wants. President Bennett clarified that the purpose of the public hearing or hearings is to review the draft and make changes until satisfied. Trustee Boyd then stated that even though the attorney is retiring he is still our attorney for now.

Motion by Drollinger, seconded by Boyd to give the attorney permission to draft an ordinance. Voice vote: Yes- Boyd, Schuckel, Hardy, McPherson, Drollinger, Turner. No- Bennett. Motion carried.

- f) **Committee Structure:** It was discussed that the previously accepted committee structure was flawed as it is not possible to have 4 members of the council on a committee. A general discussion was held to determine the committee’s structures.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Turner to accept the adjustments to the committee structure. Motion carried by voice vote.

8). New Business

- a) **Planning Commission Applications:** Two applications were received for the open seat on the Planning Commission. Daniel Wilson and Margie Boyd were present to speak on behalf of their experiences and desire to join the Planning Commission.

Nomination by Turner to appoint Daniel Wilson to the open seat on the Planning Commission.

Vote to appoint Daniel Wilson to the open Planning Commission seat.

Yes: Bennett, Boyd, Drollinger, Hardy, McPherson, Schuckel, Turner

No:

- b) **Bank Signatories:** Dave Ciganick needs to be removed from the bank signatories and Bryan Hardy added.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Turner to update the signatories by removing Dave Ciganick and adding Bryan Hardy. Motion carried by voice vote.

- c) **Social Media Policy Review:** It was discussed that the policy states that the Clerk and Deputy Clerk shall be the only ones permitted to post on the Villages Facebook on behalf of the Village. Currently the Clerk, Deputy Clerk, DPW Supervisor, and Police Chief have access to the Facebook page. The policy needs to be amended to say who has authorized access to the Facebook page. Trustee Turner voiced concerns with links on comments and reviews on the Villages Facebook page that appear to be spam. He suggested that the reviews section be turned off to no longer allow people to leave reviews. The Administration and Personnel Committee will review the policy.

No action was taken.

- d) **Open Positions and Recruitment Efforts:** The open position for the Wastewater Treatment Operator was discussed. The position has been posted on several platforms with applications received but none that had the required licensing as stated in the job posting. It was discussed that this is a difficult position to fill as many other municipalities are hiring for this position along with privatized businesses offering higher salaries. Trustee Turner was interested in learning about the training process for a current employee to fill this position. Bradley Keiser answered that current employees are logging hours to be able to sit in on the exam for the licensing, but it takes several years to obtain the amount of hours needed. Trustee Turner asked if it was possible in the future to have the DPW Supervisor also be the Wastewater Treatment Operator. Mr. Keiser stated that this position cannot be a split position due to the amount of time each position requires. A general discussion on the current treatment plant was held.

No action was taken.

- e) **Official Communication via Electronic Mail: Encryption:** Trustee Turner asked that this item be added on the agenda. He was concerned with the use of a personal email for Village business that was unencrypted. He is recommending discontinuing the use of Spectrum email as it is unencrypted and using Gmail instead as it is free and encrypts emails.

No action was taken.

- f) **ASI Update:** Dave Simcox was present to give an update on the ASI indoor recreation project. Moving from a feasibility study to implementation of the project. They are hoping to get a letter of support from the Village to use for grants. They did some sampling in October of the soil for the project which came back favorable. However, in 2004 the sampling for the original building came back with contamination so the soil from the new project needs to be removed from the site because it is next to the site of contamination. They will be holding a community outreach event to show some drawings and projected plans for 2025.

Motion by Drollinger, seconded by McPherson to write a letter of recommendation to ASI. Motion carried by voice vote.

- g) **Parking on E Broad Street:** Police Chief Drollinger is requesting that the no parking on the south side of Broad Street be extended from Depot street to Maple street during the winter. With the recent snow fall has increased the difficulties in traveling that section of road safely.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Hardy to extend the no parking on the south side of Broad Street from Depot Street to Maple Street. Motion carried by voice vote.

- h) **Parking Registration Behind Bellaire Bar:** Police Chief Drollinger would like to establish a parking permit program for the parking lot behind the Bellaire Bar for overnight parking. There have been issues with plowing this year and notifying the owners of vehicles to move their cars for proper plowing. This registration would allow staff to notify those people which side of the parking lot to park for the night to allow for the clearing of snow. This registration would be of no fee to the vehicle owner. Parking by day would not require a permit but would be by night.

Motioned by McPherson, seconded by Boyd to accept the proposal by the Police Chief to set up a parking permit program for the parking lot behind the Bellaire Bar for overnight parking. Motion carried by voice vote.

9). Discussion Items: None

10). Department/Committee Reports:

- a) **Committee Reports:** None Presented.
- b) **Clerk/Zoning Administrator:** Angela St. Pierre updated on the 411 E Cayuga dangerous structure. The case is in probate court and it is best to wait for the case to be closed before the Village can issue any tickets. There have been a good handful of people that have signed up for the email billing option for their water/sewer bills.
Trustee Turner had questions about the due date of the water bills based off of his personal bills. He has had penalties applied to his account due to payment not being received by the due date stated on the bill. He was asking if the payment received past the due date could go by postmark instead of when the payment is received by the office. It was noted that payment is due in the office by the 10th of each month.

- c) **Treasurer/Deputy Clerk:** Nora Stead reported that she is working on the budget and will send out information as she completes it.
- d) **Department of Public Works:** Bradley Keiser reported that the sewer project is still going. They have had a lot of equipment failures with the sidewalk machine and the loader. They just started working on their water reports for the year end.
Trustee Drollinger asked about the ice rink at the park. Mr. Keiser replied that it has been unfavorable weather for the ice rink so far and that he has lost the volunteers for the ice rink and would need to find new ones for this project.
Trustee McPherson asked that the sidewalk outside of the post office be cleared for the crosswalk. Mr. Keiser stated that he will bring it back up to the DPW staff to keep on top of it better but mentioned that it is difficult to keep clean with the large amount of snowfall on top of business owners moving snow outside their businesses.
Trustee Turner asked if the parking lot north of Fischer Insurance is owned by the Village and if he noticed the parking blocks moved. Mr. Keiser stated that he was aware and that they plan to fix those.
- e) **Police Department:** Bill Drollinger reported that he has had a lot of people speak to him about his upcoming retirement and if there will be a replacement. He spoke about how many openings there are currently in the area and how difficult it will be to fill this position.
- f) **Planning Commission:** None Presented.

11. Closing Member/Public Comment:

- a) **Trustee Turner** asked about the tree ordinance the Village has and information regarding the tree board in light of the airport tree trimming project. Bradley Keiser spoke that he believes the tree board was dissolved with Ken Stead and Mike Merryweather. Mr. Keiser also stated that he has met with Matt Whyman about the tree trimming and that the companies they are receiving bidding from have licensed arborist and professionals that are capable of determining how to preserve the health of the trees while also following FAA regulations. Matt has come before the council on several occasions and has invited council members out to discuss the trimming project. Matt Whyman was able to speak more on the project and the companies bidding on the project.
- b) **Angie Les**, village resident, spoke about the tree trimming project that the airport is doing. She would like the Village Council to consider the lasting effects of trimming the trees versus complete removal of the trees especially along the waterways.
- c) **Trustee Turner** then spoke again about the previous split vote on the ballot in 2018 concerning marijuana. 1,100 voted no between Kearney and Forest Home and 1,031 voted yes. He believes communication with the public is important moving forward with the marijuana ordinance.

12. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

Compiled by Angela St. Pierre.

Minutes are subject to approval.

Approved: _____

Date: _____