

Bellaire Village Council
Meeting Minutes
July 5, 2023
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 Bryan Hardy, Trish Drollinger, Pat Boyd, Eldon McPherson, Dave Ciganick & Helen Schuckel.

Absent: None.

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

Also Present: Terry VanAlstine, Janet Koch, Dan Bean, Kevin Hoch, Terry Smith, Mr. & Mrs. Copeland, Mike Belanger, Jeff Hebden, Brad Fischer and Meghan Rowinski.

3. **Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved with the addition of new business item g, Millage Pamphlet, & item h, Food Pantry Request.

Motion by Schuckel, seconded by Boyd, 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 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:** Household hazardous waste is scheduled for July 22, 2023 at the Bellaire High School parking lot. The fence surrounding the County building is going up on July 10, and they will be starting the façade project. The Health Department building renovations should be completed in October and those working in the annex building will move into it. Mr. VanAlstine explained the relocation of some of the offices that are taking place during the façade project. They developed a fund balance policy. Peninsula Fiber (PFN) received a \$61,000,000 grant to help run wireless internet through Antrim County. Janet Koch noted that signage will be going up around the County building directing residents to the entrances of the county offices during the façade project.

b) **DDA Update:** Mr. Belanger provided the DDA update to Council. The Parking Committee is working with Gourdie Frasier to maximize parking. The Charles Culver art is up. There was some minor vandalism, and they are working on a resolution to avoid further problems. The success of this project will determine future projects. They moved a few tables & chairs to the restroom area. The DDA is forming a Financial Committee is going to develop a purchase policy. The DDA will be featured next summer in a Grand Traverse lifestyle magazine, which will come out next May.

- c) **Ball Field Update:** Mr. Keiser informed Council that the I-beams for the scoreboards have been purchased. The CIA donated the funds they were raising for scoreboards, which allowed us to purchase the beams.
- d) **Property Tax Sale:** Trustee Ciganick addressed some concerns about the purchase of both properties that are up for tax sale. He explained that he is good with the purchase of the one property that goes to the river because we already maintain it and boat trailers use it for parking. He questions whether we need the other property. It is on a slope which would have to have some reconstruction done to be able to use it and he cannot think of anything we would use it for. It was noted that because there was a motion on this discussion, it would have to be reopened by a motion from those that voted yes for it in the original motion.

Motion by Bennett, seconded by McPherson, to reconsider the purchase of the tax sale property. Motion carried by voice vote.

Mr. Keiser stated that it is a piece of property that we do not need, it will have to be fixed up to use it and we would be taking it off the tax role. Trustee Boyd agreed, especially if it doesn't help us with parking.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by McPherson, to drop the consideration of the off-water property and that we move into closed session later this evening to discuss the dollar amount that we would like to offer on the piece of property that runs to the river. Motion carried by voice vote.

8. New Business

- a) **Forest Home Township-Soccer Park Road Easement:** Terry Smith, the Forest Home Twp Supervisor had previously asked if the Village would maintain the soccer park road if Forest Home Township paved it. They had received permission from the County with the stipulation that the Village maintain it. The Village declined because the property is County owned and we just have an easement to access the soccer park. He is asking the Village to reconsider the request. Their plans are to develop a park on their property in that location. An agreement that could possibly include the paving of another road (River St. was mentioned) in the Village or help from the Township in paying some of the costs to maintain the road once paved could be developed and approved. There would be no winter maintenance. He would like to pursue this if the Village considers this an option. They are currently in the process of obtaining a quote for paving the soccer park road. Trustee Ciganick's biggest hurdle is that we are being asked to maintain a road that is out of the Village. Bradley Keiser informed the Council that we are already maintaining it as part of the easement agreement with the County. We brine it in the spring. Ciganick noted due to that, we are probably spending more on it now than we would be if it was paved, especially if there will be no winter maintenance. It was noted that if maintenance items require any changes in the future, the agreement can be reviewed and adjusted to reflect those changes.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Drollinger, to continue to uphold our agreement with Antrim County and maintain that easement regardless of surface type. Motion carried by voice vote.

Terry Smith asked this to further be tabled until he can receive all quotes and he can speak to his board. The council tabled any further discussion until the next meeting.

- b) **Antrim County Request-Vacate Grove St.:** Janet Koch from Antrim County explained the County plans for a new public safety center. They presented a few conceptual drawings, but the County prefers option A. To move forward with this option, they are requesting the Village approve vacating Grove St. The County would cover all costs for the vacation and for the court action needed to change the plat. Resolutions would also have to be approved by the Village. One declaring intent to vacate and setting the date for the public meeting and one to vacate it once the public meeting is held. She explained the plans for the project. The County's other option is if the Village decides not to vacate Grove St. She also noted that a millage will have to be passed to fund the project and if that cannot be done, then this project is a moot point. They are working on completing a survey to determine if residents feel the need for the project and if there is enough support to pass a millage proposal. Without this, there wouldn't be a need to vacate the road. Bradley Keiser noted that there is only a sewer line under Grove St, which services the County. Trustee Ciganick stated what is needed is not just the abandonment of Grove St., it would also be the movement of electrical lines & water sewer lines because we would no longer have access to them. All related costs would be burdened by the County. He also asked if the County had contacted Spillway Lodges to see if they would agree to vacating the road, as this would affect them. It was noted that they did contact them, and they didn't seem to have a problem with the vacation. Mr. Keiser said the only potential problem he sees is that for events happening in the Village, Grove St is our MDOT approved detour route. Depot St. cannot be used because of its angle, and it is too narrow. We could move it to Maple St., but we may need to make some improvements to it for MDOT approval.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by Hardy, to move forward with the approval Resolution 17 of 2023, declaring the intent of the Village to consider vacating Grove St., following up with the scheduled public hearing for the purpose of receiving comment regarding the same setting the date and time of the public hearing for August 2, 2023 at 6:00 pm. Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: Ciganick, Hardy, Boyd, Drollinger, McPherson, Schuckel & Bennett. Nays: None Absent: None.

- c) **Petoskey Steel Drum Band Concert:** The Area Seniors and the Walt Mann Real Estate Team is hosting the Steel Drum Band on Monday July 17 at 7:00 pm at Richardi Park. It is open to the public. They are requesting permission to open the gate to allow for handicap parking. They would also like to park along both sides of M-88. Mr. Keiser said this was already addressed at approved at a previous meeting. No further action was taken.
- d) **EGLE-ACO:** We received the draft consent order for the WWTP. We made some changes to that draft; they reviewed and sent another draft reflecting more changes. We will be having a meeting with EGLE on Friday to discuss this and they would like to have one person in attendance that can approve and sign the order if it is ready to be approved at that meeting. Violation fees are expected to be assessed at that time and we are estimating that they will be approximately \$4,600. It was explained that the consent order is quite extensive and includes many things they require us to do.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Hardy, to authorize President Bennett to sign an approve the consent order if finalized at that meeting. Motion carried by voice vote.

- e) **Parks Committee Recommendation:** Mr. Hebden introduced Megan Rowinski who offered her services to fundraise for naming rights for Craven Park ball fields. Megan works in marketing, and she has come up with a plan to offer naming rights on the ball fields if a sizable donation is offered. The donation would help cover the balance of the costs to complete the ball field project. These costs include, but are not limited to, dug outs, concession stand and lighting. She is recommending the Council try to find a single sponsor for \$350,000 and provided a list of

potential sponsors. She explained her thoughts on the fundraiser. She also noted that if a single sponsor could not be found within a set timeline, the fundraiser can be changed to accept multiple sponsors. Mr. Hebden told Council that they have currently raised \$6,000 in the brick fundraiser and those funds will purchase the groomer that is needed for the fields. The school has offered the use of the visiting team's bleachers for Craven Park if needed. He also noted that when the dugouts and scoreboards are up, high school is ready to play.

Motion by Drollinger, seconded by Boyd, to continue with this fundraising project. Motion carried by voice vote.

- f) **Union Negotiation Rep:** Trustee Hardy needs to resign from the union negotiation team due to time constraints and a council replacement needs to be determined. Trustee Boyd offered his services.

Motion by Hardy, seconded by Ciganick, to approve Patrick Boyd as the new member of the union negotiating team. Motion carried by voice vote.

- g) **Millage Pamphlet:** The pamphlet is ready for review. It will be printed in color. The cost for 500 is \$180.00.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Boyd to approve the pamphlet presented and to purchase 500 of them for \$180.00. Motion carried by voice vote.

- h) **Food Pantry Request:** Trustee McPherson explained that he has some concerns about parking for food pantry patrons once the County begins their façade project. They are open on Monday's & Thursdays. Bradley Keiser, as the street administrator, suggested getting a sandwich board sign and placing it at the road, designating parking for food pantry patrons only on the two days they are open.

- i) **Closed Session:** A closed session was called to discuss purchase price for the tax sale property.

At 8:12 p.m. motion by Drollinger, seconded by Boyd, to go into closed session pursuant to Section 8 (c) of Michigan Open Meetings Act, Public Act No. 267, being MCL 15.268 (d), as amended, to consider the purchase of real property. Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: Drollinger, Boyd, Ciganick, Hardy, McPherson, Schuckel & Bennett. Nays: None, Absent: None

Closed session was called at 8:12 PM

Closed session ended at 8:17 PM

Motion by Drollinger, seconded by Boyd, to rise from the closed session. Motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes: Drollinger, Boyd, Ciganick, Hardy, McPherson, Schuckel & Bennett. Nays: None Absent: None

9. Discussion Items:

- a) **Office Closure:** The office staff is requesting permission to close the office for two days at the end of the month. Trustee Drollinger stated that because this is a public office it should stay open. It was noted that we have walk in customers for water bill payments and zoning questions, however, at the end of the month, water bill customers are limited because

payments are due by the 10th. Chief Drollinger stated that the office was closed for three weeks during Covid and it worked out fine. Mr. Keiser said his only concern is when a phone call may come in for a water turn off or on in the case of an emergency. Staff noted that calls can be forwarded to another number to address those concerns. Bradley suggested putting his phone number on the answering machine to direct water/sewer customer requests to his phone number. Trustee Ciganick noted that all efforts should be made to avoid the closure if possible. Trustee Boyd said this is such a rare request doesn't see a problem. No further discussion occurred.

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:** A written report was presented.
- f) **Planning Commission:** Nothing presented.

11. Closing Member/Public Comment:

- **Mr. Copeland:** Mr. Copeland informed the council that there are many autumn olive bushes, and they are very invasive. He is wondering if the Village could do anything about them. Trustee McPherson directed him to contact the Conservation District as they are the entity that helps handle invasive species. Mr. Keiser will contact them. He also asked if Bellaire Highway could be made a 25 MPH from the top of the hill toward town. Chief Drollinger explained why and when it went to 35 mph.

12. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:27 P.M.

Compiled by Cathy Odom
Minutes are subject to approval.

Approved: _____

Date: _____