

**Bellaire Village Council
Meeting Minutes
February 5, 2025**

1). **Call to Order:** President Bennett called the meeting to order at 6:58 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

Staff Absent: Angela St. Pierre, Clerk

Also Present: Terry VanAlstine, Margie Boyd, Chrissy Langdon, Shelly Dayton, Janet Koch, Dave Ciganick, Tammy Dewulf, and Kelly Young.

3). **Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved as amended with the additions of new business items J) Car Show, K) Parks Recommendations, and removal of old business item E) Marihuana Retail Businesses.

Motion by Turner, 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 amended with corrections to spelling errors on the January 8, 2024 Village Council meeting minutes.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson 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:** Terry VanAlstine was present to give an update on the County. At their January 16th meeting there was a 3/2 vote to move forward with Public Safety Center on a 25 year bond proposal. Yesterday at the Health Department of NW Michigan they appointed a new health director.

b) **DDA Update:** Shelly Dayton was present to give an update on the DDA. The DDA have a new board member who is willing to be their new treasurer. They have chosen someone to do the new DDA logo design. The banner program deadline has been extended.

c) **Sewer Project Update:** Bradley Keiser was present to give an update on the sewer project. An updated schedule for the sewer project has been provided.

d) **Mobile Food Vending Application and Ordinance Amendment:** Trustee Boyd was present to speak on behalf of the Planning Commission. At their last meeting they reviewed

and approved the draft application for mobile food vending. He stated to ignore the ordinance amendment as after further research, the suggested change to allow freestanding signs with mobile food vending should not be allowed as a freestanding sign is a type of permanent sign. This application would allow the Zoning Administrator to review the application and provide the applicant with a Zoning Permit without the need for the Planning Commission to hold a meeting. Trustee Turner asked if a yearly application would apply for multiple locations. Trustee Boyd answered that the application and fee is per location.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Turner to accept the updated Mobile Food Vending application. Motion carried by voice vote.

8). New Business

- a) **ZBA Applications:** ZBA currently has two alternate positions open. There are two applicants for these open positions. Tammy Dewulf, applicant, spoke about herself and her experiences.

Nomination by Hardy to appoint Tammy Dewulf to one open seat on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Vote to appoint Tammy Dewulf to one open Zoning Board of Appeals seat.

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

No:

Nomination by Boyd to appoint David Drummond to one open seat on the Zoning Board of Appeals contingent on confirmation by Clerk that he can attend the regularly scheduled meetings.

Vote to appoint David Drummond to one open Zoning Board of Appeals seat.

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

No:

- b) **Attorney Transfer:** A letter was provided by the Villages Attorney about his retirement and the transfer of municipal clients to a different firm. The Clerk has contacted local municipalities about who they use as their attorney and provided some pricing information in the packets. It was discussed to have the Administration and Personnel committee interview two firms that were recommended by the Clerk so that they may make a recommendation to Council.

Motion by Bennett, seconded by Boyd to have the Administration and Personnel committee interview two firms to then make a recommendation to Council. Motion carried by voice vote.

- c) **Bellaire Chamber 2025 Road Closure Schedule:** Included in the packets is the Bellaire Chamber 2025 road closure schedule. The chamber director was present to explain the schedule. Trustee Turner asked if there had been any thought into installing barricades for blocking off the streets. Mr. Keiser answered that we have water barricades for these events.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Hardy, to accept the dates proposed for the Bellaire Chamber 2025 road closure schedule. Motion carried by voice vote.

d) Administration and Personnel Committee Recommendations: The following agenda items were discussed and recommended by the Administration and Personnel Committee.

- 1. BCBS Insurance Rate:** The new insurance rate was provided in the members packets. A general discussion was held about the rate increase and the plan details. Terry VanAlstine spoke about how the County has switched insurance providers to an insurance pool and has saved about 9% on their insurance. Office staff will look into an insurance pool.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Hardy, to accept the new insurance rates. Voice vote: Yes- Bennett, Boyd, Drollinger, Hardy, McPherson, Schuckel, No- Turner.

- 2. Wage Scale/Cost of Living:** The cost-of-living increase is 3.3%.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Turner, to accept the 3.3% cost of living increase. Motion carried by voice vote.

- 3. Wage Increase:** Mr. Keiser read from the action item report that explained at the January 15th, 2025 meeting it was recommended to increase the wage of DPW employee Jason Alspaugh to \$21.45 per hour effective immediately. It was also recommended to increase the wages of office staff Nora Stead and Angela St. Pierre to \$22.96 per hour effective immediately. Member Boyd was concerned about the current pay scale and not having one. A general discussion was held about what the Administration and Personnel Committee is going to do without the pay scale. Member Boyd recommended that this be discussed further before a vote takes place.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Turner, to table this agenda item. Motion carried by voice vote.

- 4. Elimination of Investment Committee and Merging Property and Building Committee into Administration and Personnel Committee:** It had been mentioned earlier in the meeting that the Investment Committee had not met in several years and that the Property and Building Committee can be merged into Administration and personnel Committee. Member Turner voiced concern with the committee member spread now with eliminating two committees. The committee spread needs to be addressed further.

Motion by Hardy, seconded by Boyd, to eliminate the Investment Committee. Motion carried by voice vote.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by Hardy, to merge the Property and Building Committee into the Administration and Personnel Committee. Motion carried by voice vote.

- 5. Post for Part-Time Mowing Position:** The Administration and Personnel Committee is recommending posting for a part-time mowing position for the parks and cemetery at \$16.00 per hour for no more than 30 hours per week.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Turner, to post for a part-time mowing position. Motion carried by voice vote.

e) Public Safety Recommendations: The following agenda items were discussed and recommended by the Public Safety Committee.

1. **Amend Recommended Budget for Hiring Full-Time Officer:** Member Boyd spoke about how the Public Safety Committee is recommending authorizing the Police Chief to hire another officer at \$24.00 per hour.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Schuckel, to allow the Police Chief to hire another officer. Motion carried by voice vote.

2. **Money From Marihuana:** Member Boyd spoke about how the Public Safety Committee is recommending that if a recreational marihuana ordinance is to pass, that the monies received by the State from those establishments be earmarked for Public Safety wages. Trustee Turner voiced concern about the financial aspects of these businesses. He was concerned with earmarking where this money would go before there is an ordinance adopted. He was concerned if the money would be needed elsewhere due to a catastrophic failure of some sorts and that money being tied up in public safety. Member Boyd explained that the police officer wages are paid out of the general fund and that earmarking this money to public safety would allow more money in the general fund for if a catastrophic failure were to happen. It was explained that earmarking the money to public safety would provide the public with the information that the intentions of the Village are that the money would be used for public safety. This would be to provide transparency to the public.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by McPherson, to earmark the monies received by the State from recreational marihuana establishments to the Public Safety fund. Voice Vote: Yes- Bennett, Boyd, Hardy, McPherson, Schuckel, Drollinger, No-Turner.

- f) **Village/DDA Budget FY 2025-26 Review:** The draft budget for the DDA was provided. Member Turner asked for some clarification on the DDA budget concerning signs.

Motion by Hardy, seconded by McPherson to accept the DDA Budget for the FY 2025-26. Motion carried by voice vote.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Schuckel, to hold the public hearing for the Village budget on February 19th, 2025 at 6:00 PM. Motion carried by voice vote.

- g) **Planning Commission Recommendations:** The following agenda items were discussed and recommended by the Planning Commission.

1. **Amend the Zoning Ordinance to Allow for Multifamily in R-3 Residential:** Member Boyd spoke on behalf of the Planning Commission. He spoke on behalf of an individual interested in building a multifamily housing unit on a parcel currently zoned as R-3 Residential. The amendment would state that the multifamily unit would be allowed in R-3 Residential by special use only. The Planning Commission would hold a public hearing on the ordinance amendment before any amendment would be approved.

Motion by Turner, seconded by Boyd, to hold a public hearing on amending the Zoning Ordinance to allow for multifamily in R-3 Residential on a case-by-case basis. Motion carried by voice vote.

2. **ZBA Ordinance Review to Include Site Drawing with Application:** Member Boyd again spoke on behalf of the Planning Commission. Currently any ZBA applications do not require a sketch or drawing of the requested variance. When the

ZBA reviews the application at the meeting they do not have any drawing to go off of if they are to approve or deny the variance request.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Schuckel, to update the ZBA ordinance to require a drawing of the property and requested variance. Motion carried by voice vote.

- h) County Request to Vacate Grove Street:** Janet Koch was present to speak on behalf of this agenda item. The county was previously given permission to vacate Grove Street and a resolution stating language contingent of the passing of the millage for the Public Safety Center. The County is moving forward without the millage so a new resolution needs to be approved for the vacating of Grove Street for the Public Safety Center. A resolution needs to be adopted to set the meeting date for the public hearing for vacating.

Motioned by Boyd, seconded by Hardy, for a roll call vote on Resolution #1 of 2025 of intent to hold a public hearing for vacating Grove Street on March 5th, 2025 at 6:30 PM. Motion carried by roll call vote.

Yes: Boyd, Hardy, Drollinger, McPherson, Schuckel, Turner, Bennett
No: none
Abstain: none

- i) Sound System for Council Room:** Provided in the packets was a quote on installing a microphone and speaker system in the council room. This has been looked into previously, but no action has been taken. The quote that was received fits into the current budget.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Hardy, to accept the quote for the sound system. Motion carried by voice vote. Yes- Bennett, Boyd, Drollinger, Hardy, McPherson, Schuckel. No- Turner.

- j) Car Show:** Keiser Automotive is requesting Broad Street be closed for the car show with the same plan as last year on August 8th and 9th.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Turner, to approve the car show road closure request. Motion carried by voice vote.

- k) Parks Committee Recommendations:** The following agenda items were discussed and recommended by the Parks Committee.
 - 1. Seasonal Cleaning of Parks and Public Restroom:** Member Drollinger spoke on behalf of the Parks Committee and their recommendation to hire Amy Tate for seasonal cleaning from May 1st to October 1st of the parks (Richardi, Craven) and public bathrooms downtown. Member Boyd mentioned that Amy Tate's rate for cleaning is cheaper than having DPW personnel come in on the weekends to clean these bathrooms. Trustee Turner was concerned with how the cleaner would log that she had done the cleaning. It was explained that Amy has been trusted with this cleaning before and has provided great work for the Village before and if there were any question of her coming and cleaning, the cameras would show if she came or not.

Motion by Drollinger, seconded by Parks Committee, to hire Amy Tate to clean the Richardi Park and Craven Park and the downtown bathrooms. Motion carried by voice vote.

2. **Advertise for Reservation Specialist for Craven Campground:** Member Drollinger spoke about how the campground revenue had decreased due to people not knowing if Craven campground would have a spot open for them and they are reserving a spot at another local campground instead of coming to Craven. The Parks Committee is recommending advertising for a reservation specialist for Craven to monitor reservation compliance. The reservation specialist would be allowed to camp at Craven for free as compensation for monitoring reservation compliance from other campers. Maintenance would still be done by the DPW staff and cleaning done by Amy Tate. The Clerk has looked into online reservation software and has found software that does not require a contract but requires a fee per reservation. This fee can be included in the payment made by the camper which would cost the Village nothing to use this software. Reservations would be done online and the reservation specialist would not be accepting any payments from the other campers for their stay. The Parks Committee would choose this person, interview them, and allow them to stay at the campground for free for the season.

Motion by Drollinger, seconded by the Parks Committee, to allow the Parks Committee to advertise for a reservation specialist, interview and choose that person, and allow them to camp for free for the season. Motion carried by voice vote.

9). Discussion Items: None

10). Department/Committee Reports:

- a) **Committee Reports:** None Presented.
- b) **Clerk/Zoning Administrator:** None Presented.
- c) **Treasurer/Deputy Clerk:** Nora Stead reported that she has been working on quarterly transfers and that the end of year wrap-up went well.
- d) **Department of Public Works:** Bradley Keiser reported on the DPW. An EGLE letterhead was provided and reviewed concerning the lead line inventory. He is working on getting a list to provide to the council at the monthly meetings to update the hours completed by the DPW employees that would count towards their State exam for a Wastewater license.
- e) **Police Department:** Bill Drollinger reported that he has been busy with parking violations. The recent house fire with the death is nearly wrapped up.
- f) **Planning Commission:** None Additional Presented.

11. Closing Member/Public Comment:

- a) **Kelly Young**, Owner of Torch Cannabis Co. in Central Lake, was present to speak on her experiences in the cannabis and marijuana business.
- b) **Trustee Turner** voiced concern with a recent social media post and who had posted it and who had turned off comments to it.
- c) **Bill Drolinger** commented that he had been the one who posted on Facebook about clearing out snow from around fire hydrants.

d) **Nora Stead** stated that she had turned off comments after approval by the Administration and Personnel Committee.

12. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:41 P.M.
Compiled by Angela St. Pierre.
Minutes are subject to approval.

Approved: _____

Date: _____