

**Bellaire Village Council
Public Hearing Meeting Minutes
February 19, 2025**

1. **Call to Order:** President Bennett called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

President Bennett addressed the council about meeting etiquette. He stated that there have been several complaints about how the meetings were conducted and rudeness presented in meetings. President Bennett then went on to describe Roberts Rules of Order for addressing council members and speaking on agenda items. He requested that the materials be read prior to the meeting and to contact staff for any clerical corrections to be made. He then stated that it is important to treat each other with respect.

2. **Roll Call Attendance:**

Present: President Bennett, Trustees Trish Drollinger, Bryan Hardy, Eldon McPherson, Helen Schuckel, and Andrew Turner.

Absent: Trustee Pat Boyd

Staff Present: Nora Stead, Treasurer, Angela St. Pierre, Clerk & Brad Keiser, DPW Supervisor.

Staff Absent: Bill Drollinger, Police Chief

Also Present: Diane Bennett

3. **Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved as amended with the addition of adding the names of Don Hoyt and Tom Shiltz to new business item g., correction to the zip code, and the removal of item a.3. Additional Compensation for DPW Taken From DPW Funds.

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

4. **Conflict of Interest:** Trustee Drollinger has conflict of interest with the police budget.

5. **Public Comment on Agenda Items:** None Presented.

6. **Old Business:**

- a) **Re-Vote for BCBS Insurance Rate:** At the February 5th, 2025 meeting Trustee Drollinger voted on the BCBS insurance rate. President Bennett stated that according to Roberts Rules of Order she is allowed to vote on this matter but would like to do a re-vote. Trustee Turner had questions regarding an Insurance Pool that had been discussed at a previous Administration and Personnel meeting and if there was any further information on that. President Bennett answered that there has not been any update on that at this time.

Motion by Hardy, seconded by McPherson to accept the BCBS Insurance Rates. Voice Vote: Yes-Hardy, McPherson, Schuckel, Bennett. No-Turner. Abstain-Drollinger. Motion Carried.

7. **New Business**

- a) **Administration Recommendations:**

- 1). **Abolish Five-Year Pay Scale and Adopt Three-Step Program:** Trustee Drollinger asked how it would be determined when someone would move up the three-step program. Trustee McPherson stated that it would be a review system. Trustee Turner was concerned with another agenda item about current employees who would be moved up the three-step program who have not been here that long. He was also concerned with how the Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent position is not on the three-step program. He was also concerned about how the council had approved to hire another officer at \$24.00 per hour, but on the three-step program the Director of Public Safety starting rate is \$24.55 per hour. Trustee McPherson stated that the new hire for the police department would be a replacement for our current Police Chief. Trustee Turner then asked for clarification on the Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent position as it had been approved to post for that position at \$25.00 per hour and he does not see that on the three-step program. DPW Supervisor Bradley Keiser clarified that the position is

labeled as “DPW Worker-Sewer Lagoon/Plant License Holder” on the three-step program. Trustee McPherson spoke again how the Administration and Personnel committee had discussed how the five-year pay scale was too complicated and had spoke with the supervisors who said the wage scale was hard to explain to employees and hard to justify the wages. He continued that the five-year pay scale does not provide any incentive to the employees to work harder or provide better work. Trustee Turner was requesting more information on the review process and what the form for the reviews would look like. A further discussion was held concerning the review process.

Motion by Hardy, seconded by Administration and Personnel Committee to abolish the five-year pay scale and adopt the presented three-step program, which is not guaranteed, but will be based on performance reviews. Voice Vote: Yes-Drollinger, Hardy, McPherson, Schuckel, Bennett. No-Turner. Motion Carried.

- 2). **One-Time Year End Additional Compensation:** Trustee Turner asked for clarification on the one-time additional compensation. It was clarified that it would be just one-time paid out in December of 2026.

Motion by McPherson, seconded by the Administration and Personnel Committee to reward our employees with a one-time, year-end compensation of an additional \$100.00 to what they have been getting. This additional compensation would be to recognize the hard work that all employees did during the struggling budget time that stuck with the Village and still did their job well. Motion carried by voice vote. Abstain-Drollinger.

- 4). **Merit Pay Cap of \$300.00:** Trustee Turner questioned if the reviews done by the Administration and Personnel Committee would stop there for the merit pay review or if it would need to still be approved by the council for final approval. It was answered that those reviews would come to council for final approval.

Motion by Hardy, seconded by the Administration and Personnel Committee to make the merit pay up to \$300.00. Motion carried by voice vote.

- 5). **Wage Increase for One DPW and Two Office Employees:** Trustee Turner asked if there had been any performance reviews done for these employees. Mr. Keiser stated that he has held a verbal review with the DPW employee in question but does not have a written review at the time, but is happy to provide one. Trustee McPherson spoke about how the numbers show that the DPW staff and Office staff have brought the budget back in order and this would be to help reward them. Trustee Turner again voiced concern with the employees moving up the three-step program without a written review of the employees. Trustee Hardy stated that the council can start anybody anywhere they want and the three-step program is a guideline. Trustee McPherson spoke about how the Administration and Personnel Committee and Village Council have already had several great verbal reviews of the DPW worker from the DPW Supervisor.

Motion by Bennett, seconded by the Administration and Personnel Committee to increase the wages of Jason Alspaugh to \$22.24 per hour and Nora Stead and Angela St. Pierre to \$23.71 per hour effective March 1st 2025. Voice Vote: Yes-Drollinger, Hardy, McPherson, Schuckel, Bennett. No-Turner. Motion Carried.

- b) **FY 2025-2026 Fiscal Budget and DDA Budget:** President Bennett stated the purpose of this hearing is to discuss adoption of the FY2025-26 Village budget and the FY2025-26 DDA budget.
 - a) **Open Public Hearing:** The public hearing was opened at 6:34 pm.
 - b) **Public Comment Period:** None presented.
 - c) **Closing of Public Comment Period:** The public comment period was closed at 6:34 PM.

- d) **Deliberation:** Trustee Turner questioned the proposed resolution #3 of 2025 regarding the General Operations Millage amount. A clerical correction to the resolution was pointed out and was corrected. Trustee Turner was questioning if this correction to the millage would affect the budget and if it was normal to pass a budget that would need some adjustments right off the bat. Mr. Keiser answered that it is normal to pass a budget with corrections that need to be made. He stated that money is put away to a fund balance and is used to balance the budget as needed. At the end of the year the auditor will transfer funds to balance the budget. Trustee McPherson spoke about how this is a learning process and that this is a complicated process. Mr. Keiser stated that the budget may also change depending on grants or revenue from the State of Michigan. Treasurer Nora Stead stated that the General Operations Millage amount listed on the resolution #3 of 2025 was a typo and the calculations on the other forms should be correct. The budget was further discussed and explained.

President Bennett called for a 15-minute recess at 7:11 PM.

President Bennett called the meeting back to order at 7:22 PM.

c) Resolution #2 of 2025, FY 2025-26 DDA Budget:

Motion by Turner, seconded by Hardy to accept the budget for the DDA in the total revenue of \$39,264 and total expenditures \$38,020 and for a roll call vote on resolution #2 of 2025.

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

No: none

Absent: Boyd

Abstain: none

d) Resolution #3 of 2025, FY 2025-26 Village Budget

Motion by Drollinger, seconded by Schuckel to accept the updated budget and for a roll call vote on resolution #3 of 2025.

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

No: none

Absent: Boyd

Abstain: none

e) Resolution #4 of 2025, FY 2025-26 Village Budget-PS Total

Motion by Hardy, seconded by Schuckel to accept resolution #4 of 2025 with the correction of voting terms from “yeas” to “yes” and “nays” to “no” for a roll call vote on resolution #4 of 2025.

Yes: Hardy, Schuckel, McPherson, Turner, Bennett

No: none

Absent: Boyd

Abstain: Drollinger

- f) **ASI Letter of Support:** ASI is seeking two more letters of support for their indoor recreation facility.

Motion by Turner, seconded by Schuckel, to give ASI a letter of support with corrections to spelling of a name in two places. Motion carried by voice vote.

- g) **Appointing DDA Members Don Hoyt and Tom Shiltz:** Trustee Turner was concerned with the lack of information provided concerning new member Tom Shiltz given he was not present at the meeting to speak about himself. Member of the public Diane Bennett was present to speak on behalf of working with Tom Shiltz and her experiences with him. She was on the hiring committee who hired Tom as the Library Director. With further questioning from Trustee Turner concerning Tom Shiltz the Clerk provided the application filled out by Tom regarding the open position on the DDA.

Motion by Hardy, seconded by McPherson, to reappoint Don Hoyt to the DDA and to appoint Tom Shiltz to the DDA. Motion carried by voice vote.

8. Discussion Items: None presented.

9. Department & Committee Reports: None presented.

10. Closing Member/Public Comment:

- **Diane Bennett:** Mrs. Bennett spoke on how difficult it can be to do a budget for a government entity. She spoke about her experience with working with the budget for the public library and thanked the Council for their work with the Village budget.
- **Trustee Turner:** Mr. Turner spoke regarding a recent Administration and Personnel meeting on February 11th regarding the Social Media Policy. He has concerns with how it was suggested to set up a Facebook profile for the Village that employees can log into to make posts to the Facebook page. His concern is that there would not be a log of who posted what to the page if all employees logged in with one profile and if anything needed to be addressed if there was a problem with a certain post. He went on to read Facebook's policy on profiles and how a profile for the Village is a violation of Facebooks Policy.
- **Trustee Turner:** Mr. Turner also spoke about Kelly Young who attended a previous council meeting and wanted to elaborate and what she had spoke about regarding legal marihuana. He stated that at this previous meeting Ms. Young voiced concerns about who we are supporting, small vs big businesses. He stated that she spoke about the unregulated product on the shelves and that operators not making as much money as is reported. That there is suspected cheating within the sales numbers and that the money being reported isn't accurate. He stated that she described this industry as ugly. Mr. Turner believes this topic needs more analysis before we jump into this type of industry.
- **President Bennett:** Mr. Bennett spoke about two lawsuits Central Lake is currently in regarding the recreational marihuana businesses. He has invited the Village Attorney, Bryan Graham to the next regular meeting to discuss choosing the next legal council for the Village.

11. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 7:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted:
Angela St. Pierre, Clerk

Minutes are subject to approval.

Approved: _____

Date: _____