

7:30 p.m. The regular meeting of the Village Board of Trustees was called to order by Mayor Behnken. A roll call was answered aye by Wilson, Geppert, Feder, Newbold and Politsch. Trustee Hamon was absent. Also present were Sandy Stolte, Village Treasurer; Chris Remick, Superintendent of Public Works; and Leo Simburger, Chief of Police.

**VISITORS**

None.

**READING OF THE JOURNAL (MINUTES)**

The minutes from the previous board meeting had been distributed for approval.

A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Politsch, to approve the board minutes as were submitted. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

**REPORTS AND COMMUNICATION**

**MAYOR**

Mayor Behnken presented four options to the board regarding the Erwin Smith Judgement. The options were:

- a) Smith agrees to the \$40,000.00 offer, expiring in December, with payment made by December 6, 2021.
- b) The Village presents a soft counteroffer of \$44,000.00, expiring December 6, 2021.
- c) The Village presents a hard counteroffer of \$48,00.00, expiring December 6, 2021.
- d) The Village pursues \$50,000.00, along with court mandated 9% interest, totaling approximately \$54,450.00.

The board discussed the desire to end the lengthy dispute, citing the cost associated with further legal fees.

A motion was made by Trustee Newbold to accept the \$40,000.00 settlement from Erwin Smith. Trustee Politsch seconded. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

Mayor Behnken discussed a request from a resident to have permission to practice archery on his property within the village, citing Municipal Code 27.2.19. Upon discussion, it is agreed that for the safety of all residents, it is best to not make any exceptions at this time.

**VILLAGE CLERK**

Nothing to report.

**TREASURERS TIME**

The monthly Treasurer's Report was distributed to the Board prior to the meeting. The monthly Treasurer's Report was turned over to Mayor Behnken.

Mayor Behnken reports there is a first six month surplus of ~\$200,000.00, with around ~\$128,000.00 due to a grant we received from the American Relief Act Plan. Mayor Behnken analyzed the prior three years, deducing that a loss of \$120,000.00- \$150,000.00 is average the last six months of the year. The first six months of the year we typically have more revenue in property taxes. The previous year we had an operating loss of \$56,000.00. Mayor Behnken projects that we will be in the positive by the same amount- primarily due to the grant- in April 2022. The operating surplus will remain roughly the same as it was the year before. Any increase in utilities will be consumed by expenses.

Looking forward, concerns are an 18% increase in health insurance premiums for Village employees. Assessed values on property continue to decrease, fund rates have been driven up, and do have maximums on them. Mayor Behnken conveys that going forward will be a struggle. There is a need to associate enough cost to proprietary funds to bring some out of general into proprietary to justify increases in fund rates, while concurrently decreasing our deficit in the general fund.

Nancy Ritter provided extremely detailed records about the equipment time and labor time. These records can be used to have interfund charges, resulting in a more robust general fund.

A motion was made by Trustee Newbold to accept the Monthly Treasures Report. Trustee Geppert seconded. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

**POLICE CHIEF**

Chief Simburger reports that the 2012 Dodge Charger is in the shop with an antifreeze leak and brake issues.

The owner of the last boat at the Marina has not returned Chief Simburger's phone calls. He will send the owner a letter letting him know the boat must be moved immediately.

**SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS**

The second playground has been mulched. Work at the campground has been paused due to a broken drill. Christmas decorations will be displayed soon. Joe Marina is out of town, so a meeting was not possible.

**AMBULANCE SERVICE DIRECTOR**

Director Green was not present.

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

**STREETS AND ALLEYS**

Trustee Geppert asked Superintendent Remick if he knows anything about sidewalk paperwork. Remick stated a decision on when to start the repairs has not been made yet. Remick has been working on MFT.

**FINANCE AND AUDIT**

Trustee Newbold cited the handout from Lowery for United Health Care plan BR-R9 Silver.

A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Politsch, to approve United Health Care plan BR-R9 Silver effective December 1, 2021. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

**WATER AND SEWER**

Trustee Feder- Nothing to report. Chris Remick states he is waiting on the company to call back on when they will be starting the lining.

**PERSONNEL, PUBLIC SAFETY/ADA**

Trustee Politsch reports that at the Benefits Workshop employees appeared quite receptive to the new benefits package.

Trustee Newbold proposed a 2% pay increase for employees, with the exception of new hire Amy Benwell, and a 10% pay increase for members of the police force. Raises will not be retroactive. Raises are effective November 15, 2021 and will be reflected on the December 03, 2021 paycheck. The plan going forward is to address increases May 1 annually, as it is the beginning of the fiscal year.

A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Politsch, to approve Resolution No. 2021-08 establishing wage rates for appointments and employees. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

**PUBLIC PROPERTY AND PARKS**

The chiropractor is paid in full.

**CEMETERY**

Nothing to report.

**IMPROVEMENTS AND GRANTS**

Trustee Politsch is checking with Tim Pruett to check on costs. Another committee meeting will be scheduled soon to discuss.

The East West Gateway STP Grant 2021 was approved for Spotsylvania. The money is

designated for 2025, but we can request to use it sooner than that.

It was noted that the park mulch project looks very nice.

**ORDINANCES**

Mayor Behnken and the board discussed the need for a Committee of the Whole ordinance. Trustee Politsch made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2021-12 Authorizing a Committee of the Whole, Trustee Newbold seconded. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

Trustee Newbold reported that employees were very receptive to establishing HSA Accounts. He noted that we will try to establish the accounts with US Bank in New Athens as to keep business within the village. A motion was made by Trustee Politsch, seconded by Trustee Feder to approve Ordinance No. 2021-13 Authorizing Health Savings Account. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

Trustee Politsch brought up IL Codification. Mayor Behnken agreed that we want IML Code updates and Municipal Code updates at this time.

**REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

Nothing to report.

**COMMUNICATIONS, PETITIONS, RESOLUTIONS, ORDERS AND ORDINANCES**

Nothing to report.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Public Property**

Marina

- 1.) One boat is left, 11/10/21. Chief Simburger is sending a letter to the owner.
- 2.) Chris is obtaining prices on labor and material to renovate electricity 11/4/21; will not need steps; demolition of old structure starting.
- 3.) John is obtaining a proposal from Stan Sirtak. John and Stan met 10/9/21.
- 4.) Chris talked with Joe "Marina"; they will meet in the near future.

**Streets & Alleys**

- 1.) Sewer Cleanout Project- Eight blocks completed as of 10/04/21. Eighteen blocks completed as of 11/01/21.
- 2.) Quote on water line collapse on 108 North Market. Hanks will give two options roughly two weeks from 11/01/21.

**Grants & Improvements**

None.

**Other**

- 1.) Discuss with the owner of the laundromat (Jim) the condition of the building. John and Steve are going to have a meeting with him.

**Other Plans and Issues**

Marina

- 1.) Plans for the River House
- 2.) Plans for Boat Slip

Business Development

- 1.) Billy Cumberland (Steamboat Building) is not going to proceed until next Spring due to Covid-19 concerns. He is planning on six employees.
- 2.) We received an inquiry regarding Wade Boat Dealer building. There is interest in putting an RV Repair Facility in the building. Nothing will proceed until after May 2022.

Other

- 1.) Collection on Marina rent judgement. 10/22/2021 filed discover of assets petition with St. Clair County Clerk. Citation to discover assets set for 12/06/21.
- 2.) Village of New Athens v. Napier Citizens Bank included as defendant because they have a mortgage on the property. They advised us they are not going to appear and realize their lien will be extinguished.
- 3.) Employees request to buy service time credits with IMRF. Joe sent cost worksheet to IMRF for review.
- 4.) Joe is working with Soulshyne Solar on feasibility of solar generation of electricity and sell back to Ameren.

Streets and Alleys

- 1.) Arlene and Debby submitted list to Chris of 50 locations whereby sidewalks need repair.
- 2.) Trustee Politsch reports that there is a January 10, 2022 deadline for the grant.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Trustee Geppert, seconded by Trustee Newbold, to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

Amy Benwell, Village Clerk  
Joe Behnken, Village President