

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 with two typing corrections. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATION

MAYOR

Mayor Behnken reported that Smith's attorney rejected our counteroffer. The next step is to move forward with the declaration of assets. Smith is quarantined as his wife is COVID-19 Positive. The original December 06, 2021 deadline will need to be postponed due to the quarantine.

VILLAGE CLERK

Village Clerk Benwell requested approval for on site LOCIS Training in January for herself and Deputy Clerk Ritter. The cost of training will be \$50.00 for travel expenses and \$80.00 per training hour, averaging between 4 and 8 hours total. The training will aid in efficiency and further education for Benwell and Ritter. The LOCIS Representative will also discuss the option to use LOCIS for accounting software. A motion was made by Trustee Newbold to approve the training session. Trustee Feder seconded. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

Village Clerk Benwell presented a residential sewer credit request made by Daniel Voelkel after a water shut-off valve failure at his residence. A credit of \$119.70 was proposed to offset the usage cost as the sewer was not utilized for this portion of the bill. A motion was made by Trustee Politsch, seconded by Trustee Newbold to credit the resident's account. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

TREASURERS TIME

Nothing to report.

POLICE CHIEF

Chief Simburger reported that he had contacted the owner of the final boat at the Marina. The owner has hired a company that is in the business of moving boats. A trial

run has been scheduled for December 20, 2021. If the axles fall off the steel plate, the company will not be able to complete the task.

SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS

Superintendent Remick reported that he completed his last class at the ERTC building. He will be taking the test on December 17, 2021. A conference call is scheduled with IDOT on December 06, 2021 to discuss MFT Appropriations. Superintendent Remick plans to have a preliminary schedule set by the next board meeting. Work is almost completed at the park. It was noted that Gary Idecker did an exceptional job leading the team on the holiday displays around town this year.

AMBULANCE SERVICE DIRECTOR

Director Greene reported that things have been quiet. Greg Weston was recently hired as an EMT Basic but will need to delay his start due to a family illness. Mayor Behnken is working to tie in the operating statistics with the financials to further analyze key performance indicators.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

STREETS AND ALLEYS

None

FINANCE AND AUDIT

The RMA Prior Act Coverage Invoice totaling \$5166.00 was presented. Trustee Newbold further explained that this policy acts as tail coverage for the ambulance service. A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Geppert to approve the contract. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

The IML RMA contract invoice totaling \$99,321.00 for General and Workmen's Compensation insurance was also presented. It was agreed upon to pay the invoice in full as the Village receives a 1% discount for paying in full. The new contract saved the Village roughly \$23,000.00 verses last year. A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Politsch to approve the contract. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

Trustee Politsch requested a copy of the paid invoice for mulch be provided to her for submission to the grant program upon receipt of payment confirmation by the Village Clerk.

The Audit Committee reviewed the monthly bills prior to the meeting. Trustee Newbold made a motion, seconded by Trustee Geppert to approve the payment of the monthly bills. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

WATER AND SEWER

Superintendent Remick is waiting on a bid price for the lining.

PERSONNEL, PUBLIC SAFETY/ADA

A recommendation to hire two part time officers, Jake Renner and Brad Penet was presented. Both officers have prior working experience with Chief Simburger, who spoke highly of them.

After discussion, Trustee Politsch made a motion to hire Jake Renner, effective December 07, 2021. Trustee Geppert seconded the motion. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

A motion was made by Trustee Politsch, seconded by Trustee Newbold, to hire Brad Penet, effective December 07, 2021. A vote was answered aye by all members present except Trustee Feder and Trustee Wilson, who voted nay. The motion carried.

Trustee Politsch reported that Ambulance Contracts were delivered to Lenzburg and to the Fire District. No changes are to be made.

The New Athens Ambulance Garage has requested new furniture. Trustee Politsch discussed with the Fire District about possibly sharing the cost of the furniture. The Fire District will consider it at this point. They would like to have such conditions added into their contract in the future. Trustee Politsch and Director Andrew Green will obtain quotes.

PUBLIC PROPERTY AND PARKS

Trustee Newbold reports everything is going well.

CEMETERY

Nothing to report.

IMPROVEMENTS AND GRANTS

The committee met on October 15, 2021 regarding the ReBuild IL Downtown Grant. The Grant ranges from \$250,000.00 - \$3,000,000.00. Our preliminary budget is \$500,000.00 - \$700,000.00. The budget includes adding lighting, walkways and connections between Okaw Valley Park, a pedestrian walkway, and a walking trail. A recommendation to hire Volkert to assist with the budget template was made by Trustee Politsch. Volkert's estimate is between \$3,000.00 - \$5,000.00. At the recommendation of Volkert, requests for letters of support from local businesses, churches, and congressmen have been made. A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Feder to move forward with the grant application. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

ORDINANCES

Ordinance No. 2021-14: RMA Contract, approving the liability insurance for 2022 was discussed. A motion was made by Trustee Politsch, seconded by Trustee Geppert to

approve the ordinance. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

Membership in the IML Risk Management Association and execution of an intergovernmental cooperation contract were also discussed. A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Politsch, to approve the contract. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

Ordinance No. 2021-15: Tax Levy Upon Property within the Village for the Tax Year 2021 was discussed. The ordinance would increase the tax levy 8% over the previous year's levy. This was discussed in a prior public hearing. A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Geppert, to approve the ordinance. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

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 as of 12/06/21. Chief Simburger has been in contact with the owner. The owner has procured a company to attempt to move the boat on 12/20/2021.
- 2.) Chris is obtaining prices on labor and material to renovate electricity 11/4/21; will not need steps; demolition of old structure starting. Minimum of 30 man hours needed.
- 3.) Trustee Feder obtained an estimate from Stan Sirtak and provided copies of the conversation to the board. Trustee Newbold states it would be roughly \$150,000.00 for the rehab. Trustees Geppert, Newbold and Politsch recommend getting rid of the riverhouse.
- 4.) There was further discussion concerning keeping the boat slips and redredging. The Corps requires 225ft of navigable waterway.

Streets & Alleys

- 1.) Sewer Cleanout Project- Eight blocks completed as of 10/04/21. Eighteen blocks completed as of 11/01/21.
- 2.) Hanks will be providing two quotes for the storm sewer relining on 108 North Market.

Grants & Improvements

None.

Other

- 1.) Chief Simburger informed the board that we did not receive the COPS Grant. Only about 3.5 per state were awarded.

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 the 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: Discovery of assets petition filed 10/22/2021 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. Trustee Geppert inquired on the status of the Napier House. Mayor Behnken stated that the bank has not objected to taking the property. Once the property is titled to us, due to abandonment, all liens are extinguished.
- 3.) Employees request to buy service time credits with IMRF. Mayor Behnken sent cost worksheet to IMRF for review. Clerk Benwell submitted employee credit worksheets to IMRF.
- 4.) Mayor Behnken is working with Soulshyne Solar on feasibility of solar generation of electricity and sell back to Ameren.

Streets and Alleys

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

Motion to Enter into Executive Session

A motion was made by Trustee Politsch, seconded by Trustee Geppert to enter Executive Session at 8:38 p.m. to discuss a personnel issue. A vote was answered aye by all members in attendance.

DECEMBER 06, 2021

VILLAGE OF NEW ATHENS

A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Geppert, to exit Executive Session and there being no further business, adjourn the meeting at 9:06 p.m. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

Amy Benwell, Village Clerk
Joe Behnken, Village President