

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 Trustees Wilson, Geppert, Feder, Newbold, and Politsch. Also present were Leo Simburger, Chief of Police, Sandy Stolte, Treasurer and Chris Remick, Superintendent of Public Works.

VISITORS

New Athens resident Mark Schreder was present for observation. Gary Kearns was present for the vote on his appointment to the Board of Trustees.

Belinda McAllister, from Heartland Conservatory, was in attendance to give a presentation on the Tree City USA program. She discussed the purpose of the program along with the requirements to be designated as a Tree City USA. The board decided further discussion was needed prior to making a commitment.

READING OF THE JOURNAL (MINUTES)

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

A motion was made by Trustee Feder, seconded by Trustee Wilson, to approve the board minutes as corrected. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATION

MAYOR

The Mayor communicated to the board, Clerk Amy Benwell's desire to have a float representing the board and village employees in the New Athens Homecoming Parade. There was a brief discussion concerning the project. The plans will be discussed at a future meeting.

Mayor Behnken introduced Gary Kearns as his appointment recommendation for the vacant board seat previously held by Terry Hamon. A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Feder to appoint Mr. Kearns to fill the seat and finish Terry Hamon's term. A vote was answered aye by all members present. Clerk Benwell swore Gary Kearns in at the meeting.

Letters have been sent to state representatives and state senators supporting the increase in state income tax payments to municipalities. Mayor Behnken also reported that letters were sent to Brad Cole, Executive Director of IML and Judy Nelson, Executive Director of the Southwestern Illinois Council of Mayors, requesting changes in state caps for property tax funds, which have not been changed since 2012.

Mayor Behnken presented changes in Committee assignments. Trustee Feder was placed on the Finance Committee. Trustees Geppert and Politsch were placed as Co-Chairs on the to-be-formed Public Safety, Ambulance and ADA Committee. Trustee Geppert was replaced as Chairman of the Streets and Alleys Committee by Trustee Kearns. Trustee Geppert will serve as a member on the Streets and Alleys Committee.

VILLAGE CLERK

Village Clerk Benwell reported that she and Mayor Behnken had discussed the possibility of having an appraisal done on the Village owned property at 1002 Spotsylvania Street as it is recommended as part of a petition to protest the property taxes. The board expressed their desire for further information. Clerk Benwell will do more research and report back to the board.

Clerk Benwell reported that the web build was in the final stages and the site should be live within the next few weeks. Gratitude for the work Jim Houser has done on the previous site was expressed by all.

TREASURER'S TIME

Nothing to report.

POLICE CHIEF

Chief Simburger reported that both attorneys for Lenzburg and New Athens, as well as the insurance company have signed off on the contract for New Athens to provide police protection to Lenzburg. The Village of Lenzburg will vote on the contract April 11, 2022.

It was requested to have a vote added to the next agenda to approve sending someone to the Police Academy in May. It was also requested to add a vote on the Lenzburg contract to the next agenda.

Chief Simburger will be interviewing two police officers next week.

SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS

Superintendent Remick requested permission to place No Parking signs on Johnson Street, near the water plant at the request of KWD. A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Politsch to approve placement of the signs on Johnson Street. A vote was answered aye by all members present. KWD has been in the process of cleaning out the Village owned building they had previously occupied. The building will be available for Village use again.

The computer at the Wastewater Treatment Facility stopped working. Superintendent ordered a replacement known as a "shelf spare" but will be obtaining a quote on a new, up to date model. Superintendent Remick will have an on-site class April 14, 2022. The class will be an in-depth tutorial on the specific operations of the Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Superintendent Remick reported that the Ford property dispute is on-going. He will report any new information to the board. Superintendent Remick also reported that the payment from the sale of the Kubota mower on govdeals.com had been received.

AMBULANCE SERVICE DIRECTOR

Director Green was not present.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

STREETS AND ALLEYS

Nothing to report.

FINANCE AND AUDIT

The monthly bills were reviewed by the Audit Committee prior to the regular board meeting. A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Politsch to approve payment of the bills as presented. A vote was answered aye by all members present. It was expressed that the Ambulance portion of the Ameren bill seemed high. Clerk Benwell said she would research the matter and report back to the board.

WATER AND SEWER

Nothing to report.

PERSONNEL, PUBLIC SAFETY/ADA

Trustee Politsch provided an update from the March 22, 2022 meeting regarding the calendar year 2023 contract with the Fire District.

The Committee made the recommendation to hire Officer Brad Penet. A motion was made by Trustee Politsch, seconded by Trustee Newbold to hire Officer Brad Penet for full-time nights. Trustee Wilson made a request to do a roll call vote. A discussion took place regarding the desire from other candidates to be considered for the position. Chief Simburger reported that he had confirmed there was no interest by any other part-time New Athens officer to move forward in the position. Trustees Feder, Geppert and Wilson all replied with a nay vote, while Trustees Newbold and Politsch replied aye. Trustee Kearns abstained from voting as he felt he was not familiar enough with the situation to vote. Mayor Behnken stated governance is the job of the Board of Trustees, while management is the job of Chief Simburger. Trustee Geppert rescinded her vote, changing it to aye. At 9:08 pm, Trustee Feder excused himself from the meeting. Trustee Newbold made the recommendation to table the vote for a later date. The board agreed.

A recommendation was made to hire Gabrielle Johnson as an EMT. A motion was made by Trustee Politsch, Seconded by Trustee Newbold to hire Gabrielle Johnson effective immediately. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

Resolution No. 2021-14 was presented, establishing wages for Village Employees. Effective May 01, 2022, a 3% wage increase will be awarded to all full-time employees. A motion was made by Trustee Politsch, Seconded by Trustee Geppert to approve

Resolution No. 2021-14. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

PUBLIC PROPERTY AND PARKS

The Okaw Valley Park Reservation Permit was discussed. A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Politsch, to approve the updated agreement reflecting an increase in fees. The field light fee would increase from \$10.00 to \$15.00, and the liquor license fee would increase from \$23.00 to \$50.00. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

CEMETERY

Nothing to report.

IMPROVEMENTS AND GRANTS

Trustee Politsch reported that she had a phone meeting concerning the DCEO Sidewalk Grant. The grant will expire June 30, 2022. We may file for an extension and do a modification to the original scope. Trustee Politsch will obtain bids on sidewalks. The grant was originally written for 4,000 linear feet, none of it having been completed.

Trustee Politsch also reported on the Tree City USA opportunity that was discussed earlier in the meeting.

ORDINANCES

The Ordinance Committee met on March 28, 2022 to discuss online codification of the Ordinance Book. The goal is to provide a searchable, user-friendly online document. Municode and American Legal Publishing are being considered for the task.

REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Nothing to report.

COMMUNICATIONS, PETITIONS, RESOLUTIONS, ORDERS AND ORDINANCES

Resolution No. 2021-15 was presented. A motion was made by Trustee Politsch, seconded by Trustee Geppert to approve Resolution No. 2021-15, resulting in the formation of an ADHOC Marina Committee. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

Resolution No. 2021-16 was presented. A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Geppert to approve Resolution No. 2021-16, terminating the Personnel, ADA and Public Safety Committee and forming two separate committees- the Personnel Committee and the Public Safety, Ambulance and ADA Committee. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

Resolution No. 2021-17 was presented by Clerk Benwell as an addendum to the MFT Appropriations was required. A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Politsch to approve Resolution No. 2021-17, repealing Resolution No. 2021-09, and increasing the 01/01/2022-12/31/2022 MFT Appropriations to \$109,003.00. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Public Property

Marina

Chief Simburger sent the contract to the boat owner as well as an invoice for the first month's rent at the Marina. Chief Simburger reported the owner had received both documents and the signed rent agreement and first month's rent payment were "in the mail."

The electrical outlet and structure renovation is two-thirds completed at the Marina. Trustee Newbold will put out a notice inviting all interested parties to present a proposal for Marina development. There will be a committee meeting scheduled at the Marina.

Streets & Alleys

Sewer Cleanout Project- Eight blocks completed as of 10/04/21. Eighteen blocks completed as of 11/01/2021. Twenty-three blocks completed as of 01/03/2022. Twenty-four blocks completed as of 02/07/2022. Twenty-six blocks completed as of 03/21/2022.

Motion to Adjourn

There being no further business, a motion was made by Trustee Geppert, seconded by Trustee Politsch, to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 p.m. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

Amy Benwell, Village Clerk
Joe Behnken, Village President