

2021-05-11 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The Ladd Village Board met in regular session at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, May 11, 2021, in the Village Hall. President Frank Cattani called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Roll Call: Present – Trustees Jim Manning, Dave Margherio, Jan Martin, Dan Nelson, Molly Thrasher, Mike Urbanowski (6). In attendance – Attorney Pat Barry, Clerk Rhonda Bezely, Attorney Colin Barry, and Engineer Adam Ossola.

Thrasher Motion – Nelson Second to accept the April 27, 2021 meeting minutes, as amended.

Ayes: Manning, Margherio, Martin, Nelson, Thrasher, Urbanowski - Motion carried 6-0

Nelson Motion – Manning Second to authorize payment of the bills in the amount of \$72,153.30.

Ayes: Manning, Margherio, Martin, Nelson, Thrasher, Urbanowski - Motion carried 6-0

Correspondence: A note of appreciation was read from Mike Grivetti.

Committee Reports: Margherio asked Mayor Cattani if he could assemble an Economic Development Committee much like the park board. Attorney Barry will investigate forming this committee and Mayor Cattani will work with Margherio to appoint members. Manning commended Margherio for the great job he and Brad Nicholson did interviewing and highlighting the Ladd business, Softails.

Engineer's Report: Nelson Motion – Manning Second to award the 2021 Motor Fuel Tax Program bid for chip seal to Pavement Maintenance in the amount of \$105,094.70.

Ayes: Manning, Margherio, Martin, Nelson, Thrasher, Urbanowski - Motion carried 6-0

Superintendent's Report: Englehaupt discussed with the board maintenance quotes he received for all Generators in the Village. A lengthy discussion ensued and a company was chosen.

Nelson Motion/Margherio Second to accept the Cummins Rock Island quote for annual maintenance of three Village generators in the amount of \$1,701.89.

Ayes: Manning, Margherio, Martin, Nelson, Thrasher, Urbanowski - Motion carried 6-0

Englehaupt requested the board consider hiring summer help. 18 years or older is necessary for insurance purposes. We currently have one applicant and we need two helpers.

Manning Motion/Thrasher Second to hire Ethan Cattani and (1) more person for Summer help at a rate of \$11.00/hour (minimum wage).

Ayes: Manning, Margherio, Martin, Nelson, Thrasher, Urbanowski - Motion carried 6-0

Englehaupt told the board the downspout blew off the building at 336 S Main in the last storm. It has been repaired but there was concern for the condition of the piece that connects the downspout to the gutter. Margherio expressed concern that the Village owns this building and felt it would be best to concentrate on keeping our existing Village buildings maintained. He is not in favor of owning this property. Nelson explained the background as to how the building at 336 S Main was obtained and why. The board will revisit the future of 336 S Main Avenue in September 2021. No action was taken regarding gutter/downspout replacement.

Margherio told the board that he thinks the Village needs to find someone to manage the Community Center and work on commissions from renting it out. Nelson reminded Margherio we are renting the building for \$250.00 a month to help with income for this property. Margherio feels that we need to think about using this building more regularly to help maintain it.

Unfinished Business:

Net Metering Fees: Attorney Barry explained to the board that a “fee” needs to be determined for anyone using solar energy. Per the Net Metering Policy, Ladd will charge a Distribution System Utilization fee in an amount to be determined to ensure all customers pay a share of the costs of maintenance and improvements to the distribution system. Englehaupt reminded the board of our electric rates/fees for anyone that has the Village’s power. Barry will speak with IMEA to get a better understanding to explain to the board what this amount would be. Electric Rate Study: Englehaupt felt it is time to undergo an Electric Rate Study to revisit the cost of service. The last one was approximately 15 years ago. Attorney Barry will investigate the possible scenario for the Village.

Green Power Choices: Attorney Barry explained the IMEA’s Green Power Choices Renewable Energy Credit Program. The board feels that the number of residents wanting to pay more for “green power” is minimal at this time. Barry stated we have the ability to opt-in later. The board took no action at this time.

Chief’s Report: Gaefcke had requested Bezely ask the board if the Ladd Community Consolidated School could get a key to the Ladd Community Center to use it as their Emergency Evacuation Center. Gaefcke explained to Bezely that the school is using the Fire Station but when they need it, a fireman must be contacted and all equipment/fire trucks must be removed before the students can enter. The board agreed to provide a key to the school and a request will be made to the school for a Certificate of Insurance.

Inspector’s Report: None

Attorney’s Report: None

New Business:

Drainage Issue: Mayor Cattani was contacted by a farmer about a beaver damn causing drainage concerns for farmers with land adjacent to this property. Detailed discussion was held regarding the drainage issue along the south side of the railroad tracks across from the Ladd Cemetery. Starline construction removed this damn and beaver hut. Several saplings are growing in this area and will need to be cleaned out in the future.

Manning Motion/Martin Second to pay Starline Construction \$600.00 for clean out.

Ayes: Manning, Margherio, Martin, Nelson, Thrasher, Urbanowski - Motion carried 6-0

Nelson told the board he recently walked the railroad tracks behind Kennedy Park all the way to the E Cleveland Street crossing and noticed debris all along that railroad property ditch. There is concern that the drain is going to get plugged up. A blue 55-gallon water barrel was seen behind the Moose which concerns Nelson with possibly plugging up the whistle. Martin mentioned a large pothole on the E Cleveland Street railroad crossing. Englehaupt stated we were previously told this crossing was going to undergo repair. Englehaupt stated he could fix the hole but thought that the crossing repair might be happening soon.

Nelson Motion/Thrasher Second to Proclaim the month of May as Motorcycle Awareness Month.

Ayes: Manning, Margherio, Martin, Nelson, Thrasher, Urbanowski - Motion carried 6-0

Information Technology: Bezely expressed concern for the Village's current IT company. She felt hiring a private company would be a better situation since the Village is small and the continuity of having the same person assist them would be ideal. It was relayed to the board that the server would no longer be supported after October 2023 and that we are looking for a more cost-effective solution than purchasing a new server. Discussion with two IT companies revealed a more streamlined situation for the Village with lower costs. Margherio Motion/Thrasher Second to hire Dale Carls as Information Technology for the Village of Ladd.

Ayes: Margherio, Martin, Nelson, Thrasher, Urbanowski - Motion carried 5-0

Nays: Manning

A resident contacted the Village Clerk's Office asking if the board could revisit our ordinance on chickens. A long discussion was held regarding possible options allowing chickens in the Village of Ladd. The board took no action in changing the existing ordinance prohibiting the keeping of certain fowl in the Village of Ladd.

Insurance Renewal for Non-Union Employees: There was a small increase in the BCBS health insurance rates for non-union employees and the dental and vision plans had no increase in the rates.

Manning Motion/Nelson Second to approve the renewal quote from Suarez and Associates for Health Insurance for non-union employees.

Ayes: Manning, Margherio, Martin, Nelson, Thrasher, Urbanowski - Motion carried 6-0

Announcements:

Mayor Cattani stated that Bezely has worked hard on bringing Senior Housing to Ladd. He feels she did her research and feels comfortable with the progression of this project. Cattani feels very fortunate to bring this facility to Ladd and would like the board to express their support for this project around the community.

Martin thanked Bezely for getting the announcement on the utility bills for the Food Pantry.

Margherio informed the board that the Ladd Men's club met last night and numbers are down. They decided to take a 5-6 month pause. The Men's Club is not able to complete the park project. Margherio is asking if the Village can just take care of getting this fall protection project completed since there is money available to do it. The fund has a \$9,960.00 balance. Margherio felt the Village should plan to complete it.

Clerk Bezely told the board that Cameron Graper of Ax Church will be meeting with her and Nelson on Thursday, May 13th at 9 am to go over the projects they are volunteering to do for the Village during Hope Week. Bezely reminded the board of a Community Garden workday planned for Sunday, May 16th. She reminded them that Habitat for Humanity is needing volunteers for Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday of this week. Bezely stated that she spoke with Mr. Alfano regarding the repair of his awning. He has contacted contractors and is attempting to get help to make the repair. The building at 218 N Main Ave has secured a contractor and will be removing the top 8 rows of brick, replacing the lintel, pressure washing the building. The Post Office called the Clerk's Office and reported that people are leaving food outside on the bench in front of the Post Office and this was not acceptable. Donations need to be brought to the Food Pantry. The postal clerk will place a sign on the bench instructing residents not to leave food. The resident that damaged the garage door at 336 S Main has expressed that he will be in to pay for the damages. Bezely informed the board that Jill Pelka of 336 S Main will be starting Yoga classes in September and is hoping to also offer a self-defense class.

Nelson asked Bezely if anything has been mentioned about two other buildings with awnings on Main street that are in disrepair. Bezely will contact both owners and ask them to take down the shredded awnings.

Thrasher asked about the lot next to Dick's Tap. The grass was very long but has since been mowed. Bezely stated that she contacted the owner and he stated he was selling the property but didn't realize the grass was tall. Bezely offered her husband to cut it for \$15.00 in an effort to keep the Village looking nice. Joe Bezely cut the property twice and raked it after Mario Data, a Village resident, cut it with his tractor trying to help out since it was so long. Shawn Jeppson will keep this lot on Main street maintained going forward.

Martin Motion/Thrasher Second to adjourn.

Ayes: Manning, Margherio, Martin, Nelson, Thrasher, Urbanowski - Motion carried 6-0

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm

Rhonda Bezely, Village Clerk