

2022-02-08 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The Ladd Village Board met in regular session on Tuesday, February 8, 2022, in the Village Hall. Mayor Frank Cattani called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and led the pledge of allegiance to the American flag.

Roll Call: Present: Trustees Jim Manning, Dave Margherio, Dan Nelson, Molly Thrasher, Mike Urbanowski. (5)

In attendance: Attorney Pat Barry, Attorney Colin Barry, Clerk Bezely, Engineer Adam Ossola, Superintendent Doug Englehaupt, and Police Chief Randy Dean

Thrasher motion/Urbanowski second to accept the January 25, 2022 meeting minutes as presented.

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

Manning motion/Margherio second to authorize payment of the bills in the amount of \$34,004.23. Urbanowski asked if the union dues are being deducted from the union member's wages and Bezely replied yes.

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

Correspondence: Thank you notes for donations to BPart and IVCIL were mentioned.

Public Comment: None

Committee Reports: The sidewalk at Dick's Tap is currently snow-covered but will be examined as soon as the snow melts to bring information back to the council. Nelson and Margherio will check this out and report back to the board. Bezely told the board that she was called from the IL Department of Commerce and Economic Development stating the \$150,000.00 state grant was awarded to Ladd.

Engineer's Report: Ossola told the council the water main project is out to bid. Prebid is February 17th and bid letting is March 17th. Ossola stated he's had quite a bit of interest. The council is concerned about the inability to get certain materials. Ossola stated that he's already been asked about substitutions.

Ossola told the board he will be in contact with the Village regarding the feasibility study on the Village's 3 buildings as soon as the architect feels up to it. He's back at work but not feeling 100% just yet.

Superintendent's Report: Englehaupt reported that there were no cars on Main Avenue during the last snowfall. He thanked Randy and the police department for their efforts to make sure residents followed the ordinance during snowfall. Manning & the council complimented the streets department on a great job plowing snow. The streets looked great and were kept open nicely. Mayor Cattani also complimented Englehaupt but asked about the mailboxes that get hit from year to year. He asked if it was the plow hitting them or the weight of the snow. Englehaupt stated that mostly it is the weight of the snow and occasionally the plow hits them. Englehaupt stated some mailboxes are not installed correctly. They are not compliant with the post office specs for installation. Englehaupt also reminded the council that there is no curb pan and you can't tell where you are at which is another issue. Margherio wondered if there is a break-away box that we could consider replacing for people that get hit. The Village has not replaced mailboxes in the past. It was mentioned if it is possible to slow down to avoid hitting them. Cattani asked the board if they felt the Village should be responsible for replacing these mailboxes and it was decided since we have never done this we shouldn't start. Residents are welcome to come to the board meeting to discuss it if their mailbox is hit.

Police Chief: Dean was pleased with the people that moved their cars. The fact that we issued some tickets helped, Mayor Cattani, stated. He feels we need to increase the fine. Dean stated he is working with Atty. Barry to update the ordinance and have it ready for next winter. Dean would like to be able to tow the cars if they don't move. Dean stated they would watch who parks nightly on Main Avenue and make sure they are aware of the ordinance. Dean stated that they will attempt to reach the renter via phone before ticketing or towing. Mayor Cattani asked Dean about the police garage now that it is complete. Dean stated there is water in there that has no way out. Dean stated it is from the squad cars. He stated the spray foam is all the way down to the concrete pad which makes it a water-tight barrier. Manning asked Dean what the Facebook post was about that stated to call BUECOM. Dean stated that he was unaware of a post. Bezely read the request to the council that she posted. Dean told the council that this is what needs to happen and it was accurate. Margherio asked if after hours the phones for Ladd could be answered by BUECOM. Manning remembered a time when Ladd's phones were answered by Bureau County if someone wasn't in the office. Dean feels the Village residents need to contact 911 in an emergency and 815-875-3344 in a non-emergency because the Ladd Officer will be dispatched to any call by BUECOM. Mayor Cattani announced that we had an increase in hours of police protection in January we had 234.75. It comes out to 7+ hours a day of coverage. Cattani mentioned additional part-time officers being hired. Dean told the council that he is selective about who he hires because they must be up to date with training on all their officers to be awarded any grants. The camera grant and the bulletproof vest grants are coming up. Coverage improvements are being made. Another possible part-time officer or two may be hired. Discussion about the \$4.00 incentive ensued. Dean stated that the \$4.00/hour shift differential is from 8 pm until ½ hour after the bars close. Dean said he has been questioned if it is snowing and bars close early and the officer goes home before the "½ hour after the closing time in the ordinance" will they still get shift differential? After much discussion it was decided that they MUST work 8 pm until the closing time in the ordinance which is 3:30 am on Fridays, 3:00 am on Saturdays and 1:30 am on Sundays. Atty. Colin Barry is working on an ordinance for shift differential. Dean wants to see the bar hours changed to the same as surrounding towns. We also need to discuss times customers can be out on the patio. Mayor Cattani stated that he took a ride at 3:30 am one morning and noticed you cannot see into the bars because the windows are tinted or there is low lighting inside the bar. We would like to discuss turning the lights up with the bar owners at closing time so the police can make sure all patrons are out. Many times the bartender has friends or a boyfriend "waiting" for them. Per our ordinance this is unacceptable. Discussion with the bar owners will also address specific issues the police are having with each bar. Mayor Cattani told Dean to set up meetings with Shawn and Noreen individually and he will make it work. Dean said he will apply for the upcoming in-car camera grant and the vest grant which will be opening up soon. This will allow him to have the same camera system in both squad cars. He plans to sell the existing camera system and then purchase 1-2 new portable radios with the proceeds from the used camera. Dean will also look for a communications grant to help pay for new radios.

Building Inspector: None

Village Attorney: Atty. Pat Barry updated the board on the Hackler house that burned down. There has been no action on the demolition of this property. Barry contacted Kim Hackler the trustee of the trust and explained that she owns the property as the trustee of the trust and that the Village is demanding it be torn down. She stated she doesn't have the money to tear the house down. She asked about other options. Barry explained

that he could discuss deeding it to the Village. Then the Village would use their resources to tear it down and they could possibly recoup the costs from demolition when they resell the lot. Kim is going to speak to Grant's father. Kim left a message that they would like to agree to deed the property to the Village. Barry asked the council if they are willing to accept this and take on this responsibility. They feel it must get done and this is probably the only way to get it done quickly. Demolition would have to be contracted out. Mayor Cattani felt approximately \$5,000.00 would be the cost to demolish it and bury the basement. It was felt that the fire department would not be interested in obtaining permitting for a controlled burn. It is dangerous and must be done as soon as possible and permits would take quite a while. A resident was approached by Urbanowski to contact Kim Hackler to purchase the property as-is and they didn't seem interested. Discussion about this being a gamble for the Village ensued. The Village would need to mow the lot until it is sold. Urbanowski motion/Thrasher second to have the Hackler property deeded to the Village of Ladd.

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

Mr. Pinkowski was at the last meeting regarding the Covid Testing Site. We have not heard from him. Atty. Barry reached out and Mr. Pinkowski let Barry know he passed along his information to the two guys looking to open the testing site with the state. Nothing has been received from them at this time.

Video gaming is allowed in the Village of Ladd but no fee per terminal was imposed. The legislature changed in 2021 and changed the maximum fee from \$50.00 to \$250.00 per terminal. A lot of municipalities do charge a fee per machine. The Village doesn't charge per machine as of now. The owner of the facility pays ½ and the terminal owner pays ½. Bezely stated that imposing a \$250.00 per terminal fee would bring in \$3750.00 per year to the Village. Each owner of the bars would pay \$625.00 annually to have 5 terminals. The terminal owners would pay \$625.00 for 5 machines annually. We will readdress this in the future.

Unfinished Business:

Flags for Monument: It was decided to purchase nylon flags recommended by Andy Ruggerio for the War Memorial Monument. We will compare their durability to what we have ordered in the past. The price was considerably less money.

Urbanowski motion/Nelson second to purchase all 6 nylon flags for War Memorial Monument for \$142.45 from Collins Flags this year.

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

New Business:

Electric Rate Cost of Service Study: Engineer Verbal Blakey and her assistant Blake joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams. Verbal explained the rate study results in detail. Everyone was urged to ask questions. She explained in detail the 4 metrics of the study. 1. Increase customer charges for residential, general service, and small power customers. 2. Implement a municipal rate where once a year you calculate the cost of wholesale power for the general fund, water fund, and sewer fund and transfer those totals into the electric fund. 3. There is a monthly cost adjustment passed on to our customers but is only being done to 70% of customers. There is 30% that is not being raised for inflation. In order to combat this, there is an annual adjustment for operating expenses. We will adjust a different part of the rate. A simple way is a set percentage to adjust the non-energy part of the rate 5% annually. It is not a 5% rate increase it is a 5% increase on 30% of the rate. This will keep the inflationary costs of personnel, supplies, and materials this will keep the inflationary cost from taking away from our margin and reducing this margin by not considering inflation. We will need to

watch this and adjust it as needed. We won't be doing the operating expense adjustment until 2023. 4. Reset of the PCA. We will reset this from .06 cents up to .09 cents. This may in fact cause a negative PCA in the beginning. We won't be losing money, we will just be shifting where it shows up in the general ledger. We are also redrawing the lines for the customer classes to help keep users from moving from general service to small power and vice versa.

Manning motion/Thrasher second to Amending Electric Customers Classes and Rates in the Village of Ladd, Bureau County IL

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

Net Metering Policy Change: Atty. Pat Barry explained to the council the difference between Net Metering Policy that we currently have and the Net Billing Policy option that is available. Verbal gave a quick explanation detailing the differences. Because the Village of Ladd doesn't have any self-generating customers it is felt that the board agrees with Atty. Barry and Verbal in implementing a Net Billing Policy, which is fairer, before the March 14, 2022 deadline. Verbal explained the utility delivers power to the customer and the utility receives power back from the customer. This means however much their solar panels are generating over and above their usage they receive a credit for this power. Net metering is where you take the difference between the two. If the customer takes 1200 kWh this month from the utility but pushes back 400 kWh then under net metering you only charge them for 800 kWh which is the difference. The 400 kWh they have pushed back to us is paid out 100% retail credit. Under net billing, we bill them 1200 kWh at our retail rate. And the 400 kWh they pushed back will be credited to the customer under a fair solar credit rate. The IMEA will figure the Fair Solar Credit for the Village of Ladd which is a complex calculation. This credit amount is less than retail charges so the customer continues to pay their fair share of the infrastructure of the utility. With the council's permission and Verbal's help, we will move to a Net Billing Policy. This will be presented at the March 8, 2022 meeting. Verbal will help with recommendations. She explained the details to help the board decide which way they need to go regarding limiting the amount of KW of solar a resident can put on their roof. The Net Billing Policy will be on the March 8th agenda.

Repair of Backstop at Kennedy Park: Steve Bosi had inquired about getting the backstop repaired at the Senior League Diamond at Kennedy Park. He was unable to attend tonight's meeting. Margherio stated years ago they needed to move the fence back but the land further back is railroad property. The board has many questions and concerns and would like to speak to Steve. They would like me to ask him to attend the next meeting and get a couple of quotes to repair the existing fence. They will discuss things further when he is here to answer questions. Ladd baseball is willing to help pay for the repairs. Bosi also stated that Ladd Youth Baseball has merged with Spring Valley. All the Ladd board members are still on the Spring Valley board for youth baseball. The council would like to table this issue until Steve can attend the meeting and answer questions.

Donation Request for Spring Valley Red Devils Youth Baseball Organization: No action was taken, as it is felt this is a travel team.

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Residents Blowing/Throwing Snow in Roadway: Englehaupt explained that several residents purposely shovel or snow blow snow into the roadway. Some move snow from their property onto Village property or other personal property. He has seen residents move snow with a blade out of their driveway across the road to another resident's property. Englehaupt spoke with Core Construction regarding the Ladd Senior Village. Englehaupt told the manager, Steve, that when they hire someone to plow their snow they are not able to push it onto the Central Ave extension. They must put the snow on their own property.

Announcements: Bezely told the board that as of January 2022 usage the electric rate and the power cost adjustment have been "collapsed" as discussed. Bezely told the board that River City Waste has been purchased by Republic Services and that the Village has a contract with Republic until 2023. Bezely told the board the blueprints for the water main replacement were available if anyone wanted to look them over. Bezely told the board that the remote meeting would not have been possible without help from Mario and BJ. Mario provided all the equipment to the Village, as their equipment wasn't as technical as Mario's. He made sure everything was working and the best possible situation for the meeting.

Thrasher motion/Margherio second to adjourn.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm

Rhonda Bezely, Village Clerk