

## July 25, 2023 ~ REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The Ladd Village Board met in regular session on Tuesday, July 25, 2023, in the Village Hall. Village President, 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 Dave Margherio, Jan Martin, Brad Nicholson, Andy Ruggerio, and Molly Thrasher

Absent: Trustee Dan Nelson

In attendance: Clerk Bezely, Police Chief Frund, Village Treasurer Koch, Atty. Pat Barry, Engineer Adam Ossola, Superintendent Doug Englehaupt

Thrasher motioned/Martin second to accept July 11, 2023, regular meeting minutes as presented.

Ayes: Margherio, Martin, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher - Motion carried 5-0

Martin motioned/Nicholson second to authorize payment of the bills in the amount of \$133,871.54

Ayes: Margherio, Martin, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher - Motion carried 5-0

Ruggerio questioned if the Village was putting money into the 2015 Anniversary Fund. The 2015 Anniversary Committee invested \$2,015.00 after the 125<sup>th</sup> to help with costs to plan the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary when it gets here. Only interest is added to this account currently.

Margherio motioned/Ruggerio second to accept the Treasurer's Report for June 2023.

Ayes: Margherio, Martin, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher - Motion carried 5-0

Correspondence: Shawn Jeppson donated the 2023 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr Selfie with the Chicken \$50 gift card.

Public Comment: Tammy Edgcomb addressed the council. She is 1 of 5 residents that have reported damage by overspray on the 100,000 Gallon Water Tower that was painted over the past 2 weeks. She told the board that she was disappointed that the residents were not told about the painting. They could have covered up their belongings and moved their cars. Central Tank Coatings has a maintenance company by the name of Just Like New that they hire to clean anything that has been affected by overspray. The company has reached out to all who reported overspray and will be in Ladd in approximately 2 weeks to address these issues. Tammy was told that after the work is complete to be sure and let us know if she is satisfied. The company told the Edgcomb's that the Village did not want to pay the additional cost to hang a curtain while painting to help with the overspray. Englehaupt told the board that the cost to have a metal frame erected and a curtain hung is in the \$400,000.00 range. Our water tower does not have a gauge of steel that could handle the weight of a curtain. Jesus Andana addressed the council. He sold his building at 202 N Main Ave 6 months ago. The new owner was told that they needed to make sure Jesus's appliances and parts were removed so they could remodel and open their business in front. Jesus was not able to get the building emptied and the hole between the buildings closed due to the amount of stuff there was. He requested 10 more days to have this completed. The council allowed Andana 10 more days. He is to be out of 202 N Main Ave completely by August 4, 2023. The police chief will verify that this happened on Monday, August 7, 2023.

Committee Reports: A tree at 234 W Walnut located on the west side of their home will be removed by Public Works, as it is dead.

Engineer's Report: Village Hall at the Community Center: Ossola provided a cost estimate along with a drawing of a 30x80 foot addition to the Community Center which would house the Police Department, Village Hall, and the Clerk's Office. \$1.2 million is the rough cost to complete this project. Discussion ensued on several ideas and possible changes. Margherio asked Bezely & Frund to look it over and make any changes and we will discuss it in a couple of weeks at the next meeting.

Superintendent's Report: New Business: Discuss Economic Development. Englehaupt explained to the board that if they are interested in Economic Development for the Village of Ladd, he would recommend the board hire Chamlin & Associates to do a cost study to determine how much the Village could potentially invest to help attract a business. By sharing costs to bring utilities to a potential truck stop or 24-hour facility interested in locating in Ladd this would raise our chances of attracting them. Englehaupt has spoken with Bezely many times about the struggle to attract a 24-hour business without knowing the cost to the company & the cost to the residents/Village to bring utilities to a business. Businesses are looking for communities that are shovel-ready when they determine their next location to build.

Martin motioned/Margherio second to Pursue a Study of the Cost to Add Utilities to Develop Property South of Ladd.

Ayes: Margherio, Martin, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher – motioned carried 5-0

Police Chief: Chief Frund updated the council on a Main Ave property that he has been discussing with Atty Barry. This property has not maintained its grass all summer. He has issued fines but had no response from the property owner. The Public Works Dept will cut the grass and the cost will be placed on the property's utility bill. Kids are throwing rocks in the landscape around the monument and climbing on the monument along with causing issues in the bathrooms. Thrasher told the board that the Little Library books were removed from the library and thrown all around the park. Frund is going to speak to a few kids and keep an eye on the park.

Building Inspector: Not in attendance

Village Attorney: New Business: Pass Appropriation Ordinance for FY23/24. Atty Barry explained which line items were updated when he prepared the appropriations with Bezely & Koch. He asked for any questions the council may have. He reminded the council you cannot spend money if you have not appropriated it. We must anticipate any new projects you may want to implement. We also must remove any paid debt. After answering questions, a motion to pass this was made.

Nicholson motioned/Thrasher second to Pass the Appropriation Ordinance #1152 for FY23/24.

Ayes: Thrasher, Ruggerio, Martin, Margherio, Nicholson, Cattani – motioned carried 6-0

Absent: Nelson

New Business: Discuss & Accept the FY23 Audit Report: Kim Bird from Hopkins & Associates explained to the council her findings. She went over and discussed several pages of the audit. She provided a board handout which makes things easier to understand. She explained the audit opinion and stated there is another opinion, due to the federal grant funding we have received this fiscal year. An additional audit is required if your federal funding is over \$750,000.00 but we were under that figure this year. After a detailed explanation of the audit to the council, Bird asked if there were any questions. Bird was asked if we passed and she stated yes we did and she feels we are in good shape. Thrasher motioned/Margherio second to Accept the FY23 Audit Report from Kim Bird of Hopkins & Associates.

Ayes: Margherio, Martin, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher – motioned carried 5-0

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New Business: Discuss Renewal of the Sewerage EPA (Storm Sewer Debt) CD #45872. Treasurer Koch explained the balance in the disbursement account and how our payment of \$40,947.48 is due in March & September. Koch explained the monthly revenue collected in this fund also. After a detailed explanation and discussion, a motion was made to add \$50,000.00 to the existing CD balance and renew.

Martin motioned/Ruggerio second to add \$50,000.00 to the existing CD and renew the Sewerage EPA CD for 12 months at 4.35%.

Ayes: Margherio, Martin, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher, Cattani – motioned carried 6-0

New Business: Discuss Changing Online Payment Company: Bezely had prepared a report that shows the pros and cons of our current online payment provider, and e-bill provider, Payment Service Network. She explained the opportunity to work with our current software company in achieving online payments and e-billing. After a lengthy discussion and explaining real-time payments and how this would allow people to immediately see their balance after paying online instead of waiting 3 days for updating. The benefit to work with Civic to bring this product to residents is very exciting. Their service is excellent. There was a discussion regarding the need for real-time payments. Chief Frund spoke up and said that this would be very beneficial to busy people who want to pay online. Once the changeover is scheduled Bezely will advertise e-billing to all residents. We will work hard to try to get people to sign up for paperless billing to save the Village of Ladd postage fees and the risk of utility bills getting lost. The cost to offer online payments along with e-billing is very similar for each company. The fees are a little lower with the Caselle Connect program. The huge benefit is that we will e-bill the same bill as paper bills at no cost to the Village or our residents. Customer service is excellent through Civic Systems. There is no penalty to discontinue Payment Service Network services.

Martin motioned/Thrasher second to Move to Connect Software for Real-Time Online Payments, and E-billing through Civic Systems.

Ayes: Margherio, Martin, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher – motioned carried 5-0

Announcements: Bench donations were mentioned. Usually, families request the location they would like. Bezely asked Martin & Thrasher if this is okay to continue. The council feels we need to have a plan for these locations. If Bezely is concerned about a bench location she will reach out to Martin & Thrasher (Recreation Committee). Bezely asked when a concrete pad is needed if the family is responsible and who will install the bench. The family is responsible for the concrete pad and installation.

Bezely asked about selling the current Village Hall. We will hold off until we have a new location secured was the council's answer.

When Liquor Licenses are renewed Bezely will just inform the board as to any problems with licenses. They no longer need to be "approved" at a meeting after reviewing the ordinance with Atty Barry.

Village Wide Garage Sales: Next year it has been decided NOT to do it in conjunction with More in Bureau County since the traffic is decreased due to all towns participating. Bezely asked the council to think about a date/weekend to move our Village Wide Sales to.

Curtin Apartments have been painted and a Thank You Card was sent.

Water Tap & Meter – The owner of 218 N Main Ave needs a water tap & meter for the new convenience store coming. Bezely asked once the application is complete if she should bring it to the council for approval to waive this cost for the new business. The council stated to bring it to the meeting once the completed application is obtained. The new Ladd Convenience is planning to open in September or October.

Nicholson wanted to discuss the topic of looking at trees for the Village. Bezely reminded the council that surveys are being put into the next utility bill to be sent in August. Then residents potentially have

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until 8-31-23 to pay their bills. We should have survey results by the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting in September.

Thrasher motioned/Nicholson second to enter executive session 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(2) Deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of municipal employees at 8:24 pm.

Ayes: Margherio, Martin, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher – motioned carried 5-0

Absent: Nelson

9:17 pm After leaving Executive Session – Back in Regular Session:

Roll Call: Margherio, Martin, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher

Martin motioned/Nicholson second to adjourn.

Ayes: Margherio, Martin, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher - Motion carried 5-0

The meeting adjourned at 9:19 pm

Rhonda Bezely, Village Clerk