

JUNE 10, 2025 ~ REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The Ladd Village Board met in regular session on Tuesday, June 10, 2025, in the Ladd Village Hall at 121 N. Main Avenue. 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 Jan Martin, Dan Nelson, Brad Nicholson, Molly Thrasher, and Bernie Victor (5)

Absent: Trustee Andy Ruggerio submitted his letter of resignation on 5-30-25, effective immediately. It is on the agenda for the council to address at tonight's meeting.

In attendance: Engineer Adam Ossola, Police Chief Jacob Frund, Atty. Pat Barry, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer, Julie Koch, and Clerk Rhonda Bezely.

Nicholson motioned/Martin seconded to accept the May 27, 2025, regular meeting minutes as presented.

Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor - Motion carried

Absent: Ruggerio

Nelson motioned/Thrasher seconded, to authorize payment of the bills of \$55,338.32.

Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor - Motion carried

Absent: Ruggerio

Correspondence: A thank-you note for the donation from Voluntary Action Center was read.

Public Comment: None

Committee Reports: Nelson addressed the tree at 102 S Bureau Ave. The owner is worried about it falling on his house. Nelson recommends that all the dead branches be removed from the tree. Nelson also reported on a tree at 202 N Central Ave on the south side of the house on the berm. This tree is entirely dead. Nelson recommends removing it completely. Nelson and Thrasher helped out with AX Church's Hope Week and feel that the summer help should wash off tables under the shelters at War Memorial Park and Kennedy Park on Fridays to ensure they are clean for anyone who is using the shelter, and also sweep the floor if it is dirty. Thrasher stated that the landscape at Kennedy Park on the corner of Summit and Locust desperately needs attention. Cattani noted that the summer help could weed this area. 505 N Main Ave still requires attention to the front yard. This is ongoing from the Water Main Project 2 years ago. Summer help can rake out the rocks in the front yard, rake the areas needing grass seed, and plant grass seed. This should be done when rain is expected.

Village Engineer: Ossola gave the council a quick update on the Main Avenue sidewalk project. He told them Gillan was awarded the job and that his bid was considerably less than the money we have in grant funds. DCEO was contacted to see if we can add onto the project via a change order on Main Avenue, and they have no problem with that. We need to stay in the same area as the sidewalks that have been approved due to an IDOT permit for the areas that have been approved. We will need to decide which other areas we would like to add. Thrasher asked if the sidewalk on the West Side of War Memorial Park could be added. The council asked if this will be done before school is back in

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session. Ossola stated that Gillian Construction will get approximately 2 months to finish the job. Ossola then spoke about the **DCEO Grant to separate the sanitary sewer and storm sewer on the west side of the Village** to help in keeping backups out of people's basements. We talked about getting a CDBG grant for this project, which will be applied for in December sometime. Kevin Lindeman from NCICG stated that this date will likely be pushed back. NCICG is hoping to find out in July when the application will need to be done. In July, a survey will need to be done to see if the Village would qualify, and July is the timeframe that distressed communities are announced. If we were lucky enough to be considered distressed, then our Grant would be for 100% of the work. Discussion about the phases of the project would be determined to meet the application requirements and still stay somewhat within a \$2 K budget. The maximum grant is \$1K for this round of the grant. This will focus on work from the Creek to the western part of town. The application must benefit residents, so we will need to bring work to either Central Ave or Chicago Ave to be enough to make the application. The maximum grant is \$1 K, so anything above that cost to do Phase I would be the Village's responsibility. Ossola broke the cost estimate down on a spreadsheet provided to everyone, which highlighted the 3 different phases of this entire project. The total for the whole project, including engineering, is approximately \$4.3 K. To get through an initial phase and also get some project benefits to residents, you are looking at well over \$2 K to do this. The other requirement is that all permits must be in place to even apply for the grant. Ossola feels we need to get through the design so we can apply for the licenses, which would give us a much better idea of the cost before we apply. The grant does not pay for design engineering. If we are planning to move forward with the project, all engineering costs would be the Village's responsibility. All easements must also be in place in order to apply. Atty. Barry is working on these. Cattani stated that our sewer fund is at \$-50,000.00, the water fund has \$488,000.00 in it. Our auditor feels that a transfer could be made out of the water fund into the sewer fund, or possibly from the water debt fund to the water fund, and then transferred from water to sewer fund. Cattani feels step 1 is to procure the easements, then we can investigate how to pay for this. Victor thinks that after transferring money, we will only barely have enough to do Phase I. Victor is questioning how Phase II or Phase III is possible. Grants were a possibility to fund this project. Cattani feels that when sewers back up into people's homes, we must come up with a solution. We need to get all funding in place before we apply. We have to identify where the money is coming from for the match to apply. Lindeman stated that we need to determine where the project benefit area would be so that these residents can be surveyed. A 75% response rate is required from the surveys. 50% of these responses have to be low to moderate income. There are many steps involved in this. Survey cost is \$600.00, and that is Step 1. If you don't qualify, then CDBG is out. We can identify the area, but the surveys would not go out until at least July. DCEO is in a holding pattern on the next round of CDBG, and their surveys are only good for 1 year. Ossola will look into IEPA Loan rates. Anytime Ladd residents on the west side of the Village have sewer backup or storm sewer backup, they need to take lots of pictures and report it to the Clerk's Office. This will help a lot in getting us points to have a good chance of qualifying for the Grant. \$3,600.00 is the application cost.

Superintendent's Report: Not in Attendance

Police Chief: Chief Frund had nothing to report.

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Building Inspector: Not in Attendance

Village Attorney: Atty. Barry had nothing to report.

New Business: Murri Briel, Representative of the 76th District: Representative Briel gave us a lot of information on how to get grants that the Village needs. The first step is a Comprehensive Plan/Capital Plan so that the Village Council can plan out steps for future grants and obtain engineering, so that when they are announced and due in 30-45 days, we can compete with other municipalities for the money. She told us to dream big – nothing is impossible. We made good notes and will get some of her suggestions in motion. She urged us to contact her office anytime and speak with her Chief of Staff, Meta Mueller. They can help us in many ways. Discussion ensued.

New Business: OSLAD Grant: Applications are due mid to late September for this Open Space Land Acquisition and Development Grant. This Grant requires public input about what the residents would like to see done to our parks. The Distressed list gives municipalities 100% funding for projects that are selected to be funded. If the Village applied for ADA accessibility in War Memorial Park, you would also need to bring amenities to the park. Such as new park equipment, a walking path, fitness stations at the park, and also games installed, such as bags, horseshoes, bocci ball court, etc. The application fee is \$2,500.00. If we start to gather information, and it becomes something we move forward with, then, if we realize we can't afford the match and do not want to apply, no application fee will be charged.

New Business: Safe Routes to School 2025 Application: We felt that our 2025 application would either be replacing the missing sidewalks in blocks that are designated as the route to school, or we would like to continue from Summit to Eastern, or the Railroad tracks. This would continue the sidewalks that were added in the 2023 SRTS project. Kevin Lindeman stated we need to start with the school and find out which of these two ideas would provide for more children a safe route to school. A teacher tally, where they ask their students how they got to school. Did they walk, ride bikes, get a ride, etc. There will also be a parent survey that needs to be completed. The Village can share the link as an insert in utility bills to help parents make sure they respond. We need to do all that we can to make sure parents respond. Lindeman feels there will be no match for the 2025 SRTS project. The grant does not cover Design Engineering, but Construction Engineering is part of the grant. If we could do phase I ahead of time, that would help us with points and sell the project better. There are minimal funds for the 2025 Application. In 2023, there were 6 million dollars given out, and in 2025, there will be about 3 million dollars to be given out. \$3,000.00 is the application cost through NCICG. Victor asked for a copy of the 2023 Application for Safe Routes to School. Victor would like to use AI to see if the grant application would mirror what was submitted by NCICG.

New Business: AX Church Donation: A donation to AX Church for all their hard work during Hope Week was discussed. Approximately 55-60 church members were working in the Village of Ladd. Thrasher motioned/Nicholson seconded to donate \$500.00 to Ax Church in thanks for their work.

Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher – motion carried

Nays: Victor

Absent: Ruggerio

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New Business: Donation Request IVCIL: No action was taken by the council.

New Business: Donation Gateway Services, Inc.: Trustees mentioned we have residents who are at Gateway Services, Inc.

Martin motioned/Thrasher seconded to donate \$50.00 to Gateway Services, Inc.

Ayes: Martin, Nicholson, Thrasher – motion carried

Nays: Nelson, Victor

Absent: Ruggerio

New Business: Consider Wage Increase for UB Clerk as of 7/1/2025: Discussion of annual increase for utility billing clerk. Discussion ensued.

Martin motioned/Nelson seconded an annual wage increase for the Utility Billing Clerk to begin on 7-1-2025 of 4%, bringing her wage to \$23.47 per hour.

Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor, and President Cattani - Motion carried

Absent: Ruggerio

New Business: Resignation Letter from Trustee Andy Ruggerio: Cattani explained that Ruggerio had submitted his letter of resignation effective immediately, 5-30-2025.

Nicholson motioned/Victor seconded to accept the Resignation of Andy Ruggerio, effective 5/30/2025, with regret for the circumstances.

Ayes: Martin, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor, and President Cattani - Motion carried

Nays: Nelson

New Business: Part-time Employment Application: The council expressed that the part-time application needed some changes. The Clerk's Office wrote one up and presented it to the council. Changes were discussed. The changes will be made, and the application will be presented again at the next meeting on Tuesday, 6-24-2025.

New Business: War Memorial Park Restrooms: Nelson stated that at the last Music in the Park, from where he was sitting, there was a clear shot into the women's restrooms, and he feels the doors should have closures added to provide privacy. Nelson also stated that the women's restroom door is beyond repair. It is swollen so much that you can hardly shove it closed.

Martin motioned/Nicholson seconded to replace the Women's Restroom door at War Memorial Park and add closures to both the Men's and Women's Restrooms for privacy. This is hoped to be accomplished within 1 month.

Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor – Motion carried.

New Business: Renewal of CDs: Treasurer Koch explained the recommendations for renewing the CDs in detail. They will be renewed at North Central Bank as follows:

Water Debt Service: Renew for 12 months at 4.11% APY ~ \$104,845.64

Electric Fund: Add \$100,000.00 to CD and Renew for 12 months at 4.11% APY ~ \$915,711.53

150th Anniversary Fund: Renew CD for 12 months at 4.11% APY ~ \$2,818.40

TORT Fund: Add \$40,000.00 to CD and Renew for 12 months at 4.11% APY ~ \$375,112.63

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Nicholson motioned/Nelson seconded to renew all CDs as detailed by the Treasurer for 12 months at 4.11% APY.

Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor – Motion carried.

New Business: Ad in DePue Boat Race Program for 2025 races: No action was taken by the council.

Announcements: Bezely told the council she would like to go to **the Municipal Clerks of Illinois Institute and Academy** in October from the 5-10, 2025, in Bloomington, IL. Bezely has applied for a scholarship to waive the \$600.00 tuition. If she does not get the scholarship, would the council consider paying ½ if she pays ½ of the tuition? This would be her 3rd year, which is when you obtain your RMC (Registered Municipal Clerk) status. Nelson stated not to feel bad about \$600 if she does not get the scholarship again. Martin noted that this learning would be a benefit to the Village of Ladd.

Caselle Symposium for our software for all modules of the Village is September 11 & 12, 2025, at the Wisconsin Dells. Bezely & Koch would like to attend. Sarosinski will kindly be keeping the office open.

Mosquito Spraying was mentioned due to the West Nile Virus found in Spring Valley. Several people have noticed lots of mosquitoes and gotten bitten in Ladd, and some haven't noticed any.

Thrasher asked with all the **grants** and information we've heard about tonight, where is the manpower to do these things to try to secure several more grants than we currently obtain? Bezely stated that she or Koch does not have the time available in their workload to look for grants. Sarosinski will be given some of the information that Briel spoke about in checking grant sites every 2 weeks to look for money continually. **ITEP grant** alternates with SRTS every other year. This grant pertains to bike paths.

Thrasher asked Cattani who was supervising the summer help. Cattani stated that Corsolini seems to be with the summer help. He's been blocking traffic while the summer help paints the curbs and parking lines. Cattani noted that a list of things that we want done has been given to Englehaupt.

Cattani stated that 10/33 is down to 40% of what they usually do. Nicholson stated he saw a Facebook post stating that people can request 10/33 Ambulance and do not have to take what the hospital says i.e. Stark Ambulance. 10/33 Ambulance has not appeared to be very aggressive in getting the business.

Victor mentioned possibly discussing in the future a united consensus on discipline. This would be an action item in a future meeting. Doing this in a closed session is allowed, too.

Management rights were discussed.

Thrasher asked if we are replacing Trustee Ruggerio. Mayor Cattani will need to obtain a replacement to appoint to Ruggerio's position. Martin asked if we would have a replacement by the next meeting. Maintaining a quorum is essential so that the council can conduct business.

Martin motioned/Nelson seconded to adjourn.

Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor - Motion carried

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Rhonda Bezely, Village Clerk