

JUNE 24, 2025 ~ REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The Ladd Village Board met in regular session on Tuesday, June 24, 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)
Open Seat: (1)

In attendance: Clerk Rhonda Bezely, Engineer Adam Ossola, Building Inspector Barry Flanagan, Atty. Pat Barry and Police Chief Jacob Frund.

Nicholson motioned/Thrasher seconded to accept the June 2, 2025, special meeting minutes and the June 10, 2025, regular meeting minutes as presented.

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

Nelson motioned/Martin seconded, to authorize payment of the bills of \$114,720.80.

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

Thrasher motioned/Nicholson seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report for May 2025.

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

Correspondence: A thank you from Voluntary Action Center for the Village's donation was read.

Public Comment: None

Committee Report: Nelson & Victor reported on three trees that were submitted to the Village Clerk's Office. #1~ 116 N. Peru Ave. was struck by lightning, per the resident. Dead branches need to be removed. Nelson could not identify which tree it is. Victor stated it is the northernmost tree on the berm. It has a large branch and a small branch that needs to be removed. #2 ~ 233 N. Central Ave. The tree on the berm is pretty much dead. Recommend removal of the entire tree. #3 ~ 201 S. Bureau Ave. recommends removal of the tree on the Pine Street side of the road next to the mailboxes. A councilman asked if it isn't reasonable to ask the Village workers, when they are on their rounds, to look at trees on the berm and work on their own regarding trimming or removing, or is the only avenue to have residents call on their own and report bad branches or dead trees. Cattani stated that this has been mentioned. It is felt that some of this could automatically get done.

Village Engineer: Ossola gave an update on Safe Routes to School. We are still waiting for IDOT to schedule a preconstruction meeting. This will likely get scheduled for the week after the 4th of July. We cannot start until after this meeting happens. Main Avenue sidewalks are ready to start, but Gillan would like to do the SRTS and the Main Avenue sidewalks projects together. Nelson asked what the timeline is for the SRTS project completion. Nelson is concerned about the kids going back to school. It will take 30 working days to get it done.

General Superintendent: Not in attendance

Police Chief: Chief Frund told the council that the Safety grant has kicked in again. There were 11 stops over the weekend and seven citations issued. With this grant, there will be a safety program for the school

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kids. This will be happening in the next month or so. Ordinance violations have been going out. New printers have been installed in the squads. They will no longer hand write tickets; they will be typed up and printed. Tasers are in, and we will hold certifications in August.

Building Inspector: Flanagan attended tonight's meeting to get clarification on a situation that we've had different opinions on. There is a resident removing a garage from his property. A demolition permit will be completed to remove it from his tax bill. His brother-in-law wants to put this garage on an empty lot he has right next to a lot with a house on it. He needs to contact Bureau County and have both lots put under the same PIN. This keeps someone from selling the lot with the house on it, and leaving a lot with only a garage on it, which is not allowed in the Village of Ladd zoning ordinance.

Village Attorney: Old Business: Wage Increase for UB Clerk: Atty. Barry prepared the Utility Biller's new wage ordinance. It was distributed to the council for review. She was given a 4% increase from the Council, which is to begin July 1, 2025.

Nicholson motioned/Thrasher seconded to pass Ordinance 1191, an Ordinance Amending the Wage Rate for the Deputy Clerk/Utility Biller of the Village of Ladd, Bureau County, Illinois to the rate of \$23.47 per hour beginning July 1, 2025.

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

Easements Out to Adams Creek: Atty. Barry stated that all easements out to Adam's Creek are complete, and he will work with President Cattani to get them all signed.

Old Business: Revised Part-Time Application: The council reviewed the revisions and thinks everything looks good on the new Part-time employment application. Nicholson feels that next year, when we advertise for Summer Help, we should post on Facebook to stop by the Village of Ladd to pick up an application and return it with a copy of your resume.

New Business: Discuss Wage Increase for Administrative Assistant in Clerk's Office: Samantha Sarosinski hasn't had a wage increase since 2021. President Cattani feels she is due an increase of 5%. A councilman recommended going with a \$1.00/hr wage increase to even things out.

Nicholson motioned/Martin seconded to increase the Administrative Assistant, Samantha Sarosinski, by \$1.00 per hour. Her wage will now be \$20.00 per hour beginning July 1, 2025.

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

The council feels that reviewing all non-union employee wages should be done on an annual basis. We will plan to discuss employees' wages for the clerk's office and police department in May for a July 1st start. We will plan to keep the council, the clerk, and the president 180 days prior to an election for a May 1st start. We will also discuss the Police Chief in March for a May 1st start. This was felt to be acceptable.

New Business: Yard Waste Dumpster for Residents for 2026: The council was informed about the possibility of having a dumpster located somewhere in the Village that residents can bring their yard waste to, in biodegradable bags, to be put into the dumpster. Koch called and left a message with Republic, but has not heard back yet. This would hopefully cost less than what residents pay now for yard waste pickup. Nicholson motioned/Martin seconded tabling this decision until prices are obtained.

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

Announcements: Bezely asked if the council and president would write down a list of their **visions for the future of the Village of Ladd**. She stated this will help Sarosinski look for grants. This will also give economic development a direction to go in when they discuss future plans for Ladd. Nicholson mentioned Grants.gov and Grantgopher as two sites to use to look for specific grants. **DCEO/CDBG Grants** discussion about possibly applying for infrastructure improvements in Kennedy Park through this grant, if allowed, in addition to the OSLAD grant. Discussion on adding lights on the big diamond, replacing lights on the small diamond, along with two new scoreboards, a new ADA-compliant restroom/concession stand, and parking spots created by moving up the large diamond fencing was all discussed. July 8, 2025, is the Public Meeting to discuss park improvements for the OSLAD grant. Residents are strongly encouraged to attend and give their thoughts. Discussion ensued. **Water Debt Service Fee** was discussed. This was created to pay for infrastructure improvements to our water. **Ladd Community Center had no AC**, and it was rented. Over the weekend, Grassers was there working on the outdoor unit where they installed a new compressor. There was no freon in the unit. Discussion ensued regarding a leak. Bezely wanted to make the council aware that a decision will need to be made on this in the future. A **Connexus** representative called the Village asking if there was any property they could rent to store their inventory/materials on until at least the end of 2025. There is nothing in the Village of Ladd available. They are working in Spring Valley & DePue, but stated that eventually they will be installing fiber in Ladd and Cherry. In July 2024, on the utility bill message box, a note regarding **sewer backup on the west side of Ladd**. Residents were asked to please take pictures to help us get grants to remedy this terrible situation. We never received any pictures. Recently, posters have been made telling residents on the west side that we need their help in order to get funding to fix this issue. One resident recently sent pictures regarding backup in her basement.

Martin heard from a family that rented the Community Center this past weekend that Bezely was terrific to work with.

Nelson asked if there would be asphalt put on the area where the water main was repaired behind Charro Taco in the alley. Cattani stated that we will let it settle, and then the asphalt will be replaced.

Nicholson questioned if all employees had completed the cybersecurity training that was mandatory in January for 2025. Cattani stated that almost everyone has done it. One employee has not but Cattani will be reaching out to him again.

Victor told the council he attended the Ameren informational meeting on the new 138 KV transmission line that will be installed from Peru to Princeton. There is no effect on the Village of Ladd's electric system or any benefit for economic growth. Victor stated that it will make our distribution more reliable. It will benefit Peru. There will be a series of meetings set up by Ameren.

Nicholson motioned/Nelson seconded to adjourn.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.

Rhonda Bezely, Village Clerk