

## **JULY 08, 2025 ~ REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

The Ladd Village Board met in regular session on Tuesday, July 08, 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 Trustee Position (1)

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

Thrasher motioned/Nicholson seconded to accept the June 24, 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 \$53,752.53.

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

**Correspondence:** Two thank-you notes for donations from Gateway Services & AX Church

**Public Comment:** Larz Zrust addressed the council, asking to allow families to have chickens in Ladd. Amber Zrust addressed the council. She provided a detailed informational document that addressed many concerns regarding having chickens and provided solutions to these concerns. She also polled the residents on Facebook and provided both positive feedback and one negative response. Detailed facts were also offered. The council would like the question of allowing chickens in Ladd placed on the next agenda.

**Committee Reports:** Nelson & Victor addressed the following trees: 201 S. Bureau Ave. The tree is dead and needs to be removed. 121 S. Central Ave. The tree lost a branch back in 2020 when we had the Derecho, and it has a large, low-hanging limb. If the tree looks okay after trimming dead branches and a large, low limb, it can be left; otherwise, remove the entire tree. 102 S. Bureau Ave. The tree has a large branch that is bad. Remove the branch; if it looks okay after trimming, it can be left; otherwise, remove the entire tree. Victor stated that the crotch of the tree branch appeared rotten.

**Village Engineer:** Ossola gave the council an update on the Safe Routes to School 2023 Project. Ossola stated that a preconstruction meeting took place yesterday. Gillan Construction will also do the Main Avenue sidewalk project at the same time. The projected start date is July 21<sup>st</sup>, and it is to be completed by September. School begins on August 20, 2025. Ossola stated that he will have them start at the school to alleviate issues with school starting. Discussion ensued on who is responsible for making sure the yards have grass put back the way it was originally.

**Superintendent's Report:** Not in Attendance. Superintendent Englehaupt supplied a detailed report and map to the trustees and the Village President. The information provided indicates the recent televising that Hoerr Construction did on the Village's sewer system. There were several areas Hoerr

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noted as concerns that need to be addressed. This will be placed on the next agenda to discuss in detail with Englehaupt in attendance.

**Police Chief:** Chief Frund provided a report showing all the activity/ordinance violations the police department has been working on since the last meeting. Council members asked questions, and Chief Frund provided answers. The Safety grant is still ongoing. They have submitted information on the officers over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. There were many safety-related stops by Officer Krewer. These are the stops for which we get reimbursed for Krewer's wages due to his diligence in looking for safety violations and making stops to correct them.

**Building Inspector:** Not in Attendance

### **Village Attorney: New Business: Wage Ordinance for Admin Assistant in Clerk's Office:**

Atty. Barry prepared and discussed the ordinance on the administrative assistant for the Clerk's Office that the council discussed at the last meeting.

Nelson motioned/Martin seconded to pass An Ordinance #1192 Amending the Rate of Compensation for the Part-Time Assistant in the Village Clerk's Office of the Village of Ladd, Bureau County, Illinois.

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

**New Business: Conexxus Fiberoptic Broadband:** Michael Murphy, the Community Development Coordinator from Conexxus presented information on fiber. He is the contact person for any issues that arise. Murphy stated that Conexxus is from Sullivan, IL. 250 Employees are located in Sullivan, IL, who you will speak with for Customer Service. Murphy continued to explain the benefits of fiber. The timeline for installation is the end of the summer, approximately the end of August. Murphy stated they are coming from Spring Valley and heading north to Ladd. Several trustees brought up concerns, having heard the problems that Spring Valley has had. Murphy will bring this information back to his team. He stated he cannot agree to some of their concerns. Conexxus will reach out to Englehaupt to discuss the whole installation process so that he is aware of everything. Murphy also supplied pricing to the council and audience along with his business cards. Murphy stated there is no contract with Conexxus because people don't leave; they are always pleased. President Cattani told Murphy that working hours must be adjusted when working in Ladd. He told him that 7 am to 7 pm is what we will allow when work is being done in Ladd. Cattani also asked Murphy to make sure all their workers are given Conexxus identification. Cattani asked Murphy about why they are all over Spring Valley, tearing up so many locations. Murphy explained why this sometimes occurs. Murphy urged the council to reach out to him with any questions and not listen to Facebook. Murphy would like to work to provide something for the Village to show they won't just come in, do the install, and leave. They want to show that they are still there after the installation and initial sign-up of their services. He mentioned sponsoring an event to show community support. Victor asked how they think they can begin construction until we know for sure our work hours of 7 am – 7 pm have been accepted. It was stated that the Conexxus legal team will reach out to our Attorney. When Conexxus is ready to solicit for service, they will get the required permits from the Village. Murphy repeated that they want to work cooperatively with Ladd and want things to go as smoothly as possible for the residents and the Village.

**New Business: Consider Bureau County Planning & Zoning Request:** This is regarding the business on 1700 N. Avenue with the trucks and U-Hauls. The county is trying to get this owner into compliance. It is currently zoned agriculture and is requesting a change to B3. Atty. Barry read all four options that the Village can select. It was decided to choose Option C, which reads our Municipality has no objection to the above application, but recommends that the following restrictions be imposed on the applicant. If these restrictions are not imposed, this letter shall constitute an objection to the application. The council asked Atty. Barry, to help with the wording, we request be added regarding clean up of this property.

Martin motioned/Thrasher seconded to choose Letter C. so that if the restrictions are not imposed, the letter will constitute an objection to the application.

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

**New Business: OSLAD Grant:** A public meeting occurred tonight at 5:30 pm. Residents provided ideas about what they would like to see added or updated in our parks. Nicholson stated that we will have to go through all the ideas and find the ones that are less costly to move forward with. Several ideas were discussed. Gaga ball pit, bocci ball courts, pollinator gardens. Victor stated that we need to look into how a community gets on the distressed list. President Cattani asked Atty. Barry to look into acquiring the Dump property from the Walsh Family. NCICG mentioned possible grants out there that help with this situation. It was asked if the possible grant amount to acquire the property could be constituted as a match. Applications are due mid to late September for this Open Space Land Acquisition and Development Grant. The application fee is \$2,500.00.

**New Business: CDBG Grant Application:** Ossola reminded the council of the requirements for this grant in relation to health and safety. Ossola explained that this application must have proof that we are helping residents. We have asked people to email photos of basement backups. The sewer separation project cost for the west side of the Village is approximately \$4.4 million. The sewer fund is currently \$553,000.00 in the red, and the grant is \$1 million. IL EPA loans are available, and Ossola thinks there is a 30% forgiveness. This may require that sewer rates be increased. Applying will require an income survey.

**Announcements:** Bezely asked the council if **Chickens** in the Village of Ladd should be placed on the next agenda. They said yes. Possible policy to allow the public works department to trim or remove **trees** on the berm that are dead. The guys could keep an eye out when they make their daily rounds. This way, homeowners don't need to call the clerk's office to have their trees looked at. Victor just felt that it wouldn't be unreasonable to ask them to keep an eye out. We would ask them to identify any trees that are dead or need trimming. Then Nelson & Victor would look them over and report their recommendation. America 250 will be next year on July 4, 2026, where the US will celebrate the **250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence**. The IML is requesting that Municipalities pass a resolution and possibly plan an event.

Nicholson asked some questions about the Community Center rental. He wondered how many rentals we have monthly and how much the Village makes from rentals. Bezely stated that, on average, approximately \$150 per rental would be her guess. Nicholson said that he noticed we paid our cleaning person \$250.00 for June rentals. We recently, in 2025, paid out \$10,970.00 to replace the compressor in the condensing unit to repair the air conditioning. Then, just last month, we had to put approximately \$1,048.00 in refrigerant into the condensing unit because there were leaks in this

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system, which was installed in 2003. The furnaces and horizontal coils were installed in 2005 along with 4 Trane furnaces. Cattani stated that there is concern about the cost, but this is something we can offer the community. Nicholson said he questions whether we are at a point where we would be financially better off by selling this property. The council needs to decide the direction it wants to go in. Victor asked when the Village purchased the property, were any stipulations made about the use of this property? This will be placed on the next agenda to continue this discussion. Cattani suggested we look into what other towns charge for their rentals. Discussion ensued.

Victor motioned/Nelson seconded to adjourn.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm.

Rhonda Bezely, Village Clerk