

JULY 22, 2025 ~ REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The Ladd Village Board met in regular session on Tuesday, July 22, 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, Brad Nicholson, Molly Thrasher, and Bernie Victor (4)
Absent: Trustee Dan Nelson (1)

In attendance: Patrick Flanagan, Clerk, Rhonda Bezely, Deputy Clerk, Julie Koch, Admin Asst. Sammi Sarosinski, Engineer, Adam Ossola, Building Inspector, Barry Flanagan, Atty. Pat Barry and Police Chief Jacob Frund.

Thrasher motioned/Nicholson seconded to accept the July 8, 2025, regular meeting minutes as presented.

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

Absent: Nelson

Nicholson motioned/Martin seconded, to authorize payment of the bills of \$176,399.44.

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

Absent: Nelson

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

Ayes: Martin, Nicholson, Thrasher - Motion carried.

Nays: Victor

Absent: Nelson

Correspondence: None

Public Comment: None

Committee Report: Victor stated that he was unable to locate the tree that was reported at 231 S. Selby Ave. When Nelson returns, he and Nelson will revisit this before the next meeting on August 12, 2025.

Village Engineer: Ossola gave an update on two projects that are beginning this week. The Safe Routes to School 2023 project on E. Cleveland Street and the Main Avenue sidewalk projects will be done by Gillan Construction simultaneously. Cattani mentioned a couple of areas of concern on S. Peru Ave. Cattani asked about STU funds and where we planned to do curb and gutter replacement. Ossola stated that it is part of the STU/MFT project, but we are waiting to hear if the State wants to help us to blacktop E. Cleveland St. instead of tar and chip. If the state doesn't provide additional monies to blacktop, then we will need to resubmit documentation to fix the curb and gutter on East Cleveland that is crumbling and broken. IDOT approved the additional sidewalk that Cattani requested be added to the \$150,000.00 grant we received. The additional sidewalk will be in front of War Memorial Park on the west side, and a small part in front of Ladd Lanes. Ossola presented a change order to the Main Avenue sidewalk project, which adds \$42,707.80 for these additional areas to the project, totaling \$119,816.80. The grant is \$150,000.00, which includes engineering. Engineering was initially \$27,000.00 before we added two areas of sidewalk, so the Village will not have to pay any money on this project. Thrasher mentioned this being tough with the farmers' market, and Ossola stated they will work it out so it is not a problem on Mondays for the farmers' market.

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Victor motioned/Martin seconded to accept Change Order #1 for Main Avenue Sidewalk Improvements for a new project, with a total of \$119,816.80.

Ayes: Martin, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor – motion passed.

Absent: Nelson

Old Business: CDBG Grant Application: Ossola provided some numbers for the west side sewer separation project that has been discussed. He included an IEPA low-interest loan with 15% loan forgiveness. This would cost the Village approximately \$74,000.00 annually, which we would need to come up with and pay back over the next 30 years. He also mentioned possibly applying for the CDBG Grant to line problem sewer piping to the west side to fix the sewer issues seen and reported by Hoerr Construction. Sewer lining is an eligible project to apply for CDBG grant funding.

Cattani and Ossola both stated they are waiting for the video from Hoerr Construction from the recent televising. This will be reviewed and placed on the next agenda for discussion.

General Superintendent: Not in attendance

Police Chief: Chief Frund reported that he's been working on ordinance violations.

Building Inspector: Nothing to report

Old Business: OSLAD Grant Application: This grant application is due in September 2025. Bezely told the council she had Sarosinski go through the comment sheets from the Public Meeting and put together a couple of ideas to offer to the council to help with ideas so a decision on applying can be made soon. The 1st idea was a playground for small children placed on the lot up behind the Chicken on Main Ave. This would provide a small area for parents to bring younger kids to play. Sarosinski provided a rendering of this idea. She stated that the Village could do this on its own, which would get points on our application for this grant. This lot is 25 x 125. It would fit, but it would be tight. Sarosinski mentioned asking the owner of the lot to the south to split his lot with the Village to give a little more room around the playground & fence. The cost of this project would be approximately \$26,900.00. Sarosinski would like to apply for small grants to various companies to help fund this, along with fundraising. Martin wondered what happened to the concept for Bocchi Ball Courts. Bezely said she was worried that Dick's customers would walk across to the Bocchi courts with open drinks, which is not allowed. Nicholson feels that it appears that we are just looking to spend money. Martin feels we need to just put new equipment in both of our existing parks. Sarosinski then explained the idea taken from responses at the Public Meeting. She provided pictures which showed a walking path around Kennedy Park and also a picture of new park playground equipment. This also included fitness stations, which were requested. The path would be concrete or asphalt. The park equipment in the picture is \$300,000.00, but is currently on sale for half off, \$150,000.00. This could be exchanged for a smaller and less expensive piece of park equipment. Victor asked if we could complete the grant application ourselves. Sammi said she would look into what it would take for us to apply ourselves. To have this grant written for the Village would cost approximately \$5,000.00. Victor asked if someone could tell him what we can afford to spend on the OSLAD grant. Our auditor is present to discuss the FY25 Audit results. She has been given a heads-up to be prepared to give an idea of what the Village can comfortably contribute to the OSLAD grant. The Treasurer's report was also information provided to

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the council with fund balances.

New Business: Seat New Trustee

President Cattani appointed Patrick Flanagan as trustee to fill the vacancy from Ruggerio's resignation. He asked the board to accept his appointment.

Victor motioned/Martin seconded to approve the appointment of Patrick Flanagan as Village Trustee to the Ladd Village Council as of 7-22-2025.

Ayes: Martin, Nicholson, Thrasher, and Victor – motion passed

Absent: Nelson

Cattani administered the Oath of Office to Patrick Flanagan, who recited the oath and signed it in acknowledgement of accepting this position.

Village Attorney: New Business: Appropriations: Atty. Barry prepared the FY2025/2026 Appropriation Ordinance after meeting with Bezely, Koch, and Trustee Victor. Barry explained the appropriation process and purpose. Victor reminded the council that this is in no way a budget for spending. This is the total of all possible spending for FY25/26.

Victor motioned/Thrasher seconded, Passing An Ordinance Providing for the Annual Appropriation of Sums of Money for the Necessary Expenditures of the Village of Ladd, Bureau County, Illinois, for the 2025/2026 Fiscal Year.

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

Absent: Nelson

New Business: Annual Financial Report: Kim Bird, CPA from Hopkins & Associates, CPA's presented the Annual Financial Report for the year ended April 30, 2025. Revenues and Expenses were highlighted for fiscal year 2025. Bird explained several fund balances and why changes occurred. Bird also explained internal control and brought up that the general fund has a large cash balance, but a lot of this money is restricted or belongs to fund accounts that are limited. Bird spoke about the three funds you can put extra money into when you do your levy. These funds are TORT, IMRF, and Social Security. She stated that social security is only for employee payroll taxes and shouldn't have a large amount of property tax money being put into this fund because it will never be used. Social security is way over on the fund balance. TORT can be used for other risk-reducing costs. Bird suggested we look into ways we can spend this money. Bezely asked if we could put the PIP Rubber under our park playground equipment. This would undoubtedly bring safety to anyone using the equipment and the Village from the risk of potential liability due to an injury. Bird called attention to the last several pages, which go fund by fund and show the previous several years' information. Bezely told the trustees that page 22 shows all the debt the Village has. Page 44 shows the Community Centers' last 4 years of income and expenses. This will be great information for the council to review.

Thrasher motioned/Martin to approve the Annual Financial Report for the year ending April 30, 2025, by Hopkins and Associates, CPAs.

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

Absent: Nelson

New Business: Discuss Recommended Improvements for Village Sewer System: Hoerr Construction sent information on several concerns they have after televising the sewer system. President Cattani stated that we will wait to receive the video from the televising before discussing this further. We will place this on the next agenda.

New Business: Ladd Community Center: Discussion ensued regarding the income and expenses over the last 4 years for the Community Center. Sarosinski collected information from the previous 3 years, and the audit shows 4 years of the expenses vs. revenues for this property. Discussion regarding the air conditioners and future renovations to move the Village Hall into this building. Nicholson expressed concern regarding a \$750,000.00 renovation to this building to move the Village Clerk's Office. He spoke about the furnace, coils, and air conditioner's age and the cost to replace these items. He asked if it was part of the changes that were proposed, and Ossola stated yes, they are slated to be replaced. Nicholson asked why partitions can't be put up and the building be used as is with \$100,000.00 in updates. Nicholson asked if anyone else had thoughts. He wondered why we needed to replace windows, or other items, and all that the renovations highlighted. Discussion ensued. Many figures were discussed. No estimates have been obtained for a pole building, like other Villages have put up for their Village halls. \$1-2 million was mentioned as the cost of this type of building. Victor stated we don't have anything pushing us to make a move. Ossola mentioned the parapet wall and the concerns this brings. Cattani stated he's torn down buildings like the Village Hall, and they have been very well built.

New Business: Chickens being allowed in the Village of Ladd: President Cattani listed several area towns that allow chickens and the number allowed. They do not allow roosters or Guinea hens. Several trustees expressed that as long as the Village moves forward with an Ordinance like Peru's, they would be in favor of allowing chickens in the Village of Ladd. Martin asked who would inspect these coops. Thrasher mentioned we have issues with people not taking care of their yards, which will add to the Village's violations. Victor asked if this was something the council could do to examine the coops after installation to make sure they comply with the ordinance. There will be fees associated with residents being able to have chickens. A \$20 building permit will be required for the building of the coop and fencing, which must be inspected by Barry Flanagan, building inspector. Also, a \$30 fee will be needed for the inspection of the coop by a trustee. Atty. Barry discussed revising some of the ordinance to make it specific to Ladd. Cattani asked the trustees to please state if they are in favor of chickens before we move forward in drafting an ordinance specific to Ladd. Nicholson is in favor of chickens as long as limitations and restrictions are put in place. Victor, Martin, and Flanagan all agreed with Nicholson. Thrasher is not in favor of them in the Village. Chickens will only be allowed on owner-occupied properties, not rentals.

New Business: Donation Request Hall Booster Organization: No action was taken.

New Business: Renewal of Storm Sewer Debt CD: The council was provided with current rates for various terms to renew the Storm Sewer Debt CD.

Victor motioned/Nicholson seconded Renewing the Storm Sewer Debt CD for 9 months at the rate of 4.11% APY for \$436,003.77.

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

Absent: Nelson

Announcements: A resident wondered if the people who own the **farmland on the East side of Route 89** as you enter the Village from the south could plant something like wildflowers or sunflowers to make it look beautiful as you drive into the Village. Cattani stated this is set-aside ground. Cattani stated it is grass. Cattani will talk to Lyle Eiten to see if the family would be open to this. **Valley Fresh Harvest has opened a “Farm Stand”** at their building that has many groceries available for purchase. There will be an open house with IVAC on Tuesday, July 29, 2025, at 4 pm to celebrate the opening of the farm stand. The elected trustees and officials have been asked to be present. Economic Development will be providing punch and cake for the celebration. **Ameren** a letter was placed in packets – informational meeting on the new transmission line being put in. **Housing Rehabilitation Project** renovations are slated to begin in October. 10 Ladd residents who qualified on income are getting approximately \$60,000.00 in renovations done to their homes that they will not have to pay back. The order of when the renovations will take place is based on scoring, which includes disabilities, age, and need. **Summer help** will have worked 7 weeks as of this Friday, so they will be done as the board directed. **Ladd Daze** is possibly returning to the Village. Sammi Sarosinski has spoken with several people about this being brought back. She has people willing to take on booking bands, scheduling bartenders, getting bounce houses or a carnival, organizing events like a cake walk or bingo for residents, young and old, to play. Many ideas are being talked about. The council felt like it was a great event and only ended because the Men’s Club disbanded due to a lack of help. Sarosinski will move forward with planning things. It was mentioned, to possibly coordinate it with the Big Truck Show.

Martin motioned/Thrasher seconded to adjourn.

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

Absent: Nelson

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm.

Rhonda Bezely, Village Clerk