

## December 9, 2025 – Regular Meeting Minutes

The Ladd Village Board met in regular session on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, at the Ladd Village Hall, 121 N. Main Avenue. Village President Frank Cattani called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Roll

### Call:

Present: Trustees Patrick Flanagan, Jan Martin, Dan Nelson, Brad Nicholson, Molly Thrasher, and Bernie Victor (6)

**In Attendance:** Building Inspector Barry Flanagan; Engineer Adam Ossola; Attorney Pat Barry; Administrative Assistant Samantha Sarosinski; and Clerk Rhonda Bezely.

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### Approval of Minutes

**Nicholson** motioned, **Thrasher** seconded, to approve the November 25, 2025 regular meeting minutes as presented.

**Ayes:** Flanagan, Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor – *Motion carried*

### Approval of Bills

**Nelson** motioned, **Flanagan** seconded, to authorize payment of bills totaling **\$67,637.85**.

**Ayes:** Flanagan, Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor – *Motion carried*

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### Correspondence

None.

### Public Comment

None.

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### Committee Reports

Nelson reported a fallen tree on the berm at Elm and LaSalle. President Cattani will speak with Liebe about removal.

Nelson asked about clearing sidewalks before the Christmas Walk. Bezely contacted Phil Hocking, who agreed to clear Main Avenue sidewalks. Public Works will remove excess snow at block ends to allow access.

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### Village Engineer

Ossola reported Main Avenue sidewalks are complete. The handrail near Special Effect will be installed this week. Gillan removed blankets and barricades from the newly poured sidewalk in front of the American Legion.

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### Superintendent's Report

Not in attendance.

### Police Chief

Not in attendance.

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### Building Inspector

A zoning meeting was held at 6:00 p.m. for the property at 210 S. Summit Street (James Bernardi). Flanagan attended to assist with any questions regarding the zoning board's recommendations.

Continued 12-09-2025

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## **Village Attorney**

### **New Business – Return-to-Work Policy**

Attorney Barry reviewed **Ordinance 1200**, requested by IMLRMA during the insurance renewal process. After discussion:

**Flanagan** motioned, **Martin** seconded, to adopt Ordinance 1200, *An Ordinance Adopting a Return-To-Work Policy for the Village of Ladd, Bureau County, Illinois.*

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

### **New Business – FY26 Tax Levy**

Attorney Barry reviewed the annual tax levy process, noting state limitations of a 5% increase without a truth-in-taxation hearing. This year's levy reflects a **5% increase**, or **\$23,000**. Nelson asked if this increase is sufficient; Attorney Barry noted auditors report the Village is in strong financial condition.

**Victor** motioned, **Thrasher** seconded, to adopt Ordinance 1201, *An Ordinance for the Levy of Taxes for FY May 1, 2025–April 30, 2026, for the Village of Ladd, Bureau County, Illinois.*

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

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## **Old Business – Ladd Cemetery**

Sarosinski reviewed discussions with Paul Biccoci regarding the Village potentially taking over cemetery operations. Biccoci typically spends 5–10 hours per burial, with 6–12 burials per year. Sarosinski would like to digitize cemetery records and integrate grave locations into the Village website. Additional questions were raised regarding available plots, annual plot sales, and operating details. It was agreed to invite Biccoci to the next meeting for further information. Sarosinski noted the Perpetual Fund could be used if the Village assumed responsibility, and the Village could invest the fund similarly to other Village investments. Discussion continued regarding long-term planning and possible future taxation authority.

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## **New Business**

### **Variance Request – Bernardi**

Planning Commission Chair James Bernardi reported that two variances requested for 210 S. Summit Avenue were unanimously recommended for approval by the Commission.

**Victor** motioned, **Martin** seconded, to accept the Planning Commission's recommendation and grant the variances

**Ayes:** Flanagan, Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor – *Motion carried*

### **Community Water Supply Testing**

The council discussed testing proposals and expressed preference for TEST, Inc., located in Peru, due to convenience and the availability of a certified operator.

**Victor** motioned, **Martin** seconded, to hire TEST, Inc. for **\$2,310.00** for 2026.

**Ayes:** Flanagan, Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor – *Motion carried*

### **Robotic Lawn Mower**

Discussion was held about purchasing a "no-wire" robotic mower for testing on Village property. Bezely consulted Dick Fiocchi and Ladd Farm Mart; the latter does not sell the "no-wire" models. Additional information is needed on costs and functionality. Estimated cost is under \$2,000. The matter will be placed on the **January 27, 2026** agenda. Mowing bids are due **February 10, 2026**, and the test plot will remain in the RFP.

### Public Works Equipment

The council reviewed information from Asst. Superintendent Liebe regarding snow-plowing vehicles. The GMC Sierra's condition requires replacement. Liebe noted difficulty locating used vehicles due to staffing limitations and asked whether purchase of a new truck would be allowed, as in previous years. The council prefers pursuing a certified used truck but requested price quotes from local dealers on both new and used options. Once a vehicle is selected, a compatible plow will be purchased. The old truck and plow will be sold.

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### Announcements

- **AI-generated minutes:** Bezely requested feedback on the new minutes format. Martin felt the larger headings and cleaner format improved readability.
- **Fire Department Bake Sale:** Posters distributed; donations requested.
- **Main Avenue sidewalks:** The council agreed to ask Andy Ruggerio to plow Main Avenue sidewalks after snowfalls.
- **Parking signs:** Two-hour parking signs for Special Effect have been ordered. Due to pole location, both adjacent parking spaces will be designated 2-hour parking. Attorney Barry will prepare an ordinance for the next meeting.
- **IMRF:** Samantha Sarosinski will begin IMRF participation on January 1, 2026, as her expanded duties have brought her near 1,000 hours.

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**Thrasher** motioned, **Nelson** seconded, to adjourn.

**Ayes:** Flanagan, Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor – *Motion carried*

The meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Rhonda Bezely, Village Clerk**

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