

March 24, 2026 ~ REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The Ladd Village Board met in regular session on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, 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 to the American flag.

Roll Call and Attendance

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

Absent: Trustee Martin

In Attendance: Clerk Rhonda Bezely; Deputy Clerk/Billing Clerk Julie Koch; Engineer Adam Ossola; Police Chief Jacob Frund, Administrative Assistant Sammi Sarosinski

Approval of Minutes and Financial Transactions

Trustee Thrasher motioned, seconded by Trustee Nicholson, to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2026, regular meeting as presented.

Ayes: Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor, Flanagan – Motion carried (5)

Absent: Martin

Trustee Nelson motioned, seconded by Trustee Flanagan, to authorize payment of bills totaling \$172,830.72

Ayes: Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor, Flanagan – Motion carried (5)

Absent: Martin

The Treasurer's Report for February 2026 was reviewed. Trustee Nicholson motioned, seconded by Trustee Nelson.

Ayes: Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor, Flanagan, Nelson – Motion carried (5)

Absent: Martin

Correspondence and Public Comments

A thank you note was read from Ring Lawncare owner, Stacie Ring.

No public comments were presented.

Committee and Department Reports

Trustees Nelson and Victor reported on a tree located at 138 W. Elm Street. They noted that limbs fell from the tree in December 2025, and the homeowners have since expressed concerns about its appearance and the potential for additional branches to fall. The homeowners have requested that the tree be removed. The trustees recommended that village personnel remove the broken limbs and perform necessary trimming to improve the tree's condition and safety. Trustee Nelson further stated that when a concern is reported regarding a tree located within the village right-of-way, and the tree is inspected but not removed, the resident should continue to report any ongoing concerns on an annual basis.

Trustee Thrasher reported that the Easter Egg Hunt is Saturday, March 28, 2026, from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. beginning at War Memorial Park.

Engineer Adam Ossola - NEW BUSINESS: Resolution and Proposed Engineering Agreement for Cleveland Street STU Project Construction Phase. Ossola reported that the agreement is necessary to provide inspection services while the contractor performs the work. It also includes the time required to complete all state-mandated documentation. Based on estimated man-hours and administrative requirements, the total budgeted amount is \$27,860.00. He noted that the Illinois Department of Transportation has increased the overhead rate, and the figures provided reflect the updated mandated rate.

Trustee Nicholson moved, and Trustee Thrasher seconded, to approve the Engineering Agreement and Resolution for Construction Inspection on the Cleveland Street STU Project.

Ayes: Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor, Flanagan – Motion carried (5)

Absent: Martin

NEW BUSINESS: LEAD LINE REPLACEMENT PLAN – funding, responsibility for approximately 40-50 residents. Cattani asked Ossola who was responsible for the buffalo box located near the residence. He acknowledged that the Village is responsible for the portion from the buffalo box to the water main.

Ossola explained that if grant funding is obtained, it could cover the full replacement of the main into the home. However, his understanding is that the Village may require the homeowner to pay for the portion of the service line located on private property, beyond the buffalo box.

Cattani stated his preference to pursue grant funding that would cover the entire replacement, regardless of whether the work is on Village or private property. Ossola noted that the only funding source currently identified is a loan through the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. He explained that approximately \$250 million in funding is available, but there is a backlog of nearly \$1 billion in projects seeking assistance. When asked by Cattani about the likelihood of receiving funding, Ossola indicated that the chances are uncertain.

Trustee Thrasher asked for an estimated cost to homeowners if grant funding is not secured. Ossola responded that costs cannot be determined until the length of each service line replacement is known. Bezely asked whether the Village is ultimately responsible for lead line removal if a homeowner is unable to pay. Ossola stated that current regulations require the Village to ensure the entire service line is replaced.

He further reported that a final replacement plan must be submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency by April 15, 2027. Under State of Illinois guidelines, all service lines must be replaced within 15 years of that submission (by 2042), while federal guidance suggests a 10-year timeframe. Ossola noted that enforcement would fall to the State, and therefore, the 15-year timeline will be followed.

At this time, 21 service lines remain classified as unknown. No confirmed lead lines have been identified, and 47 lines are galvanized; however, it cannot be confirmed that these were never connected to lead service lines and may still require replacement.

Bezely reported that she had spoken with Englehaupt regarding the matter and shared information for discussion. Following further discussion, it was noted that if the Village chooses to require homeowners to pay for their portion, additional research will be needed. Residents would have up to 15 years to comply.

Ossola recommended conducting additional potholing to better identify the remaining unknown service lines. He suggested that, once more information is gathered, the Village could revisit the IEPA loan program later in the year if it remains the most viable funding option. He also noted that a required report must be completed and approved before applying for funding, and it would be beneficial to submit that report within the year. Ossola added that there are indications that additional funding opportunities may become available in the future.

Police Chief Jacob Frund. It was reported that the Village has applied for an additional STEP/safety grant, having previously received funding for a LIDAR unit. This grant would cover police officers' wages during designated safety enforcement periods, while allowing the Village to retain any fines collected from issued citations. The program was described as a beneficial arrangement for both enforcement and revenue.

Chief Frund reported that a situation had arisen earlier in the day and requested Council consideration to amend the current disorderly conduct ordinance. He indicated that incidents have become increasingly volatile. Frund further requested that the Village consider adopting a rental ordinance to address properties with frequent police calls, such as for domestic disturbances. Under the proposed approach, landlords would be held responsible for tenants who incur repeated violations, and would be notified of any ordinance changes.

Trustee Thrasher inquired about the status of the new police pickup truck being purchased by the Village. Chief Frund responded that the vehicle is currently in production at the factory and is expected to arrive in approximately two months.

Attorney Patrick Barry - NEW BUSINESS: Pass Ordinance #1212 to increase the zoning variance fee from \$300.00 to \$500.00. Trustee Nelson motioned, and Trustee Flanagan seconded the motion to amend Section 17.92.030 of the Municipal Code of the Village of Ladd, Bureau County, Illinois, relating to Filing Fees for Zoning Petitions to \$500.00.

Ayes: Nicholson, Thrasher, Flanagan, Nelson, Cattani – Motion carried (5)

Nays: Victor

Absent: Martin

NEW BUSINESS: Pass Ordinance #1214 Revising Compensation and Benefits for Police Chief of the Village of Ladd. Atty. Barry stated that this Ordinance is to codify his annual increase in pay, and also an increase in benefits, as the clothing allowance was raised by \$200.00. May 1st, 2026, is when it takes effect. Trustee Victor motioned, and Trustee Thrasher seconded the motion to pass Ordinance #1214 to revise the compensation for Jacob Frund as Police Chief.

Ayes: Thrasher, Victor, Flanagan, Nelson, Cattani, Nicholson – Motion carried (6)

Absent: Martin

NEW BUSINESS: Pass Resolution #1213 Authorizing the President and Clerk of the Village of Ladd to Execute Documents to Secure a Loan for the Purchase of Police Vehicle – 2026 Dodge Ram 1500 Crew Cab.

Trustee Nicholson asked whether the Dodge pickup would be a 2026 or 2027 model. Chief Frund confirmed that it will be a 2026 model, noting that a VIN has already been assigned to the purchase. Trustee Nelson inquired about the status of the 2017 Ford Explorer police vehicle, and Frund stated that it will be sold once the new vehicle is received. Trustee Nicholson moved, and Trustee Nelson seconded, to pass Resolution #1213 authorizing the Village President and Village Clerk to execute a promissory note and other loan documents necessary to secure financing for the purchase of a 2026 Dodge Ram pickup for the Village of Ladd, Bureau County, IL.

Ayes: Victor, Flanagan, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Cattani – Motion carried (6)

Absent: Martin

NEW BUSINESS: Discuss using Energy Efficiency Funds to replace light fixtures at Ladd Community Center, Village Clerk's Office & Village Hall. We have \$6,193.87 in our EEF account. The initial application needs to be completed. Discussion ensued.

Trustee Victor motioned, and Trustee Nicholson seconded to replace as many light fixtures as possible, spending up to \$6,193.87 (the amount in the EEF), with the installation being done by Village public works employees.

Ayes: Thrasher, Victor, Flanagan, Nelson, Nicholson – Motion carried (5)

Absent: Martin

Village President stated he would like the new lights installed in the Clerk's office first, then in the Village Hall, and, if funds allow, in the Community Center.

NEW BUSINESS: Discuss and approve the Fair Solar Credit Rate of .0739 beginning 5/1/2026

Atty. Barry explained the fair solar credit and how it is calculated. Discussion ensued.

Trustee Flanagan motioned, and Trustee Nelson seconded approval of changing the Fair Solar Credit to .0739 as of 5-1-2026.

Ayes: Victor, Flanagan, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher – Motion carried (5)

Absent: Martin

NEW BUSINESS: Proclaim May as Motorcycle Awareness Month

Trustee Thrasher motioned, and Trustee Flanagan seconded the motion to Proclaim May as Motorcycle Awareness Month in the Village of Ladd.

Ayes: Flanagan, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor – Motion carried (5)

Absent: Martin

NEW BUSINESS: Request to Waive Rental Fee for Ladd Community Center for Ladd Library's Lego event on May 16, 2026. The Council expressed a desire to waive the rental fee; however, it was noted that the Village incurs cleaning costs for the Community Center following events, which are expected to exceed the \$50 fee. Therefore, the Council recommended informing the Library that the fee would be waived, provided Library staff agree to clean the facility after the event.

Trustee Thrasher moved, and Trustee Nicholson seconded, to waive the \$50 fundraiser rental fee for the Community Center for the May 16, 2026, Lego event, contingent upon Library staff cleaning the building

after the event.

Ayes: Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor, Flanagan – Motion Carried (5)

Absent: Martin

NEW BUSINESS: Donation Request from Illinois Valley Animal Rescue. It was stated that IVAR helps the Village out when we have stray animals. They are very kind, and we are so thankful for their help because we are not equipped to have stray animals at the Village Hall.

Trustee Victor motioned, and Nicholson seconded the motion to make a contribution of \$200.00 to Illinois Valley Animal Rescue for all their efforts in assisting us with animal problems through the years.

Ayes: Flanagan, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor – Motion carried (5)

Absent: Martin

NEW BUSINESS: Donation Request from Project Success for Easter Dinners

There are approximately 52 families from Ladd that get dinners at Easter.

Trustee Victor motioned, and Trustee Nicholson seconded, donating \$520.00 (13) meals to Project Success for the Easter Dinner Meals.

Ayes: Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor, Flanagan – Motion carried (5)

Absent: Martin

NEW BUSINESS: Donation Request from the University of Illinois 4-H Youth Development - No action was taken

NEW BUSINESS: Donation Request from the SVLL Girls Softball - No action was taken

New Business: Purchase America 250th Anniversary Decorations for the Village Park

The Council expressed interest in purchasing decorations that can be reused annually for Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Patriots' Day, and the Fourth of July. Trustee Victor suggested establishing a budget of \$1,000.00 for decorations in recognition of America's 250th Anniversary.

Trustee Thrasher moved, and Trustee Nicholson seconded, to authorize a committee to spend up to \$1,000.00 for the purchase of patriotic holiday lighting that can be used throughout the year.

Ayes: Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor, Flanagan – Motion carried (5)

Absent: Martin

Continued 2026-03-24

Village President Cattani provided the Council with a spreadsheet detailing expenditures made by the Village of Ladd, along with reimbursements received, to assist in tracking event-related costs. He also shared a separate spreadsheet outlining the number of hours worked in connection with the Ladd Daze/America 250th Anniversary events, providing a clearer picture of the Village's overall expenses. The hours tracked currently reflect only those of employee Samantha Sarosinski, although it was noted that she contributes additional time beyond what is recorded.

Announcements and Future Initiatives

- Bezely reported she will be absent from the April 14, 2026, meeting, and Koch will serve in her place.
- Tim Bott repaired the interior door at the Community Center and declined payment for his work.
- Bezely confirmed that she contacted AX Church to verify their continued participation in assisting with the concession stand for the 2026 Hope Week event.
- One panel of the proposed light fixture has been installed in the Clerk’s Office at Village Hall for review, with potential installation also planned for the Community Center.
- Bezely was advised that an invoice for \$756.00 should be issued to Chris Brandner for engineering services related to sizing a culvert for a field entrance on East Cleveland Street.
- Mike Edgcomb, owner of A Cleaner Image, inspected the Community Center and Village Hall and noted that the floors in both buildings are in poor condition. He recommended scrubbing and applying a wax finish.
- The Crypt Keeper cemetery software offers a 30-day trial. The Village will proceed with ordering the software and begin entering data received from Paul Biccoci.
- Grant applications through Senator Duckworth were submitted by Sarosinski.
- Bezely inquired about the annexation of farmland located south of properties along East Cleveland Street, noting its contiguity. Attorney Barry advised that property cannot be annexed without the owner's consent unless it is surrounded by municipal boundaries. Bezely stated she intended to ensure the Village captures potential development opportunities, such as a warehouse, hotel, or similar uses, in light of the upcoming Peru Sport Complex.
- Bezely reported an ongoing resident complaint regarding standing water, odor, and mosquito activity. She contacted the railroad and spoke with representatives, who indicated the drainage ditch may be silted in. It was suggested that the Village engineer, the railroad’s engineer, and Englehaupt meet on-site to evaluate potential solutions. The railroad indicated it would only address obligations within its responsibility.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Trustee Nicholson motioned, seconded by Trustee Nicholson, to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes: Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor, Flanagan, Nelson – Motion carried (6)

Absent: Martin

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda Bezely

Village Clerk