

April 28, 2026 ~ REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The Ladd Village Board met in regular session on Tuesday, April 28, 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, Jan Martin, Dan Nelson, Brad Nicholson, Molly Thrasher, & Bernie Victor (6)

In Attendance: Clerk Rhonda Bezely; Engineer Adam Ossola; Administrative Assistant Sammi Sarosinski; Public Works Superintendent Doug Englehaupt; Building Inspector Barry Flanagan; Attorney Pat Barry

Approval of Minutes and Financial Transactions

Trustee Flanagan motioned, seconded by Trustee Nelson, to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2026, regular meeting as presented.

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

Trustee Nicholson asked about the new person to clean the Community Center. Bezely explained that our current cleaning person is having health issues, and her kids are involved in travel sports. We are training a new gal to provide backup. Trustee Nelson motioned, seconded by Trustee Nicholson, to authorize payment of bills totaling \$96,385.14.

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

The Treasurer's Report for March 2026 was reviewed. Trustee Nicholson motioned to accept the report, seconded by Trustee Thrasher.

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

Correspondence and Public Comments

A thank-you note was read from IL Valley Animal Rescue for the donation from the Village.

No public comments were presented.

Committee and Department Reports

Trustee Nelson mentioned all the trees and limbs that fell during Monday's windstorm. Public works are traveling around picking up and chipping these limbs. Additionally, Nelson raised concerns from residents who stated they have been on the gravel list for several years and never received any gravel. Bezely explained that a list is compiled annually and provided to the public works department. If it is determined that additional gravel is unnecessary due to sufficient existing supply, gravel is not distributed. Englehaupt stated that he has personally placed gravel at one of these residences that Nelson mentioned. He also stated that he has placed gravel, and the resident doesn't feel it's enough and goes and gets some more on their own. Atty. Barry feels it is illegal for anyone to place gravel on Village streets besides the public works department. There are many issues caused by putting down too much gravel. Atty. Barry stated this should not be allowed. Bezely also added the two residents to the 2026 gravel list, and Englehaupt was informed of their complaint. Trustee

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Victor stated that he understands we have an informal rule that if a tree is budded out or has leaves, it does not need to be removed. Victor feels that after the high winds on Monday, this theory is not always the best decision. Discussion ensued. Nelson brought up seeing grass clippings being dumped at our wood pile. This is not allowed, and if it continues, the gates will be locked. We only take limbs, leaves, and dead flowers, and there are signs everywhere that state **no grass clippings allowed**. Nelson asked if we could enact a plan to trim some of the trees on the right of way, to get them trimmed so as not to obstruct street signs. Nicholson inquired whether a tree on JoAnn Lee's property had been reported to the Village for inspection. Nicholson reported that several sides of the trunk have no bark, and there are several dead branches in it. Bezely confirmed that Deputy Clerk Koch had received that report, and this information will be presented at the next meeting to the tree committee. Trustees Nelson and Victor reported on a tree located at **104 N. Peru Ave, Apt #1**. The tenant submitted an email stating that limbs constantly fall from the tree, creating a hazard for parking. The tenant included photographs showing a limb that fell on her vehicle, causing damage. She has requested the removal of the tree. Englehaupt did not have prior instructions to inspect the tree before the meeting, but plans to evaluate it and inform Bezely of any necessary safety measures. The trees in question are sycamores, which are known for shedding branches regularly. Bezely will notify the resident once Englehaupt completes his assessment. This process aims to ensure safety and address resident concerns effectively, adhering to the Village's maintenance and safety protocols.

Engineer Adam Ossola reported that there will be a virtual preconstruction meeting tomorrow at 8:30 am on the **STU project**. President Cattani will attend this meeting with Ossola. Ossola stated he wouldn't be surprised if there was some activity on the project before the next meeting.

General Superintendent: NEW BUSINESS: Quote from TEST Inc. to install equipment and programming: Englehaupt provided 2 different quotes to the council for consideration. The first quote for \$6,234.53 is for the water plant for equipment to make the plant remotely capable. The 2nd quote is for the Waste Water Treatment plant and for the Martin addition lift station. This came about after COVID to allow for remote changes to the water plant, and ARPA funds were obtained by Joe Glynn, our operator in charge, for the Village of Ladd. We hired Electric Pump to install equipment and program it to allow access remotely to manage and control these without needing to go out to look at these areas. After several months of Electric Pump troubleshooting, it never did work. Electric pump reduced its invoice by \$10,000.00, so the Village could go in a different direction to get these locations working properly. Conxxus is in the process of getting fiber installed, so we are hard-wired at these locations. Nelson asked if this equipment could be harmed by an external influence. Our IT, Mark Karlosky, posed this question to Joe Glynn from TEST at a prior meeting with Conxxus, where TEST was called on to see if they provide security for their program, and he told him yes, they will handle the security. Victor feels that we should not be buying any apps or programs that do not have two-factor authentication. Management should have the ability to add authorized users and remove past employees for safety reasons. Victor feels we need to know for sure that any purchases have adequate security parameters in place. Englehaupt needs to check with TEST about the ability to manage users in these programs and report back at the next meeting. **NEW BUSINESS: Hoerr Construction 2026 Time & Material Sewer Cleaning and Televising Quote:** The Council was provided with a quote from Hoerr Construction for 2026 sewer cleaning and televising. This estimate is on a time and material basis. The estimated total project cost will be \$23,274.00. Trustee Victor motioned to hire Hoerr Construction to perform Sewer

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Cleaning and televising in 2026 for the approximate total of \$23,274.00, trustee Martin seconded the motion. Ayes: Thrasher, Victor, Flanagan, Martin, Nelson, Nicholson – Motion carried (6)

NEW BUSINESS: Generator Purchase Discussion. Englehaupt learned after the last power outage that the police department has repeaters, and when the power is out, these do not work, nor will any of the computers in the Clerk's Office or Police Department. At the garage, you can't get any of the equipment out. You have to climb the ladder, pull the chain, and lift the garage door just to get the trucks out. There have been more and more transmission errors. These have all been Ameren issues. Englehaupt was concerned about the weather we've been having and how fortunate we've been. He wanted to have a discussion to consider generators. Englehaupt told the council he met with Chad Thrasher for a generator quote for the Clerk's office, police department, and Village Hall. He is also waiting for Ficek Electric to provide a quote for a three-phase generator for the garage. Once he has both quotes, he will present the information to the council. He is open to discussion on which circuits the council feels should be covered by a generator. The council discussed why Englehaupt believes a generator is needed. Englehaupt is concerned about a situation where power is out for 7-10 days, and this would allow the Clerk's office to be able to continue to conduct business. This will be placed on the next agenda under old business.

Police Chief Jacob Frund - Not in attendance

Attorney Patrick Barry - NEW BUSINESS: Atty. Barry reported that at President Cattani's request, he spoke with the Jim Walsh family regarding the Village acquiring the dump property. The Walshs were in agreement to donate the 40-acre property to the Village of Ladd, as long as the Village makes it a park and it is named after Dominic P. Palmeri (the original owner of the property). A lengthy discussion ensued regarding many concerns, many ideas, and the possibility of obtaining a Brownfield Grant to clean the property up and construct a park. It was decided to table any decisions until they can speak with an individual with extensive knowledge of what may be buried on this property. Information was requested on what property taxes are currently being paid on these properties, which the Village is considering acquiring. The total property tax paid in 2025 on all 3 tracts of land was \$3,568.44.

NEW BUSINESS: Consider recommendation from Zoning Board on Michael W. Smith Variance Requests. Zoning Board Chairman Jim Bernardi reported on the zoning meeting that took place at 6 pm tonight regarding Michael W. Smith placing a 12x20 metal carport on the existing concrete driveway. He is requesting the side yard setback go from 5 ft. to 1 ft., possibly 2 ft. and to allow max coverage of his lot to exceed the 40% maximum. Bernardi reported that Smith has agreed to put a gutter on the south side of the carport in an effort to keep the water shed off of his neighbor's property to avoid water pooling. Smith was instructed that only two sides can be enclosed on this carport, and if he uses plywood, he mentions, it must be painted to keep it weatherproof. Trustee Victor motioned, and Trustee Nicholson seconded the motion to grant the variances listed by Mr. Smith to reduce the side yard setback from 5' to 1", possibly 2', and to grant the variance to reduce the buildable area to something less than 40% with the understanding that Mr. Smith is going to put a gutter on the south side of the carport to avoid drainage of any roof water onto the neighboring property and the gutter with 1' setback will remain on Mr. Michael W. Smith's property so it doesn't overhang the neighbor's property.

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

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NEW BUSINESS: Fireproof File Cabinets in Clerk's Office: Bezely reported that there are only 2 fireproof file cabinets in her office. This is a concern, and she stated that employee files need to be in a fireproof filing cabinet along with many other types of files that are to be kept permanently per the Record Destruction Certificate for the Village of Ladd. These file cabinets weigh around 500 lbs. It was asked if the floor could support this weight. Englehaupt stated that the location where the files are kept is solid concrete, and it should be fine. A quote was obtained from Quill and provided to the council. Victor felt that purging records when we get the new cabinets to have them cleaned out would be a good idea.

Trustee Martin motioned to purchase 2 Fire-Proof Legal-Size File Cabinets for approximately \$5,000.00 that are 25" or deeper. Trustee Thrasher seconded the motion.

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

Bezely will contact Quill regarding the purchase of 2 file cabinets and see if 31 ½" deep cabinets are available, since the existing 2 Fire Proof files are 31 ½" deep. Bezely was instructed to see if the delivery of these file cabinets can be made right to where they will be located, and not just being dropped at the curb.

NEW BUSINESS: CD Sewage Fund – EPA: Renewal of the sewage fund, EPA CD was discussed. Bezely explained that this is the storm sewer debt fee on our monthly billings, and we make two payments of \$40,947.48 annually to the IL EPA from this fund. Rates and terms were reviewed and discussed. Trustee Victor motioned to reinvest \$449,341.54 for 9 months at North Central Bank at a rate of 3.89% APY, and Trustee Flanagan seconded the motion.

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

NEW BUSINESS: Non-Union Employee Health Insurance Renewal: Pricing was provided to the council members. Bezely explained that this would be the insurance for Frund, Koch, and herself. She stated that everyone is very happy with their current BCBS plan and asked that they renew the same plan for 2026/2027. Trustee Thrasher motioned, and Trustee Martin seconded the motion to approve BCBS Gold Plan G532BCE for 7/1/2026 through 6/30/2027 for \$5,064.13 per month for 3 non-union employees. Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Thrasher, Victor, Flanagan – Motion carried (6)

NEW BUSINESS: Abolish Working Cash and Reestablish at \$0: Bezely explained that at the end of the fiscal year, working cash gets deposited into the general fund to help pay bills until property tax money is distributed. Trustee Nelson made a motion to abolish Work Cash of \$9,514.27 and reestablish it at \$0. Trustee Nicholson seconded the motion.

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

Announcements and Future Initiatives

- Bezely mentioned receiving complaints about mosquitoes biting already.
- There was black tar paper hanging off the front of the old furniture store. It fell to the ground, and Englehaupt will pick it up tomorrow.
- Bezely was told that Trustee Nelson and John Kohr thatched, plugged, and seeded Deb Lorenzi's front yard at 505 N. Main Ave, along with removing all the gravel that was in the dirt and replacing the dirt

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with good black soil. Nelson will also place hay. Nelson is hoping that this will grow nicely, and there will be no need for the Village to pay Taylor's Way in the fall to reseed and aerate her yard. This is where the Main Avenue Water Main was replaced several years ago.

- Resident at 123 N. Chicago Ave submitted a building permit to put a white vinyl 4' fence around her entire property. I contacted the fencing company to report that no fence is allowed in a front yard in a residential district. The fencing company asked why our council would make that law, and I didn't remember why the fence in the front yard was omitted when we revamped the fence ordinance. Invited the homeowner to the meeting, but she did not come. Offered a variance for \$500.00.
- Received a call from a resident at 300 S. Brush Ave stating she feels that the Village should at least split the cost to clean up and trim the two big trees on their Village right-of-way. Both trees are Sycamore trees, and they drop branches all the time. She is not interested in them being cut down because we've asked before, due to the sidewalk in front of the trees being so dangerous because of the tree roots.
- Bezely asked the council if they would help keep an eye on 5 trees over in the extra lot at the Ladd Community Center that have not budded out yet. Bezely was afraid they were dead, and Englehaupt advised that they were walnut trees, which bud out later than most trees.
- We purchased shelving racks from an auction. We got 3 large racks & 1 narrow rack for \$30.15.
- Sammi Sarosinski reported on the Ladd Daze Rip's night fundraiser. Overall, approximately \$3,000 was made. The bake sale brought in \$400. The 50/50 took in \$215, and Raffles made approximately \$184. This was deposited into the Ladd Daze account.

Adjournment

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda J. Bezely

Village Clerk