

Village of Ladd Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes August 25, 2026

Call to Order: President Cattani called the regular meeting of the Village of Ladd Board of Trustees to order at 6:30 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call: The following Trustees were present: Jan Martin, Dan Nelson, Brad Nicholson, Molly Thrasher, and Bernie Victor. A quorum was present.

Absent: Patrick Flanigan

In Attendance: Engineer, Adam Ossola; Village Clerk, Rhonda Bezely; Deputy Clerk, Julie Koch; Police, Samantha Sarosinski; Village Attorney, Patrick Barry; and Building Inspector, Barry Flanagan.

Minutes: A motion was made by Trustee Thrasher and seconded by Trustee Nicholson to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2026, regular meeting as presented. **Motion carried.**

Bills and Treasurer's Report

Payment of Bills: A motion was made by Trustee Nelson, and seconded by Trustee Martin to authorize the payment of bills totaling **\$185,342.87**. **Motion carried.**

Treasurer's Report: A motion was made by Trustee Nicholson, and seconded by Trustee Nelson to approve the July 2026 Treasurer's report. **Motion carried.**

Correspondence: None

Public Comments: None

Committee Reports

Trees: 2 Trees at 116 N. Peru Avenue. Nelson & Victor reported 2 dead limbs that need to come down along with a 25 ft. dead portion that also needs to be removed. Information will be provided to Public Works.

Engineer's Report

Ossola reported that IDOT-approved steel slag is scheduled for placement during the week of Labor Day as part of the Cleveland Street STU/MFT Project.

The property located at 109 N. Main Avenue is under evaluation. Ossola, of Chamlin Engineering, will coordinate with Attorney Barry to obtain the permits required to enter the building for inspection. The Village is evaluating options to ensure that the building is either demolished or sold to a 3rd party prepared to fully renovate it in accordance with the Village's vision for Main Avenue.

Police Chief Report

Sammi Sarosinski reported that Ordinance violations have been implemented. Anyone not complying will be fined. There was a Code Red message sent this past Saturday explaining to all residents the violations being noted.

Trustee Nelson mentioned several calls regarding nowhere to dump brush to clean up their yards. Bezely reported the burn pile has been locked until further notice due to brush being dumped in the wrong area.

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This causes a lot of problems. No one monitors this area. There is a concern that other towns, and possibly businesses, are using this area. In addition, other furniture and often TV's are left. The Board discussed the operation and management of the village yard waste dump site. President Cattani proposed designating a time or day for a Public Works representative to staff the site.

- **Operating Hours:** The Board considered operation by appointment versus designated hours. Deputy Clerk Koch reported that 15 residents had called during the preceding week regarding disposal of branches.
- **Regulations:** The Board reiterated that grass clippings are prohibited; only branches and brush may be deposited.
- **Determined Action:** The Board determined that an appointment-only format would be unfavorable to residents and agreed to test designated open hours. President Cattani will consult with Doug to establish the most appropriate schedule for village workers to staff the site on a weekly basis on a designated day.

New Business

Curtis & Elizabeth Doll Variance: Barry Flanagan reported for Chairman Jim Bernardi on the Plan Commission meeting tonight and their recommendation. A property variance request for 608 East Cleveland Street (Curtis and Elizabeth Doll). The request was for granting a variance to change the rear yard setback from 40 feet to 20 feet on the north side of the property (the rear yard). Flanagan noted that the proposed construction would only occupy 28% of the lot (well within the allowed 30% threshold) and would leave 35 feet between the closest neighbor and the house, which is wider than the current 30-foot spacing between existing neighboring houses. A motion was made by Trustee Victor and seconded by Trustee Thrasher to approve the recommendation of the Zoning Board to change the setback from 40 feet to 20 feet in the rear yard. **Roll Call Vote:** Thrasher (Yes), Victor (Yes), Martin (Yes), Nelson (Yes), Nicholson (Yes).

Absent: Trustee Flanagan. Motion carried.

Conxxus Fiber Optic Lid Covers (Safety Concerns): The board addressed safety concerns involving unbolted fiber-optic lid covers throughout the village. Resident Donnie Bergandi reported that the unsecured lids have caused property damage and created hazardous conditions. He specifically stated that the front tires of his riding lawnmower fell into an open, rectangular hole near his residence. Other lids are elevated significantly, causing residents to drive over them with lawnmowers and damage the covers. Clerk Bezely will again contact Conxxus on behalf of the council regarding the issue. Trustee Nelson emphasized the urgency of securing the lids, particularly with Halloween approaching and children walking throughout the area. Clerk Bezely will also contact Michael Murphy and Lance Gahimer to inform them that the board of trustees is dissatisfied and demands that all lids be secured immediately.

Hollinger Manhole Explanation: The board clarified a concern regarding a very large, elevated manhole near Julie Hollinger's property. President Cattani explained the elevation is necessary due to a severely

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blocked railroad right-of-way ditch that causes water backup. Once crops are harvested, the village plans to clean the ditch. The manhole elevation will be adjusted when a future sidewalk is installed.

Attorney's Report

Jimmy Walsh / "Dump Property" Transaction: Attorney Barry reported that he spoke with Rico Eattoni, and he feels he should be able to close soon. The Walsh family will be home this week for their father, Jim Walsh's Visitation and Funeral on Friday and Saturday. The board agreed to make a \$50 memorial donation to St. Bede in his name. The expenditure will be processed and approved under the upcoming bills list.

New Business

Trustee Wages (April 2027 Election)

The board discussed the monthly compensation for the three trustee positions (currently held by Jan Martin, Patrick Flanigan, and Brad Nicholson) up for election in April 2027.

- **Statutory Requirement:** State statute requires municipalities to establish compensation for elected officials at least 180 days before the election so potential candidates are aware of the wage.
- **Current Wage:** \$150 per month.
- **Board Consensus:** The trustees expressed that the current wage of \$150 is more than sufficient and declined to seek a raise.
- **Action Taken:** No motion was made; wages will remain unchanged at \$150 per month.

New Business

CD Renewals

Clerk Bezely presented recommendations for reinvesting several Certificates of Deposit (CDs) maturing on September 5th, 8th, and 9th, representing the Audit, Garbage, IMRF, and Social Security funds. The village recently received tax allocation monies to bolster these funds.

- **Audit Fund CD:** Reinvest the maturing balance of \$17,960.93 and transfer an additional \$10,000 from the Audit checking account for a reinvestment total of \$27,960.93.
- **IMRF Fund CD:** Renew the balance of \$322,873.44 and transfer an additional \$40,000 from the IMRF checking account for a reinvestment total of \$362,873.44.
- **Social Security Fund CD:** Renew the balance of \$464,733.08 and transfer an additional \$40,000 from the Social Security checking account for a reinvestment total of \$504,733.08.
- **Garbage Fund CD:** No additions were proposed. The reinvestment total is \$315,943.79.
 - **Term & Rate:** All selected CDs will be locked in for a 12-month term at a rate of 3.79%, as the difference in interest between a 30-day and 12-month rate is negligible (\$87.96 total) and prevents constant re-filing. Motion by: Trustee Victor and seconded by Trustee Nelson

to move forward with these stated renewals. Roll Call Vote: Martin (Yes), Nelson (Yes), Nicholson (Yes), Thrasher (Yes), Victor (Yes)

Absent: Flanagan Motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Clerk Bezely provided the following updates:

- **Consolidated Election 2027:** Packet pickup for candidates running in the 2027 consolidated election began today. Signature requirements and submission guidelines are included in the distributed packets.
 - **Property Taxes:** The first installment of property tax receipts has been received and distributed to the board for review.
 - **FOIA:** No Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests have been filed since the last meeting.
 - **Upcoming Audit:** Village Auditor Kim Bird will attend the next regular meeting to present the annual audit report.
 - **Convoy Against Cancer Donation Request:** Phil Hocking contacted the village office inquiring about a charitable donation from either the Village of Ladd or from the Ladd Daze Committee.
 - **Discussion:** The board noted that Ladd Daze is funded entirely by community donations and cannot donate back. The request from Hocking was provided to the Ladd Daze Committee.
 - Furthermore, the village already heavily supports the event by providing dedicated police and municipal workers.
 - **Result:** The board determined that a formal, written request must be submitted before the event for any future donation consideration. Rhonda will communicate this policy to Hocking.
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IT Management Report & Discussion

The board discussed IT infrastructure and a recent meeting held with Victor, IT contractor Mark Karlosky.

- **System Documentation Attempt:** Victor reported that he drafted a comprehensive diagram of the village's computers, software, and peripheral devices to establish network documentation.
- **Contractor Cooperation:** Victor expressed frustration with a total lack of cooperation from Karlosky during their meeting. Karlosky was defensive and refused to assist with mapping, instead telling them to reference historical invoices to find equipment details.

- **Password Security:** The prompt for network documentation arose from a desire to ensure password accessibility in the event of an emergency. While Karlosky claims the village has "all the passwords," Bezely isn't 100% sure of which password goes to all hardware and software. She is hoping she will know if an emergency should arise. The board discussed requiring Karlosky to submit a master list of passwords in a sealed envelope, to be stored securely and only opened under verified emergency circumstances.
- **Future Planning:** The board discussed moving more infrastructure to the cloud (such as email, etc., along with the Cassell software), which would reduce the reliance on physical local servers.
- **Consensus:** While the board remains dissatisfied with Karlosky's reluctance to share system maps or documentation, they recognized that he provides reliable day-to-day service, maintains crucial security appliances, and would be extremely difficult to replace given the shortage of local IT resources. Victor will step back from network mapping efforts but will remain available for individual troubleshooting to help out Bezely.

Adjournment: Trustee Nicholson made a motion, and Trustee Thrasher seconded, to adjourn the meeting. **Motion carried.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rhonda Bezely
Ladd Village Clerk