

The regular meeting of the Village of Divernon Board of Trustees was held at the Village Hall on Wednesday July 12, 2023. Mayor Jim Copelin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Clerk Gail Hedges called roll: Craig Busch “Here”, Joe Bukantos “Here”, Chuck Apgar “Here”, Randy Olson “Here”, and Dianne Brenning “Here”, and Baer “Here”. Also present were Superintendent Rhodes and Interim Chief Reardon.

A motion was made by Olson, seconded by Apgar, to approve the minutes of June 28, 2023. The motion passed 5-1 with Baer voting present.

Baer made a motion, seconded by Brenning, to approve the bills. The motion passed 6-0.

#### *Visitors*

Shelby Dowson was present to share with the Board a supplemental health insurance plan that assists with the medical costs above what regular health insurance pays. Policies are offered for cancer, heart attack or stroke and other hospitalizations plus ICU. The policies cover everyone in the family 24 hours a day, at work or at home, and whether they can work or not. Premiums start at \$10.00 a week. The policies offer 100% return of premiums paid, less any claims filed, after 25 years.

#### *Public Works:*

Superintendent Rhodes reported that public works staff are still cleaning up from the storm. Staff also replaced the sidewalk at 109 W. South Street. The 1998 dump truck is in the shop for repair. Rhodes requested approval of the IRC bid for the 2023 street maintenance contract in the amount of \$140,710.00. Rhodes indicated that that IRC will allow for 10% more streets be oiled and rocked for the same unit costs if the Board chooses. Bukantos made a motion, seconded by Baer, to approve the IRC bid in the amount of \$140,710.00. The Board agreed by consensus that 10% more streets should be done. Rhodes will identify the streets and bring the cost back to the Board for approval.

The tree branch overhanging into the alley on 621 High School Street is not the responsibility of the Village. Claims have been made by Randy Titsworth that the company responsible for maintaining the property has let the grass go and raccoons have gotten into the house. If the Village abates, a lien will be placed on the property. Or, the Sangamon County Department of Public Health could be contacted. Titsworth should contact the company responsible for maintaining the property directly to request corrective action.

Mayor Copelin asked about the tree down at the corner of Brown and 1<sup>st</sup>. Copelin requested the public works staff remove the branches blocking the sidewalk. Interim Chief Reardon reported they had conducted a wellness check at the location as they had notice mail stacking up. Due to a health issue, the person has been unable to take care of the fallen tree although someone is mowing the grass.

#### *Police:*

Interim Chief Reardon presented to the Board the 6-27—7-12-2023 daily incident log. Reardon requested that Officers Porter and Lavin be approved for a two-day live firearms training in the amount of \$500.00. Brenning made a motion, seconded by Olson, to approve training for both officers in the amount of \$500.00. The motion passed 6-0.

Interim Chief Reardon requested the Board consider the purchase of a Mantis Blackbeard laser training device which allows the officer to “dry-fire” their weapon allowing the officer to learn safe handling procedures. Officers would be instructed in shooting tactics, movement, areas of responsibility, and fields

of fire while using the officer's issued firearm. The Mantis Blackbeard fits in an AR platform patrol rifle. The cost of the Mantis Blackbeard is \$249.00. Reardon also presented the Canik, which is an airsoft gun, which functions in the same way as the regular issued firearm and can accept the issued mounted lights. These airsoft weapons can be utilized in the force-on-force training that can be conducted at any training center. The cost of the Canik is \$216.00 each and three are requested. Bukantos made a motion, seconded by Baer, to purchase one Mantis Blackbeard in the amount of \$249.00 and three Canik at a cost of \$216.00 each for a total cost of \$648.00. The motion passed 6-0.

Interim Chief Reardon discussed the value of the Flock Safety which is a License Plate Reader camera that could be placed in high crime areas such as the truck stop. The cameras can read stolen, suspended, wanted, etc. license plates and relay the information directly to the on-duty officers not only in the Village but across the state. The cost of the Flock is an estimated \$6650.00 per camera. More information will be presented at the next board meeting.

Reardon also reported that he continues to compare body cameras in order to identify the best value for the Village.

Mayor Copelin asked about the over grown lot at 630 S. State Street. Interim Chief Reardon reported he warned the property owner on July 10<sup>th</sup> that he has seven days to clear the property before the Village will take action. If the Village abates the nuisance, a lien will be put on the property.

*Committee Reports: Economic Dev., Zoning, TIF, Building Permits:*

Busch asked Mayor Copelin if any action had been taken to purchase property to allow the extension of Henrietta Street to Reichart Road. Copelin indicated he was working on the matter.

Busch will reach out to Nextsite to inquire as to what action is being taken to market both gas station properties. Copelin is looking into the availability of more property along Reichert Road that would be used for development.

*Public Utilities Water, Gas and Sewer*

Bukantos presented two waiver requests. Jeremy Rhodes is requesting waiver of the sewer fee due to over filling of the swimming pool. Kim Nance is requesting a waiver of the late fee due to the bank not issuing the direct debit payment in time to be received by the due date. Bukantos made a motion, seconded by Busch, to approve both waivers. The motion passed 6-0.

*Finance, Personnel, GIS:*

Brenning made a motion, seconded by Baer, to approve a contribution of \$135.00 to the American Legion for the annual golf outing. The motion passed 6-0. Baer reported the Village had received the grant agreement for \$200,000.00 to replace the water main from N. 1<sup>st</sup> Street to just beyond the sewer plant. Benton and Associates will be contacted to begin putting together the bid package for the project. Baer asked Rhodes to reach out to Deb Sergent if the final easement still needed to be signed.

*Public Safety, Health and Safety:*

Mayor Copelin reported that he has received many complaints from residents regarding properties that look like junk yards because of multiple vehicles parked or hoarders' houses, and cars obstructing stops signs or parked on sidewalks. Copelin stated that he is committed to cleaning up the Village. Mayor Copelin also

stated that much has already been done to clean up the Village and it looks good, but more needs to be done.

Busch stated that Cleeton had indicated an interest in the green tank sitting on the old IGA lot. Busch will contact the owner of the property.

The Village is looking into putting in a walkway across the railroad tracks on Brown Street. Because the tracks are the jurisdiction of the IDOT, the Village can't just put in a walkway. Olson has reached out to several persons at IDOT and has yet to reach someone that can approve the Village creating a walkway. Olson will continue to seek assistance in this matter.

Mayor Copelin stated that emergency responders and delivery trucks often have difficulty finding a specific property because the address is not properly posted. Ordinance Title 7 Public Ways and Property Chapter 1-11 C. states, "it shall be the duty of the owner and occupant of every building in the Village to have placed thereon in a place clearly visible from the street, figures at least four (4) inches high showing the number of the building." To ensure the delivery of items to the proper location and more importantly to ensure that emergency personnel can reach the correct location, house numbers must be put on the front of the residence so that it is visible from the street in compliance with the ordinance. The Village is looking into 911 signs that might help in this endeavor.

Many complaints have been received regarding crop-dusting near the Village. Residents have complained that planes are not in compliance with crop-dusting regulation when flying too low. Mayor Copelin has been in contact with the farmers and the crop-dusting company to address the issue and received assurance that it will not happen going forward

Olson asked about the status of the old IGA building. The owner of the property will be contacted and if action isn't taken soon, the Village will request a bid to demolish and put a lien on the property.

Baer commented that requests for waivers to fill pools come in annually. The current ordinance only allows for waiver of sewer charges with the initial fill. Baer will work with Olson and Bukantos to revise the current ordinance to allow for the waiver of the sewer fee with each filling.

#### *Public Works, Streets, Alleys, and Sidewalks:*

Parking on the Village square has become an issue as correct parking in spaces has created problems. Baer and Brenning will be reviewing the parking ordinance and making revisions as necessary.

#### *Village Communication/Building, Grounds & Lights, Parks, Recreation*

Apgar reported the next newsletter is being prepared. Mayor Copelin reported that demolition on the north gas station should begin soon. Once the demolition is completed, the remediation process will begin.

Copelin stated that he had been in contact with the company interested in the south gas station property. The company has some concerns because the property was an old gas station. A decision as to whether to purchase the property will be made within the next couple of weeks. Mayor Copelin shared with the company a picture of the old IGA property, but the size of the property isn't sufficient.

Mayor Copelin mentioned that another option might be to build a new fire station on the south gas station site and use the current fire station for Village vehicles. The Village would look into purchasing a small

amount of property to extend Henrietta to Reichert Road to make it easier for emergency vehicles to access that area of the Village

Old Business:

Busch provided a wrap-up of the Divy Block Party sponsored by the Village of Divernon. Residents were happy to see Parade Marshall Dorothy Goleman. Kids enjoyed seeing the many tractors. The photo booth was a big hit. Food and alcohol vendors did very well. Everyone seemed to enjoy the games, the food and the music!

Mayor Copelin discussed the need to better enforce Roberts Rules of Orders. In order to better report Board actions, it is necessary to ensure discussions are heard by all so that details can be recorded in the minutes.

Olson asked what was shared in the FOIA. Mayor Copelin stated that Board minutes, training certifications, an action plan, termination letter, etc. were provided.

New Business

Nothing to report.

The meeting ended with a motion by Busch at 8:39 p.m.

Jim Copelin  
Mayor

Gail Hedges  
Clerk