

The regular meeting of the Village of Divernon Board of Trustees was held at the Village Hall on Wednesday November 8, 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”, Dianne Brenning “Here”, and Larry Baer “Here”. Also present was Sergeant Mike Lavin representing the Police Department. Jeremy Rhodes and Chief Paul Carpenter were absent.

A motion was made by Busch, seconded by Apgar, to approve the minutes of October 25, 2023. The motion passed 5-1 with Baer voting present.

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

Visitors

Sara Peterson, representing the UCB, was present to share information on electronic bill pay. As there is a cost to the Village for the options presented, and the Village already has on-line bill pay available via the Village website, it was determined that an additional electronic bill pay method was not necessary at this time.

Jonathan Lackland, the Village’s new PT police officer, was present to introduce himself to the Board. Lackland is an Osteopathic Medicine practitioner in Springfield and a PT police officer in Divernon and Southern View. Lackland made it a point to share with the Board that when he found out that Paul Carpenter was Chief, he sought a PT position with the Village because he had worked with Carpenter as a Springfield police officer and highly respected him.

Public Works:

There was no report.

Police:

Sergeant Lavin reported that part of the tasers order had been received. A question was asked about taser training and Lavin reported that officers receive on-line training first, followed by training with a certified instructor. Brenning reported that both revenue and expenses for the canine will be tracked separately so as to determine value to the Village. Olson reported the new keypad door lock on the police department door should be installed later in the week. It was reported that trick or treat with the police department went well.

Committee Reports:

Economic Dev., Zoning, TIF, Building Permits:

Busch reported that he hadn’t heard anything from Charles Branch of Nextsite regarding interest in the two gas station properties. Mayor Copelin reported that he had talked with Todd Smith, realtor, about marketing the gas station properties. Smith indicated that a business had inquired about the southside property. Baer asked why we are talking about breaking the properties into 3 parcels and Copelin responded the properties are already 3 separate parcels for tax purposes. Copelin reported that paperwork and payment to IEPA for remediation of the north property is being processed.

Public Utilities Water, Gas and Sewer

Bukantos made a motion, seconded by Baer, to waive late fees for those who submitted for adjustments due to bank processing or delay due to US mail. The motion passed 6-0. Baer made a motion, seconded by Bukantos, to waive the late fee and reconnect fee for those who submitted for adjustment due to not having the required 10 days to make payment. The motion passed 6-0. With the US mail taking longer and bank processing of payments taking time, residents must be aware that payments are due the 20th of each month regardless of when they were mailed or paid through the bank. Payments in the drop box or paid on-line through the Village website will be accepted as received on the 20th when office hours begin on the 21st. Bukantos made a motion, seconded by Busch, to approve Stephanie Kaylor's request to waive reconnection fees due to a lack of payment, and an adjustment due to a leaking toilet. Discussion followed with several Board members stating Kaylor has made this same request many times. The motion failed 3-2-1. Apgar, Brenning and Baer cast the no votes, and Olson voted present.

Finance, Personnel, GIS:

Mayor Copelin shared that an estimate had been received for the body worn cameras and tasers. A vote to approve the actual cost will take place at the next Board meeting. Brenning reported that the Panhandle Eastern Pipe Line had notified the Village that an estimated \$384,777.00 refund is due the Village due to a settlement. The actual refund should be received the week of November 24, 2023. Brenning also reported that the IMRF rate will drop in 2024 from 7.77 to 7.64 saving the Village on retirement benefits.

Public Safety, Health and Safety:

Apgar reported he's still working on the yard waste ordinance that will provide detail on Village pickup and associated charges, if any. Village residents already have the option of taking yard waste to the dump site at no charge. Discussion of the draft ordinance was tabled. Olson shared that a draft of the ordinance violation letter was in the Board packet for review and discussion. The discussion was tabled.

Public Works, Streets, Alleys, and Sidewalks:

Brenning reported a solicitation for bids for Village garbage and recycling pickup is in process. The new contract will be effective May 2024.

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

Apgar reported the Village newsletter went out the week of October 30, 2023. Busch reported that Com Microfilm picked up the old minutes and ordinances for digitizing.

Old Business:

Benning made a motion, seconded by Bukantos, to approve the revised Personnel Code relating to holiday pay. The motion passed 6-0. Brenning made a motion to approve the parking on the square ordinance. The motion failed due to lack of a second.

New Business:

Busch recommended that we get estimates for digitizing old police and public works documents. Mayor Copelin indicated that public works has old maps that should also be digitized.

Hedges stated it was her understanding that Executive Session minutes were to be approved in Executive Session at the next Board meeting. Discussion followed. Based on discussion, approval of Executive Session minutes will take place at the next Board meeting following the Executive Session. Release of already approved Executive Session minutes will take place twice annually.

The meeting was adjourned with a motion from Olson at 8:30 p.m.

Jim Copelin
Mayor

Gail Hedges
Clerk