

The regular meeting of the Village of Divernon Board of Trustees was held at the Village Hall on Thursday March 13, 2024. Mayor 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 Superintendent Jeremy Rhodes and Chief Paul Carpenter.

A motion was made by Baer, seconded by Bukantos, to approve the amended minutes of February 29, 2024. The motion passed 5-1 with Brenning voting present.

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

Visitors:

Jon Hopkins was present informing the Board that two events will be held at the Corner Bar in June. ABATE will sponsor a bike ride on June 1, 2024. The second is a fund raiser for Kim Canewell of Pawnee with a bike ride. Hopkins request that Dodds St. be blocked off from 1st St. to the alley on Dodd St.

John Masten was present to ask about the mosquito abatement contract. Masten has contracted with the Village for the last couple years and the mosquito population has been significantly controlled. A motion was made by Busch, seconded by Olson, to agree to a contract with Masten 12 treatments including just before the block party at a cost of \$5884.56. The motion passed 5-1 with Bukantos voting no.

Public Works:

Superintendent Rhodes reported that the IL Commerce Commission had audited his records to determine if the Operation Standards Manual had been followed. No issues were identified. Public works staff have been busy trimming trees. A bid has been received by Tim Hemberger to remove a tree at a cost of \$3200.00 which includes removal of the tree stump. It was agreed that public works staff would remove the stump. Rhodes asked how much of a balance the Board wanted to remain in the MFT account. Discussion followed on ways the funds might be spent. Baer recommended a balance of \$80,000.00 be kept for emergency purposes. Baer asked why the electricity for the sewer plant had gone up by \$12,000.00 when comparing year-to-year. Baer stated he had no idea. Superintendent Rhodes said he would investigate.

Police:

Chief Carpenter reported that the K-9 stopped accepting imprinting and will not be able to serve as a police dog. The dog will be placed as a pet to a responsible home. Donations of \$6,500.00 have been raised to purchase another K-9 already fully imprinted and only needs the additional training required to meet Illinois certification. The Village attorney will prepare necessary legal documents to ensure the transfer of the pet to the new owner so that the Village is no longer liable, and the new K-9 is legally owned by the Village.

Economic Dev., Zoning, TIF, Building Permits:

A meeting was held with the principle intending on purchasing the north gas station property to discuss details. The Village is negotiating for the first right of refusal should the party intend to sell. The party is very community oriented and owns several businesses in other communities in the area. Once the property is purchased and remediation is completed, the plan is to have business operational within 5 months weather permitting. The Board also discussed the need to market local businesses to increase foot traffic resulting in an increase in revenue. There was also discussion on uses of other property owned by the Village to increase commerce.

Public Utilities Water, Gas and Sewer

Nothing to report.

Finance, Personnel, GIS:

Nothing to report.

Public Safety, Health and Safety:

Mayor Copelin inquired about the property located at 312 Lincoln St. and any progress that had been made. It was reported at the last meeting that the holdup was due to information being held by our attorney. After doing some research the Village attorney had responded to the inquiry with instructions prior to the last meeting. The attorney asked trustees to ensure the information is accurately reporting on issues in their committees to ensure the proper response is taken. Olson is taking point on the abandoned property and will contact the county and get things moving in the right direction. Olson will provide an update at the next meeting.

Olson inquired as to whether Maddy's needed a fence to section off the beer garden. Village ordinance requires a fence. Olson will address it in a letter to the establishment citing the ordinance.

Olson presented a potential parking issue on Dodd St. at the last meeting. Mayor Copelin reviewed the current layout and agreed that if emergency vehicles needed to get through, at times it would be difficult. The public works department will work with Public Safety chairpersons to provide a solution to the parking issue. Jon Hopkins was present and Mayor Copelin asked him to share his thoughts regarding the parking. Hopkins agreed that at times it is cumbersome for vehicles to back out safely while leaving his establishment.

Public Works, Streets, Alleys, and Sidewalks:

Rhodes reported he will be replacing the sidewalk by the Village Hall so it can connect with the path in McMurray Ballfield. Superintendent Rhodes will also be looking at signage to slow drivers down while kids are trying to cross for school. Chief Carpenter will be monitoring the speeds while school is in session and providing the necessary action to keep our kids safe.

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

Busch presented some ideas to upgrade the play equipment in the park. Prices and updates will be brought to the next meeting. Apgar reported that the .gov domain name is still under review.

Old Business:

No old business.

New Business:

No new business.

Baer made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:16 p.m. Brenning made a motion at 9:06 p.m. to return to regular session.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m. with a motion from Baer.

Jim Copelin
Mayor

Gail Hedges
Clerk