

The regular meeting of the Village of Divernon Board of Trustees was held at the Village Hall on Wednesday October 11, 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 were Superintendent Rhodes and Police Chief Paul Carpenter.

A motion was made by Olson, seconded by Apgar, to approve the amended minutes of September 27, 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

Rob Weaver and his wife were present to complain about the bill they received for limb/branch pick-up. He indicated he was not paying the bill as there is no written policy regarding a charge for picking up a large amount of tree limbs/branches. Discussion followed. Charges for all receiving a bill for the recent large limb/branch pick-up will have their accounts credited in the amount of the charge. This service has been provided for years by the Village and a charge has always been applied. The Board will review policies and ordinances to determine what additional information might be added to provide residents clarity. The other option is to discontinue the large limb pick-up service since additional resources are needed to handle the larger jobs.

Jerod McMorris, from Good Energy, was present to discuss an opportunity for the Village to lock in an aggregate rate of .0839 cents per kWh for the Village commercial property accounts for 2 years as of today. Discussion followed. A vote could not be taken as the proposed rate was not on the posted agenda, a requirement by law. Proposed rates for residential customers will not occur until next summer. Mr. McMorris will provide the proposed residential rates as soon as they are available.

Public Works:

Superintendent Rhodes reported that the water main along 1st Street will be completed by the end of October, weather permitting. Benton and Associates is finalizing the bid documents for the water main project from N. 1st Street to the sewer plant which should be posted in the newspaper soon. The Village Hall roof was inspected for hail damage and no damage was found.

Police:

Chief Carpenter reported that streetlights were checked for outage and only one needs to be replaced. Olson made a motion, seconded by Apgar, to replace the police department door lock with a keypad entry at a cost of \$950.00. The motion passed 6-0. Carpenter requested approval to cut 5 PT officers due to the fact they haven't worked in months making it difficult to keep full coverage. Local businesses looking for police assistance have indicated they have had to reach out to Sangamon County for assistance because there are no Divernon officers on duty. Chief Carpenter is looking to add another FT officer as well. Recruitment will begin to hire a FT officer and PT officers to ensure increased police patrol. The Tahoe has high mileage, requires increased service, is running rough and the interior is in bad shape. Carpenter has identified a replacement, with the police package, for \$39,691.00 with trade in.

The geofencing system is set up and procedures will be added in the Personnel Code. Olson reported he is seeing increased officer patrolling.

Committee Reports:

Economic Dev., Zoning, TIF, Building Permits:

Busch reported that Document Management Inc. and Com Microfilm were contacted regarding digitizing of Village documents. Mike Sullivan, of Com Microfilm, came to Village Hall to look at the documents to be digitized and discuss options. Some of the documents, dating back to the early 1900s, must be specially processed because of being in a binder which will cost \$.20 a page. The loose paper used over twenty years ago was slick and shiny, sometimes making it difficult to film, so Mr. Sullivan took some records to test the quality of the digitized page as well as the ability to search. The cost per page for the loose pages is \$.06 per page. Mr. Sullivan will provide the Village with an estimate for digitizing.

Mayor Copelin reported that the attorney indicated a Zoning Board is required. Further review is needed to determine how many members are required because of Divernon being a small village. Mayor Copelin also shared that the shed in the trailer park, even though it is on the alley, should be considered as part of the trailer park because it has been allowed since the trailer park was established years ago and there is no paperwork to support otherwise. Superintendent Rhodes was asked to identify easements around the shed to protect Village utilities. Rhodes will work with the new owner on the matter. Copelin indicated that the IEPA will begin the remediation of the north gas station property soon. Apgar said he was still waiting to hear from a few brokers on marketing the property. Baer reported that the business district tax for the south district is collected about the same amount as the north district.

Public Utilities Water, Gas and Sewer

Nothing to report.

Finance, Personnel, GIS:

Brenning made a motion, seconded by Baer, to approve the 2024 tax levy ordinance. The motion passed 6-0. Brenning made a motion, seconded by Bukantos, to purchase a street sweeper in the amount of \$5620.93. The motion passed 6-0. Mayor Copelin reported that the attorney recommends a separate position for the Zoning Administrator be created. A new position description will be developed. A determination as to whether the position will be PT or FT will be determined based on the description and the estimated time to be spent. Per Copelin, holiday scheduling and staffing for the police department is being developed. Baer and Brenning continue to work on updating the Personnel Code.

Public Safety, Health and Safety:

Olson reported that he and Mayor Copelin continue to identify ordinance violations and are working on developing policies for administering the notices and fines. Procedures for enforcement of flood plain ordinances are being reviewed by the attorney. The attorney has stated that pictures are necessary for documentation. Apgar reported the Sangamon County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan has been released by the county and is on file at Village Hall.

Public Works, Streets, Alleys, and Sidewalks:

Superintendent Rhodes reported that the street damaged by a contractor cutting trees was repaired by the Village resident. Discussion of establishing a written policy followed.

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

Apgar reported the draft newsletter is done and being reviewed by Board members. Ordinance enforcement will be included in the newsletter. The newsletter will be issued in early November.

Old Business:

Brenning mentioned that the newsletter will include mention of the 125 Years Celebration and the request for committee members to help with the planning.

New Business

Mayor Copelin reported that the review of community vision, goals, and initiatives are ongoing. Superintendent Rhodes reported he's still waiting for a final inspection report for the Maddy's Tavern expansion which is past the permit date. Failure to submit will result in action.

The meeting was adjourned with a motion from Olson at 8:37 p.m.

Jim Copelin
Mayor

Gail Hedges
Clerk