

## May 14, 2024 ~ REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The Ladd Village Board met in regular session on Tuesday, May 14, 2024, in the Ladd Village Hall at 121 N. Main Avenue. Village President, Frank Cattani called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and led the pledge of allegiance to the American flag.

Roll Call: Present: Trustees Jan Martin, Dan Nelson, Brad Nicholson, Andy Ruggerio, Molly Thrasher  
Absent: Dave Margherio

In attendance: Village Clerk Rhonda Bezely, Engineer Adam Ossola, Police Officer Sammi Sarosinski

Thrasher motioned/Martin second to accept the April 23, 2024, regular meeting minutes as presented.

Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher - Motion carried

Absent: Margherio

Nicholson motioned/Nelson second to authorize payment of the bills in the amount of \$70,678.81.

Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher - Motion carried

Absent: Margherio

Correspondence: A thank you from the Voluntary Action Center (Meals on Wheels) for the Village's donation.

Public Comment: Resident Westley Schmidt addressed the board about being billed for sewer when filling a pool or watering gardens, flowers, and trees. Spring Valley has a system where they discount sewer on any water that runs through an outdoor hose. Each meter is approximately \$200.00. Residents rent the meter for the summer; if returned in perfect condition, they get money back except for a \$25.00 rental fee. The council feels we should investigate this for our residents. We will speak with Superintendent Englehaupt and bring the information back to the board. Schmidt was thanked for his great information and we will be in touch with what the council decided.

New Business – LADD CEMETERY ASSOCIATION: Paul Biccocchi addressed the board about the Village taking over ownership of the Ladd Cemetery and dissolving the Ladd Cemetery Association. Mike Grivetti had approached Biccocchi with the question of does Biccocchi have someone who would take over the cemetery if something happened to him. Biccocchi stated that he does not. This is when the discussion about the Village of Ladd owning the cemetery came about. Biccocchi is approaching 70 years old. Biccocchi answered questions from the President and council. He was asked if the cemetery pretty much breaks even annually. Biccocchi told the council that from 1997 to 2002 the cemetery had \$6,000.00 profit annually, but then in 2009, the account was approximately -\$4,000.00 due to interest rates being so low. He is only allowed to use the interest earned on the perpetual fund to maintain the cemetery. Operating costs as of now in 2023 show -\$2,142.58 for the year. The prior 3 years were also at a loss. Rates have increased lately so investments/interest should be improving which will hopefully leave the fund in a positive balance for 2024. President Cattani asked if Ladd did not take over the cemetery what would happen? Biccocchi stated that it will remain the same. Even if the Village takes it over, he will continue to volunteer to take care of it. He stated that he sort of has a board. Discussion ensued on additional responsibilities if a municipality takes it over. Biccocchi stated that he would like to dissolve the Ladd Cemetery Association in August if the Village takes it over. Otherwise, Biccocchi indicated that it could wait until December 31, 2024. Annual reporting will be due at that time. There is a gentleman who cuts the cemetery and charges \$400.00. The funeral home contacts the man who digs the graves and pays him. Rates for burial and grave plots have been the same since the 1980s. The biggest expense besides grass

Continued 5-14-2024

mowing is the trees – they are extremely old and need attention. Gravel for the roads is another expense. The council is glad Bicchochi is staying to manage the cemetery. Nicholson brought up prevailing wage being mandatory if the Village takes it over. Discussion ensued. This will be considered by the council and if more questions arise Bicchochi will return. No decision was made tonight.

Committee Reports: Nelson reported on a tree at 231 S. Central Ave. He states that it needs to come down. President Cattani will speak to public works to get this on their schedule. Ruggiero asked about the arbor vitae at the Community Center. Wilson Landscaping advised that both arbor vitae get removed on each side of the doors on the East side of the building. Englehaupt has this listed on his job board. Nicholson stated that he checked on the trees that were planted last fall by the Village and all but 2 trees look great. They are leafing out nicely.

Engineer's Report: President Cattani stated he and Ossola looked at the SRTS 2021 Project and noticed some bad sidewalk that is butting up to the new sidewalk. Cattani added some additional work to correct these concerns to Iowa Ave and Peru Street. War Memorial Park will get the sidewalk on Cleveland Street replaced as planned a couple years ago. This area looks to be approximately 60 feet. Gensini will hold the same price per yard as the SRTS project. This will be billed separately as an extra. Ossola reported SRTS is making good progress. New Business – CDBG GRANT FOR SEWER SEPARATION PROJECT: Ossola explained to the council that back in 2016 we applied for granted money through the IL EPA to make changes to the East Side of Ladd by Spring Creek. It was a Capacity Management Operation and Maintenance Plan, "CMOM." President Cattani stated that this is what the Village has been talking about for the last several years to have the West side of the Village move stormwater out to Adam's Creek to alleviate the burden on the Waste Water Treatment Plant. 1.5 million is the maximum you can ask for. This is a very competitive grant. 1.8 million was the 2016 estimate for this exact project. It would need to be increased by approximately 30% due to inflation. This would leave a sizable amount for the Village to fund. There is no match for 1.5 million but they do not cover any of the engineering costs. So, the design, construction, and inspection would be paid for by the Village. There is a low to moderate income stipulation. We must have 51% low to moderate income. According to DCEO Ladd is at 32%. It is possible to put a survey out to try to get enough low to moderate-income families to complete the survey in order for Ladd to qualify. Discussion ensued on how we might be able to reduce the scope of work to be an improvement but a less costly application. Ossola stated that this grant wants all easements obtained at the time you apply. Not necessarily all the engineering but all permits obtained for easements from property owners and Hall Township. Ossola will research property owners and report back at the next meeting. Ossola stated other options would be EPA Loans like we used for the water main replacement project or we could research the USDA Rural Development which has a water, and waste disposal grant & loan program. Ossola could ask a USDA representative to come and explain how this would work. It may be more flexible for the Village to obtain. Ossola will investigate this option. The further along you are with being shovel-ready the better. COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION GRANT: Ossola discussed the Community Revitalization Grant that is available again in July. There is a 25% match by the Village. Based on our last application, resubmitting these same changes at current costs would put our 25% match at \$660,000. Ossola stated that the state is going to be resurfacing Route 89 and at this time there generally is the ability to get some work done for a good price by doing it along with the state's project. This is an option to wait for this possible opportunity. Ossola stated that the resurfacing of 89 is not currently on the 5-year outlook. There is a \$200,000.00 minimum application if we were looking for a match that would be less burdensome to the Village. The council opted to hold off and wait for the resurfacing of Route 89 to possibly get some sidewalks done. The board thanked Ossola for such great work.

Superintendent's Report: Not in attendance

Continued 5-14-2024

Police Chief: Sammi Sarosinski attended for Chief Frund. She told the council that body cameras are going to be mandatory in 2025. They are completing a grant to help cover the cost. 3 body cameras and 2 in-squad cameras are being requested. Anytime a police officer works he/she MUST have a body camera. Three would allow for 2 officers and the chief to work on special occasions and we would be covered. The biggest cost is the storage. They are looking into less costly options. The police are going to cook and raise money for the Truck Show again in July to help out Phil. Frund has approximately 25 letters to go out regarding ordinance violations for grass, weeds, abandoned vehicles, and fences. The house discussed previously on North LaSalle Ave. (behind Rips) Frund checked and all vehicles in the yard are currently registered and continue to move. The owner's son works on vehicles. There are no violations for this resident currently. Nicholson asked if the chief must continue to "revisit" residents from year to year who have ordinance violations or does he just issue a ticket and not remind them? Sarosinski stated that Frund generally gives them a chance to rectify things but if they are blatant repeat offenders for the Village, he would probably issue a ticket. Sarosinski informed the board that she took part in an auction of St. Margaret's Hospital office furniture and equipment. After speaking with Frund and Bezely about what to bid on, she obtained many things for the Village at a very low cost. Chairs, shredders, desks, file cabinets, a copy machine, etc. were bid on. Bezely stated that Sarosinski came in on her own time and participated in the auction. The council thanked her. Nelson asked Sarosinski about how the Flock cameras were doing. She explained that notifications come to the officers' phones to make them aware of people in town with warrants. The cameras are utilized by various agencies. This has been valuable to public safety.

Building Inspector: Not in attendance

Village Attorney: Not in attendance

Old Business – NON-UNION INSURANCE RENEWAL: Lora Gramer from Suarez & Associates was in the audience to explain things and answer questions. She provided 2 additional quotes from different insurance companies to compare with the BCBS quote. They were both quite a bit higher than the BCBS quote. Other questions were discussed. We will hold off on deciding until the May 28, 2024 meeting. Vision and dental remain the same until July 2025. Two other quotes should be coming. Bezely asked if what they quote us is part of the affordable care act plan and Gramer stated yes. Bezely stated that she learned if people are healthy which is determined by a health survey, a level funded plan can be bid by an underwriter which generally has a lower cost since people are generally healthy. Gramer stated that Municipalities cannot be in a level-funded plan. We will wait to hear from the other 2 agencies. Our insurance renews July 1, 2024, and we will need to pay the new premium in June for July's coverage.

New Business – SIDEWALK PLAN FOR DICK'S TAP: The council reviewed the plan for the south entrance into Dick's Tap off West Pine Street. After discussion, it was decided that Englehaupt should discuss with Shawn and the contractor that this needs to comply with the Illinois Accessibility Code. It was also stated that when the State comes through and resurfaces Route 89, they could potentially destroy this new work. If this project moves forward within the Illinois Accessibility Code the Village will buy the concrete that is for the public sidewalks.

New Business: ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION BLOCK GRANT: NCICG emailed an information sheet on Round 3 of this EECBG grant. Bezely will reach out to Kevin Lindeman of NCICG to see if the windows, doors, and HVAC at the Community Center would qualify. If it does qualify, there is no match required so an application will be submitted.

Continued 5-14-2024

New Business – PASS RESOLUTION FOR IMRF: A Resolution relating to participation by elected officials in the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund must be passed and submitted every 2 years.

Nicholson motioned/Nelson second to Pass a Resolution Relating to Participation by Elected Officials in the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund.

Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher - Motion carried

Absent: Margherio

New Business: PASS RESOLUTION – STARVED ROCK: Senator Rezin sent information regarding passing a resolution in support of not changing the name of Starved Rock.

Nelson motioned/Ruggerio second Passing Resolution #1164 Reaffirming Support for Maintaining the Name of Starved Rock State Park.

Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher - Motion carried

Absent: Margherio

New Business: SUMMER HELP: The council asked if we advertised openings for summer help to the Ladd residents' children. Discussion ensued and the council requested Bezely to place information regarding summer help on the Village Facebook Page, make posters for our office door, and ask NC Bank if they would put this information on their digital sign. Nicholson wonders if there is enough work for 2 full-time kids for summer help. The Village will pay \$15.00 per hour. They will work 8-hour days. Nicholson stated he would like the kids to come to our next meeting to let the council decide who will be a good worker since Public Works does not hire. A decision will be made then.

New Business: AUDIT FY24 HOPKINS & ASSOCIATES: Bezely explained the need for the council to approve Hopkins to perform our audit this year for \$11,600.00. They will be here May 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Martin motioned/Thrasher second to Authorize the Village President to Sign the Proposal for Auditing Services for FY2024 with Hopkins & Associates.

Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher - Motion carried

Absent: Margherio

New Business: DONATION PITCHERS MOUND: There is no pitcher's mound at Kennedy Park which is another reason no games are being played in Ladd. The one that used to be there belonged to the Red Devils. Steve Bosi confirmed this with Denny Galetti. The school will need one when they play on the field at Kennedy Park field in the Spring. Ladd Sports has approximately \$2,000.00 in it and the expense that needs to be paid would be uniforms for T-ball. Bezely stated approximately \$150.00 was left in the account last year after all expenses were paid. Martin feels we want to do all that we can to get games played back in Ladd again.

Nicholson motioned/Martin second to Donate \$1,000.00 Toward the Purchase of a Pitcher's Mound for Kennedy Park Baseball Field.

Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Ruggerio, Thrasher - Motion carried

Absent: Margherio

New Business: ADOPT ORDINANCE VIDEO GAMING FEES: This was voted on in February 2024 but an ordinance still needed to be adopted per Atty. Barry.

Nelson motioned/ Nicholson second to ADOPT ORDINANCE #1166 An Ordinance Relating to Video Gaming Terminal Fees for the Village of Ladd, Bureau County, Illinois.

Ayes: Thrasher, Nelson, Nicholson, Martin, Ruggerio, and President Cattani - Motion carried

Absent: Margherio

Continued 5-14-2024

New Business: ADOPT ORDINANCE POLICE CHIEF SALARY: This was approved at the meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup> but an ordinance still needed to be adopted per Atty. Barry.

Martin motioned/Thrasher second to Adopt an Ordinance Revising the Compensation and Benefits of Jacob Frund as Police Chief for the Village of Ladd, Bureau County, Illinois

Ayes: Thrasher, Nelson, Nicholson, Martin, Ruggiero, and President Cattani - Motion carried

Absent: Margherio

Announcements: REPUBLIC SERVICES assured me that if carts are blown over on a windy day the drivers will get out and pick up the carts for disposal. Jim Pozzi assured me he would tell the drivers that this needs to be done. HOUSING REHABILITATION GRANT was awarded to the Village of Ladd for \$650,000.00. This money will help approximately 10 low-to-moderate-income families with home repairs for \$60,000.00 which does not have to be paid back at all. They must live in their homes for 5 years following the completion of work. SWING AT PARKS pictures were shared of the swings at the parks. Bezely asked the council if new swings should be ordered. We ordered the existing swings in 2021 they only have a 1-year warranty and did not hold up. Fire Chief Liebe requested that we not buy infant swings because children too big for them are getting in them and getting stuck. They must be cut out of them. The council stated that we should go ahead and order new ones. GRADUATING SENIORS from Ladd are in the top of their class and cards were circulated for board members to sign in congratulations. VIDEO GAMING FEES for 2024-2025 were paid. E-RECYCLING went very well. 32 residents dropped off on Friday night and 17 residents came on Saturday. \$110.00 was collected from Village of Cherry residents who took advantage of this event. The 20-yard roll-off was  $\frac{3}{4}$  full. CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE must be obtained from every team playing or practicing on the Ladd baseball fields. Bezely will work with Bosi to obtain these when she is aware of a game being played in Ladd. DRIVEWAY ON PROPERTY LINE a request was heard by President Cattani to pass an ordinance prohibiting driveways from being located on property lines. Discussion ensued and it was decided to leave things as they were.

Martin motioned/ Nicholson second to move out of regular session into executive session – 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2) Collective negotiating matters between public employers and their employees or representatives at 8:39 pm.

Returned to regular session at 8:55 pm. Roll call was taken.

Present: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Ruggiero, Thrasher

Absent: Margherio

Martin motioned/ Nicholson second that we adjourn.

Ayes: Martin, Nelson, Nicholson, Ruggiero, Thrasher – Motion carried

Absent: Margherio

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 pm

Rhonda Bezely, Village Clerk