Brooklyn Village Board Meeting Minutes
October 28, 2024

On October 28, 2024, President Mark Bruner called the Village Board meeting of the Village of Brooklyn to order at 6:30 p.m. Trustees present were Chris Groenier, Dan Olson, Michael Gehrmann, Mike Brusberg, Christian Allen, and David Berland. Also present were Ali and Nick Templeton, and Clerk-Treasurer Linda Kuhlman. No public comments.

President's report – Bruner thanked everyone who stepped up in his absence the last couple of meetings with him being sick. And here's to the election being over on November 6.

Groenier made a motion to approve the minutes of October 14. Olson seconded. Motion carried. Bruner abstained.

Extra-territorial CSM - Ali Templeton said their family bought land around the house that they will be purchasing, and they want to add a couple acres to their lot. They have about 2-3 and want to have 5 total. Kuhlman said it was part of a larger CSM that was approved prior. **Olson made a motion to accept the extra-territorial CSM in the Town of Union.** Brusberg seconded. Motion carried.

Berland made a motion to approve the CSM for the 15.72 acres in the Business Park. Groenier seconded. Motion carried.

Brusberg noticed that the check register for the EMS and Fire were each off by 2 cents. Kuhlman will fix those. Bruner asked about the Kaiser Construction invoice. He thought they were supposed to take out the concrete drive-thru area. Kuhlman explained that Public Works was concerned that the vibrations from breaking it up would damage the sewer and water lines underneath, so it was decided to leave it and complete that with the rest of the parking lot project. **Brusberg made a motion to approve the bills**. Olson seconded. Motion carried.

Brusberg stated at the last meeting we postponed hiring a commercial broker. He asked if we've heard from Jeff Groenier and Mark Mortensen. Kuhlman said she spoke with Groenier last week after the email from DOT confirming we didn't need to do the east-west road but hasn't heard since. Groenier did speak with Strand and Spilde about designs, and he was told that Strand is ready to help, but we need an offer in writing before the village will spend more money. Brusberg asked if it's possible to check in with them and get timing on producing a written offer and what their anticipated closing date would be. He's fine postponing the hiring of a commercial realtor until the November 11th meeting. **Brusberg made a motion to postpone any further discussion about a commercial realtor until the first meeting in November**. Gehrmann seconded. Motion carried.

Budgets – Kuhlman stated after the last meeting's discussion about keeping under the expenditure restraint percentage increase, she was able to find the $6,100 needed to reduce the budget. Discussion on whether to reduce for expenditure restraint, which would be a $15,000 payment from the state in 2026. Olson asked to get a total on budget cuts and increases made this year. Kuhlman also asked if we could add back in joining the Green County Development Corporation. They could be a good resource in the future. We can take it off the squad budget, since we won't get the new squad until further into the year. The board okayed that. Brusberg asked if Kuhlman can monitor how much we use them next year to determine if we should continue in 2026. Kuhlman stated the public hearing for the budget will be held on November 11, and the board should be able to approve the budgets at that time. We won't know the total mill rates at that time, because we probably won't have the county information by then.

Clerk's report – **Election** is next Tuesday, November 5. Polls open at 7 a.m. and close at 5 p.m. We have been averaging about 25 absentees voters per day, and we have a little over 200 total absentees ballots. We have

about 960 registered voters in the village. Kuhlman checked with Sue McCallum about the **6 p.m. siren**, and Sue checked with long-time locals and was told there are several reasons -- to check for proper working order, to test for tornado preparedness, and in the past was to call firefighters to fire calls, to signal the end of work shifts including lunch, and so kids would know when to go home for dinner. Deputy Grumke pulled some basic **traffic information** from the speed boards in the village. Also one of the overtime deputies recorded some data while on duty for an hour period in the evenings on Hwy 92/Church Street and Hwy 104/S Rutland, and recorded 24 and 27 cars, and the highest speed was 31 and averaged about 26. Grumke also had some data from DOT from a study they did, and they didn't see regular excessive speeds. Grumke will get data from the speed boards for a month period of time and report back to the board. Kuhlman reminded the board about the **Green County Leaders First Impressions** meeting on November 13 in the afternoon at the community building. She requested a board members attend the meeting, if possible. She will pass on more information when available. We received a call from **Culpepper & Merriweather Circus**. They are a national circus that travels across the United States and puts on a circus. It's a one-day, two-show event. They partner with chambers or other groups and the group can receive a portion of the ticket sales. They do have some animals. They were wondering if Brooklyn was interested in hosting them. The board would like to get more information before making a decision.

Brusberg made a motion to approve the clerk and deputy clerk attending the Wisconsin Government Finance Officers Association conference in Middleton on December 5-6 for $150 each plus mileage. Berland seconded. Motion carried. Olson abstained.

Private and public fire protection charges - Kuhlman explained that per our PSC tariff we charge an amount for public fire protection based on the number of fire hydrants in the village. Right now it's part of the levy that is taxed to residents. However, a few of the bigger users like the school, the churches, the fire department, for example, don't contribute because they don't pay taxes. There is an option to put all or a percentage of that amount onto the monthly utility bills and free up funds in the general fund budget for other items, like an additional sheriff deputy. If we were to take 60% of that amount and put it on the utility bills, it would free up $75,000 in the general fund budget and would add about $10 to each utility bill per month, roughly. The board was concerned with adding charges to the utility bill but the levy would stay the same for taxes. Kuhlman stated we would have to do a conventional rate case through the PSC, and there's a chance the water rates would change. She can find out more information and will bring up the matter again after the first of the year. She also explored a private fire protection charge but decided against pursuing it. It would be for businesses with sprinkler systems and private fire hydrants. After exploring further, the PSC recommends not charging, and presumably sprinkler systems would use less water for a fire.

Kuhlman explained that our website company is changing all of their websites to a new platform. So we have the option of updating our website to the new platform and updating the look of the site for $1,500 or only updating to the new platform for $800. **Brusberg made a motion to do the updated website at a cost of $800**. Groenier seconded. Motion carried. Berland abstained.

Fire/EMS District Commission – Brusberg reported the last meeting was October 16. They had a presentation on the **2022-2023 audit**. There is information in the board packet. They received an unmodified opinion from the auditors. The biggest material weakness is the lack of segregation of duties, similar to the village. There is an opportunity for improvement around spending and putting spending limits in place, and the auditor will provide information to the district secretary to draft policies. They know the fire district needs to work on their policies. The **fire division** usually has 25-30 calls per month, but in September there were 46, and a lot of fire calls were big fires with mutual aid that they got called to. They have a good flow of **new members**. Two new members were added recently, and one is in the EMR class. Two other applicants they were meeting with soon. They have been **participating in the community** with fire prevention week in the school and onsite at the fire house and their pancake breakfast. They need to get new **defibrillators.** Their's work fine now, but a new one provides better capabilities for pediatric patients. The issue was tabled and no vote in the near term, because the cost is $50,000 and they wanted to check into leasing opportunities also. Nothing

material in the **financials.** There are adjustments to the **budget** that he provided to the district secretary based on Kuhlman's five-year trajectory spreadsheet. Everything tracks to history for the EMS. Fire has an opportunity to sharpen the pencil. The commission will do that in November and make some adjustments, sliding dollars around, and if they find some are not needed in 2025, they will bring the budget down for 2026. The joint meeting for next year is September 17 of 2025. They found roughly $15,000 to $20,000 that could be adjusted. The **new ambulance** might get here in December. Radio costs are tracking high. There was a slight uptick in September **out-of-service hours** but nothing dramatic.

Bruner said a closed session is not needed. **Groenier made a motion at 7:34 p.m. to adjourn.** Gehrmann seconded. Motion carried.

Linda Kuhlman, WCMC, CMTW
Clerk-Treasurer