

Village Board Meeting Minutes August 25, 2025

On August 25, 2025, President Mike Brusberg called the Village Board meeting of the Village of Brooklyn to order at 6:30 p.m. Trustees present were Mike Gehrman, David Berland, Dan Olson, Todd Klahn, Jake Bachim, and Christian Allen. Also present were Jason Marshall, Austin Hill from Ronek Concrete, Matt Goble, and Clerk-Treasurer Linda Kuhlman. Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments – Brusberg stated we have Hotel Street on the agenda, so anything specific to the project can be covered under that item. Marshall said he got a bill for the sidewalks. Can they hold payment until we figure this out, or are they supposed to pay that. There is cement splatter up and down the whole block, the cement not being done right, so he hates to pay for something until they figure it out. Brusberg said we'll tackle that separately. The Village Board approved the assessments for all businesses on the street for the cost. Marshall doesn't like to pay for something until the job is done and done right. Brusberg said they'll tackle anything remaining as part of a punchlist with the contractors. The assessment should be paid. It's on the village on how the work was done.

President's report – Brusberg thanked the fire department association for stepping up at Brooklyn Night Out, providing food for the attendees. At a recent fire/EMS meeting, the fire association said they will cover a new sign board out of association funds. No taxpayer dollars will pay for that. In addition, regarding the concerns about social media posts that were placed on Facebook by village board members, what has been done since then is the clerk shared our social media policy, which covers this type of event, with all board members. He looked into the specific matter, and comparing to the policy, that was on someone's private page and not a Brooklyn info page that the post took place. You're allowed to comment on personal posts. There was no foul play as pertains to social media policy. Any actions of said board member were within the policy itself. We have freedom of speech, so you are allowed to make personal posts. If it had gone out to the Brooklyn info page, that would be a different story. It was reviewed.

Klahn made a motion to postpone minutes from August 11 to next meeting. Gerhmann seconded. Motion carried.

Hotel street sidewalk – Brusberg said we received information 4:00 today. He would like to make a motion to postpone any action until we have appropriate time to read and digest and get to public works and engineer. He would ask Hill if there's anything we can take from what you provided and share. Hill said the easiest way would be to go out there and walk. He had a two-foot level, a lot had no pitch, a lot had negative pitch, some had a lot of positive pitch. The whole thing really goes all sorts of different directions. If he did this at somebody's house, they'd take it out. The biggest issue is water pooling in front of buildings, and the drains, there is about that much underneath that is starting to dam up. In the winter, that water will build up and ice dam. If you have any other questions, his email and phone number are on the sheet, and he can have a separate meeting out there. Brusberg said that's appreciated. We'll have to think about it and get it to public works and Strand and definitely bring back to a future meeting, whether a board meeting or separate meeting. He doesn't want to hurry along and make a rash decision. Hill said if anyone has any questions, clarification, just give him a call or email. **Olson made a motion to postpone to a later date until all the parties can go through and go over the said paperwork that has been brought in.** Marshall asked to have the engineer there when everyone meets, so everybody is on the same page. Brusberg said we'll see. We would like to have our engineer and public works and Hill discuss it. Marshall said Goble has water running into his building. He's confident in Hill's ability. Brusberg said in his view this document addresses everything, or does it not. Hill said the stuff he saw generally. Brusberg said we are not adding more to the list. This is what we will focus on. If there's other concerns or complaints, it needs to be written to the village. Marshall and Goble would like to be at any meeting there as an observer. Brusberg said as an observer, but active engagement that's where we have to be mindful. There's been some behavior towards an engineer that's not going to be allowed anymore. Marshall has nothing against them, but it has to be solved. Brusberg

said we're going to focus on how to make this the best solution. At this point behaviors need to be improved. Marshall said he's trying to be patient. Brusberg said so are we. Klahn seconded. Motion carried. Hill asked if any other questions for him. Brusberg said we'll get back to them. Gehrmann thanked him for looking at it. (Marshall, Goble and Hill left)

Public Works/Utilities/EM – Kuhlman said the board has the list of activities. The truck sold for about \$27,724. We paid about \$29,800 for it. Klahn pushed for it the last time he was on the board, because municipalities get a discount when purchase trucks and vehicles, and it's been a good run where if you keep it for three years, there's little cost of the old truck. There's cost for the new, but it doesn't matter if you keep 10 years or 20 years, you're going to have the increase. If you bite off a little every three years, it's better to manage -- no tires, under warranty. Kuhlman said the report also shows the last three vehicles sold with their pricing. Highway 92 project is still ongoing. Every year public works moves the skateboard equipment for Labor Day. They're asking if we can make it a permanent removal. Not many people, if any, use it. It's also not in great shape anymore. Allen said as a skateboarder, the couple issues is the layout isn't correct and also the blacktop is pretty rough which makes it hard to keep speed, and a couple changes could have made it better. Gehrmann said the recreation committee thought it was to be gone years ago, because of lack of use. If people ask, revisit either fixing the ramps or the layout and do it correctly. Brusberg asked if that could be an area converted to more pickleball courts. Olson said he talked to public works, and doesn't know if dimensions are right, but in future look we have to look at replacing the tennis courts. **Gehrmann made a motion to permanently remove the skateboard ramps at the park.** Klahn seconded. Motion carried.

Clerk's report – Kuhlman reported she and deputy clerk went to the Wisconsin Clerk's Association annual meeting. It was a good conference, good training and networking. Open house here on September 8 before the next board meeting. Deputy Grumke has coverage for the events happening in the village over the next few months. Sheriff IT people will be hooking up computer at the village hall this week. After that the Historical Society can look to move into the space above the community building. Brusberg asked when the squad will go to auction. Kuhlman said public works is working on a list of equipment that's in the squad to list on auction. Klahn asked if SCADA is all fixed. Kuhlman said it has been fixed and works. The Charter bill for service at public works is \$100 less per month than Frontier. Brusberg asked to park old squad in front of public works on the date of the concert.

Kuhlman and deputy clerk wanted to ask if it's possible to either rent out or let groups use space in the village hall during the day. We have extra offices and conference room space available now. Brusberg said during the daytime hours and a group that serves the community. As long as they pick up after themselves, we don't have to charge. Berland asked about creating a signed contract with a cleaning fee to be assessed as needed, and leave it to clerk and deputy clerk discretion on who to use it. He's comfortable with that. **Berland made a motion to allow deputy clerk and clerk to use their discretion to offer rooms in village hall for use to organizations or affiliates at their discretion.** Bachim seconded. Motion carried. Kuhlman wanted to ask board thoughts on hosting a **shredding day or week** for the village residents, and also having an **electronics recycling day** either in conjunction with dumpster days or some other day. She will get more information if the board is interested. Gehrmann thinks at dumpster days would be great. Brusberg wouldn't want to do a week-long shred. Brusberg asked about having a box for goodwill donations for dollars at dumpster days to be used for, for example, fireworks. Berland asked if we invite someone like St. Vincent DePaul to accept donations instead of putting in dumpster.

New business – Kuhlman stated the board previously approved staying in the Dane County Consortium, so this resolution and agreement make it official. She would like to modify the first paragraph to just say we've been a member and not include time, because she can't find the date we first joined. **Berland made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-14 Approving Participation in Dane County Urban County Consortium, with discussed modifications.** Olson seconded. Motion carried. **Brusberg made a motion to approve the Dane County Urban County Consortium Agreement.** Bachim seconded. Motion carried.

Kuhlman explained as part of purchase agreement with Groenier and Mortensen, we don't have a clear motion in the minutes approving the offer to purchase, and the title company wants clarification on who will be signing the closing documents. **Klahn made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-15 Resolution to Sell Real Estate.** Bachim seconded. Motion carried.

Kuhlman pointed out that Groenier asked about **addresses for their land in the Business Park.** Anything coming off Heritage Drive would be numbered by the village. Anything coming off the new road, would it be state highway address or addresses off the new road. She doesn't know who would assign addresses on a state highway. Klahn said the county assigns county road and state assigns their own. Kuhlman said it's not something that needs to be done immediately. Olson said the road is the access off the state. Bachim suggested it would be Church Street if in Village limits anyway. Brusberg talked about naming the road first before assigning addresses. Kuhlman said there's no rush. Brusberg had an idea of someone that's been a prominent figure in the community: Chief Mortensen did a lot for this community, a lot of kinship for him, so something worth thinking about, or the Klahn family, with just how long they've been in this community. Klahn said Phil Mortensen did more for the community of unrecognized stuff; even Louis Fahey did a lot for the village. Kuhlman said it has to be parceled out, so they're in no hurry. Brusberg asked the board to think about names and try to tackle as part of September 8 meeting. Bachim suggested talking with families to make sure they're okay and not upset.

Kuhlman added the Exxon Mobil invoice to the check payments. It was about \$991. Olson reviewed bills and had a question on the Wayne Ace Bus and Limo Service LLC, what account was this taken out of because it wasn't budgeted. Kuhlman said they are under summer rec expenses, but if board wants, can move to take out of their recreation savings account. Brusberg asked if we have dollars set aside for summer rec. Kuhlman said not a lot, and we're always over budget because revenue doesn't match expenses. Revenue is usually about \$500-600 and between wages and expenses, it's about \$4,000, but that's normal every year, but it's budgeted. Klahn said to take the funds out of budget and general fund. Brusberg said they talked about signing up earlier to maybe get more people. **Klahn made a motion to approve bills as presented.** Gehrmann seconded. Motion carried. Olson opposed.

Finance/Personnel Committees – Brusberg said they met earlier tonight. There is a wage schedule for staff attached. It's their recommendation to provide a 3% increase to all employee wages and round up the increase to the nearest dime. The rough increase is \$11,330 and a \$12,180 increase for benefits for employees. Berland said the 3% increase is in line with state and university increases. When considering CPI, it's a reasonable increase. Roberts and Reilly will still receive 50 increase per test passed. Kuhlman said increase was 3.5% last year. Gehrmann likes we put in for passing tests, shows more responsibility and incentive. Brusberg will have a future meeting that we will begin to start general conversations around succession planning for the future and how to think about it in budget for years beyond. We don't want to be in a state turning over multiple village staff and act reactively. Klahn agreed it's a good thing to talk about. **Brusberg made a motion for the 3% increase with rounding up to nearest 10 cent.** Berland seconded. Motion carried. Olson abstained.

Trustees/president increases for the future – Brusberg said looking at comp scales from other communities, it seems like on our size and complexity, we're in the neighborhood. It's one of those things where you're never going to make a meaningful amount from this. The hard part is struggling to get people to sign up to be on the village board, and he doesn't have a good pulse on the why. He thinks we should do some type of survey to get a better pulse on volunteerism and for the board, committees, etc. Gehrmann doesn't know answer either. You're not going to make enough that it will be a part-time job. Klahn's feeling is doesn't have young kids anymore, but a parent with kids, to leave for 2 to 2-1/2 hours out of home, it has to be a worthwhile trip to come. Berland said as a parent with young kids, frequently they have conflicts and they need to get a babysitter, so it's a zero sum service for him. He's glad to be of service. He knows from the last census, 50% of population have kids, and if we want to engage people, we have to consider what happens with their kids while participating, because we can't count on people having a spouse to be there. If we can

solve that, it might change who participates. Discussion on volunteerism. Brusberg suggested postponing and revisiting as part of budget process to see how things are tracking. Gehrmann said on Planning and Zoning and Recreation committees there are community members, would it make sense to offer those community residents more and get more engagement from the community coming into those meetings, as a way of getting them into government and helping. Allen said you can't pay enough to motivate them; you'd have to go to a number that's not reasonable. Klahn agrees, but his motivation is to make it sensible. We do it because we want to do it. Berland said to look at how to remove barriers so people who want to do it, can do it. The board will look at comparable communities. **Brusberg made a motion to postpone adjustments in trustee/village president future wages until future dialogue with budget.** Klahn seconded. Brusberg added employee health insurance for 2026, presuming we provide the same type, will be a \$12,800 increase. Discussion on insurance. Klahn said retention is big. It's not as desirable an occupation, because you will make more in private jobs. The benefits make up for the pay. Gehrmann said stability is part of that also. Asked if we're part of a group or buy our own. Kuhlman said it's the state's local plan. **Klahn made a motion to recommend health insurance at no change.** Berland seconded. Motion carried. Olson abstained. Kuhlman mentioned the second meeting in September will be our big budget meeting. We get the levy on September 4 and will have the water and sewer information by that time. Public Works will meet before that. The sheriff's department isn't getting a raise next year.

Fire/EMS District Commission – Brusberg thanked the association again for Brooklyn Night Out and also for the new sign outside the fire station. Right now repairs are needed to new ambulance due to a minor accident. There's also repairs needed to a neighboring ambulance due to the same accident, and they will keep the existing one until those repairs are completed, but they will put it up for auction later. Sale will more than cover the defibrillator costs in 2026. Budgets are in packets. They're recommending for approval at joint meeting on September 17th at 5:30. Highlights are in the summary. Fire department had a budgetary decrease of 3.4% from total net. Expenses are up; however, there is additional income due to the 2% dues payments and interest. There was \$12,000 able to set aside as part of last year from final actuals, and those dollars were repurposed to other line items. They will do that process in the future also. As it pertains to EMS, that will be a nominal 1.1% increase, which is net of revenues. There is escrow dollars reflected for FAP income, but it's also reflected in expenses, so they equal out. There is also additional interest income of \$7,000 and they're continuing to see higher run revenue, so \$85,000 is an increase of \$10,000 but it's on par with a year-to-date basis. Also fairly confident they now have wages reflective of all adjustments made to make sure EMS is fully staffed and avoid out of service as much as possible. They will continue to evaluate. This represents a 1% decrease in totality across the two departments. Taking net total budget from \$496,880 to \$491,981. We're allowed CPI plus 2%, so this is a material change relative to what would be allowed, but we feel this is appropriate for the taxpayers. Klahn said it seems like the most logical budget he's heard in a long time. Brusberg said we need to get more information about the boiler, the two that heat the bay. They are getting dated, and we need to get estimates on those. That might be something to solve for in the future, but do have reserve balance. Gehrmann asked if it is an rfp. Brusberg said they're getting proposals. Annual joint meeting is on September 17 at 5:30 p.m. Not all members need to be present. Brusberg will chair the meeting. Kuhlman said we need a quorum of our board. If you can't make it, let Linda know.

Brusberg added he was direct as part of earlier dialogue. He will be that way in the future. We need to do so with behaviors that indicate cooperation, and we need time to digest this information and not react. We all want to see this to completion. We will tackle items through the punchlist. Gehrmann said as someone who manages large projects, it should come in through public works, the engineer and general contractor, and that's how we should be handling it. If we set that and do that, we will get a professional result at the end. No project is perfect. Klahn said typically contractors work better with dialogue than to say you screwed this up and you fix it. Gehrmann said we have good contractors and engineers, and they will take care of it.

Klahn made a motion at 7:56 p.m. to adjourn. Gehrmann seconded. Motion carried.

Linda Kuhlman, WCPC, CMTW; Clerk-Treasurer