

**VILLAGE OF EPHRAIM
VILLAGE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2026 – 7:00 P.M.
9996 WATER STREET- EPHRAIM VILLAGE HALL**



Action Items:

Mulliken moved, Meacham seconded, to approve the minutes of July 14, 2026, as presented, all ayes.
Motion carried.

Mulliken moved, Meacham seconded, to approve the minutes of July 28, 2026, as presented, all ayes.
Motion carried.

Mulliken moved, Meacham seconded, to approve the consent agenda as presented, all ayes with T. Nelson abstaining. Motion carried.

Hoyerman moved, Meacham seconded, that the Village Board resolve that henceforth the Village Board meetings, Plan Committee meetings, Historic Preservation Committee meetings, Board of Review meetings, and the Board of Zoning Appeals meetings be held at the Ephraim Village Hall. And that, going forward, the working Committee meetings may be held in the Administration Building, whatever form that takes going forward. Furthermore, there should be continued pursuit of updating the audiovisual capabilities of this Village Hall for the purpose of increasing the reliability and effectiveness of public meetings, all ayes. Motion carried.

Mulliken moved, T. Nelson seconded, to proceed with Option 1 or Option 2 for the Administration Building, all ayes. Motion carried.

Mulliken moved, Hoyerman seconded, to approve the Waterbury Inn Owners Association Inc., at 10321 Water Street, combination Class “B” and “Class C” Alcohol Beverage Retailers License pending health and fire inspection, all ayes. Motion carried.

Meacham moved, Mulliken seconded, that the Village of Ephraim request proposals for the design, supply, construction, installation, and startup of a PV solar power system for the Village of Ephraim Wastewater Treatment Plant, all ayes. Motion carried.

T. Nelson moved, Meacham seconded, to decline the right of first refusal for Hangar A4, all ayes. Motion carried.

T. Nelson moved, Mulliken seconded, to approve the sale of Hangar A4 from Mary Houck to Fabian Waleffe, all ayes. Motion carried.

Hoyerman moved, Meacham seconded, to approve the lease with Fabian Waleffe for Hangar A4, all ayes.
Motion carried.

T. Nelson moved, Meacham seconded, to adjourn at 9:14 PM, all ayes. Motion carried.

Present: Rick Hoyerman, Matt Meaham, Carly Mulliken, Tim Nelson, and Ken Nelson – President.

Absent: None.

Staff: Brent Bristol -Village Administrator

Guests in person: Jon Jarosh (DDC- CEO), Julianna Holly (DCTZC – Executive Director), Bruce Nelson, Andy Bartelt, John Cox, Keith Krist, Missy LeBelle (EBC), Kelsey Stone (EBC), and Sarah Martin (EBC).

Guests Online: “Angie”, “Ann H”, “BD”, “Cindy”, Lane Methner (EBC), and Michael Miller.

1. **Call to Order:** K. Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
2. **Quorum:** A quorum was present for the meeting.

3. **Changes to the agenda:** There were no changes.
4. **Visitors' Comments:** There were no comments.
5. **Approval of Previous Minutes:**
Mulliken moved, Meacham seconded, to approve the minutes of July 14, 2026, as presented, all ayes. Motion carried.
Mulliken moved, Meacham seconded, to approve the minutes of July 28, 2026, as presented, all ayes. Motion carried.
6. **President's Comments:** There were no comments.
7. **Consent Agenda:**
Mulliken moved, Meacham seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented, all ayes with T. Nelson abstaining. Motion carried.
8. **Administration:**
 - a. **Presentation of the Annual Report from Destination Door County and Door County Tourism Zone Commission:**
Juliana Holly, Executive Director of the Door County Tourism Zone Commission (DCTZC), explained that the primary responsibility of the DCTZC is the collection and remittance of room tax in Door County. She noted that there are approximately 1,640 permit holders. The DCTZC is responsible for distributing the room tax in accordance with Wisconsin State Statute §66.0615, the Entity Agreement, and local room tax ordinances. She explained that 30% is distributed to municipalities and 70%, up to the annual budgeted amount, is distributed to Destination Door County (DDC). Board composition is created pursuant to State Statute as well.

Holly reviewed room tax statistics, noting that the Village of Ephraim's total room tax collections for the year were up 11 %, compared to 4.67 % for Door County as a whole. For June specifically, the average lodging daily rate was up \$33, and lodging revenue increased by approximately \$240,000. She noted a broader countywide trend of a shift from traditional lodging to cottage, cabin, and home stays, which affects occupancy tracking since maximum occupancy is not tracked for those property types.

Holly informed the Board that the Tourism Zone is currently seeking an administrative assistant and is also undertaking a software revision to reduce human error and simplify the room tax reporting process for lodging providers, particularly in light of changes being made by marketplace platforms such as Airbnb and VRBO.

John Jarosh, newly appointed CEO of Destination Door County, then presented. He acknowledged Ephraim Business Council representatives Kelsey Stone, Missy LeBelle, and Sarah Martin for their partnership. Jarosh highlighted four primary areas of the organization's work:

Municipal Reimbursement Program: This program, started in 2022, reimburses municipalities for the exact amount they pay to fund the Tourism Zone's operations. In 2025, the total was approximately \$414,000 distributed to municipalities, with Ephraim's share at approximately 11%. These funds, drawn from the 70% tourism allocation, are restricted to approved uses.

Community Investment Fund (CIF): Launched in 2023, the CIF has invested over \$3.7 million in 70 projects across Door County, including projects in Ephraim. Grant application deadlines remaining for 2026 are on September 28 and December 28. Jarosh encouraged municipal partners to apply. He noted that the fund requires projects to have both a tourism development purpose and a positive impact on residents. He indicated that the organization is exploring whether to begin earmarking portions of the CIF for specific categories of projects, though no determinations have been made. He welcomed feedback from the Village on this direction.

Community Business Associations: DDC allocates approximately \$1.6 million annually to support 11 Business Associations across the county, recognizing their critical role in the local visitor experience.

Core Operations/Marketing: Jarosh emphasized that marketing remains foundational to the organization's work, as the tourism sector is highly competitive. He cited the economic impact report showing \$685 million in overall visitor economy impact for Door County in 2025, with \$551.6 million in direct spending, \$131 million in labor income, and Door County ranked 7th out of Wisconsin's 72 counties in tourism impact.

Jarosh also referenced the organization's Destination Stewardship Plan, developed with input from approximately 1,500 residents through town halls, surveys, and focus groups. He noted it is available at doorcounty.com/stewardship, and that while Destination Door County championed the plan, some elements—such as housing—require advocacy from other organizations rather than room tax funding. He also briefly mentioned the organization's strategic plan for 2026, the first year of a three-year plan.

Finally, Jarosh expressed gratitude to the Village for the ongoing use of the Village Hall to facilitate Social Security card applications for J-1 visa exchange students. Since approximately 2015, two sessions per year have been held, helping approximately 2,000 students avoid the need to travel to Green Bay.

A discussion was held with Jarosh. Meacham asked about restaurant business trends. Jarosh acknowledged the picture is mixed—some businesses report strong performance, and others are off—and that no clear explanation has emerged yet. Meacham also asked about day-tripper data. Jarosh explained that while precise real-time day-tripper counts are not available, the organization can analyze DOT traffic count data and mobile location data, though both carry lag times and limitations. The mobile location data is better at indicating visitor behavior than counting individuals. Mulliken asked whether the CIF's eligibility criteria or structure had been revised. Jarosh confirmed that no specific adjustments have been made yet, but that the Governance Committee and Board are discussing whether to earmark portions of the fund for specific project categories going forward.

Hoyerman asked what percentage of the 70% allocation returns to municipalities through the reimbursement program. Jarosh and Holly clarified that the reimbursement amount is not a fixed percentage, but is tied directly to the Tourism Zone's annual budget, which was approximately \$414,000 in 2025. Jarosh added that additional funds have also flowed back to municipalities through CIF grants and a one-time parks funding program offered in 2023.

K. Nelson noted for context that Ephraim receives approximately \$400,000 annually in room tax, which is used for Capital Projects such as the North Ephraim Pedestrian Path and Waterfront work.

- b. **Discussion and consideration regarding combination of Class “B” and “Class C” Alcohol Beverage Retailers License:**
Mulliken moved, Hoyerman seconded, to approve the Waterbury Inn Owners Association Inc., at 10321 Water Street, combination Class “B” and “Class C” Alcohol Beverage Retailers License pending health and fire inspection, all ayes. Motion carried.
- c. **Discussion and consideration regarding Administration building and Village Hall project planning, design, and options:**
Bristol provided background, explaining that a subgroup consisting of K. Nelson, Mulliken, and himself had been working with Keller Inc. to develop plan alternatives for the Administration Building. Originally four options were under consideration; Option 3 (a large addition) was previously eliminated due to scale concerns, leaving Options 1, 2, and 4. Option 1 involves a full gut and rehabilitation within the existing building envelope. Option 2 involves a smaller addition of approximately 818 square feet, largely to accommodate an enclosed accessibility ramp. Option 4 involves constructing a new building on the same property, most likely adjacent to the fire station.

Bristol also reported that Keller, with the assistance of Brian Frisk, who scanned original blueprints, produced scaled digital renderings of the current Village Hall and two conceptual stage expansion alternatives. A separate audio-visual proposal from Quantum Technologies was also received,

estimating approximately \$80,000 for AV upgrades to the Village Hall, lower than the \$100,000–\$150,000 previously anticipated.

Village Hall Meeting Use and AV Discussion

K. Nelson opened discussion by reframing the core question: Should the Village Hall continue to serve as the home for public business meetings, and if so, what AV improvements are needed? He noted that a prior assumption had been to house all meetings at the new administration building, but that sentiment had shifted toward keeping major public meetings at the Village Hall.

T. Nelson expressed general comfort with either stage expansion option, but indicated a preference for keeping the restrooms in the back of the building. He stated that reliable AV, specifically the ability to walk in, press one button, and run a meeting, was his top priority. He was pleased to hear that technology advances had improved reliability even for modular systems.

Mulliken raised concerns about Village Hall Option 1's elimination of the restrooms and questioned how ADA-accessible restroom access would be maintained. She also expressed concern that Option 2 would reduce the hall's usability for non-Board-meeting events by adding only a one-foot-high platform. She also questioned whether a second AV quote had been obtained, noting the Board had previously voted to seek one, and suggested that spending significant money on AV in both buildings would compound costs.

Meacham stated he would vote for neither physical stage expansion option, arguing that the Village Hall is functional enough as-is and that for large meetings, seating could be arranged on the floor. He reaffirmed the need for a second AV opinion before proceeding.

Hoyerman echoed the call for a second AV opinion and recalled asking Keller's architect directly whether technology could resolve the acoustic and communication issues without physical changes. He indicated that the emerging answer appeared to be yes, and that he was therefore less inclined to support physical modifications.

K. Nelson stated he was personally against making any physical changes to the Village Hall at this time, arguing that if improvements are ever undertaken, the building should be considered as a whole rather than piecemeal. He suggested that the focus of investment in the building should be limited to AV improvements.

Bristol confirmed he had a meeting scheduled with a second AV company on Friday and noted that a decision on AV should inform the scope of the Admin Building project. He observed that AV work in the Village Hall would be more labor-intensive than in a new building due to the difficulty of running wires through existing walls and ceilings.

Andy Bartelt offered the perspective that the Village Hall was not well-designed for formal meetings. He noted that meetings were held at the old schoolhouse (Administration Building) from 1984 until COVID forced a move to the hall in 2020. He questioned whether it was worth spending money to "make do" in a building not suited to the purpose. He also raised the practical concern that parking near the Village Hall is a significant problem, particularly for larger meetings, a problem that would not exist at the Admin Building.

Hoyerman responded with a strong statement in favor of keeping official Village business in the Village Hall. He expressed concern that if meetings were relocated permanently to the Administration Building, the Village Hall could gradually lose its official character and become an ornament, citing the Anderson Dock as an example. He stated the Village Hall was built for this purpose, is iconic to the Village, and that maintaining official use of it would be "a self-fulfilling thing" to ensure it is properly maintained and owned as an official building.

Following discussion, K. Nelson sought a resolution to document the Board's direction.

Hoyerman moved, Meacham seconded, that the Village Board resolve that henceforth the Village Board meetings, Plan Committee meetings, Historic Preservation Committee meetings, Board of Review meetings, and the Board of Zoning Appeals meetings be held at the Ephraim

Village Hall. And that, going forward, the working Committee meetings may be held in the Administration Building, whatever form that takes going forward. Furthermore, there should be continued pursuit of updating the audiovisual capabilities of this Village Hall for the purpose of increasing the reliability and effectiveness of public meetings, all ayes. Motion carried.

Administration Building Options

K. Nelson then led discussion to narrow the Administration Building options from three to two options. He summarized the remaining options: Option 1 (rehabilitate within the existing footprint, new roof, HVAC, and accessibility ramp), Option 2 (same rehabilitation plus an approximately 818-square-foot addition, about half of which accommodates an enclosed ramp), and Option 4 (new building on the same property).

A discussion was held regarding the Administration Building options. Hoyerman argued against Option 4 on fiscal grounds. He noted that the Village must spend approximately \$600,000 in deferred maintenance on the existing building regardless, and that this cost effectively neutralizes the cost-efficiency argument for building new, purpose-built. He stated he preferred Options 1 or 2 because they incorporate that necessary remediation work. Mulliken added that if Option 4 were selected, she would have difficulty justifying additional investment in the Village Hall for AV, given the overall expenditure. Meacham noted a preference for Options 1 or 2 as well, citing concern about leaving the old schoolhouse as an unused building—calling it a potential "bureaucracy" and a "money pit." T. Nelson agreed and stated he was willing to eliminate Option 4, noting that Options 1 and 2 both involve essentially the same gut rehabilitation work and differ only in floor plan and square footage. K. Nelson concurred, noting that abandoning the existing Admin Building would mean spending money to fix it and then having to determine what to do with it.

The Village Board agreed to proceed with Options 1 and 2 and to invite Keller to a special Board meeting to present and discuss the two (2) options in detail before a final decision is made.

Mulliken moved, T. Nelson seconded, to proceed with Option 1 or Option 2 for the Administration Building, all ayes. Motion carried.

d. Discussion regarding draft Protected Waterfront ordinance:

K. Nelson presented the draft revised Protected Waterfront Ordinance, noting this was a discussion item only. He explained that in May 2026, the Village Board directed the Plan Committee to revisit Ordinance §17.20 after reviewing three projects under the previously revised ordinance that resulted in outcomes, specifically two-story houses, that were inconsistent with the ordinance's intent. The Plan Committee held five working sessions of approximately two hours each to develop the draft.

K. Nelson outlined what had not changed: The ordinance's intent to preserve open viewing and encourage maintenance of existing residences, and the 23-foot maximum structure height (with certain features allowed up to 25 feet). He then described the clarifications made: definitions of a 1.5-story house, decks, porches, and other terms were added.

Regarding what has become more restrictive, K. Nelson explained:

- Proposed footprint alterations may be no wider than the existing structure as measured parallel to State Highway 42, though structures may be made deeper.
- The previous allowance for up to 50% of the roof to be pitched between 3:12 and 6:12 has been eliminated. Architects had used the gentler slope to effectively create two-story houses. The new ordinance requires a 6:12 to 12:12 pitch, with specific exceptions for shed dormers, porch roofs, and front entrance roofs.
- Existing decks and porches may be replaced in kind, but if none exist, none may be added on a new or rebuilt structure.
- Outdoor lighting has been minimized and restricted to entry points of homes.

Regarding what has become less restrictive:

- Reproductions of existing structures—rebuilding a home to match its existing look using modern materials—are now a permitted use, allowing property owners to fully rebuild without triggering the full set of new construction standards.
- Section 6 provides new language granting the Plan Committee broad latitude to work with applicants who retain the original building, incentivizing preservation.
- Sections 6, 7, and 8 together now provide multiple defined paths: preserving the existing structure, reproducing it, or undertaking a new addition or replacement—each with its own requirements.
- Attached garages may be incorporated into the living area, subject to restrictions on overall width and a prohibition on adding upper-level living space over the reclaimed garage footprint.
- Accessory buildings may similarly be absorbed into the principal structure, with the same restrictions.

A discussion was held regarding the draft ordinance. Hoyerman noted that while the intent language had been reworded, the underlying goal of the ordinance remained the same as the original.

Meacham raised a question about the lighting restriction, suggesting that rather than limiting the number of fixture locations, the ordinance might be better served by limiting lumens, since LED technology can allow many fixtures at low output without being intrusive. He also questioned what specific "look" the ordinance was trying to preserve, noting that the Protected Waterfront District currently has no consistent architectural character. K. Nelson acknowledged the difficulty in defining that look, but said the goal was to prevent the ordinance from inadvertently forcing all new construction to look the same by limiting options and preserve the variety that exists now. He noted the principal intent is to preserve open viewing of the bay along the entire stretch of the district. Mulliken asked Bristol whether the new ordinance would make it easier to give applicants clear direction at the front end, potentially reducing the time spent on non-viable proposals. Bristol confirmed that the clearer pathways and language should help, and that the Plan Committee had already discussed encouraging concept reviews before formal applications. He noted that for most projects, informal pre-application conversations already happen before anything comes to a public meeting.

K. Nelson raised the question of whether to formally require or encourage a concept review for protected waterfront applications.

Bristol expressed some caution about creating another layer of defined requirements and noted that the value of a concept review depends on the level of detail an applicant brings. He indicated he would continue to encourage such reviews informally regardless.

The Board generally agreed that "encouraging" rather than "requiring" a concept review was the right approach.

Hoyerman noted that the most successful projects in his experience on the Plan Committee are those that begin with a concept review.

T. Nelson asked more directly how the specific changes in the ordinance resolved the problems the Plan Committee encountered with recent project application submissions.

K. Nelson pointed to the new multiple pathways (Sections 6, 7, and 8) and the improved organizational structure—listing general requirements, design criteria, and dimensional standards in sequence as the primary improvements that should give architects and applicants a clearer roadmap.

K. Nelson noted the ordinance will be scheduled for a public hearing at next month's Board meeting, with a final discussion and possible adoption at the subsequent meeting. He will not be present next month, so he wanted to use this meeting to surface any remaining concerns so the Plan Committee can make adjustments at its next session in two weeks.

Mulliken agreed to mark up specific areas of concern in the definitions and footprint language as she noted them during the meeting. She pointed out that these sections could be clearer, and she intended to send her suggestions to K. Nelson for review. She specifically expressed that she found the language around "no width increase and no more total footprint" somewhat confusing. She suggested that improving clarity in these areas would ensure the ordinance is more understandable for applicants. Additionally, she indicated she would consider how the definitions are presented in §17.09 and whether they adequately serve to clarify the ordinance's application.

K. Nelson stated that he would welcome her input, as the Plan Committee was scheduled to hold another session in two weeks, during which these adjustments could be discussed.

e. **Discussion regarding North Path tree planting:**

K. Nelson recalled that the item was discussed at the last Board meeting and referred to the Physical Facilities & Utilities Committee (PFU).

Meacham explained that the PFU Committee had to defer the item due to technical difficulties that prevented the Committee from viewing schematics of the proposed solar bollard locations and proposed tree-planting areas.

Meacham reported that the PFU Committee reviewed the proposal in concept and felt that the number of proposed trees was excessive for the area. He indicated the Committee would bring a full report back at the next meeting. He also noted that the email to Mr. Wolff regarding the matter had been sent. Mr. Wolff plans to be present at the next PFU meeting.

A discussion was held regarding North Path tree planting. K. Nelson added that during the discussion, it was suggested that larger trees such as maples should be placed as far back from the path as possible. Mulliken noted that none of the trees in the current proposal are native to Wisconsin, and expressed a preference for native plantings consistent with the Village's general direction. She also raised concern that the Sienna Glen Maple's aggressive root system could potentially cause damage. She reiterated her request to see a more visual representation of the proposal. T. Nelson likewise expressed a preference for native species, though he acknowledged that non-native ornamental trees are visually appealing. He noted that native species may not offer the same seasonal color, but would be more appropriate. Meacham noted that the Committee had discussed several native options, including Kentucky coffee tree, Hackberry, American Hornbeam, disease-resistant Princeton Elm, and Swamp White Oak. Hoyerman expressed support for the native tree direction and was pleased that the planting plan is being coordinated with the solar bollard installation. K. Nelson noted his concern about the volume of trees proposed and indicated he was not enthusiastic about crabapples as a Village-planted parkway tree, favoring species that would grow large enough not to obstruct views of the businesses along the path. He also noted that large-canopy trees could conflict with the solar bollards, a concern Meacham acknowledged.

9. **Wastewater:**

a. **Discussion and consideration regarding Wastewater request to send out an RFP for Solar Project:**

Bristol provided context, noting that both the Wastewater Committee and Green Tier Ad-Hoc Committee had previously recommended keeping the solar project on the agenda. The most recent Wastewater Committee meeting included a recommendation to send out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the solar installation.

Bruce Nelson, representing both Green Tier and the Wastewater Committees, explained the background. He stated the project had stalled because the consulting engineer indicated the existing plans and specifications were not in biddable form as a standalone Solar Project, and that additional fees would be required to bring them to that standard. He said there was little appetite in either Committee to pay for another design iteration. He proposed to instead develop an RFP that would provide prospective vendors with the Village's electricity usage data, usage patterns, and rate information, and ask vendors to propose their own design, system size, and cost. He described this as

a design-build approach, stating it does not obligate the Village to any particular vendor or outcome, but would generate current, competitive proposals to inform a decision. He emphasized that there is a time-sensitive component related to available rebates.

A discussion was held regarding the development of an RFP for the Solar Project. K. Nelson framed the proposal as a Request for Bids rather than a Design Document, noting the Village would be seeking a deliverable solar system with vendors providing performance and cost information. Meacham expressed support, noting it would give the Village a better understanding of cost and return on investment. Mulliken supported the effort as well, highlighting that a concrete proposal could also support future grant applications. T. Nelson agreed and suggested the Village aim for two or three competitive responses. B. Nelson indicated he had identified approximately a half-dozen vendors in Wisconsin and Minnesota with the capacity to handle a project of this size, though not all may respond.

Regarding the process for drafting the RFP, Bristol noted he would be involved and suggested Rasmusson and B. Nelson would also participate. He preferred not to formally structure it as a working Committee or Task Force. K. Nelson, Meacham, and Bristol informally agreed to collaborate on the RFP, with Mulliken offering to review drafts. B. Nelson noted the existing draft was fairly complete and would require relatively minor adjustments—removing requirements more appropriate to large public works projects and streamlining it for a smaller proposal context.

Meacham moved, Mulliken seconded, that the Village of Ephraim request proposals for the design, supply, construction, installation, and startup of a PV solar power system for the Village of Ephraim Wastewater Treatment Plant, all ayes. Motion carried.

10. Airport:

- a. Discussion and consideration regarding right of first refusal for hangar A4:**
T. Nelson moved, Meacham seconded, to decline the right of first refusal for Hangar A4, all ayes. Motion carried.
- b. Discussion and consideration regarding sale of hangar A4 from Mary Houck to Fabian Waleffe:**
T. Nelson moved, Mulliken seconded, to approve the sale of Hangar A4 from Mary Houck to Fabian Waleffe, all ayes. Motion carried.
- c. Discussion and consideration regarding lease with Fabian Waleffe for Hangar A4:**
Hoyerman moved, Meacham seconded, to approve the lease with Fabian Waleffe for Hangar A4, all ayes. Motion carried.

11. Committee Minutes for review: There were no comments regarding Committee Minutes.

12. New Business for the Next Meeting:

- a. North Path Tree Planting (including native species options and visual representation)
- b. An update on Moravia Point.
- c. Trees south of Firehouse Marina.

13. Adjournment:

T. Nelson moved, Meacham seconded, to adjourn at 9:14 PM, all ayes. Motion carried.

*Recorded by,
Kim Roberts – Deputy Clerk*