

**VILLAGE OF HORTONVILLE
VILLAGE BOARD
JULY 16, 2026 MEETING MINUTES
APPROVED AUGUST 6, 2026**

President Jeanne Bellile called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Center at 531 N. Nash St., Hortonville, Wisconsin.

Trustees present: Therese Abitz, Dalton Davis, Carrie Lathrop, Jim Moeller, and Julie Arendt Vanden Heuvel.

Trustees excused: Jane Olk

Officials/Staff present: Administrator Nathan Treadwell, Clerk-Treasurer Jane Booth, Director of Public Works Aaron Steber, Chief of Police Brian Bahr, Library Director Alexandria Krause and Attorney Ashley Lehocky, Village Engineer Ron Wolf (arrived at 6:42).

Consent Agenda

Motion [Moeller/Arendt Vanden Heuvel] to approve as outlined. Roll call vote, 7 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried.

- A. June 18, 2026 Regular Board meeting minutes
- B. Licenses and Permits
- C. Presentation of accounts and other claims against the Village

Agenda Changes

None

Preregistered Citizens to be heard

Shauna Keel, 235 S Mill Street, Hortonville. I have been a resident of this Village for 45 years. I have seen this community through many changes and in all that time, and during the seven years I have served on this board, I have been proud of our community to bring in small businesses. Today, however, I find myself in complete disillusion even contemplating leaving the only home my children and I have ever known. Our Village comprehensive plan and website promote Hortonville as a destination for collaboration aiming to attract diverse businesses and reinvest in vacant, downtown infrastructure. Yet, my own experience suggests these words are not being met with action. At the last meeting, a growing business, Hortonville Auto, that serves more than 25% of the Village households and/or the nonresidents that come to town for work and draws hundreds of customers from across the region from Green Bay to Kenosha applied for a conditional use consideration in a location that has been empty for over a decade and is an eyesore. Some of those out-of-town customers frequent other local businesses through our promotion and only because they are utilizing our services. Among those we have served for the last three years, are half of the members of this board, and their immediate family members. Additionally, we are the only location in the district authorized to carry privately owned product used by the DPW's equipment. Despite our professional reputation and service to many on this board, and our entire community, our business was compared to a strip club and treated as a joke during discussions regarding our future success. I ask that each of you, on the board or in the audience current or previous owners of businesses, how would that make you feel? The property in question suffers from contradictory zoning. It is classified as Industrial for tax purposes but restricted by a downtown district overlay. We have collaborated directly with the property owner to develop a plan that increases the tax base and allows us to continue serving residents. We have worked exclusively with the owner to ensure the property is beneficial for everyone involved. I am sure others have thoughts about what could go there, but we

collaborated, they did not. Hortonville Auto is being forced to move due to a property layout and zoning constraints, yet we face an impossible deadline to find a new location within the Village. We have exhausted every feasible option. While some suggested we belong in the Industrial Park, there is currently no land available there. Largely due to the presence of non-industrial businesses that previous boards allowed to occupy those spaces. I would never suggest asking those businesses to move or close, however, these are the facts. Additionally, auto repair shops require visibility for success and are generally in light industrial and commercial properties. We have met with the owners of other industrial sites, such as the canning, nail and toy factory, but available space in these locations, require cost-intuitive remodeling or lack of structural integrity necessary for automotive service needs. Many do not have solid floors to install lifts. Most of them do not have adequate water, sewer, bathroom, electrical, or lighting services to perform work. We have even reached out to owners of unlisted land, with no success.

This is not a matter of preference, it is a matter of viability. These are required tools for our trade and without them, failure is eminent. To address the concerns raised previously, our building plans are driven by employee safety and number of lifts needed for operational efficiency. Not the size of vehicles being serviced. Our goal is to have a safe professional workspace that meets modern standards. Alternative options like the previously available Mike Murphy Ford building or the soon to be vacant county building, were either physically unsuitable due to the items listed above or being claimed for public use further reducing the available taxable, industrial land in our village. We are left with a single option or the prospect of forever being shut down, resulting in the loss of family income, a cessation of our community donations and a potential displacement of our family from our home.

Decisions of this magnitude should not be based on the not in my backyard sentiment or statement from board members saying take the business over there, when there is simply no place over there to go. I repeat, there is no over there. The board previously approved a conditional use for a similar automotive business in the same downtown district.

To deny us now, is inconsistent and calls into question the fairness of these proceedings. We cannot promote revitalization while creating hardships that force established businesses to close. Additionally, another nonconforming property in the downtown district states that they may want to be removed from the district for resale purposes and a change of plans. If one property east of Nash can be removed from the district, why can't another for the same reason? This isn't even just about my business, restricting this plan to a nonrealistic view only stifles revenue and contradicts our stated goals of attracting traffic to this town with the loss due to the bypass. This can only lead me to believe that we exclusively want foot or bike traffic. If you drive a car, motorcycle, own a boat or a camper, you need not apply. We must decide if we truly want a thriving business or one that will account for only bike, or foot traffic. Finally, the name of Hortonville Auto is a tribute to our local history. Our business once named for the very downtown area that we are trying to revitalize. With photos of our heritage preserved in the local museum in the same downtown building it inhabits. I urge a member of this board to move for reconsideration by adding this to a near future board agenda. The stakes for my family and the community are far too high for this. Thank you.

Grant Krull, 224 W Main Street said that he is here to speak on behalf of myself and my fiancé. We have been very stressed out with hearing about the Auto Shop. I wish we would have found them sooner, they have worked on umpteen vehicles for my family, and friends. The affordability, the honesty, loyalty and their overall integrity is we can't go anywhere else. They are too valuable to lose to this community. Hearing that they cannot find a place to have a shop in Hortonville. It would be a tragedy to lose them. If you go anywhere else you will find that the price is too expensive, and it takes too long.

They are great friends. We have raised \$43,000 in charitable donations, and Alex and Shauna have donated hundreds. They have helped with adopt a family and donated thousands. I hope this board can consider and grant them the ability to rebuild in that area across from the BP. That is all I have to say, thank you.

Conni Soufal, W9315 School Road, said I would rather crawl in a corner than speak in front of everybody like this. But, when Alex got ahold of me today, I had to come. They cannot leave, I need them here, they are honest, and I trust them. They are honest mechanics and I feel really lucky that I have found them. We need them here; I need them here. I trust him. I really hope that you will reconsider and find something, if they leave then I have to follow them and that is uncomfortable. Thank you for your time.

Committee Reports

None

Unfinished Business from previous meetings

None

New Business

Discussion and possible action on Water Rate Case Study Phase 2- Conventional Rate Case Application, presentation by Ehlers

Ariana Schmidt from Ehlers was here to report, said that I was here 1-2 months ago to present on the water sewer rate study. On April of 2026 we did the rate increase with the initial long range cash flow analysis. Phase 2 was approved, and Ehlers was directed to complete the PSC Test Year 2026 Conventional Rate Case application. The last full rate case increase was done in 2016. In June 2026, Ehlers filed a SRC (simplified rate case) application on the Village's behalf per direction of the Village during Phase 1 presentation. The rate increase will take effect August 1, 2026.

In filing this request, it is not a guarantee; the PSC will do a cost-of-service study. They will come back with a final decision. The utility has no debt, so there is no debt ration as of yet.

There is no sewer rate increase. The application would need to be filed by July 31, 2026.

Motion [Arendt Vanden Heuvel/Moeller] for approval to move forward with the PSC TY2026 CRC Application.

Roll call vote, 7 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried.

Discussion and possible action on Special Assessment for defective private sewer laterals on the Downtown Section of the Main Street Project

Administrator Treadwell said that the main street project has pipe bursting that we are trying to do, and this would be the first time we are doing that.

There is a cost associated to the homeowner for this, between \$6,000 – \$8,000. The village would pay this up front and then we would assess a special assessment and add it to their tax bill. The homeowner has the option to opt out and then the fine (\$50.00) will be applied to their water bill until it is fixed. The interest rate would be 6.5 %, but that will also depend on what it is in August. I would like to determine the years for the Special Assessment to be paid back tonight.

DPW Director Steber explained that using these older laterals, there are breaks and cracks in them and that allows groundwater to infiltrate into our plant. We have to pay to treat that water,

and the more and more clean water that goes into our system, the more risk we have of a larger event getting to a maximum amount of material or water coming in and we could potentially have to have a sewage release into the river to stop sewage from backing up into the houses. We have not been close to that point, but a lot of our projects are trying to limit this I&I and what our engineers found is a lot of this comes from our private sewers, the old private laterals.

Attorney Lehocky asked about the special assessments.

Trustee Moeller wanted it explained to him as if he was a fourth grader. Why would the homeowner decide not to do the work and instead pay \$50.00 a month and not do the full pipe bursting?

DPW Director Steber said that if the lateral completely fails, the homeowner costs would be much higher, and the road would have to be torn up.

Attorney Lehocky said that you could eventually shut off their service if they fail to repair their lateral. We could shut off the water if it becomes a public health hazard.

Administrator Treadwell said that these prices could fluctuate when they are all said and done as these are estimated.

Trustee Davis asked how long the new laterals would last.

Village Engineer Ron Wolf said 60 – 80 plus years. He said that the new laterals are 4" replacing 6" clay or cast-iron pipes. Some communities have lead laterals, Hortonville is lucky they don't have that.

Attorney Lehocky said that this will come before the board again. What Nathan is looking for is feedback on how to proceed. If you say seven years, it is not set in stone. We are not at that point yet. She said just a head nod would be ok for tonight if they want five or seven years.

President Bellile asked if we wanted to go out 10 years like any other assessment. She asked if that was going to put a crunch in the system. What does everyone else think?

Discussion on special assessments.

Trustee Moeller said our guidance should start at 5 years and if we need to scale it back we can.

Administrator Treadwell said we should set it at the maximum amount.

Clerk-Treasurer Booth said that for the special assessments, Cedar Street was 10 years, Wildwind was 5 years, Alley Way was 4 years, Wildwind - Phase 2 was 4 years, and Mill Street was 6 years.

The consensus was to set it at 6 years for the payback.

Discussion and possible action on Public Works vehicle

DPW Director Steber said that this came from the last Public Works Committee meeting. Every Monday I meet with the team, and we figure out our plan and what we want to tackle for the week. We also have a Microsoft Planner app, and we add tasks and that is in the packet. In the

Public Works Committee there was a lot of discussion on what are the day-to-day tasks were. When we tried to put together how many hours a truck is used. There are always tasks that can be done. The main thing is we are down to 3 trucks for eight employees for day-to-day operations. We had a plow go down this last year at the end of the storm. I did start out looking at used trucks for \$30,000 - \$40,000 but they had over 100,000 miles on them. There is a consensus to stay with a white truck, and we would negotiate with the dealer on that. The Dodge Ram is not good for snow removal, maintenance on the Ford is harder for our crew. They have Chevys and they are able to work on them. When we have a Ford, we take it to the Ford dealer and that is pricey.

Trustee Arendt Vanden Heuvel asked if the water truck could be retrofitted into a plow truck and then the new truck that we would purchase could be the water truck.

Administrator Treadwell said that would be a different fund.

Trustee Moeller asked if we had a plow, and DPW Director Steber said that this price includes a snowplow and all the hook ups.

DPW Director Steber said in the handout are all three prices.

Motion [Moeller/Arendt Heuvel] to approve the Public Works Vehicle purchase of the 2027 Ford Super Duty Truck 250 XL with a plow not to exceed \$58,616.00.

Roll call vote, 7 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried.

Discussion and possible action on Opera House updates in front of the building

Administrator Treadwell said that the old windowsills alongside the front areas and they are covered by boards and rotted out grates. We talked with our engineer and wondered what we should do and if we should fill them in. We could then concrete the front area and bring in planters and seeding out front. The other thought was to put an ADA accessible entrance, and we are very limited on space, and this will be a harder project to take on. We would have to submit plans to the State because it is a historical landmark and the handrails would have to approve and I am guessing that the timeline wouldn't work out. I don't have any cost estimates yet.

DPW Director Steber said that the facilities manager said that water is coming in through the window wells. He has said there has been water coming in when it rains heavily.

Discussion was to go forward with having the engineer draw up plans and get them filled in the right way.

Discussion and possible action on Temporary No Parking during Construction of Main Street

Administrator Treadwell said that he met with the Police Chief, and DPW Director Steber and the idea is to keep the temporary no parking signs up when the detour is done. This was preemptive and we are now bringing it to the board for approval.

Motion [Arendt Vanden Heuvel/Davis] to accept the Temporary No Parking during the construction of main street in the areas mentioned.

Roll call vote, 7 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried.

Discussion and possible action on O-5-26 Creating R-O-W/Boulevard Maintenance Ordinance

Administrator Treadwell said that this was not in the packet.

Motion [Arendt Vanden Heuvel/Moeller] to defer O-5-2026 the resolution creating R-O-W/Boulevard Maintenance Ordinance.

Roll call vote, 7 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried.

Discussion and possible action on Resolution R-13-26 Amending Village Budget for Stormwater portion of TID 3 Project

Motion [Moeller/Arendt Vanden Heuvel] to approve the Resolution R-13-26 Amending the Village Budget Stormwater portion of TID 3 Project.

Roll call vote, 7 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried.

Report of Village Officials

Clerk-Treasurer: The report is in the packet.

Director of Public Works: The report is in the packet. I met with the people on the sidewalk project on Grandview and all the landscaping and concrete should be done by tomorrow.

Chief of Police: The report is in the packet. There are a couple of community events coming up for us, and a couple of trainings coming up.

Library Director: We have just shy of 1,100 registrations for our Summer Library Program this year. Some of the shortcomings for our summer programming are because of the heat and the rain. We have had one farmers market this year for the entire summer, because it has been either storming or raining. We will be closed on Monday, because of a very large computer system upgrade that involves the entire 50 location consortium.

Attorney: Ashley Lehocky said she is happy to be back.

Administrator: The report is in the packet. I have been busy for the most part. The biggest concern is downtown and the lack of progress, nothing has been delayed other than the bridge going out. We will be meeting with the contractor on Monday and there will be a conversation on their delaying of certain things. We are looking at a pedestrian walkway through Mid Con. Vinton plans to come in on the 27 and start. Elmstar Electric will be working on the stop lights next week.

Trustee Arendt Vanden Heuvel said that the bridge will be down for 40 days, and it will not be done for the start of the school year.

Chief of Police said we will continue to monitor and make adjustments as necessary. We will be communicating with our crossing guards and keeping them in the loop.

Any other miscellaneous topics for future discussion

None

Communications and Miscellaneous Business

Black Otter Lake District news: DPW Director Steber said that he wasn't able to attend.

Mostly getting everything ready for the Annual meeting on August 27 and food starting at 5:30 pm., with the meeting starting at 6:00 pm.

Building permit report: The June building report was submitted.

Hortonville-Hortonia Fire District news: We had met last night, we discussed the budget, fire had 63 calls and EMS had 148 which is average. We had a short discussion on the ambulance service fee and if Hortonia is going to do the same thing as Hortonville. The Hortonville/Hortonia softball tournament fundraiser is coming up on July 24th- 25th, I think they had about 14 teams, and that is a substantial profit. The repaving of the driveway came in a little bit under budget, but they still have to deal with the sealing of it yet. Next meeting is October 14 at 6:00 pm.

Gold Cross Ambulance run reports and news: None

Hortonville Civic Association: None

Senior Activities Committee: We had a meeting on Monday the 13th and we discussed Autumn Fest. If anybody wants to go to the trout museum, it will be free as a field trip. There is a good possibility that a foot care program will be coming and will be located downtown on Mondays. This will be in the Village Voice if it works out. This will be for seniors and anybody else that needs foot care.

Comments and suggestions from citizens present

Shauna Keel said she would like to thank the board for allowing me to speak. I would like to thank Trustee Moeller and Administrator Treadwell for their ability to look at our topic objectively at the last board meeting and trying to offer suggestions and options. Additionally, I would like to thank both of those folks as well for their attempt at the last board meeting to keep the focus of the discussion to the business itself and not the structure. Thank you.

Adjournment

Motion [Arendt Vanden Heuvel/Davis] to adjourn. Unanimous voice vote, motion carried. The Board adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Minutes submitted by,

Jane Booth, WCMC
Village Clerk/Treasurer