

VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, March 25, 2025
(Approved Version)

Agenda Item No. 1. The March 25, 2025 meeting of the Sister Bay Village Board of Trustees was called to order by President Nate Bell at 6:00 P.M.

Agenda Item No. 2. Roll Call

Present: President Bell and trustees Denise Bhirdo, Louise Howson, Kurt Harff, and Patrice Champeau. Lilly Orozco arrived at 6:02 PM. Alison Werner was excused.

Staff: Village Administrator Julie Schmelzer, Finance Director/Treasurer Vlad Gannik, Utilities Director Megan Barnes, Marina Manager Dave Lienau, Parks & Streets Director Erik Linczmaier, Administrative Assistant Janal Suppanz and Clerk Heidi Teich

Others: Laurel Harff, John Lijewski, Yvonne Wiltse, Ken Church, Nancy Akerly, Nick Deviley, Jim Roeser, Karen Berndt, Ellie Soderberg-Guger, Sally Pfeifer, Skip Heidler, Jill Wiebe, "iphone", "rwuel", Richard Burress, and Terry Wolf

Agenda Item No. 3. Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by Bell, seconded by Howson that the Agenda for the March 25, 2025 meeting of the Village Board of Trustees be approved as amended to remove the Executive Session item. Motion failed 2 -3, with Bhirdo, Harff and Champeau opposed. Orozco was not present for the vote.

A motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Champeau that the Agenda for the March 25, 2025 meeting of the Village Board of Trustees be approved as presented. Motion carried, 3 - 2 with Howson and Bell opposed.

Agenda Item No. 4. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Howson, seconded by Champeau that the minutes of the February 18, 2025 meeting of the Village Board of Trustees be approved as amended to correct a reference to Federal Reserve rate cuts. Motion carried – All ayes.

Agenda Item No. 5. Comments, correspondence, and concerns from the public

Correspondence received for this meeting, included:

- A letter from legal counsel for Barbara Hull regarding future use of property she owns within the village limits
- A notice from UW-Oshkosh related to a private well monitoring program

President Bell asked if anyone wished to offer any additional comments, and the following individuals were recognized:

Nick Deviley, 10438 Orchard Dr, shared comments on the number of meetings that have had Closed Session as part of the agenda, leaving the public unaware of what is happening, particularly concerning the village administrator. He asked if the public was going to learn what was happening, and if the board members other than those who serve on the Personal Committee were aware. Deviley recounted his history as a developer in the village who has worked with two prior administrators, and then with

consultants when the village went for an extended period without an administrator, all over a short period of years. He commented on Schmelzer's professionalism, stating she has been easy to work with, and questioned the board on when the turnover in administrators will stop.

Nancy Akerly, 10810 N Spring Rd, thanked the board for considering the creation of an historical overlay district which will help to maintain what local "color" they have left here in the village.

John Lijewski introduced himself as the President of the Sister Bay Historical Society and spoke in support of the proposed historic overlay district as it aligns directly with the Historical Society's mission of preserving historic buildings in the area.

Yvonne Wiltse, 10535 Koessl Ln, voiced her agreement with the previous comments regarding an historical overlay district as it will preserve the remaining character of the village as "a village" and not a city with multiple-storied buildings which only serve to seek tourist dollars.

Jim Roeser introduced himself and commented on his family's history as a "founding family" of the village. He stated that the Roesers have been in Sister Bay since 1877, and he would like to see the original Roeser house (2397 Maple Dr) designated as a historical site. He also commented on the sadness he feels to see so much of Sister Bay's green space having gone away.

Trustee Bhirdo inquired if any of those seeking election to the village board – Mr. Kelly, Ms. White, Mr. Smith, Mr. Kodanko or Mr. Basci were in attendance via Zoom during this meeting tonight, to which Teich responded negatively.

Agenda Item No. 6. Ordinances & Resolutions

a) Ord. 2025-002; Ch. 50; Health & Sanitation; Garbage Service

Schmelzer summarized the discussion held at the prior board meeting in which this ordinance was introduced. The ordinance clarifies rules pertaining to garbage service for short-term rental properties.

A motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Orozco to approve Ordinance 2025-002 which amends Chapter 50 of the Village of Sister Bay Municipal Code as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.

b) Ord. 2025-003; Ch. 65; Floodplain Zoning; Recreate Ordinance

Schmelzer shared that the village had previously had a floodplain ordinance on file, but the DNR requested revisions to meet state DNR requirements. Schmelzer also noted that having an ordinance benefits the village so that the DNR cannot step in and dictate the zoning in the floodplain areas, which are very minimal in Sister Bay.

A motion was made by Bell, seconded by Harff to approve Ordinance 2025-003 which recreates Chapter 65 of the Village of Sister Bay Municipal Code, now to be titled "Floodplain Zoning" as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.

c) Ord. 2025-004; Ch. 66; Zoning; B-2 Overlay, B-3 Height, Misc. Amendments

Schmelzer summarized the work of the Plan Commission over the past year to discuss text amendments to Chapter 66 of the Municipal Code, which saw a moratorium on development in the B-2 and B-3 zoning districts for six months. An historical overlay added to the B-2 district, restricted building height in select areas of the B-3 district, and other miscellaneous amendments which were presented at a public hearing of the Plan Commission who then forwarded the ordinance to the board tonight for adoption.

1 Trustee Champeau read a prepared statement asserting the importance of voting in favor of this
2 ordinance and protecting what little historical area of the village they have left. Champeau spoke of
3 features of the village that have been lost over the years and displayed a picture of the former lumber
4 yard that had been located along the bay. She described ways in which the district could be developed to
5 draw visitors who desire to learn about the origins of Sister Bay, while protecting the bluff and harbor
6 views.

7
8 *A motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Orozco to approve Ordinance 2025-004 which amends Chapter*
9 *66 of the Village of Sister Bay Municipal Code to create a B-2 Historic Overlay District, impose height*
10 *restrictions in the B-3 Business District, and other amendments as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*

11
12 **d) Ord. 2025-005; Ch. 62; Utility Code; Misc. Amendments**

13 A recommendation was made by the Sewer and Water Utility Committee to update its Code, Chapter 62,
14 and a draft ordinance was introduced to the board at its February meeting. No additional changes were
15 suggested or made to the Chapter since the last meeting.

16
17 *A motion was made by Orozco, seconded by Harff to approve Ordinance 2025-005 which amends Chapter*
18 *62 of the Village of Sister Bay Municipal Code as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*

19
20 **e) Ord. 2025-006; Ch. 65; Amending the Intergovernmental Agreement Establishing the Fire Board &**
21 **Fire Department**

22 **f) Ord. 2025-007; Ch. 23; Fire Department & Fire Board**

23 The Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village of Sister Bay and Town of Liberty Grove
24 concerning the Fire Department and Fire Board was done by ordinance, and any modifications of the
25 agreement must be done by ordinance. This amendment is necessary to authorize a change in
26 membership as requested by the Fire Board.

27
28 *A motion was made by Orozco, seconded by Champeau to approve Ordinance 2025-006 which amends the*
29 *Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village of Sister Bay and Town of Liberty Grove which created*
30 *the joint Fire Board and Fire Department as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*

31
32 *A motion was made by Orozco, seconded by Harff to approve Ordinance 2025-007 which amends Chapter*
33 *23 of the Village of Sister Bay Municipal Code concerning membership of the Fire Board as presented.*
34 *Motion carried – all ayes.*

35
36 **g) Ord. 2025-008; Adopting the 2025 Comprehensive Plan**

37 The Sister Bay Plan Commission has been working for some time to update its 20-year comprehensive
38 plan. Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission has assisted in the effort, and a public hearing was held in
39 February to gather resident input. The proposed plan was included in the meeting packet. Schmelzer
40 noted that without adoption, the village would lose out on state funding opportunities. She further noted
41 that the plan can be amended in the future.

42
43 During discussion on this item, clarification was made between the current Land Use Map depicted in the
44 plan, and a Zoning Map, as a concern was raised on the loss of green space due to potential future
45 development. The village cannot deny individual property owners the right to develop their land if it is
46 their desire to do so, and development is done per the requirements of the zoning code. Property owners
47 may also request rezoning, within limits.

1 *A motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Champeau to approve Ordinance 2025-008 which approves*
2 *the Village of Sister Bay 2025 Comprehensive Plan as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*
3
4

5 **h) Res. 2025-002; Establishing an Ad Hoc Village Administration Building Review Task Force/**
6 **Appointments**

7 As discussed at a prior meeting, an ad hoc task force has been formed to review village sites for a new
8 administration building. President Bell recommended the members of the committee shall include Dick
9 Burress, Kurt Harff, Ken Church, Chris Hecht, Ron Kane, Brigid White, Jill Wiebe, with a goal for the task
10 force to report to the village board in June 2025 with their analysis. Trustee Champeau asked to join the
11 committee as she missed the invitation to volunteer at the prior meeting. The members agreed that the
12 composition of the task force be changed to reflect that it is an eight person body.
13

14 *A motion was made by Orozco, seconded by Bhirdo to approve Resolution 2025-002 which creates an Ad*
15 *Hoc Administration Building Review Task Force to review potential sites for a new administration building*
16 *and appoint members to the task force as presented and amended to update the number of members to*
17 *eight, and include Patrice Champeau among its membership. Motion carried – all ayes.*
18

19 **i) Res. 2025-003; Extending the Term for the Ad Hoc Holiday Lighting & Parking Task Forces**

20 The Ad Hoc Holiday Lighting Task Force and Ad Hoc Parking Task Force were created in 2023, but have
21 never met. Schmelzer introduced a resolution to extend the terms of those task forces for an additional
22 twelve months to give them an opportunity to meet.
23

24 *A motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Champeau to approve Resolution 2025-003 which extends the*
25 *term of the Ad Hoc Holiday Lighting & Parking Task Forces to December 19, 2025 as presented. Motion*
26 *carried – all ayes*
27

28 **j) Res. 2025-004; Amending the Board & Committee Bylaws**

29 Several amendments have been proposed to the Village Board and Committee/Commission bylaws, such
30 as a more detailed description of the Personnel Committee, and the changes to the Fire Board
31 membership and Ad Hoc Administration Building Review Task Force, as discussed earlier this evening.
32

33 Bhirdo expressed concern about the Village President's role as ex-officio member, noting that this role
34 was created in the past to ensure that committees had a quorum. Recently, the president participated in
35 a Parks, Property & Streets Committee meeting which resulted in an illegal convening of the Village Board
36 as he made a quorum of the village board, and the meeting was not posted that way. She requested
37 clarification on what "ex-officio" really means, when should it be used, and what actions the president
38 can take in that role.
39

40 Also during the discussion, the members requested that the description of the Personnel Committee in
41 the bylaws be revised as pertains to Item No. 8 to state *"Responsible for recruitment and interviewing of*
42 *a village administrator, and make recommendations to the village board."*
43

44 Schmelzer indicated that she would research the ex-officio role and report back to the board at the net
45 month's meeting.
46

1 *A motion was made by Orozco, seconded by Howson to approve Resolution 2025-004 which amends the*
2 *Village of Sister Bay Board of Trustees Bylaws and Village of Sister Bay Committee/Commission Bylaws*
3 *and Rules as presented and amended as discussed at this meeting. Motion carried – all ayes*
4

5 **k) Res. 2025-005; Adopting Financial Policies**

6 Finance Director Gannik presented the policies which were reviewed at the Finance Committee meeting
7 earlier this month, and recommended by the members for board approval. No additional comments were
8 shared.
9

10 *A motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Orozco to approve Resolution 2025-005 which approves and*
11 *adopts various Financial Policies for the Village of Sister Bay as presented. Motion carried – all ayes*
12

13 **l) Res. 2025-006; Policy for Non-Violent Civil Rights Demonstrations**

14 **m) Res. 2025-007; Residential Anti-Displacement & Relocation Assistance Plan**

15 **n) Res. 2025-008 & Ord 2025-009; Fair and Open Housing**

16 Schmelzer explained that these three resolutions are required of their application for a Community
17 Development Block Grant, with more to be presented at the April board meeting after a public hearing on
18 citizen participation. The deadline for application is May 15, 2025.
19

20 *A motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Orozco to approve the following:*

- 21 - *Resolution 2025-006 which enacts a policy to prohibit the use of excessive force and to enforce*
22 *applicable state and local laws prohibiting physically barring entrances/exits for non-violent civil*
23 *rights demonstrations as presented;*
- 24 - *Resolution 2025-007 which enacts a Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance*
25 *Plan (RARAP) as presented; and*
- 26 - *Resolution 2025-008 which adopts Wisconsin Statutes §106.50 and Ordinance 2025-009 which*
27 *creates Chapter 42 of the Village of Sister Bay Municipal Code, titled “Fair and Open Housing” as*
28 *presented.*

29 *Motion carried – all ayes*
30

31 **Agenda Item No. 7. Discussion/Action Items**

32 **a) Accept Bid; Sports Complex Sewer Lateral; Great Lakes Grading & Excavation**

33 A new sewer lateral is planned at the sports complex for the construction of new restrooms at the baseball
34 field. Bids were let, and of those who responded, Great Lakes Grading and Excavating out of Sturgeon
35 Bay proposed the lowest bid at \$218,540.25. This price does not reflect the removal of a failing lift station
36 (\$11,142.50) as they did not anticipate having to remove it when budgeting for Public Works building,
37 which funds are also covering this sewer lateral.
38

39 *A motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Harff to award the bid for installation of a sewer lateral at the*
40 *Sister Bay Sports Complex, and execute an applicable contract with Great Lakes Grading & Excavation as*
41 *presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*
42

43 **b) Park Vendor/Concession Contracts; Glide N.E.W. LLC & Peninsula Kayak**

44 A recommendation was forwarded from the Parks, Property & Streets Committee to award a three-year
45 contract to Peninsula Kayak and Glide N.E.W. LLC for kayak rentals at Waterfront Park and Segway Tours
46 from the Sports Complex, respectively. The terms of the contract remain the same as those offered in
47 prior years, with the concessionaire contributing a portion of their season earnings to the village as
48 payment for the space.

1
2 *A motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Orozco to enter into a contract with Peninsula Kayak, Dane*
3 *Spitzer and Robert Geitner – owners, for concession services at the Waterfront Park Beach during the 2025*
4 *season as presented; and enter into a contract with Glide N.E.W. LLC dba Segway the Door Tours, Nick*
5 *Dokolas - owner, for concession services at the Sister Bay Sports Complex during the 2025 season as*
6 *presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*

7
8 **c) Terminate Easement; Boathouse Area**

9 The village previously granted an easement to the Johnson family for access to property they formerly
10 owned near the boathouse. The easement was never terminated with the village's acquisition of the
11 Johnson property. To clear up any future confusion, a termination document should be recorded with
12 the Door County Register of Deeds office.

13
14 *A motion was made by Orozco, seconded by Champeau to execute a Termination of Easement for*
15 *property owned by the Village of Sister Bay and identified as Parcel No. 181-00-05312841P2, Door*
16 *County Records, and direct staff to see that the termination is properly recorded in the office of the Door*
17 *County Register of Deeds in a timely fashion. Motion carried – all ayes.*

18
19
20 **d) Approve Open Book & Board of Review Dates**

21 Dates for the Village of Sister Bay Open Book and Board of Review have been suggested by Action
22 Appraisers, the village's assessor, for Thursday, May 29, 2025 and Monday, June 9, 2025, respectively.
23 Open Book will be offered by phone only with the assessor, while the Board of Review, which is
24 conducted by the Board of Trustees, will meet in-person at the Village Hall.

25
26 *A motion was made by Bell, seconded by Howson to approve the dates for the 2025 Open Book and*
27 *Board of Review sessions on May 29, 2025 and June 9, 2025 as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*

28
29 **e) Committee Appointments; Plan Commission**

30 A vacancy was created on the Plan Commission with the retirement of Marge Grutzmacher in July 2024.
31 President Bell has recommended Frank "Skip" Heidler be appointed to complete Grutzmacher's term,
32 which expires in May 2026.

33
34 *A motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Howson to approve the appointment of Frank "Skip" Heidler*
35 *to serve on the Plan Commission for the term ending May 2026 as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*

36
37 **f) Monthly Financial Report & Appropriations**

38 Finance Director Gannik prepared the monthly statements and included them in the meeting packet for
39 the members to review. Gannik explained that an additional report was added which detailed the
40 issued check number as suggested by the village auditors. No additional questions were asked.

41
42 *A motion was made by Bell, seconded by Orozco to approve the monthly bills in the amount of*
43 *\$342,963.30 as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*

44
45 **Agenda Item No. 8. Committee Reports**

46 **Finance Committee:** The Finance Committee met on March 10, 2025 and minutes of the meeting were
47 included in the meeting packet. Bhirdo asked that several amendments to the minutes be made, and
48 Teich took note to do so according to Bhirdo's direction.

Fire Board: Harff reported that the Fire Board met on February 27, 2025. He noted that the new fire engine should be ready by May and grant funding is still available to date.

Ad Hoc Green Tier Legacy Community Committee: Minutes of the February 19, 2025 meeting of the Green Tier Legacy Community Committee were included in the meeting packet. Harff reported that there will be a tree giveaway in April. The committee is also working on a reusable bag that will be offered for distribution in the community.

Historical Society: Minutes of the March 6, 2025 meeting were provided. Champeau reported on the independent film being shot at the historical society grounds this week.

Housing Committee: The Housing Committee has not met recently.

Library Commission: Minutes of the February 10, 2025 meeting of the Library Commission were submitted. Harff had no additional comments to share.

Marina Committee: Minutes of the February 19, 2025 meeting of the Marina Committee were included in the meeting packet. A brief discussion took place on the option of utilizing plastic-based decking on the boardwalk which was rejected because it could cause static electricity and unsafe conditions around boat fuel tanks.

Parking Committee: The Parking Committee has not yet met.

Parks, Property & Streets Committee: Minutes of the March 3, 2025 meeting of the Parks, Property & Streets Committee were included in the meeting packet. No additional comments were shared.

Personnel Committee: Minutes of the February 12, 2025, February 19, 2025 and March 3, 2025 meetings of the Personnel Committee were provided in the packet. Bhirdo asked about the possibility of developing employment contracts for staff. Bell noted that he does not have a sample at this time, but the idea is to offer the employee a sense of security with a contract. No formal document has been developed yet.

Plan Commission: Minutes of the February 25, 2025 and March 11, 2025 meetings of the Plan Commission were included in the meeting packet. No additional comments were shared.

SBAA: No minutes were provided. Orozco reported that the shuttle bus route has been approved for the season and a tracking app has been purchased for live tracking.

Tourism Zone Commission: No minutes were provided. Howson noted that the last meeting was an executive session, but a full commission meeting will be held in the near future.

Sewer and Water Utility Committee: The committee did not meet in March.

Village Hall Planning Task Force: The Village Hall Planning Task Force has not met recently.

Also included in the meeting packet were minutes of the February 19, 2025 Zoning Board of Appeals Hearing and February 10, 2025 meeting of the Door County Coastal Byways.

1
2 *A motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Orozco to accept the various committee reports as*
3 *presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*
4

5 **Agenda Item No. 9. Matters to be placed on a future agenda or referred to a committee, official or**
6 **employee**

7 It was the consensus of the committee that the following items be included on a future board meeting
8 agenda:

- 9
 - Discussion on additional resolutions related to the Community Development Block Grant

10 application

11
 - Discussion on the definitions of “ex-officio” and conditions under which it should be utilized

12

13 *The next meeting of the Village Board of Trustees will take place on Tuesday, April 15, 2025 at 6:00 P.M.*
14

15 **Agenda Item No. 10. Executive Session**

16 **a) Consider a motion to convene into Closed Session pursuant to Wis. Stats., §19.85(1)(g) to confer**
17 **with legal counsel who either orally or in writing will advise the Village Board on strategy to be adopted**
18 **with respect to current or likely litigation: Pending litigation to be filed by the Village Administrator.**

19 *At 7:51 P.M., a motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Champeau to convene into Closed Session*
20 *pursuant to Wis. Stats., §19.85(1)(g) to confer with legal counsel who either orally or in writing will advise*
21 *the Village Board on strategy to be adopted with respect to current or likely litigation: Pending litigation*
22 *to be filed by the Village Administrator.*
23

24 *A roll call vote was taken on the motion, and the members voted in the following fashion:*
25

26 *Bhirdo – aye; Champeau – aye; Harff – aye; Howson – aye; Orozco – aye; Bell – aye*
27

28 *Motion carried.*
29

30 **b) Motion to reconvene into Open Session**

31 *At 8:18 P.M. a motion was made Orozco, seconded by Bhirdo to reconvene into open session. Again, a*
32 *roll call vote was taken and the members voted in the following fashion:*
33

34 *Bhirdo – aye; Champeau – aye; Harff – aye; Howson – aye; Orozco – aye; Bell – aye*
35

36 *Motion carried.*
37

38 **c) Motion for Action, if Appropriate**

39 *No motion was made as a result of the closed session.*
40

41 **Agenda Item No. 11 Adjourn**

42 *At 8:19 P.M. a motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Howson to adjourn the March 25, 2025 meeting*
43 *of the Village Board of Trustees. Motion carried – all ayes.*
44

45 Respectfully submitted,

46 
47 Heidi Teich,

1 Village Clerk