

**PARKS, PROPERTY & STREETS COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**MONDAY, MAY 5, 2025**  
**(Approved Version)**

**Agenda Item No. 1. Call Meeting to Order and Roll Call:**

The May 5, 2025 monthly meeting of the Parks, Property & Streets Committee was called to order by Committee Chair Louise Howson at 2:33 P.M.

**Committee Members Present:** Committee Chair Louise Howson and members Denise Bhirdo, Nate Bell, Mike Laszkiewicz and Jerry Ahrens.

**Staff Members Present:** Parks & Streets Department Director Erik Linczmaier and Clerk Heidi Teich

**Others Present:** Laurel and Kurt Harff, Myles Dannhausen, Chris Schmeltz, Erin Peddle, Ellie Soderburg-Guger, Sklyer Witalison, Hannah Burns, and Jessica Hatch

**Agenda Item No. 2. Approval of Agenda**

*A motion was made by Bell, seconded by Ahrens that the Agenda for the March 3, 2025 meeting of the Parks, Property & Streets Committee be approved as presented. Motion carried – All ayes.*

**Agenda Item No. 3. Approval of Minutes**

*A motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Laszkiewicz that the minutes for the April 7, 2025 meeting of the Parks, Property & Streets Committee be approved as amended. Motion carried – All ayes.*

**Agenda Item No. 4. Comments, correspondence and concerns from the public:**

Howson asked if anyone would like to comment regarding a non-agenda item. Chris Schmeltz was recognized and read a prepared statement regarding the village's receipt of Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant Funds and its obligation to use lands acquired with those funds for public recreation purposes. He stated that the village is currently in non-compliance concerning lands adjacent to the Dorr Hotel, and that he was given consent by the village board to contact Vierbicher to research options for the village to bring the land back into compliance. Schmeltz distributed the results of Vierbicher's work to the members for their review.

Correspondence was received for this meeting from Terry Wolf, Sister Bay Historical Society, which Howson read for the public. Wolf indicated that he was unable to attend this afternoon's meeting, but that Schmeltz was familiar with the sites they were going to propose for historical signage near the boathouse.

Howson also distributed an email from Jessica Hatch, Door County Broadband Coordinator, concerning fiber markers in the right-of-way for the members to reference as part of Agenda Item No. 6, in which the Administrator reports on the broadband infrastructure.

**Agenda Item No. 5. Discussion/Action Items**

**a. Property Lease Agreement; Friends of the Ice Rink**

The committee previously reviewed a draft of a proposed Operating Agreement between the Village of Sister Bay and "The Friends of the Sister Bay Ice Rink" for the new Sister Bay Ice Rink, which was again included in the packet for this meeting. Dannhausen explained that he had corresponded with Schmeltz over the weekend and a red-line version of the agreement prepared by the Friends' legal counsel was forwarded to the village's attorney and will be available for review at the next Parks meeting. The changes

1 addressed in the draft currently being reviewed by legal counsel states that the term of the lease is 10  
2 years, a termination clause given 90 days' notice by the village of the Friends' group's failure to meet the  
3 terms of the agreement, and options for remedies if the village seeks to terminate for cause before the  
4 term is up. Dannhausen continued, noting that additional language was added to address damage to the  
5 Sports Complex facility, as the Friends' group cannot be held responsible for all potential damage done to  
6 the facility when it is not being used for skating. Also, he shared the advice of their attorney to combine  
7 the lease agreement and operating agreement either in the same document, or as separate documents  
8 that have the same term dates.

9  
10 Each of the committee members then shared comments. Laszkiewicz requested clarification on the use  
11 of the terms "property owner" versus "village property" but liked that the agreement is short and simple.

12  
13 Bell spoke in favor of auto-renewal of the lease and proposed it be with 12 months of lead time.  
14 Dannhausen noted that the current draft includes a six-month lead time, but he would not be opposed to  
15 a change to 12 months. Laszkiewicz spoke of the need to revisit the terms of the agreement throughout  
16 the lease term to ensure the village is still benefiting from it.

17  
18 Ahrens felt the land lease and operating agreement were inter-dependent and could be combined. He  
19 asked Dannhausen what the group can do at this point with the lease agreement as the operating  
20 agreement has not yet been approved. Dannhausen explained that the land lease will allow them to start  
21 talking with contractors about renovations and prefers to move quickly to get it approved so they can  
22 start work this year. He was also optimistic that both agreements could be carried out at the same time.  
23 Howson added that the land lease provides assurances that work being done on the rink will be  
24 undertaken by the Friends group and is not the obligation of village staff.

25  
26 Bhirdo asks that the lease includes the provision that the lessor will automatically provide their certificate  
27 of liability of insurance annually rather than requiring the village to ask for it each year. Teich added that  
28 many insurance companies already do this for other entities that interact with the village.

29  
30 Ahrens asked about the use of the rink during the summer months if it is under lease and being used for  
31 other activities, such as basketball or pickleball. Bhirdo echoed this fact, and everyone agreed that this  
32 needs to be brought up to the attorneys to contemplate a response. One initial thought was to relinquish  
33 the land back to the village in the summer season (June – October) as it would not benefit anyone to close  
34 it if the Friends group is unable to manage it during the summer. Bell pointed out that whatever the  
35 arrangement, it will be crucial to make sure that any summer use of the ice rink doesn't damage its  
36 surface.

37  
38 Howson summarized the next steps to receive a revised draft of the land lease agreement for review at  
39 the June Parks, Property & Streets Committee meeting in anticipation of it being forwarded to the village  
40 board in June as well. Schmelzer will also be asked for an update on the status of the Operating Agreement  
41 to keep that document moving forward as well.

42  
43 **b. Bid Review; Highway 57 Trail**

44 Bids were received for both engineering and construction oversight of a proposed trail along State  
45 Highway 57 from AECOM, Graef, McMahon, Robert E. Lee, and Stantec. Links to all the proposed bids  
46 were included in the meeting packet and the committee members jointly reviewed that information.

1 Howson began by stating their task to recommend a company for award the engineering and  
2 construction oversight contracts. Due to the way in which this project is being funded, through a  
3 Department of Transportation TAP Grant, the actual costs of construction are not able to be known at  
4 this time. Skyler Witalison, of Stantec Consulting Services, Inc., was present at this meeting and asked by  
5 the committee to elaborate on this. Witalison explained that this practice by the state intends to make  
6 the selection of a contractor based on quality rather than cost.

7  
8 Laszkiewicz noted the dramatic difference in pricing among the bidders and inquired about the grant  
9 amount. It was noted that the village received an award of \$906,000 from the TAP Grant. The actual  
10 costs of the trail construction, and construction oversight, are reimbursable by the DOT, but the  
11 engineering costs will be the responsibility of the village. Ahrens added that money has been budgeted  
12 for this expense, as well as funds allocated for a sidewalk near the new medical center when they opted  
13 not to install the sidewalk on the east side of the highway.

14  
15 Howson asked if the village was required to decide right now, knowing that construction cannot begin  
16 until 2027. Witalison was again asked for input, and he replied that the DOT sets the schedule for when  
17 the trail can be completed based on their review timelines, which could be months. He stated that there  
18 are a dozen reviews involved in this project, which could push the actual construction date out further.  
19 This does not prevent the engineering component from being completed now and available when they  
20 are ready for it.

21  
22 The committee members each voiced their preferences in recommending a firm to the board. They  
23 pointed out that Stantec was the lowest bidder, and AECOM is working on a trail in neighboring Ephraim  
24 right now. Robert E. Lee has done work with the village previously, but staff has not been asked to  
25 provide feedback on how they are to work with. Everyone agreed that Graef and McMahon were priced  
26 too high. The committee discussed the option of choosing different firms for each award, which is  
27 allowable.

28  
29 *A motion was made by Ahrens, seconded by Laszkiewicz to recommend to the Village Board that the*  
30 *award for engineering of the State Highway 57 trail be granted to Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. as*  
31 *presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*

32  
33 *A motion was made by Laszkiewicz, seconded by Ahrens to recommend to the Village Board that the*  
34 *award for the construction oversight of the State Highway 57 trail be awarded to Stantec Consulting*  
35 *Services, Inc. as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*

36  
37 **c. Referral from Housing Committee; Stormwater Fence**

38 The Sister Bay Housing Committee has brought up a concern regarding the stormwater pond off Ava  
39 Hope Court, which is without a physical barrier between it and the public. Their concern is that it could  
40 pose a potential hazard for curious children who might play in that area. The Parks, Property & Streets  
41 Committee previously visited this area and determined that no fencing was necessary.

42  
43 A brief discussion was held on what type of fencing might be appropriate for that area, but Ahrens  
44 reminded the committee that there was very little space to install a fence based on their prior visit to the  
45 area. It was suggested that if the concern came from residents at the Shoals, the management there  
46 could consider erecting a fence on their own property. If the village were to construct a fence, additional  
47 maintenance to do mowing and edging, as well as trash cleanup from debris that gets blown into it, would

1 be required of village staff.

2  
3 Bell asked if there might be other ways to dissuade people from playing in the pond, such as planting tall  
4 aquatic plants. It was noted that a fence could actually work to encourage bad behavior by those wanting  
5 to access the pond, and signage will be ineffective.

6  
7 Howson concluded the conversation by stating that they report back to the Housing Committee that the  
8 Parks, Property & Streets Committee has agreed to not proceed with fencing at the retention pond,  
9 however they will gauge the response of the Housing Committee and may consider additional research  
10 and exploration in the future.

11  
12 **d. Dark Sky Initiatives; State Highway Streetlights**

13 Schmelzer conducted some research into dark sky friendly streetlights and provided a report, which was  
14 included in the meeting packets.

15  
16 Bhirdo requested that this item be postponed until the members have more time to visit the sites and  
17 observe the differences in lighting. The committee members all agreed. It was also requested that  
18 Schmelzer update her committee report with the actual wattage in lumens, as there appears to be a  
19 discrepancy in reference to those lights which are 135 lumens.

20  
21 **e. Consider Jaco Management Offer to Install Sprinklers at N Bay Shore Dr & Mill Rd**

22 Jaco Management, owner of the Dorr Hotel and the property on which Chop Restaurant is located, will  
23 be installing sprinklers on property it owns along North Bay Shore Dr. Chris Schmeltz, representing Jaco  
24 Management, was present to ask for permission to also install sprinklers on the property owned by the  
25 Village of Sister Bay at 2355 Mill Road.

26  
27 Ahrens inquired about the maintenance of the sprinklers on village lands and who would be paying the  
28 water costs. Schmeltz responded that he would fully cover those expenses for the period in which the  
29 sprinklers are installed.

30  
31 Bhirdo asked for an update on future plans to develop the properties along N Bay Shore Drive, where  
32 Phase II of the Dorr Hotel project is slated to be. Schmeltz indicated that development plans are still in  
33 the works, and they are simply looking to water the grass themselves rather than pay another company  
34 to do it to keep it looking nice in the interim.

35  
36 *A motion was made by Bhirdo, seconded by Laszkiewicz to recommend to the Village Board that a*  
37 *proposal from Jaco Management to install and maintain sprinklers on the property at 2355 Mill Road*  
38 *owned by the village be drafted and approved as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*

39  
40 **Agenda Item No. 6. Staff Reports**

41 Reports were provided by Parks & Streets Director Linczmaier and Village Administrator Schmelzer.  
42 Neither one was in attendance to report at the time they were addressed. Bhirdo noted a typo in the  
43 Parks & Streets Director's report to be corrected.

44  
45 Howson updated the committee on the first home baseball game taking place this weekend, and the  
46 concern about the work on the installation of the water lateral which will require the parking lot to be  
47 closed for the game. Bhirdo commented on the unanticipated delays in the project to install water and

sewer at the concession stand, and the resulting added time and expense to the company completing the work.

The committee members all noted that, despite the lack of participation at their inaugural Volunteer Day event, they would like to try holding another event, possibly this year, when their schedules are more open.

Howson noted that she contacted Jessica Hatch regarding information on the broadband project provided in the Administrator's report. The orange posts used as fiber optic markers are five feet tall, not three. Hatch provided a note that there are no universal specifications in Wisconsin for those posts. Howson therefore suggested that they request the poles be reduced to less than two feet and be brown or black and white in color.

Laszkiewicz explained that these posts are permanent, used for identification, and to protect the connection points where the fiber is installed. However, as they are seeing in Baileys Harbor already, the posts are being knocked down. Bhirdo was strongly opposed to installing the posts at all and stated they have no place in Sister Bay.

Hatch was asked for input. She noted that the orange color is typically associated with utilities, and the posts contain the contact information needed of who to call if damage is done to the post or as a result of someone digging where they shouldn't. This information is beneficial as service providers change from one municipality to the next as you travel throughout the county.

It was the consensus of the committee that no such posts be installed in Sister Bay, and directed staff to contact Bertram with that request. They also noted that anyone doing digging of any kind should be contacting Digger's Hotline.

Linczmaier rejoined the meeting at 4:12 PM and was able to confirm that there will be no water for the baseball game this weekend, although they were able to turn it on temporarily to roll the fields. He noted that additional damage was done to the existing sidewalk and a bench pad in order to run the excavator for the lateral installation. As a precautionary measure during this weekend's game, the parking lot at the sports complex will be closed to prevent the possibility of accidents by individuals walking to the ball field.

#### **Agenda Item No. 7. Walking Tour; Waterfront Park (Possible Action/Discussion)**

- i. **Historic Signage**
- ii. **Gazebo Benches**
- iii. **Ebike Shed**
- iv. **Little Library**

It was the consensus of the committee that this agenda item be postponed until such time as Schmelzer can be present. A special meeting to conduct the walking tour only will be scheduled in the next couple of weeks.

#### **Agenda Item. No. 8. Matters to be Placed on a Future Agenda or Referred to a Committee, Official or Employee:**

It was the consensus of the committee that the following items be addressed at a future meeting of the

Parks, Property & Streets Committee:

- Final review of a land lease between the Village of Sister Bay and Friends of the Ice Rink group
- Review of the Operating Agreement between the Village of Sister Bay and Friends of the Ice Rink group
- Dark Sky Initiatives discussion
- Walking tour of Waterfront Park

Additionally, a proposal from Jaco Management to install sprinklers on property owned by the village at 2335 Mill Road shall be brought before the village board.

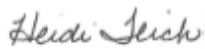
**Agenda Item No. 9. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Parks, Property & Streets Committee has been scheduled for **1:30 P.M.** on Monday, June 2, 2025.

**Agenda Item No. 10. Adjourn**

*At 4:22 P.M. a motion was made by Laszkiewicz, seconded by Ahrens that the May 5, 2025 meeting of the Parks, Property & Streets Committee be adjourned. Motion carried – All ayes.*

Respectfully submitted,



Heidi Teich, Village Clerk