

**Village of Creston Minutes**  
**Wednesday, December 3, 2024 – Amended**

President Byro called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Trustees Elliot, Hibshman, Hopkins, and Ward were present. Trustees Katzman and Kerns were not present. Attorney Wilt was also present.

President Byro introduced the December 3, 2024 minutes and asked for additions or corrections. Trustee Hibshman made a motion to approve the minutes. Trustee Ward seconded the motion. President Byro asked all in favor to vote yea and all opposed to vote the same sign. All present voted yea.

President Byro spoke about the loss of Jack Kerns and how much Jack meant to the Village. He spoke about how much Jack did for our community and what a good friend he was to President Byro and the Village as a whole. He addressed how Jack was always willing to help anyone who needed anything and that he would be sorely missed.

**Visitors & Communications** – President Byro stated that he didn't think there were any visitors or communications. There were none.

Attorney Wilt stated that he got the demolition paperwork completed. He said the last step was to get everyone served. He said that they figured out who everyone was. Trustee Ward asked which property was being discussed and Mr. Wilt stated it was 209 W Depot St. President Byro said that he had some news on the property at 224 E Depot St. Realtor Jennie McLaughlin had someone who was interested in buying that property. President Byro had been in contact with Ms. McLaughlin and he told her that the Village would need some kind of guarantee that work would be done. He said that the Village had an agreement with another property owner stating that specific work needed to be completed by a certain date. He said that the Village would need a similar agreement for 224 E Depot St. President Byro told her that he realized it was winter and that not much work would get done as a result, but the Village needed to see progress. The building inspector is in town every week, so progress must be made. Trustee Elliot asked if the Village had some kind of performance agreement with the other property owner. Trustee Ward stated it was a development agreement and President Byro echoed that. He suggested that Aaron look up the agreement that Casper had made with the other owner. Aaron asked about the address and Trustee Ward said it was the 100 block of North St. Clerk Payton stated that the address was 123 W North St. President Byro said that the outside looked good, but he wasn't sure what the inside looked like. Trustee Ward said the outside was pretty much done. Aaron said that he and Casper hadn't checked the property in a while. He said that they were talking about it that day and said they should give the property owner a call. He said work had stopped for a bit. President Byro said that the gentleman was there occasionally. Aaron said that he had been moving along quickly for a while. Trustee Hibshman said that the drywall was done, and they had been doing some painting. Curtis Loyd said he wondered if they had water there. He said he gave them a new meter and a radio read unit, but he never turned the water on. He said that with the painting and drywalling, they would need water for mudding. Clerk Payton said that there has been no water usage. She said that the address showed up on the report, but there was no usage. She said that they did request recycling and garbage bins and Clerk Payton got those ordered for them.

Casper Manheim was not present. Aaron said that a temporary occupancy permit was issued to the property owner at 502 S Pierce St. There was more work that needed to be done that mostly involved the sidewalk, the yard, transition pieces, and some fire-blocking in the basement. Casper and Aaron gave them until May 1, 2025 to complete that work, but the owner wanted to move in right away, so that was why they issued the temporary occupancy. The homeowners at 532 W Hall St had their basement remodeled and that was finalized. They put a bedroom and a living room down there. A new house permit was issued for 525 Roberts St and that house will back up to the retention pond. The work at the library is ongoing. Casper and Aaron stopped in the day of the Board meeting. The doors were locked so they looked inside. The workers were on lunch break, and they were still working on all the HVAC duct work. There is no electric service yet, so the panel inside the library is not complete. ComEd will call Casper and Aaron to inspect it before they put the meter on. They have a temporary meter there for power. Curtis Loyd asked if Scott had been reading the meter for the library. Clerk Payton said she didn't think so. She said she didn't even know what the new library's address is. Mr. Loyd said he had turned the water on there and Clerk Payton remembered that he did because the construction company asked him to.

Kevin Bunge was not at the meeting. He sent President Byro an email. Kevin stated via email that they had returned the contracts to KLM for the Water Tower Project and were waiting to hear back from them regarding scheduling. He anticipated that work would start soon. Regarding the rust issues, they had mapped out where there were bellies in the mains and it corresponded pretty closely with the rust areas. He said he would propose fixes by the next board meeting. He did not have a final answer for the ADA. President Byro said that the Village needed to get that assessment done to see if any improvements need to be made to Village Hall. Kevin also said that they were in the midst of scheduling a meeting with the homeowners they need easements from for the Storm Sewer Project. President Byro said he hoped that would come along. President Byro said he had a copy of what Kevin sent him regarding the rust issues. President Byro showed where the main went under the railroad tracks. He said that the long one was on South St in front of Trustee

Hibshman's house, and President Byro's house. The two other short ones were on West St going up past Jack Kerns' house. The big square one was right on Kaye Ln right by the house that had been having so many issues with rust. President Byro said he didn't know what Kevin had in mind. He wasn't sure he wanted to dig things up. He suggested putting a flush hydrant in there. President Byro said there was one at the corner near his house and Mr. Loyd said that one flushed clean. President Byro said that there wasn't one at the end. Mr. Loyd asked which end. President Byro said at the end of South St where it turns. Trustee Hopkins said that there is one there, but it is on the north side and President Byro said that one is hooked up to the 4" and not the big main. President Byro said there are things to figure out. He said Kevin has ideas so they would listen to what he presents. President Byro said he was leery about spending a lot of money if the Village couldn't guarantee it would fix the problem. Trustee Ward said that he wondered if all the new houses that are being built in the subdivision coming online would result in better circulation. Trustee Hibshman said his rust issues were so random. He said it was good for a while and then two days ago it was bad. He said the water was a dark orange color and his wife ran water into their bathtub and they couldn't see the bottom of it. Then the next day, the water was clear. Trustee Ward suggested doing some research to see how many houses were impacted by the rust issue. He said it may be more economical to invest in iron filters for the affected houses and treat the problem on a house by house basis rather than digging up water mains. Trustee Ward said that the Village could enter into an agreement with the individual homeowners that the Village would invest so much up front and then the maintenance would be the responsibility of the homeowner. Trustee Elliot asked what the routing of the mains was, and he asked if there was a way to reroute through the existing valley. President Byro said there is a 4" main that runs all the way down South St. Trustee Elliot asked if it runs east-west and President Byro said yes. President Byro said there is a line that goes up Kaye Ln and Trustee Elliot asked what size it was. Mr. Loyd said the print says it's a 4" main and that it runs all the way into Creston Commons. Trustee Ward said they wouldn't have been able to permit for less than 6". Trustee Elliot asked if the main dead ends. Trustee Ward and Mr. Loyd said no. Mr. Loyd said it isn't supposed to, but the water is shut off for now due to all the leaks that exist in that area. Trustee Hopkins asked if the main that runs up Kaye Ln is the main feed to the subdivision. Trustee Ward said it was not. President Byro said the main feed runs up Regulator St. Trustee Ward said the question was if the belly was in the 4" main or the 10" main. President Byro said he didn't know. He said the long skinny one was on Transit near President Byro's house. He said that he didn't know if that was tied into what was going east and west or not. Mr. Loyd said it was, because they put 4 gate valves in a few years back so they could isolate that intersection. Trustee Elliot said that more houses coming online in the subdivision will help more water flow and may alleviate the problem, but it sounded like it was hit or miss. Trustee Hibshman said it was and he said that he was surprised the people further down Kaye Ln didn't have problems. President Byro said that one resident did have problems once in a while. President Byro said that the main running under the railroad tracks to the subdivision is an 8" and Trustee Ward said he thought it was a 10" main. President Byro said it might be a 10". Trustee Ward said if that was the problem, he would think everyone would have issues. President Byro said that Jack Kerns would have problems occasionally. Trustee Hopkins said it seemed like it was more of a problem with the 4" mains along South St and up Kaye Ln. There is a 10" on the west side of West St, but none of those services are hooked into there. Trustee Ward asked if the Village still put something in the water to keep the rust in suspension. Mr. Loyd said that the Village puts phosphate in the water. Trustee Ward asked if that worked for about 3 days. Mr. Loyd said he wasn't sure. He said they put the maximum that they can in there as they have to test the water. Trustee Ward said that if the water wasn't moving, the rust would settle out. President Byro asked why Trustee Hibshman would suddenly have issues. Trustee Hibshman said it wasn't a new issue. Trustee Elliot said it sounded like Kevin had some ideas and Trustee Hibshman concurred. President Byro said Trustee Ward might have a good idea about investing in iron filters for the individual homes affected. Trustee Ward said that even a flush hydrant would run between \$8,000 - \$10,000. Trustee Hopkins asked if a rust system installed would cost about \$2000 and Trustee Ward said he wasn't sure. Trustee Ward said that when he first moved in, they put filters in his home and they were supposed to be changed every 6 months and they would be lucky to get a month out of them. He said they've been bypassing the system for years and haven't really had many issues.

## **Committee Reports**

Finance - Trustee Hopkins had nothing.

Streets & Alleys – Trustee Ward said that the county was looking to see if the Village wanted to sealcoat. The last time sealcoating was done, it was done north of the tracks. This time the sealcoating would be done south of the tracks and Main St and Woodlawn would be repaved all the way to Route 38 because of the volume of traffic and the trucks. Trustee Ward said that there were 3 options available. The first was 3H chips, which the Village usually does, and the estimated cost was about \$82,000. The ~~3H~~ <sup>3/8</sup> chips are limestone, which is a softer chip. Another option was crushed gravel, which is mined from a pit near Adeline. Rochelle did a couple of streets this year and it tends to have less dust. That would cost \$2000 more than the 3H chips, for about \$84,000. The crushed gravel is a no-brainer due to less dust. He said the drawback is that if you don't have shoes on the snowplow, it wears the cutting blades down very quickly. The 3<sup>rd</sup> option presented was steel slag. Franklin Grove did this a couple of years back. The steel slag comes from Sterling and it is the material left over in the bottom of the boilers after steel is made. It is crushed up to the size of gravel and it stays black. It would help with melting snow and ice on the pavement in winter. It creates almost no dust. It has good wear and skid resistance to it. He said that the Village would get almost double the life of the other 2 options. The estimated cost for the steel slag is \$96,000.

Treasurer Payton said that Dement Township was going to do that on Woodlawn Rd. President Byro asked if oil is put down first. Trustee Ward said it is the same process. He said that the steel slag doesn't get pressed down in the oil over time, so you don't get the bleeding issues found with the 3H or gravel chips. Trustee Hibshman said it almost looks like fresh pavement. The steel slag is IDOT approved material. Trustee Ward said that the slag goes down at 32 lbs per square yard as opposed to 25. It's a heavier application and they would still post-sweep it and we could do whatever we want with the "leftover". President Byro asked about the subdivision. Trustee Ward said he didn't do anything with that because he figured there would still be a lot of construction traffic there. He said that they just crack sealed it all, so he felt that the Village wouldn't have to do anything with it at this time. President Byro asked if Trustee Ward needed an answer that evening and Trustee Ward said yes as he would need to get everything in to IDOT for their approval. Trustee Elliot asked for a recap of the 3 options: The 3H chips would cost around \$82,000; the crushed gravel would cost around \$84,000; and the steel slag would cost around \$96,000. Trustee Hibshman asked how much longer the steel would last. Trustee Ward said that the Village is currently on a 4-year cycle doing the tar and chip method and Franklin Grove has had their steel slag streets about 4 years and they still look like new. He said that 6-8 years is not unreasonable. Trustee Elliot said it sounded like a no-brainer to him. President Byro asked how the Village stood with the Motor-Fuel fund. Treasurer Payton said that the steel slag option was doable. Trustee Hibshman said he thought they should try it. Trustee Ward said another option was to try some streets in steel slag and do the rest in gravel. Trustee Elliot said that it cost 15% more and it could last twice as long. Trustee Hopkins said even if the Village gets 2 more years out of it, it's worth it. Trustee Ward said the minimal to no dust is a big selling point. President Byro asked the Board what they want to do. Trustee Hibshman made a motion to use the steel slag to do the sealcoating. Trustee Hopkins seconded the motion. President Byro asked if there was any discussion. Trustee Elliot requested that some work be done for the park district. He requested the road be repaved to the end and that work be done by the bus barn. Roll call vote taken. Trustees Elliot, Hibshman, Hopkins and Ward all voted yes. Trustees Katzman and Kerns were not present. President Byro asked of Trustee Ward had anything else. Trustee Ward said that he and Trustee Hibshman were talking about how bad the roads were after the last ice/snow storm. Trustee Hibshman said that he had a customer take a bad fall at the corner of Main and North Streets. Mr. Loyd said that the issue with salting is that he has no direct access to salt on the day of the event. He said that he gets salt from Dement Township. He said a lot of times he doesn't bother them because they aren't there for him to get salt. He said if they are out salting, he can pull in and get salt. He doesn't have regular access to salt. President Byro said that Mr. Loyd has to call Trustee Kerns and then he has to get someone down there with an end loader to fill the spreader. The salt belongs to the township. Mr. Loyd said he weighs the truck, then they fill it, and then he weighs the truck after it's filled, and the Village pays the township for that much salt. Trustee Ward asked if it was a pretty consistent weight every time and Mr. Loyd said he thought it was within a few hundred pounds. He said that Treasurer Payton might know better than he did, and she said it was pretty consistent. Trustee Hibshman said there probably wasn't a good place to put any salt to store it until it is needed. President Byro said that it isn't good to fill the spreader and then let it sit. Mr. Loyd said he's done that and had to go at it with a hammer and chisel to break it loose. Mr. Loyd said he tried to get salt at 7 one morning and ended up not getting it until noon. He said by the time he got the salt the roads were already melting. Trustee Elliot said we are at the mercy of others. President Byro said they do it as quickly as they can. Mr. Loyd said he talked to the state crew out on Mulford Rd and they would hardly even talk to him. President Byro suggested that perhaps a deal could be worked out with the Township to have someone down there when the weather turns bad. Trustee Ward said that they have to be loading their trucks sometime, so maybe the Village could ask someone to contact Mr. Loyd and he can take our truck down there while they are loading their trucks. Treasurer Payton said she would put it on the next agenda for the Township and they would have a discussion. Mr. Loyd told Trustee Ward he got a hold of RMU for the lighting in Creston Commons last year and they told him that the soonest they could come would be the first or second week of this year. He said they had been out once to repair one light. Trustee Ward asked if the Village paid for those lights. President Byro said no. He said that they are on the Village's bill, but it is RMU's responsibility to fix them.

Water & Sewer – Trustee Kerns was not present.

Health & Safety - Trustee Hibshman said all he had was the ice issue that Trustee Ward brought up.

Zoning & Planning – Trustee Elliot said there was nothing.

Subdivision - Trustee Elliot said he hadn't been up there for a while. President Byro said it was a mess. He said there was a lot of dirt and mud. The construction workers have been up there working. Trustee Ward asked if they were following the "No Construction Traffic" signage and President Byro said yes. Trustee Hopkins said that it did seem like they were following that direction. President Byro said that the digger was out and ready to dig at the end of Roberts St. Trustee Elliot asked if all the permits were for Hayden. Aaron said yes. Trustee Ward asked if they were all spec houses and Aaron said as far as he knew. Trustee Ward asked if Mr. Hayden had said what his price point was and Aaron said based on the last permit he saw, it was \$240,000-\$250,000. Trustee Ward said there were several people looking for houses in town. Mr. Loyd said there was no water on Roberts. Aaron said he would let them know. Trustee Hibshman said he thought that Mr. Hayden had a couple of them sold already.

**New Business** – President Byro said that the insurance was in with the bills so when the Board approved the bills, they could look at that. The total was \$17,432 for both regular and Workman's Comp insurance. Both are in with the listing.

President Byro spoke about Wreaths Across America. He said that the Board donated \$500 about 3 years ago. He said he would like to donate another \$500. He said that they were laying about 700 wreaths per year and if they ordered now, they could get 2 for the price of 1. Trustee Ward made the motion to donate \$500 to Wreaths Across America. Trustee Hibshman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Trustees Elliot, Hibshman, Hopkins and Ward all voted yea. Trustees Kerns and Katzman were not present. Trustee Elliot stated that the Park District also donated money. He also stated that the donations cover Woodlawn Cemetery as well as other cemeteries that don't have a cemetery board. Trustee Hopkins said that they had extras from Woodlawn, and they took them over to St. Patrick's as they were running short.

President Byro said that Comcast had put together a proposal about building a structure on the north side of the water tower. They didn't want to be on the south side in case there were any issues with the water tower. Trustee Elliot and President Byro were up there with them and discussing areas to build. He said that they were supposed to get back to the Village with a proposal. President Byro said that the Village would sell them a 60' x 123' lot and they said that would be big enough. He said he had not heard anything back from them. He wanted to inform everyone about the progress that has been made. Trustee Elliot said they would probably have rendered drawings.

The Storm Sewer project had already been discussed.

Trustee Elliot said that President Byro missed the Paid Leave Act. President Byro stated that the Village was evidently required through the state to give part-time employees paid time off. Treasurer Payton said that it had already been passed and it was law. President Byro said he didn't know how to set that up. Trustee Hibshman said it was 1 hour of paid time off for every 40 hours worked. Trustee Ward said that the Fire District took their hours and divided them by 40 and added additional hours to their paycheck because how do you give a part-time employee time off? So, if they worked 80 hours, they got paid for 82 hours. Treasurer Payton said that the Village of Hillcrest set a policy in which part-time employees get a set amount of hours per year. She said they don't count hours and it's legal. Trustee Ward asked how they handled someone like Mr. Loyd, who works variable hours. Treasurer Payton said that as hard as Mr. Loyd works he should get the moon, but the Board could decide with a resolution how to do it. Treasurer Payton said that Hillcrest just allots 24 hours of paid vacation time per employee every year. Mr. Loyd said that state-wise, you have to go by how many hours worked for the year. It is 1 hour per 40 hours worked per year and some places were automatically giving their employees 40 hours per year. Trustee Hibshman said that what he does at Headon's is look at all his employees' hours every month and divides them by 40 so they get the additional hours each month. If someone worked 160 hours in a month, then they would get 4 hours. Trustee Hibshman said it was pretty simple. If they worked 20 hours in a week, they would get ½ hour of paid leave. Trustee Hibshman lets the employees roll the time over month to month for a year. Trustee Ward said with the fire district, it's hard to give someone vacation time. Trustee Elliot says it just gives them some compensation for time off for part-time people. President Byro said he is all for being fair. He just wanted to make sure the Village was doing it correctly. Trustee Hibshman said that each business can handle it however they want. Attorney Wilt said that his concern with granting every employee the same amount of hours is there has to be some nexus between the amount of hours worked and the amount of vacation hours granted. He said that by not giving any out last year, you could probably get away with that, but the better practice is to keep track of the hours on a monthly or quarterly basis and grant the vacation time accordingly. Trustee Ward said he could see an issue with the Village hiring someone to plow part-time and they get the same number of vacation hours as Curtis, who works full-time, how is that fair. Trustee Hopkins said that the fairest way to handle it was to figure the hours earned based on the hours worked. President Byro said that they would figure out a system and let everyone know about it at the next meeting.

**Old Business** – Rust Concerns, Village ADA and property condemnation had already been discussed. President Byro said he had talked to Jennie McLaughlin about what would need to be done in relation to the property at 224 E Depot St. President Byro asked Attorney Wilt about 209 W Depot St. Atty Wilt said that everything is ready to go. All the parties just needed to be served and that should be done prior to the next meeting. Trustee Ward asked how many parties are involved. Atty Wilt said that was a trickier question than one would think as the property bounced hands a number of times. He said he thought it was 3: a bank and two different individuals. He said that they were serving all 3 parties and letting them work it out between them. President Byro was hopeful that Ms. McLaughlin could work out a deal with the gentleman who wanted to buy the home at 224 E Depot. President Byro said that was all he had, and he asked if anyone had any questions.

Trustee Elliot asked what the deal was with the printer. He asked if it was our printer. Treasurer Payton said it is our printer, and it is a good printer and people just need to know how to use it. Trustee Elliot said he had nothing else.

**Treasurer's Report** – President Byro introduced the bills. He stated that there was a bill to Deanne Haub in relation to the old domain and web-hosting. Clerk Payton got the services canceled and we have paid Ms. Haub the final payment that will be due to her for those services. Trustee Ward asked about tree-trimming for Robert Garland. The bill was \$600 and he paid half of it. President Byro told him that the Village would pay half. Trustee Hopkins said the trees were planted by the Village. Trustee Ward pointed out that Queens finally billed the Village for all the water main work that was done. Trustee Elliot made a motion to pay the bills. Trustee Ward seconded the motion. Roll call vote taken. Trustees Elliot, Hibshman, Hopkins, and Ward voted yes. Trustees Katzman and Kerns were not present. Bills were approved.

President Byro said he had nothing else. President Byro asked if Clerk Payton had anything to say. Clerk Payton brought up the fact that Trustee Hibshman had mentioned how dark the intersection of Beck Rd and Route 38 was, and a resident had actually reached out to the Village to voice her concerns. The resident wanted the Village to put up a streetlight at that intersection and Clerk Payton told her that the Village was aware of the issue as it had been discussed and a previous meeting and she would make that suggestion to the Board, but she couldn't promise anything. Trustee Ward asked if she had a problem finding the road to turn onto it. She said that it was really hard to see, and she tended to slow down too early because she had trouble seeing the road and she was afraid someone would rear end her while she was trying to turn. Trustee Ward said that 3 orange reflective stickers were put on that stop sign to make it easier to see. President Byro said that he thought Beck Rd needed to be closed in the winter. Trustee Elliot agreed. Trustee Ward said he liked not having a streetlight at that intersection because when someone stopped there at night to pull out, they can see headlights coming from both directions.

Trustee Hopkins made a motion to adjourn. Trustee Ward seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:02:05 pm.