

VILLAGE PUBLIC HEARING & BOARD MEETING DECEMBER 4, 2023

The Public Hearing was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building. On roll call were President Antone Sindelar, Trustees Mandy Schwabe, Ernie Klicko, Brad Oberbeck, Jason Pierce, Bob Berry, and Melvin Waller. Attorney Flanagan, Public Works Director-Brent Frank, Clerk/Treasurer Lori Hustad, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Rebecca Reuter. Citizen Roberta Sindelar, Gerald Sonnenberg, County Representative - Rick Pease & Reporter Reesa Evans were also present. President Sindelar turned the Public Hearing over to Attorney Flanagan to run. Flanagan stated he would open the Public Hearing at 6:00 p.m. to consider the proposed 2024 budget. Prior to commencing with any overview, questions, or statements from the public he reviewed that the statutory notice requirements had been met. Notice of Public Hearing was published November 15, 2023. Additionally, copies of the proposed 2024 budget have been on file and open for public inspection in the Clerk's office. Hustad gave a brief overview of the 2024 budget. She stated that the budget was a balanced budget meaning that the revenues and expenses balance and was under the levy limit. Attorney Flanagan asked for any final questions or comments, hearing none, he closed the Public Hearing.

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The Friendship Village Board meeting was called to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance by all present. President Tony Sindelar called the meeting to order and roll call was taken. Present were Trustees Brad Oberbeck, Ernie Klicko, Jason Pierce, Amanda Schwabe, Melvin Waller, Bob Berry, and President Sindelar. Also present were Public Works Director Brent Frank, Attorney Flanagan, Clerk/Treasurer Lori Hustad, and Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Rebecca Reuter.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 6TH MINUTES

MOTION by Berry, second by Schwabe to approve the November 6th, 2023, Village Board minutes, motion carried.

TREASURER REPORT

General Fund Checking Aug. 2023 Starting Balance \$119,744.11. Receipts of \$5,196.54. Disbursements of \$59,900.35. Ending Bank Balance of \$65,040.30. General Fund Checking Sep. 2023 Starting Balance \$65,040.30. Receipts of \$14,464.80. Disbursements of \$67,682.62. Ending Bank Balance of \$9,831.88. General Fund Checking Oct. 2023 Starting Balance \$9,831.88. Receipts of \$113,713.26. Disbursements of \$48,150.05. Ending Bank Balance of \$66,558.51.

Water Fund Checking Aug. 2023 Starting Bank Balance \$504,119.31. Receipts of \$61,674.45. Disbursements of 6,784.55. Ending Bank Balance of \$559,009.21.

Water Fund Checking Sep. 2023 Starting Bank Balance \$559,009.21. Receipts of \$7,923.25. Disbursements of 9,305.73. Ending Bank Balance of \$557,626.73.

Water Fund Checking Oct. 2023 Starting Bank Balance \$557,626.73. Receipts of \$97,882.67. Disbursements of 153,729.90. Ending Bank Balance of \$501,997.34.

Sewer Fund Checking Aug. 2023 Starting Bank Balance \$9,714.47. Receipts of \$21,195.30. Disbursements of \$11,476.82. Ending Bank Balance of \$19,432.95.

Sewer Fund Checking Sep. 2023 Starting Bank Balance \$19,433.00. Receipts of \$7,840.29. Disbursements of \$4,984.73. Ending Bank Balance of \$22,288.56

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Sewer Fund Checking Oct. 2023 Starting Bank Balance \$22,288.56. Receipts of \$51,842.33. Disbursements of \$27,694.04. Ending Bank Balance of \$46,436.85. **MOTION** by Schwabe, second by Berry to approve the Treasurer Report.

PAYING OF BILLS

MOTION by Klicko, second by Schwabe to approve November vouchers in the amount of \$216,943.45. Motion carried. November vouchers 26,911 – 26,960. Motion carried.

CITIZEN INPUT

Gerald Sonnenberg wanted to thank the Public Works guys for their hard work, and for getting all the leaves picked up. He also thanked the office ladies for doing a good job. He finished by updating everyone on the progress of the property he's trying to buy.

REPORT FROM COUNTY REPRESENTATIVE RICK PEASE

He stated that the county passed their budget. The county budget went up 4% across the board. The County had enough in the budget to fund the Adams County Chamber of Commerce & Tourism again this year. He stated that if we really want to know what's going on in the County we should read through Cynthia Haggards (Adams County Manager/Administrative Coordinator) minutes and Board reports. He also stated that they are still looking for office space for the employees at the County Courthouse, and Health and Human Services.

APPROVAL OF OPERATORS LICENSE

MOTION by Berry, second by Schwabe to approve the Operators License for Athena Oberbeck for Corner Bar. Motion carried.

APPOINT ELECTION INSPECTORS

MOTION by Berry, second by Klicko to appoint election inspectors for January 1st 2024 – December 31st 2025. Sue Barker, Janet Boddy, Eileen Gibbs, Charles Spargo, Rebecca Reuter, Cory Reuter, Kathy Pierce, and Cheryl Dee Witz. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON ESTABLISHMENT OF VILLAGE OF FRIENDSHIP WEBSITE/FACEBOOK PAGE

Hustad started the discussion on having a website and a Facebook page. She stated that one of the biggest things we can accomplish by having a website is that our residents would be able to pay their water and sewer bill with a credit or debit card. That is something that the residents are always asking for. Right now, we only take cash or checks. With a website we would be able to put our agendas and minutes on it for the public to see. We could put forms and permits on it. We could put updates on the website for leaf pickup. With the Facebook page, most of the municipalities around us already have one. They can post about their meetings, upcoming events, any changes that might be coming. It's a way to get the community involved in what we do. Hustad stated that we are looking into going with TownWeb, they have done a good job at putting together websites for the other municipalities in our community. The proposal they gave us would be as follows, the 1st year's fee: \$2,015.00, the 2nd year's fee: \$1,215.00, and the 3rd year's fee: \$1,215.00.

Reuter took over the discussion adding that one of the things that TownWeb does is they work hand in hand with Workhorse Software (our utility billing program) so our residents would be able to pay their utility bills online. We will be able to have all our ordinances online. TownWeb will be able to monitor and get us our .gov emails that we are required to have in the next year or so. We will be able to post ourselves online, or we can send it to TownWeb and they

will post it for us. The payment collection cost would be an extra cost, but a service for the residents that we think would be worth it.

Attorney Flanagan stated that it would cost a little more for TownWeb to do the online payments and set up the .gov accounts, but he knows other municipalities that use it and they are very satisfied. He also added that TownWeb will work with us to get some of our outdated forms up to date and on the website.

Berry thinks it's a good idea, and says we've been behind the times.

Schwabe agreed and said it would be nice to be able to pay the utility bills online.

Hustad stated that there is money in the budget to cover the website. Also, they could have it up and running in a month or so. **MOTION** by Berry to set up the quoted package of \$2,015.00, second by Oberbeck. Motion carried.

UPDATE ON ACH

Hustad talked about how the office is looking into direct deposit for the 4 full-time employees. She stated that the office staff had a meeting with One Community Bank to discuss what that would look like for us. The cost would be minimum, and we might even be able to get the cost waved. We would be able to make payments to anybody who makes their banking information available to us. Hustad also pointed out that the Village doesn't have their own credit card, and one of those is needed to place orders online for different items like 1099 forms, and W2 forms. The previous office staff used their personal credit cards for such purchases, and then were reimbursed. The credit limit would be \$3,000-\$5,000. **MOTION** by Klicko, second by Berry approve getting the Village a credit card. Motion carried. **MOTION** by Schwabe, second by Oberbeck for the ACH to move forward. Motion carried.

SET DATE TO HOLD THE VILLAGE CAUCUS

MOTION By Klicko, second by Berry to hold the Village Caucus on January 8th, 2024, at 6:00. Motion carried.

UPDATE BY PRESIDENT SINDELAR REGARDING CLEANUP OF EAST LAKE STREET PROPERTY

President Sindelar stated that the East Lake Street property was cleaned up by Fenner's Excavating. Sindelar talked with Fenner's, and they are just waiting on the final bill from the landfill. Once they get a bill from the landfill Sindelar will meet with Fenner's to go over what the Village needs to pay. Sindelar said after the cleanup they did a walk around the property, and everything was cleaned up other than the personal items up by the house that the homeowner needs to take care of. After the bill comes in, Sindelar plans on inviting the homeowner to come into the Village Hall to go over the bill with them. Berry wants to know if we can give them a timeline to get rid of the broken-down trailer on the property. Attorney Flanagan stated that once we get the final bill, they will work with the office staff to get it put on their taxes (as that's how they're planning on paying for it) then invite the landowner to come to the Village Hall to talk with them about the bill and give them a timeline of when the trailer needs leave.

UPDATE TO VILLAGE BOARD ON REQUEST TO PURCHASE VILLAGE-OWNED PROPERTY AND ALLY VACATION PETITION RECEIVED

Attorney Flanagan started with the letter that the Village received from Vertical Illusion on 8-1-2023. In the letter they expressed that they wanted to purchase the neighboring property of 1.850 acre (parcel #126-00023-0000). Attorney Flanagan has reviewed the deed. This property had been deeded to the Village of Friendship in 1966. In the original deed there was a restriction, the restriction was for it was to be used only for municipal and public purposes. However, there was a sunset to that of 30 years. We are past the 30 years, and that restriction for the property. As an overview Attorney Flanagan gave some

consideration to keep in mind if they decide they do want to sell it. 1- We need to have a sale that doesn't benefit any particular property owner. It's a process that's a fair consideration and benefit to the public if we decide to sell it. 2- If the Board does decide to sell the property, then we would need to make a referral to the Plan Commission for a report. Afterwards it would come back before the Village Board to determine what you want to do based on what the Plan Commission decides. **MOTION** by Berry, second by Klicko to bring the property before the Plan Commission. Motion carried.

Next Attorney Flanagan said we received a pair of petitions, one for an unimproved alleyway vacation in the plated subdivision in Oaklawn subdivision, and the second one for a dedicated way in a plated subdivision. It would require going through certain court processes. Attorney Flanagan recommended that if the Board decides to go through with this, that they do it in stages. This is something that will have to go through the circuit court. One other important piece to note is that this isn't property we have to sell, this is property that we just lose. This is going to cost money, and we aren't selling it, we would just be giving it away. So, no money will be made on this. Attorney Flanagan stated that unimproved alleyways can go through chapter 66103 process with the court. If that is something that we want to move forward with at the next meeting, we would need a resolution to vacate the alley. The petition for vacating the alley has been signed by all abutting property owners: Jason Pierce, Thomas Pierce, John Jones, and Sonja Ley. **MOTION** by Berry, second by Klicko to process the petition and move forward. Motion carried. Pierce obtained.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON WATER AND SEWER INCREASE

Reuter brought before the Board that the City of Adams had contacted the office to let them know that water and sewer rates would be going up. 8% for water and 10% for sewer. Berry wanted to know if the last time we raised water and sewer if we did a simplified rate case, or did the Village do a conventional rate case study? The office wasn't sure, but they will find out. **MOTION** by Berry to put together a simplified rate case study, and application for the PSC, second by Klicko. Motion carried. The Board discussed the sewer treatment plant, and that it is going to need work down the road. Also, the City of Adams raised their sewer rates 10% last year, the Village only raised theirs 3% according to what can be found in the office. **MOTION** By Berry to raise the sewer rate by 17% contingent of where and what we find out the City of Adams is going to be charging, second by Waller. Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT

Charman Pierce stated that Public Works didn't have a meeting.

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FRIENDSHIP LAKE DISTRICT REPORT

Sindelar stated, When the lake water was down, some of the members went out and put markers on tree stumps, so now you just have to look for the orange sticks to avoid hitting a stump. They also marked them on GPS.

FIRE DISTRICT REPORT

Klicko stated, Work has started on the backup generator, and it's going to be bigger than what they originally thought. The new Firetruck is still being built. They put 6 members through for officers training. They had 10 calls in the last month, that's 1 every 3 days.

AMBULANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Nothing new to report. Next meeting will be in January.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION ON YEAREND BONUSES

Klicko stated that the Finance Committee is recommending a \$150.00 yearend bonus go to the 4 full-time employees of the Village of Friendship for the Adams

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County Chamber of Commerce. **MOTION** by Klicko, second by Schwabe. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF THE ADOPTION OF THE 2024 BUDGET AS PUBLISHED

MOTION by Klicko, second by Schwabe to adopt the 2024 budget. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

A letter was received from Ray and Nancy Churchill thanking the Village for the leaf pickup that took place in November. The Village public works guys did an excellent job, and Ray and Nancy would like to thank them. They hope that leaf pickup will continue in the future.

SET AGENDA ITEMS FOR JANUARY 8TH MEETING

Update on LRS

East Lake Street property

Caucus

.gov domain registration

Plan Commission recommendation

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business to come before the board, **MOTION** by Berry second by Schwabe to adjourn, motion carried. Meeting ended at 7:23

Rebecca Reuter

Deputy Clerk/Treasurer