

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRESIDENT
& BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF BEECHER
HELD AT THE WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP CENTER,
30200 TOWN CENTER ROAD, BEECHER, ILLINOIS
MARCH 10, 2008 -- 7:00 P.M.**

All present joined in the Pledge to the Flag.

President Lohmann called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: President Lohmann and Trustees Cleary, Ahrendt, Szymanski, Gardner, Kuhlman and Wehling.

ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Clerk Janett Conner, Administrator Robert Barber, Treasurer Nelson Collins, Public Works Superintendent Bud Cowger, Public Works Crew Leader Floyd Burger, Engineer Ray Koenig and Attorney Tim Kuiper.

GUESTS: Terry Gatlin from the Beecher Herald, Dennis Sullivan from the Chicago Tribune, Kim and Betty Koutsky, Kevin Bouchard, Bob Howard, Jeff and Jessica Zimmer, Althea Machtemes and Mike Stanula.

President Lohmann asked for consideration of the minutes of the February 25, 2008 Board meeting. Trustee Cleary made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Trustee Szymanski seconded the motion.

AYES: (5) Trustees Cleary, Szymanski, Gardner, Kuhlman and Wehling.

NAYS: (0) None.

ABSTAIN: (1) Trustee Ahrendt.

Motion Carried.

CLERK'S REPORT: 1) A report on income received since the last meeting was provided. 2) Bills were presented for the Beecher Fourth of July Commission. Trustee Szymanski made a motion to approve the list of bills totalling \$1,389.81 as listed on the Clerk's Report. Trustee Cleary seconded the motion.

AYES: (6) Trustees Cleary, Ahrendt, Szymanski, Gardner, Kuhlman and Wehling.

NAYS: (0) None.

Motion Carried.

Treasurer Collins was asked if expenses incurred so far were within budget for the new food stand. Some discussion followed.

3) Clerk Conner read aloud a letter from Senator Obama congratulating Beecher on receiving the Tree City Award.

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS: Kevin Bouchard of 291 Mallards Cove wanted to inform the Board that a utility box with wires hanging out is near the park in Hunter's Chase Subdivision, sitting on the ground in a rear yard easement. Mr. Bouchard felt this was a safety concern. He also reported two leaning electric poles: one on Woodbridge and one on Pheasant Chase Circle. Staff will get with Mr. Bouchard to determine exact addresses for these items and contact the proper utilities.

Washington Township Supervisor Bob Howard asked that as the Village prepares their budget for the coming year that they consider funding 50% of the dial-a-ride program. Mr. Howard has an estimate of the costs. Any money Washington Township would get back through grants would be returned to the Village.

Althea Machtemes from the Planning and Zoning Commission felt that the \$750 fee for variances is too exorbitant and that the fee to make a property handicap accessible should be more affordable. Ms. Machtemes asked that the Board consider lowering the fee for variances. She felt it was too expensive for the average citizen and way too much for handicapped access to a home. Board members answered questions about their reasons for the \$750 fee. There was much debate between the Board and Ms. Machtemes regarding the variance fee. This matter will be looked at again at a workshop meeting.

A. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

TREASURER'S REPORT: A copy of the Treasurer's report was provided to the Board for review and the Treasurer was present to answer questions. Treasurer Collins noted that Capital Checking owes the O & M Account \$110,000 from last month and he may have to transfer funds this month to cover some bills. Decreasing revenues were discussed.

A list of bills totalling \$128,207.38 to be paid was available for review. A summary of the list of bills was provided. The Board went over the unapproved bills at the end of the bills list. Trustee Szymanski made a motion to approve payment of the list of bills as presented. Trustee Ahrendt seconded the motion.

AYES: (6) Trustees Cleary, Ahrendt, Szymanski, Gardner, Kuhlman and Wehling.

NAYS: (0) None.

Motion Carried.

An elected official salary survey from Burr Ridge was provided in the packet for review.

Results were provided from the Economic Development Committee meeting. The first item was an attempt to make Beatty Lumber whole on the sales tax reimbursement agreement as a result of the

new 0.5% sales tax increase that went into effect on January 1, 2008. It was agreed between Beatty Lumber and the Village that it is not possible to do this, but that the Village could offer about \$10,269.95 in other economic incentives to offset the \$33,000 in additional taxes Beatty will have to pay. An explanatory memo was provided in the packet for review. The Attorney has been directed to draft an ordinance and memorandum of understanding on this matter for the Board's consideration at a future meeting.

Also considered at the Economic Development meeting was the consideration of a request to hold a craft and art fair on Gould Street the weekend of the Drivin' the Dixie. Two scenarios of the area to be utilized for this purpose was provided in the packet for review. Bob Tully is requesting that the Village assist by authorizing a road closure, tables, garbage cans, barricades, and promotion. Administrator Barber, President Lohmann and Trustees Szymanski and Gardner attended the meeting. Mr. Tully offered to help with setting up the arts and crafts fair. The Board discussed different options for the Drivin' the Dixie plan. No action was taken.

The Board received the first draft of the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2008/2009, which will be the subject of the workshop on Tuesday, April 1st at 6:00 p.m. at the Washington Township Center.

RESOLUTION #2008-02 - A resolution adopting a five-year financial plan for the Village of Beecher. Trustee Szymanski made a motion to adopt Resolution #2008-02. Trustee Cleary seconded the motion.

AYES: (6) Trustees Cleary, Ahrendt, Szymanski, Gardner, Kuhlman and Wehling.

NAYS: (0) None.

Motion Carried.

Trustee Szymanski asked that the spending policy that was previously discussed be brought back up at the workshop meeting. Staff will add this matter to the workshop agenda.

President Lohmann asked if the Village could charge interest on engineering fees due from developers for amounts that the Village has already paid. A developer has many outstanding engineering bills for which the Village has already paid Baxter and Woodman. Attorney Kuiper will provide a legal opinion on this at the next Board meeting. The Committee is to look into changing the ordinance to set up a different way for getting these fees paid.

B. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Police Department monthly report was provided for review.

Results were provided of the March 4th tornado drill. The Junior High School did not participate due to state testing. All other schools participated and it went well.

Administrator Barber attended the recent Eastcom Board meeting and did not get anywhere in getting Beecher's fees reduced. The Village is looking at alternatives for dispatching.

President Lohmann asked about the policy on dog tag enforcement. Trustee Kuhlman will get together with Chief Weissgerber on this matter.

Trustee Kuhlman reported that the Police Department just got their traffic counter in and when the weather gets better, it will be set up to conduct a count at Orchard Lane and Lange Avenue, in response to a request for a stop sign at that location. Trustee Ahrendt commented that visibility due to a bush at that corner might be part of the problem. Code Enforcement Officer Riechers has looked at the issue with the bush before and will be asked to look at it again.

Trustee Ahrendt asked about a half of a pole near the cluster box at Orchard Lane and Lange Avenue. It looks like it was broken off. Public Works Superintendent Cowger will look into this matter.

C. STREETS AND ALLEYS COMMITTEE

Status was provided on the Chamber of Commerce banner replacement program. To date, 38 of the 47 available banner packages have been purchased by Chamber members. The Village has agreed to put up and take down the banners for a period of five years.

Status was provided on the Village's salt supply. The Village currently has about 100 tons of salt on hand. 140 additional tons are on order and should arrive in late March. Next season the Village has placed an order for up to 600 additional tons.

Trustee Cleary made a motion to approve the signing and sending of a letter from President Lohmann to Will County regarding a proposed road impact fee. A draft of the letter was provided in the packet for review. This letter will be submitted as testimony at Will County's March 11th meeting. Trustee Gardner seconded the motion.

AYES: (6) Trustees Cleary, Ahrendt, Szymanski, Gardner, Kuhlman and Wehling.

NAYS: (0) None.

Motion Carried.

Public Works Superintendent Cowger reported that he would be out of town the end of the week at the AWWA Conference.

President Lohmann asked about the stones put on the walking path in Lion's Park by the snowplow. Superintendent Cowger said he would see to the removal of the stones.

D. SEWER AND WATER COMMITTEE

The Water and Sewer Department monthly reports were included in the packet for review.

The Water Billing Register for January and February were provided in the packet for review. Administrator Barber commented that the water billed vs. water pumped ratio has become very narrow and asked Superintendent Cowger if Public Works needs to look at replacing some meters

in town. The reports reflect a current 7% water loss which includes hydrant flushing, etc. There are many old meters in town that need to be replaced.

Engineer Koenig provided an update on well #5. It is estimated that well #5 will be on-line April 15th. The project is still within the cash allowance in the budget amount. The Board discussed the budgeted amount and separate components added to the project.

Trustee Gardner made a motion to approve the re-application for eligibility for \$5,000,000 in low interest loans from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) wastewater revolving loan fund for expansion of the sewer treatment plant. This re-application keeps the Village eligible for funding. Trustee Cleary questioned staff about the timeline for this project. The project is not anticipated to begin until 2010 with construction in 2013 or 2014. Trustee Kuhlman seconded the motion.

AYES: (6) Trustees Cleary, Ahrendt, Szymanski, Gardner, Kuhlman and Wehling.

NAYS: (0) None.

Motion Carried.

E. PUBLIC BUILDINGS, PROPERTIES, PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Trustee Wehling reported that the Firemen's Park/OSLAD Grant project should start back up soon. Trustee Wehling also reported that an exploratory park district meeting is scheduled for March 11th at the Beecher Community Hall. New Park District Exploratory Committee members are George Obradovich, Bob Howard, Tom Brislane, Julie Wille, Drew Beck, Dan McKay, Trustee Ahrendt and Trustee Wehling. President Lohmann asked if the Firemen's Park dugouts have been completed. Superintendent Cowger reported that they are on his project list.

F. PLANNING, BUILDING AND ZONING COMMITTEE

Trustee Ahrendt made a motion authorizing a change to a condition of rezoning allowing a different roof appearance for the Beecher Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. This roof line was discussed last month at a joint meeting of the Village Board and Planning and Zoning Commission. The Planning and Zoning Commission voted 6-0 to approve the new roof line. Trustee Cleary asked if the Planning and Zoning Commission already approved this why is it coming before the Village Board? It was believed that the Planning and Zoning Commission had the right to approve any changes to this structure and that the Village Board didn't need to consider this. It was determined that this was correct so Trustee Ahrendt withdrew her motion and Trustee Szymanski concurred by withdrawing his second to the motion.

The Board considered a new variance application form, a copy of which was provided in the packet for review. The Planning and Zoning Commission voted 6-0 to approve the new form with one change: that any request for a variance that involved handicapped accessibility be charged a discounted fee of \$0 to \$150 in lieu of the standard \$750 fee. Attorney Kuiper provided opinion that the Village Board has the right to waive any and all fees for variances on a case by case basis. Administrator Barber also discussed determining what would be considered a hardship for variances.

Trustee Cleary made a motion to approve the new variance application form. Trustee Ahrendt seconded the motion.

AYES: (6) Trustees Cleary, Ahrendt, Szymanski, Gardner, Kuhlman and Wehling.

NAYS: (0) None.

Motion Carried.

The Planning and Zoning Commission approved for public hearing on March 27th the Trinity Industrial Intermodal expansion and the Creekside East development as proposed by Ron Reichert.

The Building Department monthly report was provided in the packet for review.

The Code Enforcement monthly report was provided in the packet for review.

The Economic Development monthly report was provided in the packet for review.

G. VILLAGE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Board considered the institution of a \$1 monthly fee for mosquito abatement to be placed on the water bills. Trustee Gardner asked if the Village is saving money doing the mosquito abatement ourselves instead of using Clarke Mosquito, why a fee would be added now and is this amount too much to collect or not enough. There was some discussion on the use of this fee. The Board discussed how to implement this fee and how much it should be. No action was taken at this time.

Results were provided from the Eastern Will County Council of Mayors meeting regarding the future of the health insurance co-op. Administrator Barber reported that questions came up about the selection process for insurance brokers. The group is still working towards a solution.

President Lohmann asked the Board to consider who to appointment to the Planning and Zoning Commission to fill the vacancy from the resignation of Nick Grutzius. Board members were asked to think about this and the matter will be considered again at the next Board meeting.

President Lohmann encouraged the Board and residents to participate in the "Lights Out" campaign from 8:00 to 9:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 29th.

President Lohmann has received requests from Striker's Bowling Alley regarding the hours for sale of liquor for consumption on Friday nights/Saturday mornings. Trustee Cleary expressed concerns about changing the hours. Some discussion followed regarding possible problems with extending hours on Fridays for bars in residential areas. After much discussion, Trustee Szymanski made a motion to authorize the Village Attorney to draft an ordinance for the bowling alley and taverns to be allowed to extend the Friday night/Saturday morning hours to 2:00 a.m., and the Village President and Clerk to sign the ordinance. Trustee Gardner seconded the motion.

AYES: (6) Trustees Cleary, Ahrendt, Szymanski, Gardner, Kuhlman and Wehling.

NAYS: (0) None.

Motion Carried.

Trustee Szymanski made a motion to move the date of the next Village Board meeting from March 24th to March 31st, due to a conflict with Washington Township for the meeting room. Trustee Ahrendt seconded the motion.

AYES: (6) Trustees Cleary, Ahrendt, Szymanski, Gardner, Kuhlman and Wehling.

NAYS: (0) None.

Motion Carried.

State Representative Lisa Dugan will host a local hearing on the proposed state budget on March 24th from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Kankakee Community College. Trustees were encouraged to attend.

President Lohmann reported on House Bill 4322 which is legislation pertaining to special service areas and the Village's right to implement special service areas in the event that a homeowner's association goes defunct. President Lohmann strongly opposed this bill and asked staff to draft a letter to be sent to our legislators indicating our concerns about this bill.

H. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

Trustee Cleary reported on a question brought to Clerk Conner, if a resident who attended meetings can have his name struck from all minutes and agendas posted on-line. Attorney Kuiper indicated that once minutes are approved it becomes a public record. It was the consensus of the Board not to change how things are currently being done.

Administrator Barber stated he would be in Springfield on Wednesday and Thursday for Lobby Days.

There being no further business, President Lohmann asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Cleary made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Ahrendt seconded the motion.

AYES: (6) Trustees Cleary, Ahrendt, Szymanski, Gardner, Kuhlman and Wehling.

NAYS: (0) None.

Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Janett Conner
Village Clerk