

**MINUTES OF A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING OF THE
PRESIDENT & BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF BEECHER
HELD AT THE BEECHER VILLAGE HALL,
724 PENFIELD STREET, BEECHER, ILLINOIS
NOVEMBER 20, 2007 -- 6:30 P.M.**

ROLL CALL

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

ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Clerk Janett Conner, Administrator Robert Barber, Planner Don Thomas and Building Inspectors Bill Blanke and John Rue.

GUESTS: None.

Building inspectors Bill Blanke and John Rue were present to answer questions from the Board about violations of the fence ordinance, how inspectors catch violations and other inspectional issues. Board members discussed a recent story on ABC News about problems with quality of construction in Chicago area towns including Beecher. Problems were attributed to not enough inspectors available to do inspections and municipalities only being responsible for inspecting for life safety issues and not quality of construction. Accessory structures, subdivision covenants and homeowners associations were discussed. Some Board members felt that the Village needs to better educate the public on what needs a permit and what does not in response to many emergency generators being installed in homes throughout the Village after a power outage earlier in the year. There is electrical wiring involved in installing these generators. It was suggested to put the information in the newsletter as to what needs a permit. There was discussion on having a uniformed code enforcement official on the street regularly in the future for enforcement of building permits and code violations, etc.

Elimination of privacy fences was considered. Some Board members expressed interest in no longer allowing privacy fences at all. The Board will provide a recommendation of changes to the Planning and Zoning Commission. Also discussed was to set a standard expiration of ninety days for all building permits except for new construction. The permits can then be renewed at the discretion of the building inspector.

Administrator Barber brought to the Board's attention some of the items on the Board meeting agenda for next weeks meeting. They discussed the need for a four way stop at Lange and Orchard, the banner replacement program and Bruti's proposal for a subdivision.

There was discussion on establishing an architectural code for the Village. A consensus was reached that once the code is approved it should only be applied to plats of subdivision approved after a certain date and it will be attached to the annexation agreement. It was also determined that the Architectural Review Officer would be the ARC Review Committee for the homeowner's association.

Defining of “masonry product” in the architectural code was considered. Planner Don Thomas will address this issue in the architectural code more clearly. The three new Trustees will be given more time to review the code since they haven’t seen it before.

Board members agreed to schedule future workshop meetings to discuss other issues.

Trustee Wehling asked if the regular Board meetings can be moved back to Mondays. The consensus of the Board agreed they would also like to change the meetings back to Mondays. The ordinance will have to be drafted and the issue will be brought up at the next meeting. The change can be as of the first of the year.

Administrator Barber asked who would be attending the Will County Governmental meeting in Joliet on December 13th. They were asked to please let him know so he can put in reservations.

Administrator Barber indicated he would like to leave the next Board meeting at 8:00 p.m. due to his kids basketball game.

There was a report provided on Bob Howard’s comments regarding the Firemen’s Park project and the Township’s open space initiative.

A dial a ride program was discussed. Whether the Township or Village will fund the project and how much from each was questioned. This will be discussed at the next regular meeting.

It was agreed that the next workshop meeting will be held after the holidays.

Trustee Cleary gave an update on the history of the Ruhe/Hearn drainage problem. It was asked if there are drain tiles sending water towards the property causing flooding. The possible causes of the problem were discussed.

Trustee Szymanski provided a report on what he and Trustee Cleary learned at the Illinois Municipal League Convention. Trustee Cleary also gave a report on sales tax law changes.

There being no further discussion, Trustee Kuhlman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Szymanski seconded the motion.

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

NAYS: (0) None.

Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Janett Conner, Village Clerk