

**MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP MEETING OF THE PRESIDENT  
& BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF BEECHER  
HELD AT THE WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP CENTER,  
30200 TOWN CENTER ROAD, BEECHER, ILLINOIS  
JANUARY 28, 2013 -- 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, Kypuros, Kuhlman and Wehling.

**ABSENT:** None.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Clerk Janett Conner, Administrator Robert Barber and Attorney Tim Kuiper.

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION (PZC):** Marcy Meyer, Kim Koutsy, Denis Tatgenhorst, Althea Machtemes, George Schuitema, Phil Serviss and Kevin Bouchard.

**GUESTS:** Stacy Mazurek and J.R. Delgado.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO ZONING CODE:**

The Village Board and PZC members met jointly to consider an Ordinance amending the Zoning Code pertaining to special uses for digital signs. The meeting was scheduled to discuss questions raised by the Village Board and PZC and to obtain input from the Village Attorney on putting specifics in the ordinance relating to density and aesthetics as a criteria for judging special uses.

Attorney Kuiper explained that digital signs are put in the ordinance as a special use which requires a petitioner to go through a detailed process to get approved. Attorney Kuiper stated there was no value to add aesthetics into the ordinance and felt there was enough subjective criteria in the special use ordinance that can allow a request to be denied if needed. It was also noted that these signs are very expensive so a lot of applications are not anticipated.

Trustee Szymanski felt the density can be considered in the special use process, and didn't support changing what the PZC recommended. Each special use can be considered on a case by case basis. Trustee Cleary commented that DeJong Equipment was the first request for a digital sign like this and that there may be more so the Board needs to be proactive in planning for future requests. Trustee Cleary referred to Midland and Echworth ordinances and their specifics regarding aesthetics. Attorney Kuiper clarified that digital billboards and digital signs are regulated differently. Attorney Kuiper stated that he is not aware of any other communities that have regulations pertaining to distance

between digital signs. Administrator Barber commented that New Lenox does have a distance regulation in their ordinance as a reference. Administrator Barber referenced smaller digital signs on buildings and how these can be regulated. Trustee Kuhlman commented that the high costs of these signs may change to make them more affordable in the future.

PZC member Koutsky commented on pole signs and what's allowed. He said with current criteria due to building size restrictions, that if an existing sign blows down it can't be replaced as pole sign, it would then have to be a monument sign. Concerns were expressed about possible visibility issues with monument signs. A petitioner could apply for a special use with the hardship being visibility issues.

There was then some discussion on Section 2, non-permitted signs and the definition of: "Lights create an illusion of movement".

The Board discussed the difference between the 2006 zoning ordinance and proposed changes relating to digital signs. Attorney Kuiper reminded that these requirements are in addition to the current ordinance for signs that specifies size, location, etc.

Trustee Ahrendt asked Attorney Kuiper if he had any experience with other towns that have allowed and found that they haven't liked the digital signs. Attorney Kuiper stated that most towns regulate them and only allow the signs in certain areas. PZC member Machtemes stated that the areas Attorney Kuiper commented on in Indiana are commercial districts and Beecher has more residential along Route #1. Ms. Machtemes opposes many of these signs and the effect on residents. Trustee Kypuros said these have to put off less light than the current street lights in neighborhoods. Ms. Machtemes said the Board should ask residents who live along these areas how they feel about these signs. Trustee Ahrendt asked Attorney Kuiper if the Board can regulate when the sign can display their messages. Administrator Barber said that it may not be fair to all businesses since some are 24-hour businesses in all commercial areas and some are in more residential areas. Attorney Kuiper noted if conditions are put on signs, criteria must be measurable such as how many seconds a sign message can display. It was decided that #6 in the proposed Ordinance needs to be changed relating to non-measurable criteria of flashing a message. After lengthy discussion it was decided to accept the amended Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the PZC with the amendment to M6 to say "Same message shall remain constant for at least three seconds". The Ordinance will be voted on at the February Village Board meeting.

PZC members were thanked for attending this workshop meeting.

#### **OPTIONS FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT:**

The Board discussed options for the Wastewater Treatment Plant after February 18, 2013 since Bill Merritt, the current sewer operator has submitted his retirement letter. The Committee has met and discussed the options and their recommendation was provided in the packet for review which is to contract out the plant operations to Baxter and Woodman Engineering. It would save the Village money and give us a year to evaluate the situation and allow time to see how it works. The Village may have someone in house that can get the required license in the next year. Trustee Szymanski stated that the main reason Baxter and Woodman was the Committee's recommendation is that they

did the sewer plant expansion so they know the plant and have a positive record in running these types of plants. This plan would be re-evaluated after the first year. Trustee Cleary expressed concerns as to why the Village should contract with a Class I operator with Baxter and Woodman and not a lower operator class which may cost less. Administrator Barber said the engineering firms only have Class I operators and a Class I operator could possibly give us input on needs for future expansion of plant. The Village can hire a Class II operator but will need Class I in the future so need to plan for that. Trustee Kypuros wants to see Superintendent Cowger get the license but since Superintendent Cowger may be retiring in the near future we also want to have current Public Works employees to start going for training to get their licenses so they may be available with the needed license when Superintendent Cowger retires. The Board discussed the options explained in the packet. President Lohmann supported the Committee's recommendation as long as we still have some of our own staff working at the plant and familiar with operations. This is a one-year proposal that can change. The Village can do something else if this doesn't work well. Plus, this buys time to decide what to do. Trustee Cleary asked questions about the recommended proposal and costs of hiring a consultant versus hiring an operator. The Board will vote on the Committee's recommendation at the next meeting. The consensus of the Board agreed to go with the Committee's recommendation to hire Baxter and Woodman Engineering to run the plant.

**REFUSE OPTIONS:**

Administrator Barber provided a summary of the refuse contract options. Two alternatives were reached after meeting with refuse haulers and other towns. All communities negotiations had different criteria for what they needed so negotiations were helpful but all communities will be negotiating different contracts. This is due to different criteria regarding needs, location, etc. The Village negotiated to include yard waste in the pickup and reduce Public Works having to do so much with brush, leaves, etc. Plus it can be hard to get rid of yard waste. Compared costs of Public Works picking up brush and leaves versus having the refuse company to do it, and considering the cost of wear and tear on Village equipment. Trustee Cleary noted covenants in subdivisions, that some don't allow cans outside of the garage.

Administrator Barber explained the two options: 1) If the Village wants the same service level with yardwaste, etc., Allied and Star are comparable in cost. 2) Allied would provide a much better rate if the Village wants to include yard waste in the proposal, and residents can use any bag or can. For all proposals, all residents would be provided with a garbage can.

President Lohmann asked if the Board wants yard waste included in the rate. There was much debate as to the options relating to including yard waste in the contract. President Lohmann recommended going with the proposal that includes yard waste in the program. Trustee Kypuros noted an increase in costs to residents as a concern. There is money in the Refuse Fund to help hedge the rates to minimize the initial impact on residents. There were many concerns of those who bag their grass, etc. versus those that don't and people may be paying for a service they never use. It was also noted that residents are happy with Homewood/Star Disposal's service. According to some Board members some people in other towns are unhappy with Allied. Trustee Ahrendt asked if the Village could negotiate the price of yard waste bags with Homewood/Star Disposal? Administrator Barber said the Village would have to supplement the cost in our rate.

Board members were polled asking their opinion on refuse contract options:

Option 1 - Homewood Disposal: Trustees Cleary, Ahrendt, Kypuros, Kuhlman and Wehling supported.

Option 2 - Allied: Trustee Szymanski supported.

It was the consensus of the Board to stay with Homewood/Star Disposal and using the pay per bag option for yard waste bags. A contract will be negotiated with Homewood/Star Disposal and the proposal will be brought to the Board for a vote.

**ILLIANA EXPRESSWAY UPDATE:**

President Lohmann reported on the Illiana meeting held earlier in the day. He provided a listing of road closures being proposed and which roads are to remain open. This is for information only. Landowner meetings are scheduled to discuss issues with the impact on their land. Two interchanges are proposed for Beecher.

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

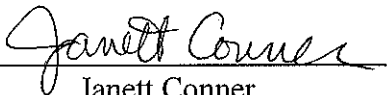
AYES: (6) Trustees Cleary, Ahrendt, Szymanski, Kypuros, Kuhlman and Wehling.

NAYS: (0) None.

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:



Janett Conner  
Village Clerk