

The regular meeting of the Village of Divernon Board of Trustees was held on Wednesday, May 13, 2020 electronically. Village President Jim Copelin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. After the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance, Clerk Rod Molnar called roll: Jim Copelin "Here", Craig Busch "Here", Melissa Layton "Here", Wayne Jones "Here", Gail Hedges "Here", Tyler Bramley "Here", Larry Baer "Here". Also, in attendance were Police Chief Jason Martin and Superintendent Jeremy Rhodes.

A motion was made by Layton and seconded by Jones to approve the minutes of April 22, 2020. The motion passed 6-0.

A motion was made by Baer and seconded by Layton to approve the executive session minutes of April 22, 2020. The motion passed 6-0.

Baer presented the Village bills with a motion they be approved. Hedges seconded and the motion carried 6-0.

Visitors:

Chris Swieca of Wintrust Bank was in attendance to update the Board on the gas station properties. Wintrust has purchased the previous bank's assets, so they own the collateral, but still do not own the properties. They have filed a motion with the court to be named the plaintiff at which time a new receiver will be put in charge of the property. Motions have been drafted, but have not yet been heard. In the interim, a landscape company has been hired to keep the properties mowed. Representative Mike Murphy asked if Swieca knew what had to be done to the north property to be in compliance with EPA. Murphy said he had contacted EPA and was told the south property was cleared and only required a traffic study by IDOT. He was told the north property cleanup was not complete, but they wouldn't supply Murphy with the details as he is not the owner. Swieca and Copelin will each contact EPA for more information. Jones asked what their vision for the property was. Swieca said the bank will not be involved in the development. They will sell the property as soon as they get a clear title. Swieca said he hoped that the new receiver would be in place for the south property by the end of summer and the north property by the end of October. He would like for his bank to have both properties sold by the end of the year. Hedges reported she was told Dollar General contacted the owners of the property across the street from the south property and was told it was not for sale at this time.

Supervisor Reports:

Public Works:

Superintendent Rhodes thanked the Board for the raises he and his crew had received. They continue to work on ditches and drainage issues. They have been using the sewer-better to clean tree roots out of old clay tile drainage pipes. He then presented this year's MFT plan put together by Benton and Associates to repair the Village Streets. Busch had a question as to why only a portion of streets are being done instead of the way it used to be done years ago when the whole street was done. Rhodes replied, with prices of materials increasing, they have to be more selective in which streets are chosen and what is done. The plan this year is for \$68,414.00 which is much higher than previous years. Rhodes hopes the bids come in lower. A motion was made by Hedges and seconded by Bramley to approve the Municipal Estimate of Maintenance Costs. The motion was approved 6-0. A motion was made by Larry to approve the Resolution for Maintenance of Streets and Highways by Municipality under the Illinois Highway Code. Hedges seconded and the motion carried 6-0.

Police:

Chief Martin reported the F150 is being repaired for warranty work and has still not been returned. The issue has been turned over to the Village Attorney. Martin asked the Board if they would be willing to waive the fees for the ordinance violation for the gas station properties in response to the bank mowing the properties and putting a plan in place to keep them mowed. A motion was made by Baer and seconded by Hedges to waive the fees. The motion carried 6-0. Martin went through a list of 13 properties which received warnings for tall grass and burning of garbage. He has spoken with some of the property owners and they have begun taking care of the problems. Full time Police Officer Austin Cronister turned in his resignation. He will owe the Village \$1200.00 for training and also for a portion of his vest. Currently the Village has openings for one full time and two part time officers.

*Committee Reports:**Zoning, TIF, Building Permits:*

Rhodes reported the new playground equipment has been delivered. Copelin received an email saying that the installation would begin the week of May 25th. Busch believes the company needs a form from the Village allowing them to request a Julie before digging. He will follow up.

Public Utilities, Water, Sewer and Gas:

Jones presented a request for an adjustment to a utility bill. The card had been ripped and received late from the post office. Jones made the motion to approve the adjustment of the late fee. Layton seconded and the motion passed 6-0. A motion was made by Jones to approve the Hedging Agreement with United Gas Management regarding natural gas purchases. Baer seconded. Molnar called roll. Busch- yes, Layton- yes, Jones-yes, Hedges- yes, Bramley- yes, Baer- yes. The motion carried 6-0. Baer said while going through the bills, he noticed how high the electric bill was at the sewer plant. He wondered if the Village had ever considered looking into solar power. Rhodes has been in contact with Ruby Electric to get some estimates. He is also exploring the possibility for grants that may be available. It was suggested he contact Harvest Solar also. The Village's contract for electric service is scheduled to expire at the end of the year. The contract with Good Energy will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

Finance, Personnel, GIS:

Busch asked about the status of employee drug testing. Baer said that all full-time employee are random tested. The only employees not in the testing pool are part time employees. Molnar will contact Illinois Risk Management to get their opinion.

Public Safety, Health and Safety:

The burning of yard waste has been discussed at recent meetings. Copelin said he is not trying to get the issue resolved tonight, but instead asked each Trustee to give their opinion on how the issue should be handled. Baer believes that the Board can reach some type of agreement. Bramley is concerned if burning yard waste is outlawed that some people wouldn't be able to take care of it as they don't have trucks to haul to the sewer plant. He believes that burning yard waste is a much more viable option for many residents. Busch believe burn barrels make for a

more controlled burn. Hedges and Jones agree that the Board needs to look at the big picture when it comes to burning regarding health and safety issues and the overall look of the Village. Layton said some type of compromise could be reached. Copelin said that whatever the Board comes up with, enforcement is the key. It makes no sense to pass an ordinance and only give out warnings. At some point fines need to be issued. The Board was in agreement.

Public Works, Streets, Alleys and Sidewalks:

Nothing to report.

Village Communication/Building Grounds and Lights, Parks:

Busch received a bid from Walker Painting to power wash and paint the swing set and merry go round in the park. The total was \$1300.00. A motion was made by Baer and seconded by Busch to approve the bid. The motion passed 6-0. Bramley reported 70 to 80 residents have signed up for the Civic Plus notification system. Office Manager, Heather Rideout has been testing the system. Martin is using it already with his officers.

Old Business:

Copelin reported the Census Bureau is reporting that thus far 70% of residents have replied to the census survey. The Village is 13th in the county for responding to the survey, moving up from 17th last week. An item will be put on Facebook reminding residents to fill out the survey. Molnar presented two drafts of letters to be mailed to businesses regarding liquor and gaming fees. He will edit the one chosen by the Board and have it approved at the next meeting. Layton received an email from Sangamon County Board Representative Jeff Thomas. The county's Smart Transport will begin delivering essential items to county residents. The Methodist Church food pantry continues to serve nine to ten families. There has not been an increase during the pandemic.

New Business:

Baer said that he had been contacted by Randy Kestner. Kestner normally cleans the carpets in the Village Hall this time of year. He will be told to do it. Stephanie Kaylor was given the ok to begin cleaning the Village Hall again. Layton has painted the flower pots on the square and filled them with plants. She has a receipt for the items.

Motion by Hedges to adjourn at 8:12 p.m.

Jim Copelin
Village President

Rodney Molnar
Village Clerk