

The regular meeting of the Village of Divernon Board of Trustees was held on Wednesday, December 23, 2020 at the Masonic Lodge. Village President Jim Copelin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Clerk Rod Molnar called roll: Jim Copelin "Here", Craig Busch "Here", Wayne Jones "Here", Gail Hedges "Here", Larry Baer "Here", Also in attendance were Superintendent Jeremy Rhodes, Police Chief Jason Martin and Officer Kenny Reardon. Melissa Layton and Tyler Bramley were absent.

A motion was made by Baer and seconded by Jones to approve the minutes of December 9, 2020. The motion passed 4-0.

A motion was made by Hedges and seconded by Jones to approve the executive session minutes of October 12, 2020. The motion passed 4-0.

Baer presented the Village bills with a motion approve. Hedges seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

Visitors:

Prizes were awarded in the annual Christmas Lights contest. Scott and Ashley Smother won for Best Traditional. Jay and Deb Sergent for Best Theme. Randy and Judy Graeser were unable to attend. They won for Best Light Show.

Supervisor Reports:

Public Works:

Superintendent Rhodes distributed his plans for work in the Village for the coming year. He was unable to begin work on the driveway for the Police Garage because of the weather.

Police:

Chief Martin reported all of the Christmas lights stolen have been returned and apologies were given to the residents. Martin would like to start a Neighborhood Watch program in the Village and has received a great deal of interest. Martin also informed the Board of the retirement of part time officer Bill Price. Bill also served the Village for several years as a full-time officer. A discussion was held concerning how the stolen Christmas lights issue was handled. Mayor Copelin feels that earlier intervention on the departments part with parents could have put a stop to the problems before they escalated. In addition to the lights problem, there were some issues regarding bullying, assault and bad language being directed towards adults in the Village Park. Martin replied he was short on staff because of illness and felt he and Officer Reardon handled the problems as best they could. The Board would like to see some best practices be instituted to see this type of problem does not happen again.

Committee Reports:

Zoning, TIF, Building Permits:

Busch gave an update on the Business District Project. Adam Stroud of PGAV Planners will have a plan and scheduled sometime in January and present it to the Board. Attorney Kathy Orr informed the Board that TIF funds may be used to establish the district.

Public Utilities, Water, Sewer and Gas:

Jones reported he attended a meeting of the Sangamon County Natural Hazard Committee. There is currently no funding available and none foreseeable in the future. The next meeting will be held in June.

Finance, Personnel, GIS:

A motion was made by Baer and seconded by Jones to give all full and part time employees a \$100.00 Christmas bonus. The motion carried 4-0. A motion was made by Baer to offer Village employees vision and dental insurance as part of their benefit package. The employee would be responsible to add family members. Hedges seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

Public Safety, Health and Safety:

Nothing to report.

Public Works, Streets, Alleys and Sidewalks:

Nothing to report.

Village Communication/Building Grounds and Lights, Parks:

Hedges reported the quarterly Village Newsletter will be mailed on Monday.

Old Business:

Hedges has contacted Heart Technologies regarding the capability of the Village's computer network. The system has the ability to have files where information can be shared between employees.

New Business:

None.

The Board then interviewed two candidates for the position of Police Officer.

The first candidate was Charles Barber. He currently lives in Chatham. He is working construction and is looking to do something new. He has three years on the Pawnee Fire Department. Jones asked what his five-year plans. He wants something steady in a position where he can help people. If he were to get a better offer a year from now, he said he would honor his commitment to Divernon. Baer asked why he wanted to be an officer. He felt currently police across the country are getting bad press and he wants to be part of the change. Hedges asked how he would be part of the change and about training. He attended SIU in Carbondale for 1 1/2. He also worked with the carpenter's union. He would like to work with the children in the community.

The second candidate was Matt Hulslander. He is a graduate of Auburn High School and was raised in Divernon. He recently completed a tour with the U.S. Marines. He is currently

enrolled at SIU in Edwardsville, majoring in business. His wife is a teacher in Bellville. Hedges asked why he wanted to be a police officer. He wants to give back to the community. He said that is why he joined the Marines, as he wanted to give back to the country. Baer asked what he was working towards in college. He said he hoped to have his teachers' certificate by 2023. He became interested while in Afghanistan, where the literacy rate is very low. He would like to become involved with children in the community as he feels they have too much time on their hands and need some direction.

Jones made the motion to go into executive session at 8:29 p.m. to discuss personnel.

The Board returned to regular session at 9:37 p.m.

A motion was made by Baer to employ Matt Hulslander as a Police Officer. He will begin two weeks prior to the Village getting him into a training class. His starting salary will be \$19.00 per hour. Jones seconded. The motion carried. 4-0.

A motion was made by Hedges to adjourn at 9:45 p.m.

Jim Copelin
Village President

Rodney Molnar
Village Clerk