

The regular meeting of the Village of Divernon Board of Trustees was held on Wednesday November 10, 2021, at the Village Hall. Mayor Jim Copelin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. After the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance, Clerk Gail Hedges called roll: Craig Busch “Here”, Joe Bukantos “Here”, Chuck Apgar “Here”, Dianne Brenning “Here” and Larry Baer “Here”. Tyler Bramley was absent. Also present was Chief Martin. Superintendent Rhodes was absent.

A motion was made by Bukantos seconded by Busch to approve the corrected minutes of October 27, 2021. The motion passed 4-0 with Brenning voting present

Baer made a motion to approve the bills seconded by Brenning. The motion passed 5-0.

Visitors

Jake Rettberg, Chair of the Otter Lake Water Commission, shared with the Board that the Commission passed a 3% annual increase in water rates to its wholesale member municipalities for the next five years effective March 1st of each year on. The increase amounts to \$5.24 per 1000 gallons for residential users.

Erin Parga was present to discuss concern about open burning. She indicated that open burning is a health concern especially for those with respiratory issues like asthma. She also indicated she had a signed petition by 50 Divernon residents gathered via Facebook. Ms. Parga presented the Board with information to support her concerns and asked that they be considered.

Ben Spreen, Benton and Associates reported that Maxcor will begin repairing the water tower the week of November 15, 2021. Spreen indicated that if the Village wanted Benton and Associates to monitor progress ensuring that work was completed properly, a fee of not more than \$4500.00 was necessary. Benton does not have a general contract with the Village, but rather charges on a per project basis.

Supervisor Reports:

Public Works:

The gas survey was mailed, but it was not identified as Village mail causing concern that it will be discarded as junk mail. The survey is managed by an independent agency and the survey questions gas users on how informed they are of gas safety. There was discussion of the \$4500.00 for Benton and Associates to monitor the progress of the water tower repair. A vote will be taken at the next Board meeting.

Police:

Chief Martin asked the Board to consider a fourth full-time police officer. Managing part-time officers has been difficult as they all have full-time jobs. With another full-time officer, the Village would have more police presence during peak hours. Decisions impacting increases in finances will be made during the time of appropriations review in 2022. Martin indicated that gym equipment had been set up in the Village garage for police officers.

Committee Reports: Economic Dev., Zoning, TIF, Building Permits:

There was a brief discussion on the use of American Rescue Plan Act funding. Busch and Apgar will continue to investigate possible uses of these funds.

Public Utilities Water, Gas and Sewer

Nothing to report.

Finance, Personnel, GIS:

Baer stated account codes will be set-up for each the North and South Business Districts to track funds separately. Heartland will begin assessing a fee of \$99.00 for each merchant account beginning December 30, 2021. The Village only has one account.

Public Safety, Health and Safety:

There was a discussion on open burning, but no action was taken at this time.

Public Works, Streets, Alleys and Sidewalks:

Bukantos stated that Brown Street is a state route and might be eligible for infrastructure funding for repair. Further investigation is necessary.

Village Communication/Building, Grounds and Lights, Parks, Recreation:

The Village newsletter was issued this week.

Old Business:

Nothing to report.

New Business:

Village offices will be closed December 24th and 27th for the Christmas holiday. Christmas decoration judging will take place December 15, 2021. Judging will be for best traditional, best theme, and best light show. \$100.00 will be awarded in each category. Awards will be presented at the December 22, 2021, at the Village board meeting.

The meeting ended with a motion by Apgar at 8:10 p.m.

Jim Copelin
Mayor

Gail Hedges
Village Clerk