

The regular meeting of the Village of Divernon Board of Trustees was held at the Village Hall on Wednesday June 12, 2024. Mayor Jim Copelin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Clerk Gail Hedges called roll: Craig Busch "Here," Joe Bukantos "Here," Chuck Apgar "Here," Randy Olson "Here," and Dianne Brenning "Here," and, Larry Baer "Here." Also present were Superintendent Jeremy Rhodes and Chief Paul Carpenter.

A motion was made by Bukantos, seconded by Apgar, to approve the minutes of May 22, 2024. The motion passed 6-0.

Baer made a motion, seconded by Brenning, to approve the bills. The motion passed 6-0.

*Visitors:*

Melissa Taylor was present to observe.

*Public Works:*

Superintendent Rhodes reported a large tree branch in the park had fallen that needs to be removed. A bid was received from Norris-Kohen Tree Service for \$300.00 to remove the fallen branch which was removed. Rhodes also reported there are other dead branches that need to be removed. Norris-Kohen offered a bid of \$2000.00 to remove and clean up the other dead branches in the park trees. Busch made a motion, seconded by Bukantos, to approve the removal of the fallen branch and the other dead branches. The motion passed 6-0. Another tree needs to be removed but will be done at a later date.

The summer workload has increased so much that another part-time worker is needed. Rhodes said the branch pick-up has increased significantly. Discussion followed. A position description will be developed and posted. The starting salary will be \$15.00 an hour.

Baer reported the park slide has water pool at the bottom when it rains. Baer suggested a hole be drilled allowing the water to drain. Mayor Copelin said that drilling holes could weaken the material and void the warranty. Superintendent Rhodes will look into what can be done to allow for natural drainage.

*Police:*

Chief Paul Carpenter said that Officer Leak and Gator, the police K-9, passed the Canine Team Drug Detection Test Certification. Gator was the only canine to pass the test, and it was passed on first try. Officer Leak and Officer Gator will be on duty next week. Bukantos asked the Chief about License Plate Reader cameras. The Chief said he's looked at them.

*Economic Dev., Zoning, TIF, Building Permits:*

Busch reported that the North Business District has \$215,958.00 on account and the South Business District has \$69,819.00 on account. One business has asked about accessing funds for improvements. The application for funds is on the Village website but does not include specifics on how much can be requested or how the funds can be used. Apgar's been working with Rhodes to get cost estimates for

materials for projects included on the Rural Development and Main Street application. Busch recommended the estimates be increased by 15 to 20 percent. The application is due at the end of July. Mayor Copelin reported that remediation should begin immediately on the north gas station property, and groundbreaking should be in July.

*Public Utilities Water, Gas and Sewer*

Nothing to report.

*Finance, Personnel, GIS:*

Nothing to report.

*Public Safety, Health & Safety:*

Mayor Copelin said that 6 ordinance violation letters had been sent out. Abatement must be completed by June 17, 2024. If it is determined all the requirements have not been met, a Village employee will be dispatched to your property and will begin the abatement process, for which a \$150.00 fine will be issued and a daily fine will continue until the property has met the necessary guidelines.

*Public Works, Streets, Alleys, and Sidewalks:*

Busch asked about parking around the El Quetzalito restaurant. Because of the strictions for parking in proximity to stop signs, parking in front of the restaurant is prohibited. Adding diagonal parking along the south side of Kenney St. is problematic because of the driveways. In an effort to make parking more convenient for customers, the matter will be looked into further.

*Village Communication/Building, Grounds & Lights, Parks, Recreation*

Nick Goedecke, President of the Chatham Railroad Association, contacted the Village about the Depot repair and maintenance. The Village of Chatham has an agreement with the Association for oversight of their Depot. Goedecke will be invited to a board meeting to discuss a relationship with the Village. Busch said that volunteers are needed to monitor the bounce houses at the July 13, 2024, block party. If interested, contact Village Hall. Apgar reported the next newsletter will go out in August.

*Old Business:*

Baer reported the problem with the utility bills being lost or torn is due to the perforation. Normally 4 bills are printed on a sheet. If the number of bills per sheet were reduced to 2, the issue could be minimized. The larger size utility bill would also allow for more information to be added. Baer said that upfront preparation of the bills takes a lot of time. There're adjustments, review of entries to ensure accuracy, uploading data from meter reader, etc. There was a lot of discussion about using an outside mailing company or going paperless. The Village will be gathering email addresses in preparation of going paperless. Residents will have the choice of receiving a bill or going paperless. Apgar spoke again of an average gas rate. Baer said he was not supportive of an average rate. More discussion is needed.

*New Business:*

Bukantos made a motion, seconded by Baer, to approve the liquor license for El Quetzalito Restaurant and the liquor and gaming license for Tammi's Gaming. The motion passed 6-0. Bramley Funeral Home is celebrating 100 years of operation this year. There was discussion about recognizing businesses when milestones are met.

Baer made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:15 p.m. to discuss personnel. Baer made a motion to return to regular session at 8:51.

Apgar made a motion, seconded by Baer, to approve annual performance raises be based on an annual merit-based evaluation. The motion passed 5-1 with Bukantos voting no. Apgar made a motion, seconded by Olson, to approve the April 24, 2024 Executive Session minutes. The motion passed 6-0. Apgar made a motion, seconded by Olson, to approve the amended May 8, 2024 Executive Session minutes. The motion passed 6-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m. with a motion from Apgar.

Jim Copelin  
Mayor

Gail Hedges  
Clerk