

The regular meeting of the Village of Divernon Board of Trustees was held at Village Hall on Wednesday March 26, 2025. Mayor Jim Copelin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Chuck Apgar called roll: Craig Busch “Here,” Joe Bukantos “Here,” Chuck Apgar “Here,” Randy Olson “Here,” Dianne Brenning “Here,” and Larry Baer “Here.” Also present were Chief Mike Lavin, Superintendent Jeremy Rhodes, and Attorney Tony Schuering. Clerk Gail Hedges was absent.

Busch made a motion, seconded by Baer, to approve the amended March 12, 2025, minutes. The motion passed 6-0.

Baer made a motion, seconded by Brenning, to approve the bills for payment with the addition of \$50.00 for a Graduation ad for Auburn School District, and \$100.00 to American Insurance as a Bond for the watermain project. The motion passed 6-0.

Visitors:

Julie Rhodes was present to observe.

Justin Reichart and family were present to comment on the Police Department K9 program as family of Officer Leake. Officer Leake may be leaving the Department which presents concerns about the future of the program and of the K9 unit. If the program is discontinued, the family would like the opportunity to buy the K9 so it can remain with the Leake family.

Public Works:

Superintendent Rhodes presented a quote to place a port-a-potty and hand washing station in the park. The quote from P.S.S. (Portable Sanitation Systems) was for \$350.00 per month including service, \$30.00 delivery fee, and \$30.00 pick-up fee. Busch made a motion, seconded by Olson to approve the contract for April through October 2025. The motion passed 6-0. The Public Works department will look into pouring a concrete pad and other security elements for the placement.

Rhodes also reported that the Department is interested in the property at 10 W. Dodds St. for expanded equipment storage. The property owner is open to a sale pending appraisal. Apgar will obtain a recommendation on an appraiser from Skeeters and share with Rhodes to get the property appraised for further Board consideration.

Police Department:

Chief Mike Lavin reported that the K9 program will need to be evaluated if Officer Leake leaves the department. Mayor Copelin offered additional thoughts on the program since its inception and the hurdles it has had. There are a variety of options available to the Village including selling the K9 to another Department. Discussion was held on the program’s effectiveness and the usefulness of the program in the Village. Other factors including banked comp time for Officer Leake will impact on the effectiveness of the program soon. Schuering recommended that no changes to the program be made at this time. The Board will hold further discussion in the executive session regarding the costs and future of the program at the April 9, 2025, Board meeting.

Lavin reported that the 2022 Durango is still out for repairs. Further diagnosis is ongoing but should be covered by the powertrain warranty. Mayor Copelin updated the Board on the damage done to the picnic table at the park. The parties involved have been identified, and the damage documentation has been submitted to the insurance company.

Economic Dev., Zoning, TIF, Building Permits:

Ordinance 2025-003 was presented which will amend the Village Code to update the Building Code references. The functional change of the amendment is to refer to the latest edition of the Sangamon County code. Olson made a motion, seconded by Busch, to approve the ordinance. The motion passed 6-0. Ordinance 2025-004 was presented which converts the Village Clerk position to an appointed position. The functional change is to make the clerk's position appointed rather than elected. The change is necessary because no one is interested in running for the position which becomes vacant following the conclusion of the current clerk's term. Busch made a motion, seconded by Bukantos, to approve the Ordinance. The motion passed 6-0. Resolution 2025-001 was presented declaring the Village owned property at 100 Reichart Road as surplus, and other connected actions. This is the next step in preparing the property for sale. Busch made a motion, seconded by Apgar, to approve the Resolution. The Motion passed 6-0.

Apgar updated the Board on his meeting with Jim Skeeters to discuss marketing the 100 Reichert Road property. Skeeters has experience marketing comparable properties in small communities, and believes the property has potential for development. Discussion was held on dividing the lot and a portion that is of interest to another local business. It was determined that an appraisal of the lot (approximately 1.6 acres broken down as two parcels - approximately 1.1 acres and 0.5 acres). With an appraised price an offer can be presented to the local business that has shown interest, and the remaining property can be actively marketed. Apgar will work with Skeeters to arrange for an appraisal and secure a listing agreement when appropriate.

Mike Bolash submitted a \$3,660.00 quote for exterior repairs to the Train Depot. The quote included repairs to the exterior and paint. Bukantos made a motion, seconded by Baer, to accept the bid, and include it in the submission for the Historical Society Grant. The Motion passed 6-0. Apgar will finalize and submit the Grant application. Per terms of the Grant work cannot begin before July 1, 2025. Awards are expected to be announced by June 2025.

Public Utilities Water, Gas and Sewer:

Bukantos inquired about whether the Public Works Department needed summer help. Rhodes indicated that it was likely needed.

Finance, Personnel, GIS:

Baer presented more quotes on a replacement document shredder for the Village Hall. There are three options: purchase costs range from \$714.00 to \$1,400.00, CDS offers a lease option at \$2100.00 per year, Shred-It offers on-site shredding services for \$55.00 per 65-gallon bin. Pickup can be scheduled as needed. Baer made a motion, seconded by Busch, to enter into an agreement with Shred-It for on-site shredding. The Motion passed 6-0. Brenning reported that several utility accounts enrolled in the budget billing program have accrued large balances. Discussion was held on addressing the balances.

Schuering will review the existing agreement language. Baer reported that the electric aggregation rate was rebid, and an agreement was reached with Direct Energy for 1 year starting July 1, 2025. The contract rate will be 10.66cents per kWh. Baer also reported that the North Business District balance is growing.

Public Safety, Health & Safety:

Olson reported that he is working on quotes for the Village Hall drop box. Olson inquired about updates to the building ordinance violation process.

Public Works, Streets, Alleys & Sidewalks:

Nothing to report.

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

Apgar reported that the next edition of the newsletter is scheduled for May 2025. Board members were asked to submit items to be included in the newsletter. The focus will be on the newly elected Board members, and the Block Party. Apgar also asked for opinions on which portions of the denied RDMS grant, if any, the Board might want to fund. Additional power and water at the park, the sound system for the pavilion, and Village welcome sign were previously identified as a priority. Mayor Copelin will approach Jamie Stowers about power layouts in the park, and Apgar will pursue an updated design for a sound system. Busch presented Resolution 2025-002 regarding Food Truck vendor agreements. Baer made a motion, seconded by Bukantos, to approve the resolution. The motion passed 6-0.

Old Business:

Apgar updated the Board on the Village yard sale in April and the Clean-up Day. Any available help on clean-up day would be appreciated.

New Business:

Busch reported that Jake Rettberg is the Grand Marshal for this year's Block Party scheduled July 12, 2025. This year's theme will be "Through the Generations."

Baer made a motion, seconded by Olson, to adjourn at 8:45 p.m. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Jim Copelin
Mayor

Chuck Apgar
Trustee