

Regular Meeting Minutes
February 4th, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Village President Marc Baures. Roll call was taken and the following were present: Trustees Pete Filla, Dan Molstad, Harold Olson, Village President Marc Baures, Public Works Director Courtney Kotlarz, Village Clerk Jane Jensen, property owner Tom Morehouse and Andrew Dannehy of the Trempealeau Co. Times. Trustees Kaylee Waldvogel and Dana Stoner were absent. A quorum was present;

The Board said the Pledge of Allegiance;

Jane Jensen verified that the posting and notification requirements were met;

(10) Minute Open Forum No one was present to speak in the 10 minute open forum;

Report from the Public Works Department; Courtney Kotlarz reported that Hilltopper Refuse and Recycling has delivered the garbage/recycling carts and the first collection will be on February 6th, 2025. He noted that he has received many positive comments about the new program. Jane reported that she included billing for the garbage/recycling collection on the January utility bills, even though the carts won't be used until 2/6/25. Harold Olson said that is appropriate to bill the week prior to implementing the program. Courtney reported that the the new public works employee, Greg Hansen is catching on, and the transition is going well, however it is difficult to replace Pete Tabbert, who has been with the village for 15 years.

Courtney Kotlarz presented a building permit application from Nick Hoeth to build an attached garage in the side-yard of his property located at 15633 E. 2nd Street. He said that all of the setback requirements have been met. Courtney also presented drawings of the proposed structure. The board asked if the garage will be stick built, as steel panels and steel trim were mentioned in the drawings. It was also mentioned that the board had previously denied construction of a steel pole shed in the village. Harold Olson said that this practice is becoming more common in new construction. Courtney said that he recommends a stick-built garage, and he will clarify that with Nick Hoeth. A motion was made by Dan Molstad, seconded by Harold Olson to approve the application of Nick Hoeth to build an attached garage in the side-yard of his property located at 15633 E. 2nd Street, on the condition that the structure is stick-built. A roll call vote was taken: Pete Filla-yes; Dan Molstad-yes; Harold Olson-yes; Marc Baures-yes. The motion carried 4 to 0, on the condition that the structure is stick-built. No other Building Permit Applications were submitted for approval;

New Business

The board reviewed the request from G-E 1st Responders for funding. Jane Jensen was instructed to send a check for \$4.00 per resident to the First Responders, along with a letter of appreciation;

Tom Morehouse was present to submit a request for a variance to the Village Zoning Ordinance that will allow residential use of his commercial property located at 15804 1st Street West. He said he and his wife Ellen Morehouse purchased the property in May 2024 with the intention of leasing or renting it for commercial use, but have been unable to accomplish this. He said that he has one lone prospect, but that person has not made a commitment. He said he is asking for permission to convert the existing office space on the first floor to a 2 bedroom, 1 bath apartment. Marc Baures said that an ordinance is in place, and precedence was set when the owner of a computer store on Main Street made the same request and was denied. He explained that the village board wants to maintain commercial properties in the business district. Dan Molstad said that once a new precedence is set, all of the commercial properties would consider converting to residential rental properties. Pete Filla told Morehouse that the board applauds his efforts, but has indeed maintained commercial property zoning in the business district and they have no desire to change course. Tom Morehouse said that he sees a need for more

affordable rental housing. Marc Baures pointed out that the business district is set and there is no plan to move away from that. He said that there are some lower level rental properties in the business districts in Galesville and Blair, but their situations are more unique. Ettrick does not wish to make that change at this time, and therefore will deny the request of Tom Morehouse to convert his commercial property to residential. Tom asked if the topic can be revisited at a later date. Baures said that the ordinance is not going to be changed. Harold Olson thanked Tom Morehouse for coming and he left the meeting at 6:14;

Dan Molstad said that because he is on the Ettrick Industries Board he will have to abstain from voting on the adoption of Resolution #25-01 to transfer the following parcels of village property identified in Project #200731.105 of the Land Survey Map dated 9/30/24 drafted by Sonsalla Land Surveying: Parcel "A" – 19,439 square feet and Parcel "B" – 93,349 square feet, to Ettrick Industries, Inc., at no cost to the Village of Ettrick, with all legal fees incurred paid by Ettrick Industries, Inc. He noted that there is not a quorum at this meeting without his vote, and the matter should be tabled until March;

Marc Baures presented the board with literature on the Ballot Initiative and Referendum Wisconsin from the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau, as well as bonding statutes and a copy of the Village of Cross Plains debt management policy. Marc said that the board must establish the amount of money that is needed and when the potential to run short of money is most likely. Harold Olson said that the board needs to have legal advice on which direction to take. Marc Baures said that the Committee of the Whole should meet to review expenditures and determine what time of year the money will be needed. Pete said that by the end of the year, the money for operating expenses is tight. He also said that there should be a small cushion for emergencies. Dan Molstad suggested short-term borrowing or establishing a line of credit. Harold Olson asked if the village should consider selling the land they own on Whalen Road. Marc Baures said the village should consider leasing it for hunting land. Dan Molstad reminded the board that the maintenance building needs to be replaced and the WWTP needs updates. Harold Olson said that federal grants will be needed for any building projects;

Jane Jensen reported that she had MCS Networks, Inc. do printer repair last week and hook up the scanner. She said she is going to consult them to purchase computers and a color printer. Marc Baures said that he did not feel that a color printer was necessary. Jane said that she has many documents that are in color, especially the recycling calendar. Marc told her to change the recycling calendar. Jane said that Hilltopper Refuse and Recycling makes the calendar and emails it to the village. She prints it in black and white, and it can't be determined what day is recycling and what day is garbage. Jane was instructed to bring quotes to the March meeting;

Marc Baures asked for discussion on filling the vacant Village Trustee position. It was the consensus of the board that an ad should be placed in the Arrow Shopper and the Trempealeau County Times requesting interested parties to submit their name for consideration. The Village Board will review candidates and appoint a trustee. A motion was made by Harold Olson, seconded by Dan Molstad to place an ad in the Arrow Shopper and the Trempealeau County Times requesting interested parties to submit their name to Village Clerk Jane Jensen for the Village Board's consideration. The motion carried 4 to 0;

Old Business

A motion was made by Pete Filla, seconded by Harold Olson to approve of the minutes of the Village Caucus and the minutes of the regular meeting of the Village Board of Trustees held on January 7th, 2025. The motion carried 4 to 0;

A motion was made by Dan Molstad seconded by Pete Filla to approve for payment the voucher #'s 39967-39972 and voucher #'s 39985-40026 in the amount of \$224,743.66, plus 1 auto pay and voucher #'s 11292-11306 in the amount of \$9,988.37, plus 1 auto pay from the water/sewer checking account for the month of January. The motion carried 4 to 0;

A motion was made by Dan Molstad seconded by Harold Olson to approve the Treasurer's Report for the month of January. The motion carried 4 to 0;

Jane Jensen said she initially received a few complaints about the garbage and recycling program that were resolved by Courtney Kotlarz. She said many people like the new program better than the garbage bags;

Harold Olson asked Dan Molstad how the Etrick Community Foundation is funded. Dan Molstad said that it is a 501 3c Non-Profit Organization. It was originally funded by a donation from the Dean Helstad Estate. He said they have recently received other significant donations. He said there are 7 village residents on the board. Dan also said that they are always looking for projects in need of funding;

A motion was made by Pete Filla, seconded by Dan Molstad to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 p.m. The motion carried 4 to 0.

Jane Jensen
Village Clerk
Village of Etrick