

Village of Wapella Board Meeting

Wednesday, August 20th, 2025

Village Hall – 7:00 pm

Meeting called to order by Village President, Dennis Boyce.

Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL:

Present:

Dennis Boyce

Mark Miller

Sara Goergen

Jane Buraglio

John Goergen

Sean Holland

Steve Mahrt – Attorney

Absent:

Robin Morrow, Clerk

Approval of Minutes

Mark Miller made a motion to approve minutes with the correction of the date from June 18th, 2025 to July 16th, 2025. Second made by Sean Holland. All voting yes. Motion approved.

Bills:

Jane addressed the following bills with the board:

American Legal Publishing: Our Supplement 3 has been processed and is now updated online.

Burdick Mechanical Contractors: The USDA granted approval to use the funds in the Short-Lived Fund. She was reminded that this account is underfunded, and the monthly payments (\$2289) to this account must continue for the life of the loan until 2058. This Fund can only be used for infrastructure repairs. The next repair that she sees requesting is the aeration and backwash pit cleaning. The electric motor at the top of the aeration tank is making noise, so GA Rich will take a look when they are up there.

Jane had to submit the most current bank statement, a copy of the invoice and a copy of the issued check. We had to order checks for this fund. We also ordered checks for the Restricted Fund. The check to Burdick has been mailed. She will submit the next bank statement to USDA that shows the cancelled check.

Deere Credit: A note of importance – we have one more payment after this one on our John Deere Tractor.

Water Products: These are parts needed for meter and pit replacements. Two of the resetters came in with bad soldering joints. Cody McCoy picked them up. They will be replaced.

Mark asked questions about American Legal and whether we need to review and update the zoning ordinances. He mentioned that Solar is not included. Jane explained the cost is by page. Jane also mentioned that we need to review our penalties. Steve mentioned that he has dealt with some ordinances for solar and containers. Mark was just anticipating that some changes will need to be made.

Jane Buraglio made a motion to approve the bills as presented to the board. Mark Miller seconded. All voting yes. Motion approved.

Department Reports:

STREETS & ALLEYS: Jane Buraglio

Kubota: Our Kubota is back in the shop at German Bliss. Rex spoke to the technician yesterday. They have determined that the thermostat needs to be replaced. The faulty thermostat was causing things not to get hot enough to complete the Regen cycle. Rex was told this is still warranty work. They are waiting for the part.

Ordinance Violations:

The ordinance violation letter sent by Steve to 9531 Thorps Road produced results. When Jane drove by last week, there were only three vehicles in the driveway and appeared to be licensed. The ordinance violation notice sent to 415 N Locust also produced results. The grass was higher than the porch rails and hadn't been mowed for months. She was told there was a contractor called in to mow and remove all the debris.

Question for the Attorney: Jane was contacted by a property owner. From what she understands, he is trying to evict a person from the residence. He is being threatened by the person in the house that they are going to dump construction material in the yard, etc. This owner fears ordinance violations may be filed against him if this happens. He wondered if there was anything the village could do to help him in this situation. Jan said she would ask our attorney a general question. Is there anything the village can do and are there any recommendations to this property owner?

Steve responded that there isn't anything the village can do. The property owner would have to go through the court himself. He confirmed that the owner is responsible for the property and not the renter.

Emergency Julie: Jane got a call on Friday evening, July 25th for an emergency Julie at Dick Burk's house. They detected a gas leak, and it said that John Karr was starting the repair the next morning at 8 am. She called Paul in to do the locate.

Tree Removal: On July 26th at 7:30 Jane received a call from our mayor about a tree limb blocking the road on S. Poplar. She was able to reach Rex first and he thought he might be able to move it. It turned out to be a much larger limb than we imagined. Paul came in also

and they were both at the job site by 8:30 am. It took them about two hours to cut up and clear the limb from the road and haul it all to the burn pile.

Jane had Kevin Mandrell come to inspect the tree. It had been hit by lightning several times over the years and had developed severe cracks. It was determined to be a hazard, and our insurance requires that we address those types of hazards as soon as possible. Kevin arranged to remove all the parts that could fall and came back with a crane to remove the trunk. While he was in town, She had him do the same thing to a tree on N. Locust. Part of that tree hit the house in the July 2024 windstorm. There are a couple of more trees Jane might have Kevin inspect later.

The men assisted hauling away the tree parts, which helps to keep the cost to the village down.

Ditches on Walnut Circle: The same day the men cleaned up the tree on S Poplar, it started raining right after they were done. We had several inches of rain that weekend. The ditch in front of Randalls and Corey Holland's businesses filled up due to some blockage at the culverts in front of Corey Holland's. Paul pumped the water from the ditches to the north. Corey has offered to help the men open both sides of the culverts and Jane said it was okay. They will do that work when they can coordinate time between them.

Drama in the Park: Paul got a call from Nelson Thorp about a dead owl and rabbit close to the trail just south of the Veteran's Memorial. One of its talons was about three feet from the owl and a baby rabbit was clutched in its other talon. Paul and Rex collected the deceased and took them to the shed. Paul called to report the deceased owl since it is an endangered species. The next evening Paul met with a conservation officer who inspected the owl and gave permission for proper disposal.

GFL: Eric from GFL was in town on August 5th and dropped off a few extra garbage containers to the shed. He also delivered a new one to 400 S Second. We had a short meeting. He told me that there was quite a shakeup at the plant. Both head supervisors at Operations were let go. They were not working out and it sounded like they were causing some problems with the drivers and the routes.

Late last Friday Jane was contacted by Natalie Barr who said that Thomas Court was not picked up. Jane got ahold of Eric, and he said they would recover on Monday. Eric has always been good about getting operations right out to do a missed pick up. It helps if we know early that someone's trash was not picked up. In a few instances, Jane has asked the men to go get the tote and empty it. Eric works with one contact and that happens to be her. Jane has no problem at all if someone needs to contact her if they are missed on the route. She will do what she can to get it solved.

Another Gas Leak on S. Fourth: One of the many Julies this month was for another gas leak on S Walnut. Jane is sure everyone has seen the many locate flags on the east side of 51. The

leak turned out to be in the middle of an old concrete driveway. They had to drill a hole in the concrete to make the repair yesterday.

Julie Positive Response System: Jane has been informed that effective January 1, 2026 State law requires all member utility companies to enter their responses using the Positive Response System. This means when we get a Julie, just marking the locations of our water lines will not be sufficient. We must follow up in the Positive Response System on the computer. Jane is going to take some time off and try to schedule a couple of webinars where our men and she can sit and learn this new system. No one will come and train in person because this new law is state-wide. So, wish us luck.

Alley Patching: The men were able to put some rock down in a few potholes in a few alleys. The holes are by no means repaired properly, but it should satisfy a few complainers until we get more time to do more alleys. The gal who complained to Robin about her car getting damaged by the potholes in the alley about killed Rex on the Gator when she flew into the alley and met him head on. She had to slam on her brakes to avoid hitting him. Jane believes the speed she is traveling down the alley may be the contributing factor to any damage to her car.

We all know the garbage trucks do the most damage to the alleys. Clinton has barred the garbage trucks from their alleys because of all the damage. We could consider doing this in the future to help preserve our alleys.

Water Meter Installations: We continue to install new water meters among the other jobs that need to be done. Jane counted about 30 more to install. She thinks the new meters do take a slight priority since these new meters help us generate revenue. For example, she is very happy to report that since the new meter was installed for FS, the revenue from that service has greatly increased. The last bill showed a usage of 735,900 gallons producing a bill for \$9,060.12.

Jeter Meter on Thomas Court: What started out to be an easy change out turned into a very big mess. The installation of the old meter was very poor workmanship. Not all the fittings were brass. The yoke was bent and crammed up against the pit. They have removed the lid and the hub to help gain some workspace and id the size of the pipes. Paul called Steve Schaefer to hydrovac out the pit area. He uncovered a huge power service laid directly over the water supply line to the residence. Ameren was called in and Paul was told not to go into the hole until Ameren is able to isolate the power and shut that section off. They have been gathering all the parts and fittings needed for this job to have everything ready before starting. They went to Water Products and Brandford supply. We are talking yoke, riser, fittings, a new pit, a new hub, a new lid and the new meter.

It would be very interesting to know exactly what each one of these free meter installations is costing the village in time and material. Jane guarantees that none of them will be easy. Kris Hedrick is requesting water service. The meter pit there is in the sidewalk. The concrete surrounds the lid so it can't be removed easily. That installation will be interesting.

HEALTH & SAFETY: Sean Holland

Sean stated he had a quote for the shed at the park but it is one of the agenda items. He then went on to state that the volleyball tournament went off well at the park. Very huge attendance with movie in the park night. Mark stated approximately 100 people.

Jane mentioned that they got the new net and they have gathered all the boundary lines which are at the shop.

WATER: John Goergen

John said he didn't have much and that Jane had already covered most of it in her street report. He did mention that he received a call from a Plumbing company about a bill for installing a chlorine pump. He was not aware that the village hired out a contractor for that. Jane stated that was Steve Westerfield. John wanted to reiterate that if he is over the water department and he should be made aware of these things going forward.

ZONING: Mark Miller

Mark issued one permit for a deck and one poultry permit. He still has one permit that needs to be resolved which he is still working on. He said he had the wrong phone number. Jane mentioned that she had the number.

FINANCE: Jane Buraglio

Overall Account Balances as of July 31, 2025

General Fund Checking	\$142,366.48
Park CD (DeWitt Savings)	\$ 59,067.58
Police CD (DeWitt Savings)	\$ 19,420.78
Water Fund Checking	\$ 17,193.98
Motor Fuel Checking	\$ 81,254.46
Water Project Fund	\$ 64,728.99
Restricted Debt Service	\$ 11,712.90
Short Lived Asset Account	\$ 80,140.41
Total:	\$475,885.58

Bank Signature Cards: We need to make some changes to our signature cards at Heartland Bank. Jane needed make the statements in the minutes that these minutes need to be given to the Bank so they can process the new signature cards for each account. We need to remove Dennis Klatt and Lauren Johnson. We need to add Dennis Boyce, President.

Property Taxes: We received our first installment of property taxes. \$40,053.25, which includes \$4,603.53 of our share of the Wapella Township Road & Bridge collected from Village property owners.

Alter Check for Recycled Metal: Our latest check collected for recycled metal was \$227.60

Water Rates: Jane is very concerned about our Water Fund. We should not have to borrow from other funds to pay our maintenance bills. She thinks this board needs to take a serious look at our water rates. The Water

Department is an Enterprise and is supposed to be self-supporting. The IRWA has the means to do a free Water Rate Study for us which can help determine if we are charging enough to keep our Water Department solvent.

RMA Denial: Jane has been working with Alexis Fadl, Claim Representative for RMA, regarding a collection company for another insurance company who is trying to collect from the village payment for cost incurred by a village resident for tree removal from a shed. The resident claimed the tree was owned by the village. The village has determined it is a private tree. RMA reviewed everything she submitted and has also determined the village does not own the tree that caused the damage, and the damage is not caused by village negligence. The denial letter was mailed on August 14, 2025.

USDA Civil Rights Review: Steve Westerfield and Jane received an email from Julie Beer, the USDA Area Specialist. They met with her and Dwight Reynolds regarding accessibility of the Village Hall. She said unfortunately, the training she received earlier in the summer is in contradiction to what she knows now. Apparently, she had been given incorrect information regarding the requirements. Julie only needs to be sure that her borrowers are complying as it relates to what the funds were used for. In our case, that is the improvement of the water system. For this compliance, Jane did provide a Demographic Chart using race and ethnicity totals collect by the Census Bureau in 2020. So, for us, this means we do not have to remodel the Village Hall on their two-year plan. However, it means that going forward it would be a good idea to consider the upgrades discussed to make the hall accessible. We can work upgrades like the bathroom remodel into our future budgets as funds allow.

DRAINAGE: John Goergen

John had nothing to report other than what Jane reported earlier in her report.

WATER OPERATOR: Steve Westerfield

Nothing to report.

CLERK: Robin Morrow

Nothing to report.

FOIA OFFICER: Robin Morrow

Nothing to report.

WEBSITE: Jane Buraglio

Jane stated everything was up to date and all board members contact information has been updated. She confirmed to Steve that all Trustees contact information is on there.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/Village Organizations:

Dale Karr – Dale stated that not having money or in the budget is not acceptable. He was asked by Rodger Sprague to identify the sidewalk that hasn't been done and now he has found more areas that need repaired as well. All of these create a public safety issue. There has to be some way to find money to fix these sidewalks. He also mention a sink hole over by FS.

Mark Miller – on behalf of Wapella Says YES, they will be selling brats/hotdogs and snow cones at the car show on 8/30/25.

Mark also mentioned he had receive a copy of the County Board minutes. There is a section that refers to Wapella. Under their public safety there is discussion and possible action for a motion to give notice to Clinton, Farmer City, and Wapella about the discontinuation of animal control in these areas. The meeting is at the Dewitt County Building on 8/21/25 at 6:00pm. Jane mentioned she had heard that as well and John mentioned that he had also heard that the county workers were threatening to strike.

NEW BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION, APPROVAL, AND POSSIBLE VOTE:

1) Rodger Sprague – 2025 MFT Program

Jane stated that Rodger can't be here tonight due to his wife being sick. He told me that the new concrete crew will be on the job starting tomorrow if they finish up their current job. Our new contractor is Quality Concrete. That's all I know right now. It would be helpful if we let the contractors do their work and not bother them.

2) Discussion and possible approval of quote for repairs to building in park.

Sean received a bid that he gave everyone copies of for the shed in the park. The bid is for a 12X24 shed, blue roof, blue walls, white trim, white gutters for \$9000. Half to be paid upfront to cover materials and balance due when complete.

The board discussed the overall structure of the building and issues and concerns with the condition of the building. Mark mentioned that YES had looked into updating the building to make it more of a concession stand, but would not pass health/safety. They continued discussing the costs of tearing it down, putting a new one up, bringing in a separate structure.

Jane added a little history about the building in the park. An interesting fact – when Paul Schmid worked at Carter Lumber in the late 80's, he sold the garage kit to the

school for this building. It was probably put together by the shop classes. Bill & Kayla Short may know more about the history of this building. In 2018 the village hired Shae Weides to do the work on the building. His material list includes new siding, new paint, new door, new storm door, new soffit and fascia, new trim and other miscellaneous items. His labor included demolishing half of the building, installing the siding and painting. That work only lasted seven years.

All decided to get another quote and look into other possible options for repair/replace of shed in the park.

3) Discussion and possible approval to set Budget Workshop meeting.

Jane mentioned that the Appropriation Ordinance is due to be filed on September 30, 2025 and that the budget will need to be in place. She suggested to schedule a special meeting on Wednesday, September 10th, 2025 at 7:00pm.

Jane mentioned she would be happy to meet with everyone individually prior to the workshop if anyone needed to for any questions regarding the budget.

All agreed that September 10th, 2025 at 7:00pm for the workshop.

Steve confirmed no motion is necessary to set meeting date.

4) Discussion and possible approval on appointment of ESDA Liason.

Dennis Boyce explained how this came up. He and Mark went through the training and it was brought up that we need to appoint a liaison as he cannot be in two places at same time for any emergency in the county that would affect Wapella. Steve mentioned that the proposal would allow the Mayor to be on-site for an emergency and it would allow the liaison to be his back up.

Dennis would like to appoint Mark as the ESDA Liason. Mark accepted, however, suggested he appoint another officer just in case the need be. John mentioned he would be interested in being a back up as he does have FEMA training. Dennis asked if there were any comments or discussion. Jane mentioned that part of the ordinance should be amended.

Jane Buraglio made a motion to approve the ordinance amending section 31.080C ESDA officer. Sean Holland seconded. All voting yes. Motion approved. 2025-8-20

Steve asked if the board wanted to vote on Mark being appointed or consider the meeting minutes to reflect that.

Dennis asked for a motion appointing Mark Miller as the ESDA liaison with John Goergen as a back-up. John Goergen made the motion to appoint Mark as Liason and John as the backup. Sean Holland made the second. All voting yes. Motion approved.

5) Discussion and possible approval of appointment for trustee to fill vacant seat.

Dennis stated that Dalton Spencer is his nomination appointment for the vacant trustee seat. Dalton addressed the board and stated that he has worked in construction and is now a PE teacher.

Jane Buraglio made a motion to accept Dennis's nomination of Dalton Spencer to fill the vacant trustee seat. Seconded by Mark Miller. Mark, Jane, John, Sean voting yes. Sara abstained. Motion approved.

Dennis swore Dalton Spencer into the Trustee position.
Everyone welcomed Dalton to the board.

6) Department assignments.

Dennis addressed the board and wanted to let each of them know how much he appreciates everything they do for the village and the time they take to invest into the village. He wanted everyone to know that each of them collectively work together to do things in the best interest of the village. He understands that we can't make everyone happy and he respects what each of you bring to the table. He has not taken the task of department assignments lightly and has spoken to each individually and taken into consideration everyone's thoughts and comments. He wanted everyone to know that his decisions are not personal, but professional. He expects everyone to work together in the best interest of our village and residents.

Dennis Boyce made the following assignments:

Website – Jane Buraglio

FOIA Officer and Clerk – Robin Morrow

Water Operator – Steve Westerfield

Drainage – Dalton Spencer

Finance – Jane Buraglio

Zoning – Mark Miller

Water – Sean Holland

Health & Safety – Sara Goergen

Motion to enter closed session – John Goergen made motion to enter closed session for pending litigation. Second by Mark Miller. All voting yes. Motion approved.

Exit Open Session at 8:03PM

RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION: 8:18pm

ROLL CALL:

Present:

Dennis Boyce

Mark Miller

Sara Goergen

Jane Buraglio

John Goergen

Dalton Spencer

Sean Holland

Steve Mahrt – Attorney

Absent:

Robin Morrow, Clerk

1) 2 c (11) Discussion of Pending Litigation

No further discussion needed.

Motion to adjourn – John Goergen made motion to adjourn. Sean Holland seconded. All voting yes. Meeting adjourned at 8:19pm

Respectfully submitted by:

Robin Morrow, Village Clerk