

**Village of Wapella Board Meeting
(Rescheduled)
Wednesday, January 26, 2022
Village Hall – 7:00 pm**

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by Village President Dennis Klatt.

Roll call made by the President in absence of the Clerk.

Present:

Dennis Klatt
Sean Holland
Lauren Johnson
Jane Buraglio
Steve Marht – Attorney
~~MARK MILLER~~

Absent:

Robin Morrow - Clerk

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve minutes from December 15, 2021 meeting by Jane Buraglio. Second by Mark Miller. All voting yes.

Bills

Motion to approve all Village bills by Mark Miller. Second by Sean Holland. All voting yes.

Department Reports:

STREETS, ALLEYS AND DRAINAGE: Jane Buraglio

The abandoned car was removed from Main Street. The officer contacted the owner. Jane gave the name of the owner of the car to the towing company. The towing company apparently contacted the owner and worked with them at no charge to the Village.

There is new Internet in the hall. We are working at upgrading the Internet at the shop, but Mediacom has to move their service further north and under the drive closer to the shed because our power comes in at the back of the shed.

Someone took out the stop sign at the corner of Elm and Chestnut after we got done treating the streets for ice January 8th. The post was flattened and they literally knocked the letters off the sign. There must be some major damage on the vehicle responsible.

It seems every piece of equipment that we use has to have some kind of repair. The spreader had extensive work done to it before taking it out. After using it during the ice, it was determined it needs more work. We have ordered a center section of the spring metal “piano keys” that keeps the material from dumping out all at once. Those pieces were bent beyond repair. Paul has temporarily repaired them and hopefully they hold until the new pieces come in.

The wheels (for the red dump truck plow) that we ordered in December won't come in until February. Paul has refurbished some old wheels with bearings and racers, etc and we are using them for now.

An overhand overhead chain hoist has been installed in the shop, which allows one man to safely pick up heavy pieces of equipment and move them or work under them.

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We are monitoring the furnaces at the community center because the condensation drips on the outside onto the gym roof and onto the conference room roof creating icebergs. The ice eventually reached the pipe and blocks the drainage causing the water to back up into the furnaces and leak inside. Toby has been keeping an eye on that and we will see if we can correct this problem eventually so we don't have that issue anymore.

We had a main break at the corner of N Oak and N Second. On January 17 Paul noticed water on the road after his shift. We consulted with Clyde and Sean. The men were able to repair the leak on January 18 under pressure, or hot. Paul explained they are allowed if possible to cut back the pressure to a certain point, make the repair and not have to completely shut off the water. Steve Westerfield stopped during the main break and did his inspection at the site and at the pump house. No boil order had to be issued.

There is a lot more happening at the shop and Jane invited the board to come and look.

We have waders at the shop and Paul decided to test out one pair during the main break. They leaked and did not keep him dry at all. One of the bills this month is for a new pair of waders Toby purchased. There is still a few other pair at the shop, but we plan to get another new pair – maybe two.

HEALTH & SAFETY: Lauren Johnson

Lauren was going to talk about the furnace and said Jane gave a very detailed report and knew Toby was looking at it. Jane explained to Lauren most furnaces have a condensation line that drips into a drain, but ours drips on the roof. We have flat roofs so the water doesn't run anywhere and in the winter it turns into icebergs. The water on the floor of the gym wasn't coming through the roof. It was actually coming from the furnace. Paul explained the drain line had froze up and the water had no way to drain out so the water backed up into the furnace. Jane said the same thing happened at the shop last February. The floor would be flooded in the shop because there was a giant iceberg outside on the north side of the shop preventing drainage.

Jodi is not going to clean the village hall anymore. Jane said she would help clean and Lauren doesn't mind helping. Jodi said she has no contact with people because they pay in advance and she is not one-on-one with them. She is comfortable with that and does not want the opportunity to run into people at the hall. Dennis asked if she goes to the store or anywhere else. Jane said she runs into Jodi at the community center prior to the YES events. Jane said Jodi cleans the hall once a month and turns in 2 hours. Lauren said she just wouldn't turn in those hours.

WATER: Sean Holland

Jane told us about the main break. Jane and Paul do most of the water work and hats off to the guys.

There are two new leaks: Ralph Smith on N Locust and Tracy Williams across from the Auction House. Robin will let them know. Linda Wickenhauser has still not repaired her leak.

G A Rich and Sons wants to have a meeting with Steve Westerfield and him to check out the replacement plan for the inside filters at the pump house. That won't start until there is warmer weather. A full boiler order will be likely during that project.

Steve Westerfield also wants to meet about new testing equipment for the pump house that the EPA is requiring that will cost about \$4000. We should be able to use part of the COVID relief funds for that.

ZONING: Mark Miller

The Board had previously discussed sending a letter to Bartels about the vehicles he is storing at his lot. He is down to two cars and a trailer. Mark showed the board a map of his lot and does believe he is in violation. He compared Bartel's property to Billy Miller's property. Miller's permit told him to fence the property, but he never did. In looking at both properties, Mark said he would just continue to monitor Bartel's property to see if the outside vehicle storage grows.

FINANCE

Jane told the board the bank has forced the Village to close the General Fund checking account that had fraud checks drawn on it. The bank opened a new account. The old account ends January 31, 2022 and the new account is effective February 1, 2022. We are trying to get everyone notified as far as automatic deposits and payments.

The auditor was here today and he and Jessica got the IRS filings done and the W-2s issued. He is coming back on February 4th to have a meeting about the audit. He plans to come to the February 16th meeting.

WEBSITE: Jane Buraglio

Jane did not know how to add the New Year 2022 and got some help from Kim Yearry. She will be able to continue posting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

NEW BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION, APPROVAL AND POSSIBLE VOTE.

Authorization to spend \$1000 on replacement signs: Jane said Toby went around town to see what signs needed replaced. There is a bent emergency vehicle sign, three faded railroad-crossing signs, the two faded park rule signs and two handicap parking signs. One of those had been vandalized with paint. The cost came to about \$702 and Jane wanted to ask for the \$1000 that was budgeted for signs in case a few more are found. Lauren motioned to spend up to \$1000 on replacement signs. Second by Sean. Roll Call: Sean, Jane, Mark and Lauren all voted yes.

Discuss and possible authorization on Zoning Ordinance Violations of 2 separate residential properties: Mark discussed the vacant lot at the corner of S Fourth and 51/Walnut Street. The owner had been at a meeting a few months ago wanting to get re-zoned that night to be able to put a sign up. There is a pickup truck and trailer parked on that lot now with a For Sale sign on it. Cihan Carrazen, owner of CarzRUs in Heyworth, owns the lot. The truck has a dealer plate registered to the used car lot. The lot is zoned R-1. The only thing allowed is residences and agriculture. He had mentioned to Jane about maybe putting in a quick lube. Mark requested that Steve send a letter with a copy of the ordinance. Mark would like to give the owner by March 1st to either have the vehicle sold or moved and no long post signs. Mark will send copies of the photos to Steve.

The second issue involves a permit that was issued November 12th to Wes and Jill Foster. The original contact was about tearing down their garage and building a new garage. The current garage sets right on the property line. Mark advised them to move it six feet to meet the set backs because they were tearing down and adding one. On the other side of the existing garage is a large shade tree, which they didn't want to loose. Mark advised him to go to the Zoning Board of Appeals and request a variance. Mark told them it would take at least 30 days and Foster told him the contractor will be starting tomorrow. Mark recommended that he call the Mayor and see how the Zoning Board was going and we might be able to move it up.

Dennis told Mark the Fosters would be willing to strip the siding off the old garage and use the existing framing and just add on to the front with the new addition. It still didn't meet Code and still didn't get a hearing, but Mark did issue a permit. Mark drove by from the alley and saw they had torn down the entire old garage and built a brand new garage. He took pictures and it shows all new studding inside the garage.

The Fosters have violated the building permit. The Zoning Code allows under Violations and Penalties – any person who shall violate or refuse to comply with any of the provisions of this ordinance shall be subject upon conviction to a fine of \$200 or imprisonment of not more than six months for each offense. Each day that the violation persists shall constitute a separate offense.

The solution is they have to tear down the garage and move it back by the alley, or stop construction and wait for a Zoning Board hearing and hope that a Zoning Board will approve a variance. Mark was open to suggestions. Lauren was concerned about the dishonesty. Dennis confirmed they had told him they were going to keep what they had and build on to it.

The Board asked for an opinion from Steve. He understood a garage was torn down and they rebuilt a bigger garage on the same spot. The concern was the lie and the attitude that this was Wapella and we can do what we want. Jane asked if a letter to the Fosters could say we are aware they are in violation of the Code. Steve said if there was a mortgage on the property, the Village could notify the bank and the bank could pull their loan. Sean didn't like the attitude. Steve suggested the Board could file a complaint against them and the court could make a ruling. Mark would like the attorney to draft a letter saying the Board is aware he is in violation of the building permit and at this time the Village is willing to forego legal action unless he applies for a variance. Steve suggested and the board agreed to a letter saying he appears to be in violation, the Village will defer prosecution to allow him time to apply for a variance.

Mark told the board that at no time in the future would he issue a permit that does not comply with the letter of the law, no matter who calls. The Code is written for a reason.

Discuss COVID health and safety: Dennis did not believe the Board had any rules in place as far as working with COVID. The board members expressed many opinions about what to do and what not to do when someone is sick. Many members were speaking over each other during the discussion. Situations will happen where some jobs will not get done. Employees will get paid late or other jobs will not get done. Dennis said the new rule is do not work when you are sick – plain simple. Steve Mahrt told the board that they recommend to their clients that the policy be whatever the Department of Health recommends. Mahrt also told the Board that a person couldn't refuse to do their job because of a fear of COVID. The Board discussed having some kind of backup plan for the future in the event of any kind of emergency.

Discuss Finance Department: Dennis wanted to have someone who knows what the Treasurer does so there is a backup plan. We need to get something in place so that is covered. Jane has volunteered to cover Finance and learn the payroll program as a backup to the Treasurer. Dennis appointed Jane Buraglio to be the Finance Chairman. The Board approved the appointment.

Discuss Winter Weather and Village Streets: Dennis did not know what the rules were, for instance when we had ice a couple of weeks ago. The old mayor was texting him while he was sick. There were all kinds of posts on FaceBook. Dennis asked who was in charge of making those decisions. Jane said the Streets Department was in charge. The night of the ice one employee was out of town, but she went out with the other employee to treat the streets. The Village does not use straight salt on the street. We use a winter blend. Grit on ice is much better than straight salt because the ice will melt at a certain temperature and then the water will

possibly refreeze. Jane said she would love to use the brine mix IDOT uses but the Village does not have the tanks or the sprayers. The Village has to use what they have.

The Street Department monitors the conditions to the best of their abilities. They use visual and they use the weather predictions, which can be hit or miss. Jane told the Board that after being out that night on the ice, there were things she wanted to consider about the snow removal. One would be establishing a few snow routes. Valerie Lane is extremely narrow. One resident who parked on the street about lost their car. Jane told Paul he was the best diver in the world, but there were times she couldn't keep her eyes open because the cars were so close. Thomas Court is another place. People need to park off the road so the plows can safely get through to plow our roads. The exercise place on Walnut Circle is another place where they are parking in the street.

Jane was told that the road commissioner and his employee both said that Paul put everything on the road where it should be – at the intersections. The bad thing about the winter blend is that it will eventually have to be swept off the streets. It is not good for motorcycles and just could be bad. The people that oil and chip will bring in their sweeper to clean it off the streets, too. Paul told the board if there were more snow, the snow would bond to the grit that is already there. Mark also noted that by plowing the snow to the pavement, there is a danger of creating black ice. Sometimes plowing creates more of a hazard. Dennis saw where lots of people who tried to turn or stop on the ice couldn't. Jane said then they were driving too fast. Dennis thought people could contact us instead of going to social media. Jane said the person who initially made the post knew our phone numbers and could have called if they had a problem. Dennis wanted to make sure our guys were on call especially if there was substantial bad weather headed our way.

Lauren motioned to adjourn. Second by Mark. Meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted and reviewed by Robin Morrow.