

Village of Wapella Board Meeting

Wednesday, June 18th, 2025

Village Hall – 7:00 pm

Meeting called to order by Village Clerk, Robin Morrow.

Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL:

Present:

Mark Miller
Sara Goergen
Jane Buraglio
John Goergen
Dennis Boyce
Sean Holland
Steve Mahrt – Attorney
Robin Morrow, Clerk

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by John Goergen to approve minutes from May 21st, 2025, Village Board Meeting. Second made by Jane Buraglio. All voting yes. Motion approved.

Bills:

Jane pointed out the cost of the Meter Lids. She stated that Devin Peterson with EJ Prescott, our Kamstrup dealer was able to find the 11” meter lids for us. In 2018 the meter lids cost \$25 each. The price has gone up.

The board discussed some of the bills that were presented. Motion made by Jane Buraglio to approve the bills as presented to the board. The second was made by John Goergen. All voting yet. Motion approved.

Department Reports:

STREETS & ALLEYS: Jane Buraglio

Sidewalks: Jane reported that Rodger Sprague said he is finished trying to work with TKS. Mr. Smith will either say he will call back and then he doesn't, or he will not answer Rodger's calls. Rodger wanted Jane to let the board know that he will be contacting the other bidder from last year and see if he is still interested. It will be more money, but it will get done. TKS did do some work last year involving sidewalks, but they have not submitted a bill. If or when they decide to submit a bill for that work, it will be up to this board whether to approve payment for a job not completed.

0-Turn Mower: A former employee installed a mulching kit on the 0-Turn mower and all it did was bog down the mower. Apparently, the chute had been damaged and was wired together. The mulch kit has been removed, and a new chute was installed.

Kubota: Our Kubota is still at German-Bliss. Some of the work is backed up at their shop, but from what Jane understands some of the work is still considered under warranty. She is happy about that. However, being down one mower is causing some stress on the mowing around town. We were fortunate that the Township did loan us the use of their mower when needed.

Town Clean Up: Jane felt the Town Clean Up was a huge success. It was a lot of work to keep up with crushing down the debris to continue to make room for more. The metal dumpster was very handy, and many residents sorted out their metal for us. The men did pull out various metal debris from the landfill roll offs – pipe, metal grills, basketball poles, and things like that. Jane sent a thank you to Eric and GFL for making this clean up go so smoothly. All four roll offs were delivered a day early and they were all hauled off promptly on Monday. Paul had asked GFL for new dumpsters since the bottoms of the old ones were rusting out. Brand new green GFL dumpsters showed up today.

Metal Roll Off: This is the second metal roll off we have had on site this year. Paul makes the arrangements since he knows the people at Alter and gets a better price per ton. He had the first one swapped out a week before Clean Up and arranged for the next one to be delivered before Friday, the 7th. The Village earned \$418.80 on the first roll off. This one still has some space left so we will keep it on site for a while longer.

USDA Civil Rights Inspection: The men will be installing a Disabled Parking sign on the front of the Village Hall and see about striping off a parking space. We will be replacing the handles on the front door and storm door and removing the raised portion of the entrance. We must install new door handles on the bathroom and records room doors. Jane mentioned to Sean we must proceed and get quotes for the bathroom remodel. Jane can go ahead and get those quotes because she needs to report to Julie at USDA that we actively have a plan to proceed. Sean agreed.

HEALTH & SAFETY: Sean Holland

Sean mentioned the Park is in use and there was a fundraiser last week that went well. He did check the grills and agreed that some need replacement. The volleyball pit has been sprayed for Brendan Hoskins tournament in August. He stated that Brendan had purchased a new net and a few other things for the volleyball court that he agreed the board would reimburse him for. The swings are up. He is still waiting for bids on doing the siding for the shed. Jane mentioned that we really need to put together a scope of work before getting actual bids.

WATER: John Goergen

Jane reported that a meter on Thomas Court is always underwater and difficult to read without pumping out the pit. We had 5 Kamstrup remote antennas in stock and used one to attach to one of our poly lids and we will see if it works this week.

Jane stated that the men would be getting meter readings on Friday and Monday.

Jane received a frantic text from Sherry Ashby on the evening of May 28th. Her grandson had been jumping on the meter lid, it collapsed, and he fell in. He was not hurt, and the pit was not very deep. She sent the men over the next morning to investigate and install a new lid.

Jane mentioned to the board last month that we had Chuck Woodworth from IRWA look at this suspicious area of standing water in the alley between Maple and N Chestnut. After locating water

services and lines in the area, he determined there is a leak, but it is so small that his equipment could not specifically locate it. He could only give a general area. It might be losing a gallon an hour. She met with John on May 9th to look at this area. John indicated at the meeting last month that the men could find and repair this leak. The puddle had gradually gotten a little bigger, but it is not showing any running water like a main break. She is sure the ground is saturated on that corner.

Aside from our own attempts at locating lines, Lloyd Francis and Kyle Morris from the Clinton Water Department came to the site to see if they could help better locate the main and the services feeding off the main along the alley. For some reason most of the meter pits in this area were installed far distances from the main, mostly on private property. It may be due to the old interurban that ran through this block. We aren't sure. Kelly Kinder came yesterday and connected to some of the meters to try to locate the service lines. Then we were told yesterday that there may be two mains in this alley – one may be abandoned but still charged with water. Our maps are conflicting. Diamond Maps show the main on the west side of the alley. Our book of main diagrams shows the main on the east side of the alley.

After much consideration, Jane had determined that it is not safe or wise for our men to begin exploratory digging in this area. The corner is saturated, and we are concerned about cave ins. We do not own any shoring equipment. We have had the area Julied and all the utilities – gas, cable and phone - are so tight in this area, that digging with our backhoe is extremely risky. GA Rich is scheduled to come on Thursday to do the exploration digging with their own equipment, which is much smaller. It is the same equipment used on East Street. They have the shoring walls and are much more experienced. Our men will work with them and haul away the spoils and provide all the backfill sand and rock.

Jane is not working on Thursday and plans to be on site to provide any assistance needed, most likely with traffic control. This stretch of main will involve isolation valves located on Hickory Street by the Auction House all the way to S Third Street close to the Meadows alley – three blocks. She has the Boil Order notices ready to go if needed. Steve Westerfield has been made aware of the situation. If we are lucky, they will find the problem where they begin digging rather than having to go under the road and on down the block in either direction.

Jane also reported that we have had to shut off one water service. The customer has been told they had a leak ever since they turned the water back on themselves. As far as she knows there is quite a large bill that has not been paid. We installed a locking meter pit lid. The water should not be reconnected until the bill is paid and the leak is fixed.

John did not have much else to add from Jane's report that included water.

ZONING: Mark Miller

Mark issued two permits. One to replace and extend a front porch, the other to build a deck around an above ground pool.

DRAINAGE: John Goergen

Jane reported on a drainage issue that has been identified some suck holes in village right of way locations. She believes two of them are related to the Drainage District. She wanted to remind the board that there are still two approved quotes for pending drainage work.

CLERK: Robin Morrow

A reminder to everyone on the board that they need to complete the Statement of Economics, Security Awareness, Sexual Harassment, and FOIA/Open Meetings trainings. These certificates of completion must be turned in as soon as possible. Keep in mind that if not turned in timely there could be fees/fines incurred.

FINANCE (Jane Buraglio / Pat Good)

Overall Account Balances as of May 31, 2025

General Fund Checking	\$110,262.68
Park CD (DeWitt Savings)	\$ 57,335.30
Police CD (DeWitt Savings)	\$ 18,942.61
Water Fund Checking	\$ 22,262.43
Motor Fuel Checking	\$ 89,721.69
Water Project Fund	\$ 61,850.48
Restricted Debt Service	\$ 11,368.71
<u>Short Lived Asset Account</u>	<u>\$ 75,561.13</u>
Total:	\$447,305.02

Water Infrastructure Expenses: During my meeting with Julie from USDA, Jane asked about the purpose of the continued payments to ourselves into the Short-Lived Assets Fund (\$2289/mo. for the life of the loan until 2025) and into the Restricted Debt Service (\$172/mo. capping at \$20,640 after 10 years). Julie told her that we can use money from the Short-Lived Fund. Right now, we have \$75,561.13 in that account. We are facing a repair tomorrow. Jane also knows that the Chlorine Pump went down, and Steve was required to get a new one. She was told that it would cost \$4800, but she has not seen the bill yet. Both expenses can be paid from this fund. The process requires approval from the USDA. Jane would submit the bill with an explanation and the committee would send approval. Then she would have to submit a copy of the bank statement from the month before the payment was made and the month after it was paid. It seems rather simple, and she will go this route for these major expenses rather than depleting our Water Fund checking, which you can see right now only has \$22,262.43 as of May 31, 2025.

2023/2024 Audit: Jane had the final meeting with Neal Kuester on May 30th. They finished gathering the information from all the documents she had ready. She is not sure when the final audit will be ready – hopefully at the July meeting. July 1st we will begin our new fiscal year (2025/2026) and our 2024/2025 audit still needs to be done. Jane just spoke about depleting our Water Fund. One thing they told her was that in the fiscal year they are working on, the Water Fund did not collect enough money for garbage expenses. Jane believes the fund compensated for garbage expenses between \$2000-\$3000. This is not good.

Grant for Ball Field Lights: Jane is working with Greg Ward from Ameren Business Energy Incentives. She worked with him when we got the grants for the LED lighting for the trail, the village hall, the community center and the maintenance shed. On this last round of incentives, they are offering incentives for seasonal outdoor lighting like ball field lights. They are looking at generally 1080 hours of use, which is tough for schools to meet. He asked her to speak more to him about the fact that we have a maintenance crew and access to bucket trucks. There is a possibility that we could qualify for the fixtures if we can arrange to have them installed.

WATER OPERATOR: Steve Westerfield

Nothing to report.

FOIA OFFICER: Robin Morrow

Nothing to report.

WEBSITE: Jane Buraglio

Jane passed around a tablet requesting everyone list their name, their email address and phone number.

As part of this FOIA compliance, she needs to know who wants their phone numbers published on the website next to their names. They have the choice of their personal phone number or the regular village phone number where someone can leave a message for them. If someone leaves a phone message specifically for them, they will be contacted.

Also, Jane needed to ask if anyone wanted their personal email address posted on the website under their name. She is not sure any of us want to do that, but that is individual choice. The village email is published on the website. The way it works right now is if an email comes in directed to a trustee or the mayor, it will be forwarded to their personal email if we have your email address. For instance, we get zoning emails that are forwarded to Mark. Questions about the community center are forwarded to Natalie.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/Village Organizations:

No public comments.

NEW BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION, APPROVAL, AND POSSIBLE VOTE:

- 1) Discussion and possible approval of the nomination and appointment of a mayor.

Jane stated that there is an option to go into Closed Session to discuss the appointment of mayor or there can be a motion now and a vote. Steve confirmed that it was up to the board to decide to go into closed

session or continue this agenda item in open session. Mark mentioned that he felt at last meeting the board did a disgrace to itself with having two nominations and a tie vote and agree to just continue on. He was in favor of continuing with the discussion in open session and not go into closed session. Jane stated that experience in a mayor is extremely important. Sean asked how long we have to select a mayor and what happens if we don't. Steve explained that there is 60 days from time of resignation of previous mayor. He stated that the statute states that if you cannot come to agreement among the board that they board could appoint a citizen to the position. They continued to discuss the process for several minutes. After much discussion, Sara voiced her opinion about Mark not wanting to run and then changing his mind. She stated that she felt there needed to be new blood and that is why she was supporting Dennis. Mark then explained about the incident that changed his mind. He then mentioned a situation and comment that was made when Dennis turned in his poultry form. Dennis did not recall saying that. Mark just wanted to point out that comments such as that is not what is needed with a village official and was concerned about his leadership skills. They continued to discuss the situation amongst themselves. Sean expressed his opinion about every month having to vote on a mayor and it continues to be a tie. John voiced his opinion about who actually had experience when initially becoming mayor. After much discussion, Mark asked Dennis what his thoughts were about becoming mayor. Dennis explained his ideas and how he would expect things to work and do the best for the village as a whole and not separate entities. Jane brought up the tension that is felt, but it extends from what is on social media and Dennis agreed. The discussion continued for some time.

After a long discussion and some silence, Jane made a motion to appoint Mark Miller as active mayor. There was not a second, therefore, the motion dies due to lack of a second. Sara made a motion to appoint Dennis Boyce as mayor. The second was made by John. Mark-abstain, Sara-yes, Jane-no, John-yes, Dennis-yes, Sean-yes. Motion approved. Dennis Boyce has been appointed mayor.

Steve explained to Dennis that he needs to decide to resign his trustee seat and become mayor or be acting mayor and continue as mayor but still holding his position as trustee. A decision doesn't need to be made tonight but should be made soon. Steve explained what the difference would be with each scenario. As mayor he would get to vote except in certain situations. As Trustee he would get to vote on everything. The mayor would be the only way to break a tie. If he did decide to become mayor there would be a vacancy that would need to be filled. Dennis states he wanted to think about it and make his decision by next meeting.

2) Department assignments.

Dennis stated that he wanted to take some time and talk with everyone before making any assignments. He would discuss at next month's meeting.

3) Discussion and possible approval of Easement granted to Kris Hedrick (may defer discussion to Closed Session).

Jane stated that Kris Hedrick will not be here tonight, but he told here that he will be closing on this property next week. We are discussing the wording on the easement in closed session. He plans to be at the July meeting.

4) Discussion and possible approval of the Right to Return to Work Program per IMLRMA.

As Jane told everyone last month, we received an email from Megan Toth, the IML Risk Management Program Coordinator. She said IMLRMA is requiring all municipalities to adopt an Early Return to Work policy by September 1, 2025. Steve reviewed the example policy and drafted one specific for the Village of Wapella. As Jane understood, this will not be an ordinance or a resolution. She thinks it will be posted or become part of the employee handbook. Once we approve the policy, she is supposed to send it to Megan Toth.

John asked questions about how this tied in with FMLA. There continued to be discussion about the differences.

Jane made motion to approve the Right to Return to Work Program per IMLRMA as presented. Seconded by Mark. Mark, Sara, Jane, Dennis, Sean voting yes. John voting no. Motion approved.

5) Discussion and possible approval of an ordinance setting forth the compliance with the FOIA.

Jane stated that Steve brought this to her attention and is making sure the village is complying. Once this ordinance is approved, it will have a link on the website. There are some blanks to fill in but can still be passed tonight.

Motion made by Jane to approve the ordinance setting forth provisions the compliance with the FOIA pending filling in the blanks next month. Seconded by Dennis. Mark, Jane, John, Dennis, Sean voting yes. Sara voting no. Motion approved. Ordinance 2025.06.18A.

6) Discussion and possible approval of an ordinance amending and clarifying language in Chapter 51 Water Works Sections 51.15, 51.25 and 51.33.

Jane mentioned that 51.15 does not need to be amended. Only 51.25 and 51.33. Steve explained that this was specific to splitting parcels more for commercial properties. The board discussed for some time and decided to wait until after closed session to decide.

Motion to enter Closed Session made by Jane for:

The setting of a price for sale or lease of property, discussion of pending litigation, and discussion of closed session minutes from 6/21/23, 8/16/23, 10/25/23, 12/20/23, 5/15/24, and 5/21/25. Seconded by John. All voting yes. Moved to Closed Session at 8:26pm.

RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION: 9:01pm

Roll Call

Mark Miller
Sara Goergen
Jane Buraglio
John Goergen
Dennis Boyce
Sean Holland
Steve Mahrt – Attorney
Robin Morrow, Clerk

1) Discussion and possible approval of Easement granted to Kris Hedrick.

No vote at this time.

2) Discussion and possible approval to proceed with pending litigation.

No vote at this time.

3) Discussion and possible approval and/or release of Closed Session minutes from 6/21/23, 8/16/23, 10/25/23, 12/20/23, 5/15/24, and 5/21/25.

John Goergen made motion to approve all closed session minutes from 6/21/23, 8/16/23, 10/25/23, 12/20/23, 5/15/24, and 5/21/25. Second made by Sean Holland. All voting yes. Motion carried.

Jane Buraglio made motion to release all closed session minutes from 6/21/23, 8/16/23, 10/25/23, 12/20/23, 5/15/24, and 5/21/25. Second by Dennis Boyce. All voting yes. Motion carried.

Steve asked if they didn't need to go back and discuss the ordinance. Jane agreed.

Jane made a motion to approve the ordinance amending and clarifying language in Chapter 51 Water Works Sections 51.25 and 51.33 of the Wapella Code of Ordinances. John Goergen made a second. All voting yes. Motion carried. #2025-06-18B

Motion to adjourn made by Sean Holland. Seconded by Dennis Boyce. All voting yes.

Meeting adjourned – 9:05pm

Respectfully submitted by:

Robin Morrow, Village Clerk