

**VILLAGE OF ELLSWORTH COUNCIL MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
BANKS TOWNSHIP HALL
January 13, 2025**

Present: J. Rasmussen, G. McCallum, S. Sowers, A. Drenth, M. Bennett, S. Dhillon, M. Drenth and M. Potter

Others: Tina Sundelius, Jarris Rubingh, Beth Cooper, and Lynn Spearing was on speaker phone.

Meeting called to order by Rasmussen at 7pm.

1. **MOTION** by M. Bennett/seconded by S. Sowers to accept the minutes of the December 9, 2024, regular meeting as presented. CARRIED 6-0

PUBLIC INPUT:

- County Commissioner Jarris Rubingh informed the board that the county has a new prosecuting attorney from Grand Traverse County, William Bratt. Central Lake Village has Sewer issues also. There were 680 car deer accidents in Antrim County in 2024. There have been no changes to the Antrim County Road Commission Board.

DEPARMENTAL REPORTS:

- a. Police: N/R
- b. Streets: The storm drain infrastructure needs attention. Ash St. culvert needs to be replaced.
- c. DPW: Rasmussen reported that the backhoe is broken down. They will be able to rent a loader & snow sweep from Drogd until it is repaired. It went down the day after it was serviced. Questions are being addressed.
- d. Presidents Report: Rasmussen stated that he would like to take this time to mention issues brought to him for possible discussion/consideration: Making the 4-corners downtown into a 4-way stop, eliminating the blinking light, to slow down traffic. Changing the speed limit from the Dollar general to the Rowe to 35MPH. Putting rumble strips or painting the road to slow down incoming traffic. Extending the guardrail on Essex/Park just SW of the Wesleyan Church. He would like to get a sign (free) from the state highlighting the Girl's Basketball State Championship that occurred when Hugh Campbell was coach. Research needs to be done.
- e. Clerk's Report: The Chamber Annual dinner and auction is coming up. Rasmussen, Dhillon, Spearing & Sundelius agreed to go. Bills were presented. A sample ordinance & procedure was presented that would make the clerk & Treasurer positions appointed instead of elected. Discussion was held. Questions will be taken to the attorney and the idea will be discussed again next month.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- a. Finance Committee: They need to meet again and need Marlene's input. No date was set.

- b. DDA: N/R
- c. Planning Commission: The December meeting was canceled the next meeting is set for February 13; the Master Plan will be discussed. Everyone is welcome.
- d. Parks and Recreation: Rec Director Bethany Cooper reported that she met with Dhillon for 2.5 hours today working on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan that will also be presented to the township. She does not think we need to hire Beckett & Reader at the \$17,000 price they gave. Contacting the NLEA for guidance through the process was suggested. The importance of an accurate Master Plan to secure funding was stressed. The current plan has not been updated since 2022.
- e. Ordinance/Law Enforcement Committee: The village has not had a licensed police department since 2022. We can go through the process of reactivating it or contract with the Sheriff's Dept. to have one of their deputies in the village 40 hours per month. Discussion was held.
- f. Streets/Lights/Water/ Solid Waste Committee: N/R

DISCUSSION:

- a. The new graphics department at the high school has offered a free banner with the village logo as a sample of their work.
- b. VanDellen List: S. Dhillon had nothing to report.
- c. Ellsworth/Banks Recreation Plan Update: Cooper has been working to launch a new and better program since September.
- d. Police Car Shelter: Since our officer resigned a redesign of the shelter seems to better serve the community. McCallum will get a new drawing from Jared.
- e. Sewer Project: Rasmussen presented the idea of a septic-type system. More information is needed.
- f. Service Contract for Mowers: Sowers reported that after investigating, he feels the contract is too expensive and unnecessary.
- g. Delinquent Water Bills: Rasmussen asked if we could shut off delinquency rather than wait until tax time to collect.
- h. Attorney Retirement: Young, Graham, & Wendling are closing their firm and have referred us to Bauckham, Thall, Seeber, Kaufman & Koches, PC. Effective Feb. 1, 2025. They are located in Harbor Springs and specialize in municipalities.
- i. Change Meeting Hours: Al Drenth cannot make a 6:00 meeting every time.
- j. Wages:

ACTION ITEMS:

- 2. **MOTION** by Bennett/seconded by McCallum to change the meeting times to 6:30pm. CARRIED 6-0.
- 3. **MOTION** by McCallum/seconded by Sowers to send Rasmussen, Spearing, Dhillon & Sundelius to the Chamber Annual Dinner. CARRIED 6-0.
- 4. **MOTION** by Dhillon/seconded by McCallum to pay the Recreation Director quarterly. CARRIED 6-0.
- 5. **MOTION** by McCallum/seconded by Bennett to pay village employees \$20 per hour.

CARRIED 6-0.

6. **MOTION** by Rasmussen/seconded by Bennett to confirm Tina Sundelius as Deputy Clerk.
CARRIED 6-0.
7. **MOTION** by Rasmussen/seconded by Dhillon to raise the Clerk's salary by 10% or \$2,535.30.
CARRIED 6-0.
8. **MOTION** by Bennett/seconded by McCallum to raise the Treasurer's salary by 10% or \$491.41.
CARRIED 6-0.
9. **MOTION** by Rasmussen/seconded by Bennett to pay the bills as presented. CARRIED 6-0

PUBLIC INPUT:

- No public Comment.

10. **MOTION** by Rasmussen/seconded by McCallum to adjourn at 9:26pm. CARRIED 7-0

Marlene Drenth, Village Clerk