

VILLAGE OF ELLSWORTH COUNCIL MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
BANKS TOWNSHIP HALL
November 10, 2025

Present: J. Rasmussen, S. Sowers, M. Drenth, Al Drenth, G. McCallum, L. Spearing, M. Bennett, Marcie Potter.

Absent: S. Dhillon

Others: Tina Sundelius, Candy Randall, Ken Grosser, Don Ruis and Danielle Ruis.

Pledge of Allegiance

1. **MOTION** by M. Bennett/seconded by L. Spearing to accept the minutes of the October 13, 2025, regular meeting as presented. **CARRIED** 6-0

PUBLIC INPUT:

- None

Guest Speaker: Leslie Meyers presented the work she has been doing as the Antrim County Operator of Dams & Drain Commissioner on the Chain of Lakes. The Chain's infrastructure & the laws governing it haven't been updated in over 100 years. She hopes to repair the Bellaire & Elk Rapids dams, conduct dredging, & fix the Bridge Street culvert (to name a few of the areas of concentration). Charlevoix, Kalkaska & Grand Traverse Counties are included in her efforts because although 70% of the Chain of Lakes is located in Antrim County, the other 30% is spread throughout the other 3 counties. Ultimately, she will be approaching a civil judge to institute a special assessment dividing the Chain into 2 districts (north & south of the Bellaire dam).

DEPARMENTAL REPORTS:

- a. Recreation: L. Spearing reported that we are still waiting to hear back from Rotary Charities about assisting with the Rec Plan. A refrigerator was donated for the concession stand.
- b. DPW: The DPW Truck sander is in for repairs.
- c. Streets: None
- d. Zoning: None
- e. President's Report: J. Rasmussen stated that property owner, Chad Taylor, would like to build an assisted living unit outside of town on the gravel pit property on Essex Rd. The Farmer's Exchange would like to acquire some of the Village's & Taylor's property on Center Street to build a gas station.
- f. Clerk's Report: M. Drenth presented an opportunity for Municipal League members to receive a 15% discount at CMU.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- a. Finance Committee: None
- b. DDA: L. Spearing reported that Trunk or Treat was a success. A goal setting retreat will take place in November. Plans are underway for the Christmas in the Village Festival. This year the DDA will be partnering with the Good Samaritan to put on the event.
- c. Planning Commission: The Draft Village Master Plan will be reviewed at the December 11 PC

Meeting and all input collected over the 63 day public review period will be incorporated. A public hearing will be scheduled and the draft should be at the January Village Council meeting for approval. Brian Certa has agreed to be on the Planning Commission.

- d. Ordinance/Law Enforcement Committee: None
- e. Streets/Lights/Water/ Solid Waste Committee: None

DISCUSSION:

- a. VanDellen: Spearing, Rasmussen, & Dhillon met with Paddle Antrim Director Deana Jerdee and Dave Muha to discuss details on how to install & improve the dock & universal kayak launch site as well as fundraising/grant ideas. Professional engineers need to be hired.
- b. Sewer Project: J. Rasmussen made several attempts to get a hold of anyone at EGLE and finally spoke with Aaron Klien out of Cadillac who informed him that the state has no record or knowledge of the Village trying to get a septic system in place. The very first step in the process was to apply for a permit with EGLE, this was never done. He will be attending the December meeting. A representative from the Health Department will also be at the December 8 meeting to answer sewer related questions.
- c. Rasmussen suggested trading the Village police car for a new DPW truck. He was directed to shop around. Central Lake President is interested in collaborating with us on a police officer.
- d. The culvert that goes under Sunrise Drive fills in with dirt & gravel and needs to be cleaned out annually at a cost of \$2,000. Sommer Solutions will ditch the surrounding area to stop the buildup for \$2,500. The action was tabled.
- e. McCallum, Drenth, Rasmussen & Spearing will comprise the committee to update the Village Capital Improvement Plan.
- f. The Council spent an hour going over the budget. They decided to move the responsibility to committee. Drenth, Rasmussen, Bennett, Potter & Spearing will comprise the committee.

ACTION ITEMS:

- 2. **MOTION** by M. Bennett/seconded by L. Spearing to adopt the updated fee schedule. **CARRIED** 6-0.
- 3. **MOTION** by L. Spearing/seconded by M. Bennett to purchase the hot cocoa & approve the closure of Center Street for Christmas in the Village Festival. **CARRIED** 6-0.
- 4. **MOTION** by S. Sowers/seconded by M. Bennett to pay the bills as presented. **CARRIED** 6-0.

PUBLIC INPUT: Jarris Rubingh, County Commissioner, reported that after a few years of financial struggles the Antrim County Fair Board had a successful event this year. The jail bond issue passed. The County will be looking at what other Counties have done who have constructed jails in the last 6-8 years.

ADJOURN: **MOTION** by A. Drenth/seconded by G. McCallum to adjourn at 8:50. **CARRIED** 6-0.

Marlene Drenth, Village Clerk