

Minutes of Regular Meeting of the Oakfield Village Board
Oakfield Community Center
130 N. Main Street Oakfield, WI 53065
Wednesday, May 8, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by President Dan Redman.

Roll call found the following trustees present: Chris Cook, John Cedar, Al Kamenski, Julie Franke, and Jim Eckberg. Also in attendance: Joe Ciesielezyk, Brian Roemer, Lisa Trebatoski, Sami Lewin, Angel Thomas, William Rutten, and Bradley Winger

Motion: Al Kamenski, seconded by John Cedar, to dispense with the reading of the minutes from the April 10, 2024 regular board meeting and approve them as written. Motion carried 6-0.

Public Comments: None.

BetterLife presentation: Representatives from BetterLife presented background info on the non-profit fraternal benefits society, their requirement to provide life insurance and why they were seeking to become involved with some community projects and activities. There are over 150 BetterLife members in the Oakfield area and the company gives back what the taxes would be to communities where they have insured customers. Angel Thomas stated they can help with things like parks equipment, fire and EMS needs, etc. They are looking for ideas for events or projects they can help with since there are so many insured members in the area and need someone local to steer an idea or project. BetterLife can provide volunteers and cover partial or full cost of an event, pending the scope. Dan stated there are several projects that could work and will follow up with Angel in the near future.

Ehlers presentation- Sewer Rate Study & Long-Range Cash Flow Analysis: Brian Roemer and Lisa Trebatoski from Ehlers Public Finance Advisors presented the initial sewer rate study and long-range cash flow analysis. Brian reminded the board that the numbers are pre-bid and will change after the project is bid out and construction begins. Their analysis relies on using revenues only to repay debts versus using a general obligation pledge (tax revenues) and is based on a 20-year loan. Ehlers will be working with MSA on creating a timeline for the board to make decisions for rate changes to be ready for a January 1, 2025 implementation. One of the things to be determined/decided soon is interim financing to pay for costs incurred prior to loan closing. A public informational meeting will be scheduled by fall 2024 and a request for proposal will be published.

MSA has already submitted an intent to apply for the Clean Water Fund Loan program for a \$10 million loan. The Village qualifies for at least 10% principal forgiveness on the loan so all of Ehlers' figures are based on a \$9 million loan. Based on the village's historical rate performance no vital catch-up rate adjustment is needed. The adjustments to be done are solely for the treatment plant project. Initial impacts to an average residential user would be a 93% increase for the quarterly sewer user charge as well as the sewer volume charge in 2025 and another 93% increase in 2026. An alternative option is to see if the village qualifies for a 30-year Clean Water Fund loan. This would lower the annual debt service and the required rate adjustment to close on the loan. Ehlers advised against using general obligation debt; the village's capacity is \$4.6 million and if utilized it would limit the village's funding options in the future and is not prepayable. New tax increment districts cannot be created until the current TIDs are terminated. Increasing connection fees, while helpful for future growth, would not make a big enough impact for this project. Another suggestion is to make changes to the rate structure; if administratively feasible, move to monthly billing and adjust the volume charge to be higher and fixed rate to be lower so those users who don't use a lot of volume aren't paying so much. The most immediate need is to secure interim financing for costs that are starting now. Ehlers will continue to work closely with the village and MSA to assist in making the best decisions for the community.

Public Works:

Water: Tony has begun installing the new meters. The pressure reducing valves were inspected and routine maintenance completed.

Sewer: Nothing to report.

WWTP update: No new information has been received from MSA regarding the project.

Main Street project update: The state has requested two meetings for the upcoming project. Both are tentatively scheduled pending confirmation of the county and state's availability. A local officials meeting is planned for May 23rd at 6:00 p.m. A public informational meeting is planned for May 29th from 5:00-6:30 p.m. Miriam will email the board confirming the dates and times once they are definitely known.

Public Safety: Nothing to report from Chief Schuster.

Human Resources:

Motion: Dan Redman made a motion at 8:34 pm to move into closed session under §19.85(1)(c) for consideration of employment and compensation for employees.

Motion: Jim Eckberg, seconded by Julie Franke, to resume regular session at 9:00 p.m. Motion carried 6-0. Chris Cook had to leave after regular session resumed.

Motion: Jim Eckberg, seconded by Julie Franke, to approve a \$1,000 bonus for Earl Norenberg upon retirement. Motion carried 5-0.

Seasonal employees: Several applications were received for the lawn mowing position. One high school student was interviewed and tentatively hired. The committee is considering hiring another high school student so all hours are covered when summer activities and vacations happen. Dan and Jim will be interviewing the other two high school age applicants and make an offer to the best candidate.

League Mutual Insurance Conference update: Jim attended the annual conference last month and provided a brief overview of some of the topics covered. He will be following up with Miriam on some of the highlights to ensure the village is following best practices. If board members would like any additional information on the agenda items listed on Jim's handout they should let him know.

New Business:

Monthly check approval: The monthly approval sheet was passed around and signed.

TIF money: During this year's audit one of the auditors pointed out that the village is only receiving 0.1% interest on the large sums of money in both TIF accounts at the bank. The Local Government Investment Pool is paying 5.4% interest currently. Miriam spoke with the bank regarding the interest rate and received email confirmation that the 5.4% interest rate would be matched. Board members felt that a meeting with the bank and three trustees should take place before a decision is made.

Electronics recycling event: Jim spoke with Com2 Recycling Solutions about possibly organizing an electronics recycling event in the village. Some suggestions included holding it around the same time and bulky waste pickup. Staff would have to monitor the drop offs to ensure nothing unacceptable was taken in and that items were sorted into containers to be provided by Com2. There would be no additional cost to the village other employee time to monitor the event. Jim will get some additional details before confirming the event.

Service Motors payment options: Service Motors has changed their payment options starting in April. Since the village doesn't spend a large sum on parts or maintenance the only option available would be to pay for services with a credit card. The option was acceptable to the board.

Insurance crime coverage: An optional coverage available this year through the village's insurance policy is Crime Coverage for an additional \$500 premium. It was decided to not pursue the coverage this year. Miriam will let the insurance agency know to bind coverage without it.

Motion: Al Kamenski, seconded by John Cedar, to adjourn the board meeting at 9:30 p.m. Motion carried 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Miriam Thomas, Clerk/Treasurer