**VILLAGE OF LEE, ILLINOIS**

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Lee Fire Station, 103 Lee Road, Lee, Illinois**

1.CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

President Voitik opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**Roll Call**

V. President Therese Voitik – present Treasurer Katherine Felker – present

Trustee Jessica Galbreath – present V. Clerk Dawn Woodbury - absent

Trustee Stacey Schnupp – present

Trustee Margie Foshe-present Others in Attendance:

Trustee Jean Michels – present V. Engineer Curtiss Cook

Trustee Dawn Kimpflin – present V. Attorney Russ Crull

Trustee Jessica Moser – present

2. VILLAGE PRESIDENT WELCOME/COMMUNICATION

3. VISITORS/COMMUNICATION/PUBLIC COMMENT

Shaun Miller respectively requested the board hold an in-person town meeting regarding the water project details.

Ali Huss introduced herself as a board member for Lee County District 2. Looks forward to working with everyone and would like to make sure we have a voice.

Don Post had a concern about Mike McGinnis’s shipping container in his yard. If Mike is allowed to have one, then the rest of town should be able to own one.

William Heimbigner concerned about his rent. It has increased 150% due to a change in water rate and asked the board to issue a code enforcement.

Jordan Steffa received 2 code violation letters, one was not addressed to him and was not sure what his own violation letter was for. Addressed the village president and trustees and have had no response.

Mike Shafer had a question regarding the $18 fee for maintenance/surcharge on the water bills. Can we obtain any help from the State of Illinois for assistance.

Michelle Fossett had a concern about the surcharge on the water bill. She also received a violation letter and was not aware of what the violation was for.

Jim Moberg had a concern about the water surcharge on the water bill

Bill Gee had a concern about when the board voted in the $18 fee on the water bill and why it was not on the agenda.

Josh Carlson has a problem with the retention pond that might have a broken tile. The retention pond will need to be addressed.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. Reports of Village Employees/Officers

i Curtis Cook – Village Engineer

* Project Summary Report

The water project has had some revisions to save money. On November 1st, the village will have a hearing regarding the water project as a requirement for the IEPA in order to approve the budget plan. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the environmental impact of the project.

* Stephanie Brown from Chastain to discuss master plan possibilities.

Would love to know what Lee’s needs are and would love to help with our comprehensive plan. Our next step would be to ask around and find out what our goal is. She will give us several examples of ideas she can help us with.

ii Michael Woodbury – Public Works

iii Dawn Woodbury – Village Clerk

iv Katherine Felker – Village Treasurer

All trustees’ emails have been changed so that everyone’s similar. The $18 surcharge in the water bills was already in effect when she started as village treasurer.

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b. Representative Bradley Fritts discussion

Lee County will be receiving 18% less of state dollars this year due to the state having to use the money for other expenditures. His office can help with legislative fixes to help cut through some red tape. There is a trend going around in other rural towns regarding issuing of code violations. The smaller communities that are doing well are ones that keep their neighborhood looking nice and attract more residents.

c Jerry Foster discussion on action item for steering committee

The Economic Development team would like to move forward with a committee. If Lee is not going to grow, our costs will be dispersed around the same number of people, and as costs go up, we will all be paying more. Lee has very little resale tax coming in and the burden will be on the property owners if Lee does not grow. It does not mean we have to bring in big business. We need to work with our representatives to help us.

d. Discussion on Steward Creek Solar Phase 2 plan

William and Matt Hantzman and Scott Remur were in attendance. The original Phase was originally developed back in 2018. Unfortunately, they have major delays from ComEd, but continue to keep engaged with Lee County to help them as they worked on a revised solar ordinance due to new state laws.

At present, we permitted 6,002 acres as part of Phase I. For Phase 2, it would bring it to just around 10,000 acres in size. This would represent a substantial increase in taxes in the local community. The initial projection was $81,000,000 generated for Lee County local school districts in Phase I, that estimate has now increased to $174,000,000 to the local community over a 35-year period. If Phase 1 and Phase 2 are not built, we would be looking at an increase of $160,000,000 more in tax revenue over 35 years than what would be otherwise be generated if it stayed in Ag. Funds from the county would help to bolster and provide any additional flexibility protection the county would need by diversifying income and tax streams so that there is a real big benefit for this project. Phase 2 allows us to become more efficient in the site design and realize that some discounts will be available for the scale of the project. What we must present is an increase of voluntary contributions to the Village of Lee Community Fund from $25,000, escalating at 2 percent annually, to $100,000 per year. This would represent to the village over 35 years- $5.5 million in voluntary contributions to the village. We submitted a petition and expected to present it to the zoning board of appeals at their December session. Hexagon will send a map for us to review along with a packet for trustees to review. A new resolution would be modified to Phase 2.

e. Discussion and possible vote for zoning change at the former County Line Pub from commercial use to commercial/residential (multi-use) -Zach Burkhart

There has been a residence in the back of the bar for 20 years and that apartment would be the main selling point for selling the property. If the bar would re-open, that apartment would still have to be there.

The board would have to put a notice in the paper and have a public hearing if more than 1 apartment is requested. No vote.

f. Discussion on Tax Levy

Tax Levy will be presented again and approved at the November meeting. No increase compared to last year.

g. Discussion and approval of annual treasurer’s report

Combination of all treasurer’s reports for the year. Trustee Moser Motioned to approve the annual treasurer’s report. Trustee Schnupp Seconded that Motion.

Moser, Michels, Kimpflin, Galbreath, Schnupp, Foshe-yes

h. Discussion and possible vote to change the way code violations are handled (Margie)

Violation letters that were delivered to certain residents did not specify the certain violations being made. Before any violations are issued, there should be board approval. Per Trustee Moser, our ordinances say that trustees are allowed to write and send ordinance letters out. B & F will now be handling the writing and sending of the ordinances. Trustee Foshe wants to create a resolution to change the code for violation letters. No vote.

i. Discussion regarding the IEPA hearing

The hearing will be held on November 1st at 7:00pm at the fire house. President Voitik will post the information.

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1. Requested hearing regarding code violation-Joe and Tina Phipps

The Phipps were absent-no discussion.

1. Discussion on Steward Creek Solar Phase 2 plan

Discussed under d.

1. Lee Volunteer Fire Department-Chief Aters

It was only a discussion as to whether it would be a good idea to know prior to new occupancy on rental properties, that carbon monoxide and fire alarms would be working and available in the building. Electrical wiring was not meant to be inspected and the fire department understands that it needs to be certified. Chief Aters mentioned he received a call from the State Fire Marshall, and he advised the Fire Marshall that the village will not be doing any safety inspections. Tornado sirens will be done on the 1st Tuesday of each month if someone is available. In the event of a village emergency, any resident who lives north of town can meet at the fire house. On the south side of town, a location will need to be found. An emergency evacuation road is still needed.

* Intergovernmental agreement for use of fire house- No Vote
* Discussion and possible vote for Emergency access road- No Vote
* Safety Inspection of rental properties prior to new occupancy (carbon monoxide, fire alarms, electrical wiring, etc.)

Not happening currently

* Discussion on LFD and village combined disaster team plan and training

Already discussed

* Discussion on LFD testing of tornado siren every 1st Monday of the month

Already discussed

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. Further discussion and possible re-vote on moratorium for code violations (Stacey)

Trustee Schnupp mentioned that there are fines on the violation letters. Trustee Moser added that there are no fines associated with those letters. B & F is the best choice to handle the code violations at this time, due to board members being harassed. Trustee Moser stated to please let B & F know that you will be fixing any code violations. Trustee Schnupp would like to re-look at the code violation ordnance and wait until 2024 to do a possible moratorium. Trustee Schnupp made a motion to re-vote on a moratorium. Trustee Foshe made a 2nd motion.

Moser, Michels, Kimpflin, Galbreath- no Schnupp, Foshe-yes

b. Grant Updates (Stacey)

Trustee Schnupp is working with small businesses in town in helping them with grants.

c. Discussion and possible vote for variance to allow Mike McGinnis’s shipping container.

Mike McGinnis did directly address his neighbors and they said they were fine with the shipping container being in his backyard. He was unaware there was a code violation against a container before he installed it. The board is concerned that anyone else who wants a container in their yard, will want to get one if he were allowed to have one. The plan is to paint the container black and put the white lattice on it. Mike McGinnis has requested the board that he continue to do the work on his container and within 30-45 days, all work will be completed per board recommendations. He was told he did not need a permit if the container was temporary. Atty Russ Crull will need to review the International Residential Book regarding the specifics of the container per the wording in our code. Russ stated that a public hearing will need to be held. A public hearing will be conducted at 6pm on November 8, 2023, one hour before our already scheduled board meeting. Mike McGinnis has agreed to pay for the publication regarding the public hearing. No vote.

d. Discussion and possible vote for code revisions (Margie)

Trustee Foshe asked to hold off until November.

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6. REVIEW AND CORRECTION/APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING

a. Approval of minutes from October 11, 2023 Regular Board Meeting

Trustee Galbreath made a motion to approve the minutes from October 11, regular board

meeting. Trustee Moser Seconded the motion.

Michels, Kimpflin, Galbreath, Moser-yes Schnupp, Foshe-no

7. TREASURER’S REPORT

a. Discussion and possible approval of Treasurer’s Report

Trustee Moser made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report for October 11, 2023. Trustee Michels seconded the motion.

Kimpflin, Michels, Moser, Foshe, Schnupp, Galbreath-yes

8. APPROVAL OF BILLS

a. Discussion and possible approval of bills payable

Trustee Kimpflin made a motion to approve the bills payable for October 11, 2023.

Trustee Moser seconded the motion.

Galbreath, Moser, Kimpflin, Schnupp, Foshe, Michels-yes

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Streets and Alleys/Public Safety

Trustees will meet with Chief Aters and Mike Woodbury in regard to the emergency

Evacuation access.

b. Water and Refuse

waiting on the revision of plans for water project.

1. Finance and Ordinances/Zoning

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

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