

May 11, 2023 – EMPIRE VILLAGE COUNCIL WORK SESSION

The meeting was called to order at the Empire Township Hall and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Palmer at 7:00 p.m. Upon a roll call, Council members Bacon, Chase, Dye, Palmer, Rademacher, Walton, Webb were present.

CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA – Approval of 4-13-23 was added after Communications on agenda. Ordering of port-a-potties was added under New Business

ADOPTION OF AGENDA - Motion by Bacon, support by Webb to approve the agenda as amended. Upon a voice vote, MOTION PASSED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS – Mary Sharry commented on possible removal of a streetlight near her home. Martha Acton commented on behavior of audience members at Council meetings.

APPROVAL OF 4-13-23 Minutes – Motion by Dye, support by Walton to approve the minutes of 4-13-23. Upon a voice vote, MOTION PASSED.

COMMUNICATIONS – An email from State Representative Coffia was read aloud.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Motion by Bacon, supported by Rademacher to approve the 4-13-23 minutes provided per the Rules of Procedure. Upon a voice vote, MOTION PASSED.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS – Palmer noted her report on meeting with Attorney, accompanied by Walton, regarding 4 issues. Discussion included: why 4 issues, rather than single New Neighborhood request discussed with Council; why the Council consensus on incompatibility of offices was disregarded; discussion with auditor and email from such to be shared with Council; impact of Attorney consultations and comments at meetings and on the street have impacts on Officers and employee. There was unanimous consensus to approve training for Zoning/Planning with application submitted for grant reimbursement of fee.

COUNCIL MEMBER/COMMITTEE REPORTS – Reports from the Personnel Committee, Wastewater Update Task Force, and Dye/Walton report on County Emergency Mitigation meeting were received and reviewed.

OLD BUSINESS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – Topics submitted by each Council member and included in packet were discussed. Agenda request form format was reviewed. Overview of topic, questions to be answered and recommendations as headings were agreed as a format by consensus. Use of a projector was discussed. There was consensus that display of just the agenda could be a start. There was consensus to form a Community Engagement Task Force. There was consensus on adopting the Community Engagement Guiding Principle.

RULES OF PROCEDURE REVIEW – Council member input regarding pages 1-6 were discussed and synopsised in a color-coded document provided by Palmer. There was as consensus that discussion will continue at the next work session beginning at section 3.2.

PURCHASING POLICY – Changes to the existing policy as drafted by Dye were reviewed. Bacon asked that the Clerk check with MI Treasury for any conflicts with their requirements. Once that is completed, there was consensus that the policy be considered for approval at the regular meeting.

SOUTH BAR LAKE ASSOCIATION EDUCATION MATERIALS – Materials provided by Steve Lewis and Trustee Rademacher were reviewed for mailing to Village residents. Costs for mailing were budgeted at \$1K and Rademacher will assemble likely costs for consideration at next meeting.

LAMBKIN LANE/FLORENCE STREET REPAVING PROJECT – Bids for engineering and repaving, as included in the packet, were reviewed. Application for grant was considered, but research by Bacon indicated that the required engineering plan costs are not reimbursable, and the project would likely not be competitive. There was consensus this be placed on the consent agenda for the next meeting.

EQUIPMENT PURCHASE TRAILER – Three vendors were contacted about the type and price of trailers by DPW Superintendent Friend. His recommendation, as included in packet, was reviewed. There was consensus that its purchase be placed on the next meeting consent agenda for approval as the price is within amount budgeted.

NEW BUSINESS

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS – Palmer reviewed the process described in the Personnel Policy for employees. She requested Council discussion on the development of a process and evaluation document for assessing the Clerk and Treasurer. Bacon distributed a handout including information from MML and documents used previously to remove an officer for neglect of duties. **Motion by Dye, support by Rademacher to continue past 9 p.m. Upon a voice vote with Bacon opposed, MOTION PASSED.** There was discussion of MCL 64.3 that provides the process for removal of an officer for neglect of duties. There were several comments that further review be considered once the attorney opinion is received. Palmer stressed that the topic was Performance Assessment, it was never a discussion regarding termination.

SOUTH BAR LAKE MONITORING – The request to continue this monitoring at the beach was reviewed. There was consensus to place this on the next meeting consent agenda.

AUDIT FEE TO RISE – Palmer reviewed her documentation on a discussion with the auditor. There was a 49% increase and a quote for a 3-year price commitment discussed. Bacon noted that Gabridge completes all the reporting for Act 51 monies, unlike other audits, and she feels this is worth a lot of money. There was consensus this be placed on the next meeting agenda for approval.

FEMA INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT – There was consensus that this be placed on the next meeting agenda for approval of the Resolution required for the agreement.

CONSUMER ENERGY STREET LIGHT DIRECTION – Bacon reviewed the documentation and estimated the cost to remove the lights and poles would be \$800-1400 each. Confusion remains over who may turn off or remove the lights and the poles: residents or the Village.

At 9:30 p.m. it was noted that the ROP requires the meeting to end, but allow for public comments.

PORT-A-POTTIES – There was discussion of adding a second one downtown. There was consensus this be added to the next meeting agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT - Tom Islieb commented on employee reviews. John Lambkin commented on the streetlights.

COUNCIL COMMENTS – Dye noted that the crabapple tree donated by the Shalda family and planted at Shalda Park has broken off and needs to be replaced. Zimmermans will be receiving a shipment in the next month and can replace at 50% of cost or possibly no charge. Rademacher thanked the public for sticking out the entire meeting.

ADJOURNMENT at 9:42 p.m.

Derith Smith

Empire Village Clerk

These minutes were approved at the May 23, 2023, Regular Council meeting.