

Grand Ridge Village Board
Minutes of the October 15, 2024, Regular Meeting of the Village Board

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Kay Hines at the Grand Ridge Village Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance. Trustees present: Jim Stricklin, Anne Hinterlong, Kim Olney, Dennis Rockey, Cindi Koetz and John Hettel. Also present: Village Attorney Sheryl Churney, Village Clerk Christy McGuire, Police Chief Josh Jabczynski. A sign-in sheet was provided for all others present and a copy of the sign-in sheet is attached.

Minutes. Trustee Hinterlong made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2024 Board meeting, and the August 27, 2024 Park Committee meeting; second by Trustee Koetz. Ayes: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report. Trustee Hettel made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented; second by Trustee Olney. Ayes: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Payment of Bills. Trustee Hinterlong made a motion to approve payment of the monthly bills; second by Trustee Stricklin. Ayes: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Public Comment.

1. Zeke Simons, a member of the Pacesetters 4-H Club discussed his 4-H project which focusses on being an entrepreneur. Zeke noted his interest in animals and cooking led him to make and sell \$492 worth of dog cookies. He presented a check to Mayor Hines in the amount of \$500 to be donated to the Grand Ridge Park Project Fund.
2. Pete Sutton stated is not against a single garbage hauler and he is not against the Village trying to save residents money. He is, however, against the Village mandating people who want to opt out of the service and getting a bill for a service they do not use. He noted the issue with dumpsters needs to be addressed.
3. Kelly Harsted commented she had just signed a new contract with a garbage carrier within the last 6 months for a dumpster and what the village is proposing would pose a problem with her contract. She stated she should have a right to help her kids and renters by letting them use her dumpster. She also stated concern for people who do not already have a garbage bill in their budget and are already struggling to make ends meet to be required to pay for a service they do not use.

Travel Request(s). None.

Old Business.

- A. **Purchase of Welcome to Grand Ridge Sign.** Trustee Rockey reported he had spoken to Midwest Signworks who encouraged the Village to go with larger size sign because it would be on a north and south road. The company also noted the change in size would not affect the cost due to the size of the sheeting used for an aluminum composite sign. Permission would be needed to put the sign on private property. Concerns about making the sign "break-away" were discussed. Board members discussed the sign design and color schemes. Using the same wording as old sign was desired. Trustee Rockey will submit designs by email and Ms. Churney reminded the board members not to "respond all" as

doing so could create an Open Meetings Act violation. Trustee Hinterlong made a motion to approve up to \$5,000 for the cost and installation for the new Welcome to Grand Ridge signs; second by Trustee Koetz. Ayes: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Nays: None. Motion carried.

B. Drainage in McBride Subdivision and Storm Water Drainage Water Line Connection Agreements.

Trustee Rockey presented 3 signed connection agreements and noted that there were two resident who had not signed the agreements. Trustee Rockey made a motion to approve signed connection agreements from Buck and Sarah Hill, Jack Tidaback and Brian LaBeau; second by Trustee Olney. Ayes: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Trustee Rockey will contact Lemrise Tile Repair to discuss their availability to begin the project. The Village will pay to install the drainage line and residents who would like to connect to the line would need to have a signed agreement and would be responsible for the cost to connect to the drain line.

C. Update regarding vacant homes on Poundstone Ave. Attorney Churney reported letters were sent to the two property owners. She will update the board in November once she has received a response.

D. Garbage Service Request for Proposals ("RFP"). The Board reviewed the draft RFP and discussed revisions to be made. The RFP would be given to garbage carriers current providing services in the Village and a notice of the RFP will be published in the paper. The Board wanted the garbage company to do the billing. The number of potential users was discussed. Trustee Hettel made a motion to authorize the RFP amended per tonight's discussion; second by Trustee Stricklin. Ayes: Stricklin, Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Nays: Hinterlong. Motion carried.

E. Revisions to Chapter 53 of the Village Code concerning Garbage and Recycling. The Board directed Attorney Churney to provide some opt out language for review at the November board meeting.

New Business.

A. Water Sewer Plans. Village Engineer Jack Kusek reviewed the preliminary engineering report for the Village wide sewer system. He noted, in the first phase, the Village received a grant for \$30,000 for the preparation of the plan which will be ready by the end of next week for submittal to IEPA for approval. A preliminary plan drawing was circulated.

The next phase involves obtaining a design and construction grant from IEPA. IEPA has a 5 year grant program and is now in year 3. There are 300-400 unsewered communities and Mr. Kusek reported IEPA is revising the program to help totally unsewered communities like Grand Ridge. When the next application round is opened, Mr. Kusek will be in contact with the Board.

The Board needs to consider where the plant would be situated and talk to the parties involved to see if we can get an option on that property. Mr. Kusek noted having a secured site would help the application.

B. Donation to Grand Ridge PTO for Community Halloween Party. Trustee Koetz made a motion to make a donation to the Grand Ridge PTO in the amount of \$250 for a Community Halloween Party; second by Trustee Hettel. Ayes: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Nays: None. Motion carried.

- C. **Donation to Grand Ridge Volunteer Fire Department.** Trustee Koetz made a motion to make a donation to the Grand Ridge Volunteer Fire Department in the amount of \$4,000; second by Trustee Hinterlong. Ayes: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Nays: None. Motion carried.
- D. **Donation to Grand Ridge Emergency Fund.** Trustee Olney made a motion to make a donation to the Grand Ridge Emergency Fund in the amount of \$2,000; second by Trustee Hettel. Ayes: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Nays: None. Motion carried.
- E. **2024 Tax Levy Announcement.** Attorney Churney discussed the 2024 tax levy. She was not able to calculate the estimated tax rate as she has not yet received the estimated equalized assessed evaluation ("EAV") from the Supervisors of Assessments. She the Village's EAV continues to rise which is good for the Village. She recommended the Board announce a tax levy of \$87,635 which is less than a 5% tax increase from last year's tax extension. Ms. Churney anticipates the 2024 tax rate will stay flat or may go lower. Trustee Rockey made a motion to announce the 2024 tax levy in the amount of \$87,635; second by Trustee Koetz. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Engineers Report. None.

Committee Report. No reports by Finance, Building Permit, or Health/Storm Drains.

Insurance. Trustee Stricklin reported the insurance payment has been made – there was a discount for the early payment.

Streets and Alleys. Trustee Rockey reported Nick Hettel is working on the parking berms. Trustee Rockey reported the county has approached the Village about the 2025 skip patching and seal coating program and wanted to see if the Village would like to "piggy-back" with the County on projects in Grand Ridge. IDOT will be doing some work on Main Street and Trustee Rockey would like to see if the berms could be done at the same time. He was not sure of the cost. Attorney Churney noted IDOT should be able to give us an Intergovernmental agreement to let us know how much IDOT would need the Village to commit to the project. Trustee Rockey will set up a meeting to discuss the side roads and the parking berms. Trustee Rockey thought Motor Fuel Tax money could be used to help pay for this work. Trustee Rockey he will work with Mike Harden to install a storm drain cap that needs to be replaced.

Water. Trustee Hettel reported Grand Rapids Enterprises finished a 4- inch main going out to the edge of the Village limits and put in a fire hydrant; Tim Gieger's residence was connected to the new main at Mr. Gieger's expense. A new home being built on Main Street will need to have a water meter hooked up but is not yet ready to do so. Valves have been replaced at the water treatment plant and Kyle Dumke is in the process of drying out one side and they will be cleaning out one side of the pits. Mike Harden noted samples have been taken. Trustee Hettel also reported an air conditioner has been installed in the treatment plant building and the bill has been received. Mr. Harden noted that refurbished meter heads should arrive soon.

Police. Chief Jabczynski reported Officer Berninger resigned last month. He conducting an interview with a candidate for the position and hopes to have a replacement by next month. He also reported the Police Department was awarded a taser grant through ILEAS in the amount of \$6,300 for two new tasers.

Park. Trustee Koetz discussed keeping the park bathrooms will be open until the end of the month, weather permitting. Mayor Hines discussed a fundraising sign that will be made for the park and noted that approximately \$5,000 has been raised so far. Mayor Hines also noted the hope is to hear back on the park grant application in February. Mike Harden expressed concerns over the cleanliness of the park bathrooms and stated he spent 5 hours cleaning even though there is a contract for cleaning and maintenance. It was noted the park bathrooms will be closed and winterized for the season after this weekend due to a pending park pavilion rental. There were 10 park rentals this year.

History. Trustee Hettel showed pictures of a veteran's monument that the committee would like to purchase for the Village and discussed continued fundraising events planned to raise money which include a pancake breakfast with baskets for a fundraiser on November 10th and a Christmas House Walk on December 7th. A location for the monument is currently being discussed with the Grand Ridge School Board.

Ad hoc Long-Range Planning. Mayor Hines plans to schedule a meeting for the Long Range Planning Committee before the end of the month to discuss options for locations for a sewer treatment plant.

Mayor's Report. Mayor Hines noted she paid a visit to Shug Grosenbach who retired at the end of September to express the Village's thanks for all of her help throughout her years with NCICG.

Correspondence and Announcements. A thank you card was received from Shug Grosenbach.

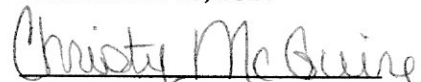
Candidate petitions can be filed November 12 through November 18.

Adjournment. Trustee Koetz made a motion to adjourn; second by Trustee Rockey. The motion carried on a voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Christy McGuire, Village Clerk

*Approved by the Board of Trustees
on November 19, 2024*


Christy McGuire, Village Clerk