

Grand Ridge Village Board
Minutes of the December 17, 2024, Regular Meeting of the Village Board

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Kay Hines at the Farm Ridge Township 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 and Police Chief Josh Jabczynski. A sign-in sheet was provided for all others present and a copy of the sign-in sheet is attached.

Mayor Hines read a letter from the North Central Illinois Council of Governments ("NCICG") to announce the Village has been awarded a grant in the amount of \$300,000 from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Open Space Land Acquisition and Development Program to upgrade the Village Park. She also noted the park would need to undergo an environmental check and the Village is required to the match funds as it is a 50/50 grant.

Minutes. Trustee Hettel made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2024 Board Meeting, November 6, 2024 Historical Committee Meeting, November 13, 2024 Historical committee Meeting and the December 3, 2024 Special Meeting of the Village Board; second by Trustee Hinterlong. Ayes: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report. Trustee Koetz 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. It was noted money was donated by Vogels for a bench and the bench will be placed in the Spring.

Payment of Bills. It was noted a payment to Lemrise Tile Repair in the amount of \$28,793.50 was left off the list of bills and should be added. Mayor Hines will instruct the Treasurer to pay the amount under capital improvement. Trustee Rockey made a motion to approve payment of the monthly bills; second by Trustee Hinterlong. Ayes: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Nays: None. Motion carried. It was noted that Jack Tidaback was hired by Lemrise Tile Repair to do landscaping and more work would be done in the Spring after settling occurs. Trusted Rockey was notified by two property owners who have already experienced an improvement in drainage.

Special Business:

- A. **Swearing in of new patrolman.** Police Chief Jabczynski introduced Officer Jordan Risley who was sworn in by the Village Clerk as a new Village Police Officer.
- B. **Update on OSF Ottawa Hospital by Dr. Manigold.** Mayor Hines introduced Dr. David Manigold who is on the Citizens for Healthcare in Ottawa Committee. The Committee wants OSF to revise its plans for the Ottawa hospital. He reported Ottawa blocked a building permit to delay OSF from moving forward with its plan. OSF his using its significant control and influence to push forward with its plans despite local objection. He noted Peru will become the new hub and will have more resources. He explained that Ottawa would be losing obstetrical care, will no longer have nighttime surgeries, beds will be upgraded from the 12 originally proposed to 20 beds, and there will 2 procedure rooms.

Public Comment.

1. Jim Hinterlong commented the Village has been blessed to have Trustee Rockey as the Chairman of the Streets and Alleys for many years, but expressed concern about Trustee Rockey's claims regarding

the conditions of Village streets and the potential impact of garbage trucks. Mr. Hinterlong commented it is essential that Village trustees consider all available information before making a decision on this issue when no credible proof or dollar amounts have been provided to support Trustee Rockey's previous statements. Mr. Hinterlong commented it is reasonable to question whether there are sufficient grounds to vote in favor of the proposed ordinance or contract award.

2. Mike Harden reported he has acquired 12 additional signatures to add to a petition opposing the use of a single waste hauler. He commented the signatures were never meant to be counted as households but as individual voters. He asked the board to consider the 111 signatures when making a decision on the proposed ordinance to have a single waste hauler for the Village and to let residents have a choice in who they select for garbage service.

Travel Request(s). None.

Old Business.

- A. **Discuss and Act on Purchase of Welcome to Grand Ridge Sign.** Trustee Rockey reported he is working with Midwest Sign Works and will need to submit a downpayment in the amount of \$2,000 which is half of the cost of the sign. The total cost, including installation, will be \$4,000. When the downpayment is made, Trustee Rockey and Midwest Sign Works will complete the design and colors so a final proof can be generated and sent to the Village Board for approval. The sign will then be installed as weather permits. He reported IDOT has given permission for the sign to be put on the public right of way and the paperwork needs to be completed.
- B. **Drainage in McBride Subdivision and Storm Water Drainage Water Line Connection Agreements.** Trustee Rockey had no further information to report. He will give an update in the Spring once landscaping has been completed. This item can be removed from the agenda.
- C. **Update on Vacant Homes on Poundstone Ave.** Trustee Hettel reported he met with the owner of 305 Poundstone to discuss safety issues and broken glass hanging from a window needing immediate repair. Ms. Churney suggested a notice to repair should be sent and followed with an ordinance violation ticket if the repair is not made. The owner advised he has a verbal agreement to sell the property. The owner of 225 Poundstone has contacted Mayor Hines and stated he has secured financing to begin work on the structure.
- D. **Ordinance Revising Village Code Chapter 53 concerning Garbage and Recycling** The Village Attorney answered questions and concerns about the proposed ordinance revising Chapter 53. Trustee Hinterlong made a motion to table this item and put the issue on the next available ballot in LaSalle County for the Village residents to vote on; second by Trustee Stricklin. Ayes: Stricklin and Hinterlong. Nays: Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Motion failed. Trustee Olney made a motion to approve the ordinance revising Village Code Chapter 53 concerning garbage and recycling; second by Trustee Rockey. Ayes: Olney, Rockey, Hettel. Nays: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Koetz. Mayor Hines voted to approve the ordinance. Motion carried.
- E. **Award C7ontract for Residential Garbage Service.** Trustee Rockey made a motion to approve the bid from Waste Management for single hauler residential garbage service; second by Trustee Hettel. Ayes: Olney, Rockey, Hettel. Nays: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Koetz. Mayor Hines voted to approve the bid from Waste Management. Motion carried.

New Business.

- A. **Donation to Grand Ridge PTO.** It was decided to postpone a decision on a donation to the PTO until the January meeting. Trustees would like to review a list of all donations made to the PTO for the past year.
- B. **Donation to NCAT.** Trustee Hinterlong made a motion to donate \$350 to NCAT; second by Trustee Koetz. Ayes: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Nays: None. Motion carried.
- C. **Purchase of Taser Equipment.** Chief Jabczynski presented a quote from Axon Enterprises. He noted in November of 2024 the Village received a grant of \$6,274.40 from ILEAS to purchase 2 tasers; the grant did not cover the warranty and additional equipment at a cost of \$6,274 spread out over a 4-year period. Chief Jabczynski requested the Village spend \$1,713.70 per year through 2029. Prices will go up on January 1st. Trustee Koetz made a motion to approve the payment of \$1,713.70 per year through 2029 for the purchase of the warranty and supporting hardware for the new tasers; second by Trustee Olney. Ayes: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Nays: None. Motion carried.
- D. **Purchase of an Updated Report Writing Program for the Police Department.** Chief Jabczynski presented an estimate from Brownlee Data Systems for a Village police report writing program. The Village's current software is from the 1990s and is no longer supported. The Village needs to go to a cloud-based program. The base package covers the office computer and both squad car computers. There would be a one-time charge of \$500 and then \$600 per year thereafter. Trustee Koetz made a motion to approve the cost of the new program; second by Trustee Hettel. Ayes: Stricklin, Hinterlong, Olney, Rockey, Koetz and Hettel. Nays: None. Motion carried.
- E. **Implementing the Quicket Solutions Program.** Chief Jabczynski explained the state shut down the LEADS program, leading the Village to purchase the REJIS system in September. LaSalle County has adopted a Quicket Solutions program and the County will pay for the first year. The Circuit Clerk has offered to buy the equipment such as digital printers and scanners for the squads. Quicket Solutions would offer digital ticket printing, digital report writing for traffic crash reports and our LEADS system all integrated and free for the first year. Future costs are uncertain because the county controls the license, but smaller communities may continue to benefit at little or no cost if larger communities stay involved. Chief Jabczynski noted this is not a binding contract and the Village could opt out at any time. Trustee Koetz made a motion to approve the Police Department's participation in the LaSalle County Quicket Solutions Program at no cost; second by Trustee Hinterlong. Motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Engineers Report. Jack Kucek gave an overview of a report on the Global Transition and Global Solutions Project to implement a cost-effective and sustainable wastewater management system for the Village. Treatment options evaluated included: (1) a setback system, (2) a covered Lagoon, and (3) an advanced filtration system. Among these, the covered lagoon was identified as the most cost-effective solution with minimal environmental impact, including odor control. The estimated capital cost for the project is 8 million dollars with potential funding from EPA loans with possible principal forgiveness and state/federal grants. A 1.5% interest loan rate offers favorable financing terms. Short-term and long-term asset management plans have been developed, ensuring funds are set aside to replace components like pumps and meters as they fail, enabling the system to remain self-sufficient.

Homeowners will incur costs for connecting to the mainline and decommissioning existing septic systems. Financial assistance may be available through USDA programs for those who qualify. Construction will affect both streets and properties, with plans for comprehensive street restoration post-project completion.

Community engagement efforts include providing education about the system and addressing concerns. The next steps will be finalizing funding applications, selecting a site for implementation and preparing for project construction. The loan application period is expected to open in January 2025.

It was noted the water treatment loan is almost paid off. An option agreement for the real estate purchase has been drafted.

Committee Report. No Finance Committee report.

Insurance. Trustee Stricklin noted that the village is saving money by paying the insurance ahead of time.

Streets and Alleys. Trustee Rockey thanked Mike Harden for putting the snow plow and salt spreader on.

Building Permits. Trustee Hettel received a request from the Grand Ridge Bank about installing new computer lines. He received a message from Stratus, which is the company who will perform the work asking if a permit was needed. He tried calling them back twice and has not received a call back. The Village Attorney raised concerns about the lines being in the Village's right-a-way and suggested the Village should improve its process for permitting and documenting such projects. It was noted the work involves running lines from the beauty shop to the bank, connecting a sidewalk box to another box on the bank's side, Ms. Churney suggested working with the Village Engineer to get more details and issue special permission for the project. She also noted that the Village should ensure that any disruption to the sidewalk is properly repaired.

Water. Trustee Hettel reported we had one of the pits pumped out. The waste was taken to Seneca to be dried out before taking it to the dump. Trustee Hettel will meet with Joe Glynn from TEST to discuss removing the lids from the pits to facilitate drying.

Police. A written report was provided.

Health/Storm Drains. Trustee Rockey reported Mike Harden installed the new storm drain on West Liberty Street.

Park. Trustee Rockey asked how soon the Village would be able to begin using grant money from the OSLAD grant. Mayor Hines explained the grant was awarded with the expectation the Village would match the funds. She added that specific details about the grant still need to be clarified. Trustee Rockey suggested that starting work, like breaking ground, might motivate people to contribute and support the project as this is an opportunity to develop the park for long-term use. He also expressed interest in speaking to a representative from Marseilles as to the processes it followed in connection with its park grant. Mayor Hines recommended calling a meeting of the Park Committee after the holidays to discuss the plans further.

Trustee Hinterlong reported the school board is considering putting in a walking path and expressed interest in having the path open. It was noted that security concerns would need to be addressed, especially during school hours.

History. Trustee Hettel reported the Historical Committee had a productive year, successfully hosting fundraising events like the pancake breakfast and Christmas Walk. He noted these events not only raised significant funds for the Veteran's Memorial, but also had a positive effect on the community. The committee will discuss sending out a fundraiser letter during its January meeting. Committee members attended the Grand Ridge Grade School December Board Meeting and a vote scheduled for next month will determine if the memorial can be placed on school grounds at the corner of Main Street and Route 23.

Ad hoc Long-Range Planning. No report.

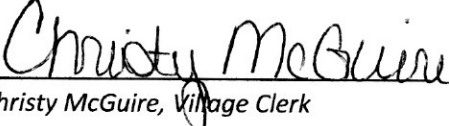
Attorney's Report. Attorney Churney discussed an IML worksheet on building codes which explained that municipalities without building codes are not required to adopt them for commercial construction. However, a certified inspector must confirm compliance with the codes for commercial projects, For residential construction, the builder and buyer can choose which code to follow. Ms. Churney plans to provide an information sheet with this guidance for when someone applies for a building permit.

Mayor's Report. Mayor Hines reported she received a thank you card from the Fire Department and the school for recent donations by the Village.

Correspondence. None.

Adjournment. Trustee Koetz made a motion to adjourn; second by Trustee Rockey. The motion carried on a voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Christy McGuire, Village Clerk

*Approved by the Board of Trustees on
January 21, 2025*


Christy McGuire, Village Clerk

