

7:30 p.m. The regular meeting of the Village Board of Trustees was called to order by Mayor Behnken. A roll call was answered aye by Trustees Wilson, Geppert, Feder, Newbold, and Politsch. Trustee Hamon was absent. Also present were Leo Simburger, Chief of Police, Sandy Stolte, Treasurer and Chris Remick, Superintendent of Public Works.

**VISITORS**

The Girl Scouts were present to discuss working on their Silver Badge. Madelyn Sinn, Sarah Fisher, and Kenadie Buehler, along with their Troop Leaders Diane Sinn and Rachel Buehler, discussed their plans to “Prep the Park” April 30 at 9am. They plan to clean the equipment, concession stand, and park grounds. The troop will use social media, posters and word of mouth to get the community involved.

Resident Jeff Tucker was present to discuss his property taxes increasing on two lots in the industrial park. Trustee Feder and Superintendent Remick will assist Mr. Tucker in checking the pins on the property.

Erica Pyle of the New Athens Library was present to request a street closure for the Summer Reading Program Kickoff Party June 10, 2022. Chester Street between Van Buren and the alley will need to be closed from 5pm-8pm. Superintendent Remick and Clerk Benwell will set up the barricades.

Officer Jake Renner and his parents, Kathy and Daniel Renner were present for Jake to receive a Letter of Valor from Chief Simburger.

**READING OF THE JOURNAL (MINUTES)**

The minutes from the previous board meeting had been distributed prior to the meeting for approval.

A motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Geppert, to approve the board minutes. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

**REPORTS AND COMMUNICATION**

**MAYOR**

The Mayor presented the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year Budget. Due to inflationary measures, Mayor Behnken anticipates an increase in taxable income. The state of Illinois is looking at increasing the total income tax rate to 8% for the local governmental distributive fund. The increase in fuel prices may also lead to increased tax revenue. The final draft of the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget will be available by the last meeting in May. The board will vote on appropriations from the final draft.

Resolution No. 2021-13: Use of Online Marketing Place was presented. All suitable surplus assets will be listed on govdeals.com to be sold to the highest bidder. A motion was made by Trustee Politsch, seconded by Trustee Newbold authorizing the use of the online marketing place. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

**VILLAGE CLERK**

Village Clerk Benwell reported that the data migration is nearly complete from the old village website to the new site.

**TREASURER'S TIME**

Year to date there is a surplus of \$159,323.00. March and April may see losses, not holding until the end of the fiscal year. The ARPA Grant of \$128,000.00 contributed to the surplus. The second phase of the ARPA grant is anticipated in September. The Marina settlement of \$56,000.00 also added to the surplus. We have increased our operating margins by reviewing our fees and bringing them up to date. The Mayor is in the process of updating the long term budget through 2033. Trustee Newbold inquired when we would know of any increase in property taxes, as residents recently received their cards in the mail from the county. Mayor Behnken stated that the tax levy is a number that we come up with and we tell the county how much money we want. They take that and divide it by the equalized assessed value. The lower the equalized assessed value, the higher the rate. The only thing that affects the levy is our numbers that the village proposes. Trustee Newbold made a motion, seconded by Trustee Politsch to approve the Treasurer's report. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

**POLICE CHIEF**

Chief Simburger indicated that Lenzburg has agreed to the conditions in the contract he sent. Lenzburg will pay \$55,000.00 annually for police protection and sell two cars to us for \$1.00 each. If at the end of the contract they do not continue, we will sell the cars back for \$1.00 each. Chief Simburger reported that our liability insurance will increase by \$5500.00 annually and suggested annual contract increases to absorb the cost. Clerk Benwell will arrange an in person meeting with Chris Korte from RMA to discuss.

A Letter of Valor was presented to Officer Jake Renner for his brave actions at Dollar General March 02, 2022 apprehending a suspect.

Chief Simburger reported that the owner of the remaining boat from the marina received both the rental contract and first rent invoice and will be returning the signed copy along with payment shortly.

**SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS**

Superintendent Remick reported that there have been no updates from Visu Sewer on the lining. Cardinal pump has experienced a delay in procuring parts for the seal repair. The payment from the sale of the Kubota mower was sent out by govdeals.com and anticipated to arrive in three to four weeks. Steve Galle will be submitting a bid for replacing a section of sewer pipe based on footage next week. Superintendent Remick has requested a bid from Moore Asphalt for sealing Hidden Lakes subdivision. He will inquire about the cost to seal the Village Hall lot. Mayor Behnken stated that he appreciated the prompt communication and swift action from both Superintendent

Remick and Gary Idecker during the recent water leak. Trustee Politsch requested the park bathrooms be opened now, rather than April 1. The Public Property and Parks Committee will meet to discuss.

**AMBULANCE SERVICE DIRECTOR**

Director Green was not present. Mayor Behnken reported that for the long-term ambulance budget, he assumed an 80% manning rate. We will consider proposing a \$139,000.00 subsidy from the New Athens Fire District in January 2023. They have \$113,000.00 in reserves.

Trustee Geppert reported that we had four calls in one day and the ambulance service was able to make it to all of them.

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

**STREETS AND ALLEYS**

Trustee Politsch reported that the grant application had been successfully submitted. She attempted to contact Representative Friess. Trustee Politsch spoke with Kathy who advised her that there is a portal that may be beneficial for grant application status information. The ARPA grant report is due by April 22. There has been no activity on Spotsylvania Street; applications are being reviewed.

**FINANCE AND AUDIT**

Nothing to report.

**WATER AND SEWER**

Mayor Behnken is working on forecasting the Village's cash position annually. From that figure, he would like to determine how much we can use to improve infrastructure. Mayor Behnken will calculate the budget and Trustee Feder and Superintendent Remick will plan projects from there.

**PERSONNEL, PUBLIC SAFETY/ADA**

A meeting was scheduled for March 22, 2022 to discuss police and Fiscal Year 2023.

**PUBLIC PROPERTY AND PARKS**

Nothing to report.

**CEMETERY**

Nothing to report.

**IMPROVEMENTS AND GRANTS**

ARPA funds may be an option for the campground electric. Trustee Politsch is applying for Tree City USA designation. The trees would be planted on Arbor Day, April 29, 2022.

**ORDINANCES**

Trustee Politsch is scheduling a committee meeting to discuss moving forward with Municode or American Legal Publishing as a source of online ordinance publishing.

**REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

Nothing to report.

**COMMUNICATIONS, PETITIONS, RESOLUTIONS, ORDERS AND ORDINANCES**

Nothing to report.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Public Property**

Marina

Chief Leo sent the contract to the boat owner as well as an invoice for the first month's rent at the Marina. Renovation continues on electrical outlets and structure.

**Streets & Alleys**

Sewer Cleanout Project- Eight blocks completed as of 10/04/21. Eighteen blocks completed as of 11/01/21. Twenty-three blocks completed as of 01/03/2022. Twenty-four blocks completed as of 02/07/22. Twenty-six blocks completed as of 03/21/2022.

Quote on water line collapse 108 North Market. \$65k estimate- not covered by insurance. John Feder will research repairing the line in-house using a remote model car. Springfield Plastics came, will be getting a price back to John.

**Business Development**

The Village has not heard back from Billy Cumberland or the person interested in opening an RV Repair Shop.

**Other**

The Village of New Athens vs. Napier Citizens Bank

The ninety-day period for the Napier buyer has commenced to secure financing. Should the ninety-day period expire, the Village will move forward with demolition action.

**IMRF**

IMRF is unable to give two year estimates for service credit buy up without a resolution.

**Solar Solutions**

Steve Newbold is working with Solar Solutions on proposal for solar for sewer plant.

**Energy Audit**

Amy Benwell is working with Ameren and the University of Illinois to obtain an energy survey for grant endeavors relating to energy efficiency.

**MARCH 21, 2022**

**VILLAGE OF NEW ATHENS**

**Motion to Adjourn**

There being no further business, a motion was made by Trustee Newbold, seconded by Trustee Wilson, to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 p.m. A vote was answered aye by all members present.

Amy Benwell, Village Clerk  
Joe Behnken, Village President