Village of New Athens

Committee of the Whole Meeting

06/23/2025

6:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Arlene Geppert. Those in attendance were Gary Kearns, John Feder, Richard Fitzgerald, Rich Stoops, Steve Newbold, and Ryan Heinecke. Chris Remick, Superintendent of Public Works and Nancy Ritter, Village Clerk were also in attendance.

**Visitors**

Edwin Cockrell, Jr., Scott Harriss, Stan Ruhmann and Doug Kinzinger

**Streets and Alleys** – Nothing to discuss.

**Finance and Audit** – Mayor Newbold mentioned to the Board that he and the Treasurer have discussed closing the accounts with Fidelity and moving them to a local bank. He has spoken with both banks in town to get some numbers. This was a recommendation from Scheffel Boyle. Newbold stated that he and the Treasurer will bring this back to the Board soon.

**Water and Sewer** – Members of the New Athens Fire Protection District were present to discuss helping the Village with the cost of replacing and/or repairing fire hydrants. Doug Kinzinger stated that Freeburg and American Water both have agreements with local fire departments to help with this.

Scott Harriss said we have 117 hydrants in town and some of them do not work. It was mentioned that they went to use a fire hydrant that was not even turned on.

Kinzinger will put together a proposal and discuss it with the Board again when complete.

**Personnel** – Trustee Fitzgerald reminded the Board that elected and public officials should not be making comments on social media that could open the Village up for litigation.

There was a discussion regarding a Facebook post that mentioned a creek with tall grass. Trustee Feder responded to the post.

**Public Property and Parks** – Edwin Cockrell, Jr. went over the list of activities he would like to bring to the city park this fall. He wants to do movie nights with food trucks. He has a proposed budget of $6,500. He would like to get sponsors to help pay for these events. The proposed dates are four Fridays in October.

The Clerk mentioned that the Homecoming Committee has asked for a parade donation of $500 for the Bicycle Brigade. She advised them that the Board will have to vote on that at the next board meeting since it was not on the previous agenda.

The Clerk asked if the wall at the front counter in the village hall could be removed. She said they cannot see customers when they enter the building due to the blind spot. It was advised to have the public works department do the removal.

**Cemetery** – Nothing to discuss.

**Ordinance – Manufactured Homes –** Trustee Fitzgerald made some changes to the ordinance regarding manufactured homes. He said he removed the references and made it permittable in all zoning codes. Mayor Newbold suggested the proposed changes be sent to the attorney for review.

**Improvement and Grants** – Nothing to discuss.

**Public Safety** – Mayor Newbold had a meeting with Chuck Kelly from MedStar. He was interested in purchasing both of our ambulances. Scheffel Boyle advised him to put the units up for public bid. The Clerk stated that we currently have a lease with MedStar for both of those units and the lease agreement states that they have the first right to refuse the purchase if the Village would want to sell them.

**Marina** – Nothing to discuss.

**Other Business** – The Clerk stated that our liability insurance, Risk Management Association, is making it mandatory for all their insured to create a ‘Return to Work Policy’ regarding worker’s comp claims. Nancy said she does not fully understand what we are supposed to do with it because they want a physician’s name attached to it. She said she created a policy, per the sample policy given, and left that item blank. It will be put on the agenda for the next board meeting for approval.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

 Arlene Geppert

 Vice President

 Nancy Ritter

 Village Clerk