

**APPROVED MARCH 18 MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
March 18, 2024**

VILLAGE OF LYONS
212 Water St
PO Box 175
Lyons, MI 48851

The meeting was called to order by President Charles at 6:00pm
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Formation of the roll was taken, and a quorum was declared:

Roll Call:

Fred Charles-P, Joe Farrington-P, Jon Houserman-P, Patty Priest-P, Erin Randall-P,
Bernard Russell-P, Jennifer Spearling-P

Staff Attending: Lyndon Randall-P, Laura Schoenmehl-P, Jennifer Sims-P

A quorum was declared.

Approval of Agenda: A motion was offered by Trustee Houserman, seconded by Trustee Priest to approve the agenda. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

President's Report:

Village Office Supervisor: Trustee Houserman noted that Kenton Eavey was previously Village Office Supervisor, but is no longer a Trustee. Recommendation made to appoint a Village Office Supervisor. Trustee Farrington made a motion to appoint Jennifer Spearling as Village Office Supervisor, seconded by Trustee Russell. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

DPW Supervision: Trustee Houserman said there should be a chain of command, with DPW Superintendent in charge of two DPW workers, and a Council Member supervising the DPW Superintendent to deal with staff issues and oversee DPW department. Trustee Russell made a motion to appoint Trustee Joe Farrington for DPW Supervisor, seconded by Trustee Spearling. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Public Comment: Gabrielle Charles asked when water/sewer bills will be sent out. Trustee Houserman said the CPA and new Treasurer are cleaning up postings not entered in the system correctly for a couple weeks, so late charges will be waived in March to compensate for delayed billing. Badger coming Monday to assist with clearing up mismatched records and getting things ready for bills to be mailed Monday, 3/25/24.

Sherrie Mason mentioned Granger told her they would pick up 1 cart plus 2 bags, but are not picking things up as they said. It was recommended she call Granger prior to large item pick-up. Sherrie asked if Village will call Granger. Trustee Houserman said Treasurer Jennifer Sims can call Granger and find out for Sherrie what their policy is and report back to Sherrie Mason.

Notice of Public Hearing for Intent to Vacate – Higbee Street has been tabled per Trustee Spearling to obtain more information.

Approval of Previous Month's Regular Meeting Minutes February 19, 2024: Trustee Houserman made a motion to approve the previous month's minutes, seconded by Trustee Priest. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

Approval of Special FY Budget Meeting Minutes February 26, 2024: Budget meeting for new FY2024/2025. Trustee Houserman made a motion to approve the special meeting minutes, seconded by Trustee Farrington. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

Approval of Special Personnel Meeting Minutes March 8, 2024: Trustee Farrington made a motion to approve the special meeting minutes, seconded by Trustee Spearling. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

Approval of Special Personnel Meeting Minutes March 14, 2024: New Treasurer approved. Trustee Houserman made a motion to approve the special meeting minutes, seconded by Trustee Russell. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

- **Committee Chairs/Members:** Trustee Farrington mentioned it was discussed at meeting to reassign Committee Chairs because of new members and new employees. Trustee Farrington said he is Streets, Water/Sewer & Fire Committee Chair, with Trustees Houserman and Spearling as members.
Finance/Grants Committee Chair is Trustee Randall, with Trustees Houserman and Spearling as members.
Ordinance Committee Chair is Trustee Priest, with Trustees Farrington and Randall as members.
Parks & Recreation Committee Chair is Trustee Russell, with Trustees Priest and Randall as members.
Personnel Chair and Office Supervisor is Trustee Spearling, with Trustees Farrington and Russell as members.
Trustee Houserman recommended appointment of new employees that filled vacancies: Laura Schoenmehl-Clerk, Jennifer Sims-Treasurer and Lyndon Randall-DPW Superintendent reappointed for new Fiscal Year. Trustee Farrington offered a motion to approve, seconded by Trustee Russell. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

Employee Leave Review: An employee vacation and pay rate audit has been conducted for the last 15 months by Trustee Houserman, with assistance from CPA Neil Hammerbacher. Trustee Houserman recapped 3 types of leave according to Personnel Policy: Personal leave of 16 hours per year at hire for full and part time employees. New full time employees receive 40 hours vacation in the first year, 80 hours in the 2nd year and it goes up in increments. Part time employee vacation leave is to be pro-rated; half time employee gets half of benefits of a full time employee for vacation leave, accrued every pay period bi-weekly. Only full time employees get 48 hours of sick leave per year, prorated bi-weekly. There were clerical errors found in past employee records due to policy not applied properly from person previously responsible for payroll. CPA, Neil Hammerbacher will assist with next payroll entry, 3/25/24 to ensure benefits entered correctly for start of FY 2024-2025 for full and new part time employees. Trustee Houserman noted that new DPW employee hired December 11th may need benefits to

be updated in the system. Trustee Farrington made a motion to qualify Kevin Neville as permanent part time, seconded by Trustee Priest. Houserman made a motion to approve 16(x2) personal leave for Laura Schoenmehl, Clerk for FY-2024/25, seconded by Trustee Farrington. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

Trustee Houserman clarified that Clerk and Treasurer will receive .8 hours of vacation leave per pay period. Treasurer started after March 1, so will receive 16 hours of personal leave for FY-2024/25 and Clerk will receive 16 hours personal leave for FY ending 2/29/24 since she began employment 2/23/24, in addition to 16 hours for FY ending 2/28/25. No sick leave will be provided for part time Clerk and Treasurer. Trustee

Approval of Current Month's Account Payable

Neil Hammerbacher, CPA assisting clerk, formatted Accounts Payable Check Register a little different, but set out clear for the period February 15 through March 15, 2024. Trustee Houserman made a motion to approve, seconded by Trustee Farrington. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

Approval of Treasurer's Report

Feb. 29, 2024 Preliminary Balance Sheet. More transactions being processed for FY. Revenue and Expenditure Report – all amounts entered correctly to balance after new entries. This is preliminary, as with Balance Sheet. Trustee Houserman made a motion to approve, seconded by Trustee Randall. Motion carried by voice vote, as presented. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

DPW Report – Finally able to get to the water line on the end of Higbee after 2 years. It was turned off. They obtained the shut-off fee and it was turned backed on. When they went to turn water back on for new customer, the shelf was broken. They had to redo the line. They redid a couple of shelf boxes that needed repair. In addition, DPW's picking up leaves and brush, work on comfort station and working on equipment.

Charles Babcock, Lyons Township Supervisor asked if DPW Superintendent Randall talked to Council about Tornado siren for the people of Lyons. DPW Superintendent Randall said they're meeting with another electrician for a bid next week, and they're waiting on pager setup from Crouches. DPW Superintendent Randall mentioned if the Township was going to pay for the electrical installation, but electric bids came back more than original bid because of need to rent a high rise. DPW Superintendent Randall thinks possible cost of \$35,000, so Lyons Township has now asked for cost to be split between the between the Village and Lyons Township. Charles Babcock said he really wanted to see this happen for the people of Lyons, since Muir is already on board with it. DPW Superintendent Randall said Muir has theirs wired up by electrician, so they're just waiting for pager to activate. Trustee Houserman asked for clarification of the total cost for the Village. DPW Superintendent Randall will look into costs further and report back with more solid cost.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Streets, Water/Sewer & Fire Committee: Trustee Houserman reporting since he received emails from John Moxey. In last couple weeks Grant Request for Payment submitted to MDOT, along with \$400,000 Bond documentation that John Moxey was able to reduce to 2.0% interest for 20 years. It was great that bids came in so low that the Village doesn't need to finance it; could have been \$400,000. MDOT confirmed they received documentation. John Moxey attempting to schedule preconstruction meeting around May, and beginning of Tabor Street Project scheduled for July 29th. Construction Contract with C&L has been signed, and all paperwork is in order to begin project. Other local street work, in addition to Tabor St. is Fuller Street drains and resurfacing on last block of Burgess on west side. If we have additional funding at year end closing, the Council can look into what else might be done.

Chairperson Spearling reported EGLE is coming to do contamination study at the Chrysler plant, taking soil and groundwater samples to see if any clean up needed. The consent form with EGLE has been completed, but there's no actual date set as yet for the study. Comment made that this is phase 3 of two previous studies. Trustee Houserman mentioned no major contamination found by County study 20+ years ago and so far no cost for studies. Funding will have to be discussed if costs incurred for cleanup.

Trustee Spearling reported Village Clean Up Day has been scheduled on Saturday, April 13th from 7:00am to 11:00am at the Fish Ladder, as usual. Trustee Priest asked if the DPW employees get overtime. Trustee Houserman said to just follow Personnel Policy.

Finance & Grants Committee: Chairperson Randall said we received a claim for unemployment insurance from a former employee, but it was denied. Trustee Houserman said the denial was due to the employee voluntarily resigning. Trustee Houserman mentioned there are two types of employers: Contributing employers pay 2.7% of wages up to \$9,500 for the employee for Unemployment Insurance (UIA) coverage. Previously we have been a Reimbursing employer, which means we have been uninsured. No claims have been made so far since 2010, but if the former employee had succeeded in the claim, it would have cost the Village \$362.00/week for 20 weeks or \$7,240.00. The insurance is \$256.00 per employee for employees. The CPA, Neil Hammerbacher said most government offices have the insurance. The CPA suggested we bring it up to the Council for discussion. Trustee Houserman made a motion to begin UIA Contributing, seconded by Trustee Farrington. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

MRWA Rate Study: Chairperson Randall said we received email that Mike at Rural Water forwarded on the request to see when there would be time for a rate study to be done. They're at conference, so we won't hear back from them until the following week or the week after. Trustee Priest asked what our cost is compared to Muir. Trustee Houserman replied that Muir is 25-30% higher currently than the Village, in addition to Muir's millage being higher at 15 mils compared to the Village at 11.5 mils. Charles Babcock, Lyons Twp Supervisor commented that Village should raise the Village rates to maintain streets in order to bring new residents in.

Masonic Lodge Building Roof: Trustee Farrington reported that after February meeting with Cherpes, Triton came in with the best bid for Masonic Lodge roof. Trustee Farrington contacted a few businesses in Ionia and they said Triton is highly recommended. Cost split is 1/3 Cherpes and 2/3 cost to Village currently.

Trustee Houserman said it was mentioned to have the Historical Society chip in. They weren't thrilled about the idea, saying they're not responsible for infrastructure, but since it's a Lyons/Muir Museum, Muir should contribute to the museum part. Trustee Houserman stated that since the upstairs just sits there, would it be possible to give Cherpes a nominal, very reasonable rate for a 17 year lease to coincide with the Historical Society lease, to possibly renovate into rental apartment to get back on tax rolls. Trustee Houserman said it may be a deal to consider before the Village goes forward with funding. Trustee Houserman said the Village should also ask the Township if they will chip in to the cost. Trustee Houserman said quote for \$46,650 was reasonable since our part would be only about \$30,000. Trustee Houserman mentioned that he and President Charles need to abstain from the vote since they are members of the Historical Society. In response to apartment development, Trustee Farrington said it might be beneficial to mention it to Cherpes, but not stipulation to roof renovation. Trustee Farrington made a motion to allow for funding of the Masonic Building roof, of which our part would be two thirds, and also solicit additional funds from Village of Muir for shared Historical Society Museum and from the Township as well to chip in, seconded by Trustee Spearling.

A roll call vote was taken;
President Charles-abstain
Trustee Farrington-yea
Trustee Houserman-abstain
Trustee Priest-yea
Trustee Randall-yea
Trustee Russell-yea
Trustee Spearling-yea

Motion carried with 5 yea's.

Fixed Assets Accounting: Trustee Houserman stated that we currently pay for the Fixed Assets Module in the BS&A software. In speaking with the CPA firm, they said Fixed Assets module in BS&A is complicated for staff and has caused audit problems. We currently pay \$324/year for the BS&A module. Gabridge & Company made a proposal to provide Fixed Assets accounting as part of their annual audit for the Village at a cost of \$200/year, with a savings of \$124.00 per year. Trustee Houserman made a motion to switch from BS&A to Gabridge & Company CPA firm for Fixed Assets accounting, seconded by Trustee Farrington. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

Legal Services Representation: Trustee Priest mentioned that the new legal representative, Attorney Cherry from Miller Johnson chose not to come at this time. Trustee Priest said he prefers a private meeting rather than the Council meeting. Trustee Houserman said we should

have access to legal counsel and invite Mr. Cherry to a private meeting with the Finance Committee, as counsel requested.

Kenton Eavey commented it would be good to change the lock on the bathhouse. Camera surveillance system discussed with Kenton Eavey. He said all the information for the cameras should be in the file.

FY 2024-2025 Employee Compensation/ Wages & Work Schedules: Trustee Houserman introduced the updated Wages and Work Schedules for Village employees. There's no changes in pay rates. Only change is that DPW employees are working a flex schedule on Friday, and DPW employee, Kevin Neville made permanent part time employee. Trustee Houserman made a motion to approve the Employee Compensation Plan, Wages & Work Schedules, seconded by Trustee Farrington. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

Ordinance Committee: Chairperson Farrington said nothing to report.

Personnel Committee: Chairperson Priest introduced new Clerk and Treasurer.

Parks & Recreation Committee: Chairperson Russell said nothing new to report. Charles Babcock, Lyons Twp Supervisor asked Superintendent Randall how the Kayak Launch is doing. Superintendent Randall said they need to find a better spot for anchor point.

DDA: Chairperson Farrington said they have a meeting next Monday. Trustee Priest said she has a doctor's appointment. Charles Babcock asked how much the DDA takes in a year. Trustee Houserman said The DDA takes in about \$3,800 a year.

Events Committee: Chairperson Priest said Island Fest has been scheduled. The Easter Bunny will be onsite Saturday before Easter, with cakes and candy.

Trustee Houserman has recap of budget for the Events fund this year: Beginning balance for Events in March 2023 was just over \$2,000. Revenues taken in were \$951.00. But there was \$2,324 spent, so savings went down by \$1,400. Unless \$3,000 raised in donations, the \$2,700 budgeted can't be spent, so taxpayers aren't paying for bands and other events. Trustee Priest said they can't get donations. Trustee Houserman said it's okay to receive donations as long as not deducted on their taxes. Trustee Priest will need to let donors know donations are not tax deductible, and donations need to be increased in order to access \$2,700 budgeted for this Fiscal Year.

Council Comments: Trustee Houserman said the Village website is not maintained adequately at all. There's only one set of minutes posted from November 2023 last year. New staff changes and other pertinent information needs to be updated.

Unfinished Business: None.

Correspondence

Max Darling Letter: Trustee Spearling referred to Max's letter in Council packet. Max made comment as to his availability and desire to help out on Tabor Street project and new staff in any way. He would report to Trustee Farrington. Trustee Houserman made a motion to bring Max on a Personal Service Contract for \$1.00 a month (to be followed up with attorney consult) to assist with DPW, Tabor St. Project and other business as needed, seconded by Trustee Farrington. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

Vrjure IT Solutions: Vrjure contacted us for IT support. Trustee Spearling mentioned that we have received good service from our current IT support company.

Realtor request to divide property into 16 lots: Trustee Spearling introduced Realtor who was interested in information to split client's property into lots. Charles said to refer realtor to Ted Droste at Lyons Township for response to questions.

Spring Newsletter: Trustee Houserman mentioned importance of listing Village business, such as water test results, need to mow the lawn, etc for residents of Lyons.

Comfort Station: Trustee Spearling mentioned that the Comfort Station is in need of revitalization. She reached out to the local Eagle Scout Troop leader to take it on as a project this year. They were having a meeting tonight, and will need to be approved by the scouts themselves. Part of Scout's service is to seek their own funding to help in their projects. They need to know what all needs to be done. They can source out the work that is beyond their ability to do. Trustee Houserman mentioned the DDA has some funds to help out with restoration. Superintendent Randall said the roof is the biggest upgrade and will need to be powerwashed before painting.

Village Wide Garage Sale/DPW Items: Trustee Spearling said lots of items at DPW garage that are no longer in use, but can still have value to public. There are community wide garage sales at the end of April, and it was thought to use the money raised from garage sale to go back into General Fund. Trustee Farrington said there are about 6 or 7 new wheelbarrels. Superintendent Randall said they were purchased for the Events committee. Trustee Farrington said there are other items lying around that might be sold. Superintendent Randall said there are Christmas items as well. Trustee Farrington made a motion to allow for excessive DPW items to be offered at community wide garage sale, seconded by Trustee Spearling. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

New Business: None.

Adjournment: There being no further business, a motion was offered by Trustee Russell, seconded by Trustee Spearling to adjourn the meeting at 8:00p.m. **Motion was carried by voice vote.**

Respectfully submitted by Laura Schoenmehl, Village Clerk