

APPROVED REGULAR VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

July 15, 2024

VILLAGE OF LYONS

212 Water St

PO Box 175

Lyons, MI 48851

The meeting was called to order by President Joe Farrington at 6:00 p.m.
The Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America flag was recited.

Formulation of the roll was taken and a quorum declared as follows:

Village Council Roll Call:

Joe Farrington – P Jennifer Spearling – P Jon Houserman – P Max Darling – P
Erin Randall – P Erin Randall – P Rich Spaans - P

Staff:

Laura Schoenmehl – P Jennifer Sims – P Lyndon Randall – AB

Approval of Agenda: A motion was made by Trustee Randall, seconded by Trustee Russell to approve the agenda as written. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

President’s Report: President Farrington reported on Eagle Scouts projects started on the Comfort Station painting and DeVore Island Park playground equipment renovation. It was also noted that an initial estimate, between \$4,000-5,000, had been received from RedBeard PC Repair (computer services) for hardware/software needs to re-establish certain Village surveillance cameras, to help monitor and address recent vandalism including at DeVore Island Park.

Public Comments:

Two residents shared comments and some questions regarding the Village’s financial operations. Another resident had some questions, but all were applicable to Lyons Township or the Village of Muir and he was referred to those local governmental units.

Public Hearing for Update of Village Water and Sewer Rates:

President Farrington called the Public Hearing to order at 6:15 p.m., noting that the purpose was to report results of a recent water/sewer rates study and consider action on a Village of Lyons Resolution No. 2024-03 for adopting changes to the Village’s current water/sewer rates structure. He then turned the hearing over to Trustee Houserman for presentation, who noted the last rates study was done April 2022, followed by nearly 2 ½ years of high inflation and loss of some system user billable units. The Village had obtained the professional assistance of the Michigan Rural Water Association (MRWA) to re-evaluate its water/sewer rates structure to assure that those municipal systems are maintained financially viable for current and future generations of the Village residents. Copies of the MRWA rates study results were provided, indicating the need to increase the Village’s monthly water/sewer rates as listed on the proposed Resolution No. 2024-03. The combined monthly water/sewer ready-to-serve rate would increase from \$55.00 to \$62.50, by roughly 13% of which about 5% was attributable to fewer user billable units and about 8% attributable to inflationary factors. Other monthly usage fees were similarly affected. It was noted by the MRWA representative that, with these rate adjustments, the Village’s water/sewer rates would still be at or below average of similarly-sized Michigan municipalities and that the Village’s fund reserves would continue to be sound. After hearing and responding to all resident comments and questions, President Farrington closed the Public Hearing. Thereupon, Trustee Houserman made a motion to approve Village of Lyons Resolution No. 2024-03, seconded by Trustee Darling, with an effective date of 8/13/24 (September 2024 water/sewer bills due 10/5/24).

Roll Call Vote:

Trustee Spaans – Table (No Second) Trustee Houserman – Yes
Trusting Darling – Yes President Pro Tem Spearling – Yes
Trustee Russell – Yes President Farrington – No
Trustee Randall – Yes

Motion approved with majority vote, as presented.

Approval of Previous Month's Regular Meeting Minutes – June 17, 2024: Trustee Spearling offered a motion to approve the previous month's minutes, supported by Trustee Russell. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

Approval of Current Month's Accounts Payable – June 16 through July 15, 2024: Motion made by Trustee Houserman, seconded by President Pro Tem Spearling to approve the Accounts Payable/Check Register totaling \$25,775.33. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

Approval of Treasurer's Report – June 30, 2024 Revenue & Expenditure Report and Balance Sheet: Trustee Houserman reviewed those financial documents, noting some adjustments that had been made and providing supplemental information related to some of the earlier Public Comments. In addition, it was noted that the Village's FY 23-24 audit was currently underway by Gabridge & Company (CPA firm), with the audit report to be completed by or before August 31, 2024. Trustee Houserman made a motion to approve the June 30, 2024 Revenue & Expenditure Report and Balance Sheet, seconded by Trustee Randall. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**

DPW Report: Trustee Darling said that new water meter installations are progressing, as training and meter acquisitions are occurring. New DPW Part-Time Worker training is ongoing.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Streets/Water/Sewer & Fire

- Fleis&Vandenbrink (engineering firm) proposal to do annual Bridge Inspection at a cost of \$900. Trustee Darling made a motion to approve Bridge Inspection contract, supported by Trustee Houserman. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**
- Trustee Darling reported some new water meters have been ordered, with 36 delivered/available and 177 more new meters needed at total cost of \$75,136.90. Trustee Houserman pointed out that this cost for the added meters was already accounted for from fund reserves and did not affect new water/sewer rates. Trustee Darling made a motion to approve purchase cost of the additional new water meters, supported by Trustee Houserman. **Motion passed by unanimous vote approval.**
- Trustee Darling said that some smaller trees (3) and brush need to be removed near the Comfort Station. Received quote from White Tree Service for this work for a cost of \$2,600. Trustee Darling made a motion for approval, supported by President Pro Tem Spearling. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**
- Trustee Darling also noted a very large old maple tree along Water Street (in the Village's jurisdiction) has a hollow trunk (dying) and needs to be removed as a safety precaution. White Tree Service provided a quote for \$3,850 to do this work. Trustee Darling made a motion to approve, supported by President Pro Tem Spearling. **Motion carried by voice vote, as proposed.**
- Working with Ionia County to get the big brush trimmer for clean-up along two streets.
- Upcoming pre-construction meeting for Tabor Street Project on July 23 at 2:00pm at Village Office. Speed tables and radar to be discussed also at the pre-construction meeting. Noted that project would commence on schedule starting the week of July 29th and discussed details of the project.

Finance & Grants Committee

- Nothing to report outside of Tabor Street Project already discussed.

Ordinance Committee

- Trustee Spaans said we need a new sign by the old Tower house, "No Camping Overnight."

Personnel Committee

- The Village has decided not to become contributing employer for State Unemployment Insurance since lay-offs rare for most employers, as well as the Village in the past.
- New job descriptions for Clerk and Treasurer were presented, which meet all legal requirements under Michigan law and current operational needs. Trustee Houserman made a motion to approve these revised Job Descriptions, supported by President Pro Tem Spearling. **Motion carried by voice vote, as presented.**
- Village was contacted by Michigan Works regarding their summer youth work program. We have a young man joining us for 6-8 weeks to help out with the DPW crew at no cost to the Village and fully insured.

Parks & Recreation Committee

- DPW crew installed boulders at berm successfully. When water recedes, kayak launch will be installed.
- Two sturdier gates to be installed at front of Devore Island Park with locks to deter vandalism.

DDA Committee

- Meeting next Monday (July 22) at 6:30pm, with hopefully enough committee members for a quorum.

Events Committee

- Chairperson Sherrie Mason said Island Fest just weeks away, with \$3,000 raised so far in donations since April, and some last minute sponsorships still coming in.
- She has street closure information and a few items DPW needs to address, such as poison ivy at Comfort Station and bees.
- President Pro Tem Spearling said three (3) portable restrooms ordered from Kerkstra and scheduled to be in place for \$145.00 each, total \$435.00. President Pro Tem Spearling made a motion to pay for portables from Parks and Recreation funds, supported by Trustee Spaans. **Motion carried by voice vote.**
- Street closures are as follows:
Thursday Car Show: Bridge closed at John, and Bridge/King (both sides). **Saturday** Parade: Starting 10:00am at the Chrysler building—request to hold traffic there and at the bridge at 11:00am. Edwards and Bridge lining up (hold traffic), Bridge to Hawley, north on Hawley to Lyons St., west on Lyons to Elizabeth, Elizabeth to Water Street, proceeding to Hazel Devore Park. **Saturday** Street Dance: Closure of Bridge at John; and Bridge/Prairie (both sides).
- Borrowing 6 barricades from Muir. Trustee Darling said Lyons has 6 barricades; may need to purchase more.
- Motion to accept street closures made by President Pro Tem Spearling, supported by Trustee Russell. **Motion carried by voice vote.**
- Chairperson Mason mentioned proceeds from sales of water at Car Show will go to future events and activities. Billie Strings has items to be raffled with proceeds to be used as revenue for Island Fest next year. There are several fun activities for children this year, such as face painting, petting zoo, etc.

Council Comments: Trustee Darling thanked President Pro Tem Spearling for all her efforts and success in overseeing Village business, and office staff as well. President Farrington addressed **Public Comments**, stating that the Village Council will receive/review all written and oral public comments as well as questions, but may or may not respond to individual items depending upon the relevance and nature of the subject matter. The Village Council is well informed and advised by professional consultants (e.g., legal counsel, CPAs, engineering firms, etc.) and other resources via appropriate municipal processes and practices. The Village Council strives to govern to the best of its ability acting on behalf of the best interests of Village residents, as elected to do so. Village employees work diligently to fulfill their duties and responsibilities, are supported in their positions by the Village Council, and deserve respect free of individual public rumors or comments intended to create division and disrepute within the Village.

Correspondence: Received a MML Annual Meeting Notice for September 11-13, 2024 on Mackinac Island.

New Business: A technician from Aire Serv recently serviced the Village Office (24 year old) air conditioning unit, which had been experiencing operational problems. Aire Serv provided a quote for needed repairs of the old system in the amount of \$1,536, as well as an estimate of \$6,920 for a new replacement air conditioning unit. During discussion Trustee Spaans requested further quotes/estimates, and was asked to oversee that task and bring a recommendation to the next Village Council meeting.

Adjournment: There being no further business, a motion was offered by Trustee Russell, seconded by President Pro Tem Spearling to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 p.m. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Respectfully Submitted By:
Laura Schoenmehl, Village Clerk