

Village of Ashton Board Meeting – September 13th, 2021

Village President Tim called the meeting to order at 7:01pm

Present: Martha Holder, Rhonda Cardot, Susan Larson, Village President Tim Henert, Russ Crull, Chuck Ellis, David Chapman, Ermir Ramadani, Village Attorney Russ Crull, Village Clerk Katie Koks

Motion to approve August meeting minutes – Chapman, Second - Holder.

Voice Vote 6-Ayes, 0 Nays. Motion Passed.

Motion to pay bills in the amount of \$54,367.27 – Holder, Second- Ramadani.

Voice Vote 6 Ayes, 0 Nays. Motion Passed.

Citizens To Be Heard

The speaker listed on the agenda, Kyle Mahaffey, was not present to address the board.

Old Business

Kelly Vial, Lane Koenig, Zane Murphy, Andrea Buhrows, Nadezda Cater gave the overview of the plan for what the proposed building and its purpose. Mark Delhotal -FFA Alumni Chapter President spoke about the support from the Alumni association, the plan to donate the building back to the school district, and the benefits for having a facility located near the school, instead of having to travel off-site. Delhotal stated that their plan was not an all-or-nothing, they are open to negotiations about the terms of the agreement with the Village and then took questions from board member David Chapman, who asked about issues with noise, smell, unsightliness for residents within a certain radius of the proposed site, as well as about accountability for maintenance on a facility on behalf of the program. Delhotal said that they had ideas for natural buffers outlined in the proposal and also explained that the program has gathered several accolades, which helps solidify the commitment from members past and present and future. Donna Page (resident, district parent, 17yr Ag teacher) spoke about the benefits for adding a facility which would make Ashton Franklin Center a very desirable premiere school district. Amy Buhrows added a statement from the high school principal in support of the facility. Alan Buhrows made a statement about the placement of the facility and stated that it all comes back to accountability on the part of the village and the FFA program. Henert reminded the board that this project is still all in talks - and they are open to more discussion and there would not be a vote at this meeting. Larson expressed reservations on the location and on the timeline, as the property is not owned by the Village yet. Henert and Crull touched on the next steps in the process for the group. A Zoning Board of Appeals will be formed at a later date.

New Business

Nick Nelson from Jacob & Klein to speak about TIF. He represent 60 cities and administer over 200 TIF districts. Nelson explained what a TIF district is and what happens when it's established. He explained the qualifications for a "blighted area" to become a TIF project and some options a taxing body may have to get started. There was discussion about the size of a potential project and the benefits of having multiple projects that touch or are contiguous. Nelson answered a question from a citizen present about some hypothetical situations and another question from Larson about how the firm's fees are structured.

Henert gave an update on 804 & 806 Main St. Minutes from a meeting with the Andersons, and their attorney, were included in the packets. Casper Manheim echoed Henert's sentiments that the situation seems closer to a resolution.

Henert spoke about Northern Illinois Disposal savings for the Village. The number of homes serviced has been adjusted and the Village cut the price per month for pickup with Northern Illinois Disposal by approximate \$500. To compensate for the period the Village was overcharged, Northern Illinois Disposal also waived the Village's September bill.

Motion to discuss fee structure for Water/Sewer/Garbage -Ramandani, Second-Holder.

Henert outlined proposed changes to the next round of water bills. Late penalties for bills paid after the due date proposed to be raised from 10% to 15%. A \$10 materials/processing fee (time and materials) is proposed for any bills that have a second notice sent, and a second \$10 material/processing fee (additional time and materials) for any red letter notices that are printed and placed. The shut off- turn on fees were proposed to be raised from \$75 each to \$100 dollars. Crull will re-write the ordinance to be approved at the October meeting.

Discussion about pros and cons of changing the current fee structure. Chapman asked to consider a list of exceptions written into the ordinance. Henert asked Koks to talk at this time about the Tri-County Opportunity Council and the voucher program now available to residents that meet the criteria for help with delinquent and past due bills.

*Motion to amend the Water Bill Policy and re-draft the ordinance for approval at the October meeting - Holder
Second-Larson*

Voice Vote - 6 Ayes, 0 Nays. Motion Passed

Zoning

Manheim reported a few building permits, a couple roofs and a garage had applied for permits. He has been canvassing town to deliver ordinance letters. Just served a letter to the corporation on the corner of Rt 38 -for several municipal ordinance violations.

Community Economic Development

Ramadani spoke about the opportunity for a TIF district and thanked Henert and Cardot for working with interested parties in his work-related absence.

Streets and Alleys

Ellis reported the streets crew began around 2:30 on Monday 9/13 (an equipment issue delayed their start) and should be done with the chip and seal process early on Tuesday.

Residents are concerned about the speed of vehicles coming down Richardson and would like to see speed bumps installed. Four speed bumps - two on Richardson and two on 4th street, just before the curve. Approximate cost is \$1200 for both sets of bumps.

Motion to Purchase 2 sets of speed bumps – not to exceed \$1500 total – Ramadani, Second - Chapman

Roll Call Vote: Cardot-Aye, Chapman-Aye, Ellis-Aye, Holder-Aye, Larson-Aye, Ramadani-Aye

6 Ayes, 0 Nays – Motion Passed

Water & Sewer

Chapman reported that he is continuing to collect data and resident input on water bills. He is working to understand the language on water bills to be able to answer questions better. Chapman also posed a question about water abundance in the Village wells. Henert stated that according to Blair, there is no sign of shortage in the city's supply of water in the wells.

Discussion on chemicals and Crest Food and the amount of usage. Chapman will put a meeting together for the committee to meet with Crest Foods and Willett and Hoffman to discuss and report about on a later date.

Parks

Holder reported Sunday, September 19th is Fall Festival from 1p-4p. Lots of family fun is planned, refreshments to be served, games, crafts, prizes. Tabled a discussion for the October meeting to take invested money from a Beautification Fund CD and cash it out to be used for Parks projects.

Liquor Commissioner

Nothing to report

Police Report

Glessner gave overview of violations- Speeding complaints about Rt. 38 --Crest Food Semis. Complaints about Schools when the kids leave. Nothing has come back that there is trouble. In regards to grass on the roadway complaints, some talks with citizens have gone better than others. Criminal damage at the Mills & Petrie has been cleaned up by Ofcr. Dempsey. Some complaints about criminal damage and identity theft--which is being monitored. Glessner asked to step down as chief and reinstate Jared Yater as Chief of Police

Motion to accept D. Glessner resignation as Chief of Police – Holder, Second – Larson

Roll Call Vote: Cardot-Aye, Chapman-Aye, Ellis-Aye, Holder-Aye, Larson-Aye, Ramadani-Aye
6 Ayes, 0 Nays – Motion Passed

Motion to reinstate Jared Yater as Chief of Police – Holder, Second – Larson

Roll Call Vote: Cardot-Aye, Chapman-Aye, Ellis-Aye, Holder-Aye, Larson-Aye, Ramadani-Aye
6 Ayes, 0 Nays – Motion Passed

Yater stated that he would like to make progress on ordinance tickets and enforcement and had some other projects he would like to see done down the road.

Clerk's Report

Koks asked the board how they would like their monthly meeting packets delivered. A digital copy will be e-mailed to all board members the Friday before the meeting and a hard copy will be provided at the meeting.

Cemetery Board

Ellis reported that they were still working on new pricing for plots and burials.

Mills & Petrie Board

Holder reported that the biggest news at the Mills & Petrie is the health department assessment of the current kitchen, to convert to a commercial kitchen. The only thing that needs to be updated is the addition of an additional refrigerator for an interested vendor. The Mills & Petrie board will have more discussion on this at their next meeting.

Village Attorney

Nothing to report

Other Topics

None

Motion to enter into executive session – Ellis, Seconded by - Larson

Voice Vote: 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, Motion Passed

Executive Session - Employee wages

Motion to Return to the Regular Meeting - Larson

Seconded by- Holder

Voice Vote: 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, Motion Passed

Motion to Increase pay rate for Blair Crum (Full Time) 2% retroactive to 5/1/21 - Ramadani

Seconded by- Holder

Roll Call Vote: Cardot-Aye, Chapman-Aye, Ellis-Aye, Holder-Aye, Larson-Aye, Ramadani-Aye

6 Ayes, 0 Nays – Motion Passed

Motion to Increase pay rate for Part Time Street Employees to \$15/Hr. retroactive to 5/1/21- Holder

Seconded by- Ramadani

Roll Call Vote: Cardot-Aye, Chapman-Aye, Ellis-Aye, Holder-Aye, Larson-Abstain, Ramadani-Aye

5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 Abstain – Motion Passed

Motion to adjourn meeting - Larson

Seconded by: Holder

Voice Vote: 6 Ayes, 0 Nays - Motion Passed

Meeting adjourned at 9:39p.m.

Submitted by: Katie Koks, Village Clerk