

**Thomasboro Village Board of Trustees
Regular Board Meeting
September 2, 2014**

*Thomasboro Village Hall
101 W. Main Street, Thomasboro, Illinois*

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Thomasboro was held on Tuesday, September 2, 2014, President Brad Morris presiding. President Morris called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Roll Call

The Village Clerk called the roll, finding the following members physically present: Village President Brad Morris; and Trustees Joe Wilson, Kim Ratts, Anthony Grilo, Kyle Henegar, and Roger Rosenbeck. Trustee Jeff Robertson was absent

Other Village officials present: Leon Albers, Treasurer; Keith Willis, Chief of Police; Jay Arnold, Public Works; Laurel Zook, ESDA Coordinator; and Jeremy Reale, Village Clerk.

Pledge of Allegiance

Following roll call, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Discussion/Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Trustee Grilo moved to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2014 regular meeting, as prepared. Trustee Wilson seconded the motion. Motion carried, all present voting "aye".

Presentation of Bills

President Morris noted that he had intended to have Greg Gustafson at the meeting to provide an update on the status of the filter media project and to clarify the charges on the pending Berns, Clancy & Associates invoice; however, he was not available to attend. Mr. Arnold reported that the lids on the filter tanks needed to have new mounts installed to fasten the lids to the tanks since the existing mounts had become ineffective due to excessive rusting. He added that the invoice in question included fees for lab testing and materials that would be used for the necessary repairs. The consensus of the Board was that the invoice should not be authorized for payment until such time that Mr. Gustafson could provide an explanation of the charges and any anticipated additional costs for the project.

Following review and discussion of the monthly bills, Trustee Wilson moved to approve the payment of the bills listed and the regular bills yet to be received, with the stipulation that the Berns, Clancy invoice would remain unpaid. Trustee Rosenbeck seconded the motion.

The Village Clerk called the roll:

YEAS: Wilson, Ratts, Grilo, Henegar, and Rosenbeck – 5
NAYS: None – 0
ABSENT: Robertson – 1

Motion carried by roll call vote of 5 to 0, with 1 member absent.

Presentation on Thomasboro Grade School Referendum

Superintendent Bonnie McArthur and School Board President Jane Sprandel addressed the Board and the audience to discuss the tax referendum that had been placed on the ballot for the upcoming November 2014 election. If approved by the voters, the referendum would nearly

double the district's current tax levy rate, meaning the owner of a home with a market value of \$100,000.00 would expect an increase of \$546.67 on the next tax bill. Ms. McArthur explained that the district had suffered from the impact of continuing reductions in General State Aid payments, with a loss in state revenue of roughly \$113,000.00 from FY 2012-13 to FY 2013-14. These payments are calculated on an attendance-based formula, and district enrollment had dropped from 170 to 140 students over the previous three-year period. She stressed that school officials wanted to continue offering the same level of programs and favorable class sizes; however, this would require an additional source of incoming revenue to be sustainable in the coming years. Absent an increase in revenue, the district would be forced to cut staff levels and combine classes. Sports programs and other extracurricular activities had already been eliminated in an effort to save money. If the ballot question were to fail, the district would use reserve funds to cover the approximately \$300,000.00 deficit for the current fiscal year. It was possible that the district could approve a \$750,000.00 bond issue to shore up the deficits for a couple of years; however, Ms. McArthur noted that there would be no way to stop the trend without additional revenue or severe expenditure cuts.

Jim Richardson noted that costs were increasing everywhere and a large tax hike would have an adverse impact on many residents, particularly those on fixed incomes. President Morris stressed that this was not a problem unique to Thomasboro, as school districts across the state were facing these same concerns. He noted that Village officials wanted to have a school system that would help attract families and sustain the quality of life in the community. Trustee Grilo added that property values would likely be negatively impacted if the quality of the school system deteriorated. Ms. Sprandel announced that the school board would be hosting 3 public meetings to present information and answer questions related to the tax referendum. These meetings would be held in the gymnasium at Thomasboro Grade School on September 18, October 28, and October 30 at 6:00pm.

Committee Reports

Police & Safety: Chair Wilson discussed the monthly activity report.

Personnel: Chair Rosenbeck noted that the committee had met in August to interview an applicant for a vacant part-time police officer position, with a recommendation being made to the full Board to approve the hiring of Ryan Umberger. Chief Willis introduced Officer Umberger, who would be covering the day shifts on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays for a total of 18 to 24 hours per week.

Trustee Rosenbeck moved to authorize the appointment of Ryan Umberger as a part-time officer of the Thomasboro Police Department. Trustee Wilson seconded the motion.

The Village Clerk called the roll:

YEAS: Wilson, Ratts, Grilo, Henegar, and Rosenbeck – 5
NAYS: None – 0
ABSENT: Robertson – 1

Motion carried by roll call vote of 5 to 0, with 1 member absent.

Building Permit & Liquor License: Chair Rosenbeck reported that a building permit had been approved for a 14'x12' addition to an existing single-family home at 408 W. Bradley Street.

Health, Sanitation & Public Relations: No report.

Waterworks & Sewer: Trustee Henegar inquired about the status of the meter replacement project. Mr. Arnold commented that there were approximately 30 water meters in the Village that were non-functioning and needed replacement. He added that he would address the replacement of the meters as time and the availability of manpower permitted. Trustee Grilo asked if it would be unreasonable to set a goal of having three meters replaced by the next Board meeting in October. Mr. Arnold responded that he would try to meet that benchmark.

Streets & Alleys: Chair Henegar reported that several complaints had been received from residents concerning an overgrown pine tree at the corner of Elmore and Church Streets which obstructed the view of oncoming traffic at the intersection. Mr. Arnold noted that the tree was probably in Village right-of-way, but the homeowner would need to be contacted and given an opportunity to trim it back before Village personnel would handle it. Trustee Grilo asked Mr. Arnold if he would have time to address the potholes on Central Avenue and bump grinding work before he takes time off for harvest season. Mr. Arnold responded that these projects would be addressed as time and manpower permitted. He added that Mark Odum, his part-time assistant, had not yet received clearance from his doctor to return to work following his work-related injury.

Civil Defense & Parks: Chair Ratts reported that monthly siren testing had been conducted today, with the next regular testing scheduled for the first Tuesday in October.

Old Business

A) Discussion on new procedures for community landscape waste disposal site

The Board continued its previous conversation about procedures for handling residential landscape waste in the Village. President Morris noted that the issue at hand was whether the Village wanted to continue to offer a site at which residents could deposit brush and other landscape materials, or leave it up to individual residents to arrange for their own disposal of these items. Tyler Martin addressed the Board to report that he had located a possible site that could be used for burning landscape waste on private property in Urbana. Mr. Martin stated that the property owners had consented to making the property available for this purpose twice each year around community cleanup dates; however, the Village would need to have personnel available to monitor the site during those days. Trustee Grilo noted that the Board had discussed using a site off of Central Avenue for a possible disposal area; however, the proximity to neighboring residences made this site unacceptable. He suggested that the bridge at the western terminus of Central Avenue could be used as a containment area for landscape waste. Chief Willis cautioned that the Village could not block access to the property on the west side of the drainage ditch there. Trustee Grilo reiterated that he wanted to find a location suitable for burning the waste so as not to utilize too much of Mr. Arnold's time in hauling it off to other locations. President Morris opined that the current site off of North Thomas Street was probably the best location for storing these materials, provided that the Village could find a way to better secure the area. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to continue using the North Thomas Street location, with the area being opened to residents to dispose of landscape materials during certain times prior to community cleanup days.

New Business

A) Approve Resolution Authorizing Execution of a Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement and the Existence and Formation of the Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System by Intergovernmental Cooperation

Chief Willis presented an updated agreement with the Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System (ILEAS), which included mutual aid provisions to ensure that the Village would have proper law enforcement resources available in the event of a disaster or other emergency situation. He noted that the cost for the Village's participation in ILEAS is roughly \$25.00 annually.

Trustee Grilo moved to approve the mutual aid resolution, as presented. Trustee Wilson seconded the motion.

The Village Clerk called the roll:

YEAS: Wilson, Ratts, Grilo, Henegar, and Rosenbeck – 5
NAYS: None – 0
ABSENT: Robertson – 1

Motion carried by roll call vote of 5 to 0, with 1 member absent.

B) Updated Franchise Agreement with Nicor

President Morris reported that the 50-year term of the Village's original franchise agreement with Nicor was set to lapse in 2015, and the Village had been contacted by Nicor officials to approve an extension of the agreement. A draft agreement had been submitted to the Village, which would need to be forwarded to the Village Attorney for preparation of an ordinance for Board approval in October.

Trustee Grilo moved to direct the Village Attorney to draft an ordinance approving an updated franchise agreement with Nicor. Trustee Henegar seconded the motion.

The Village Clerk called the roll:

YEAS: Wilson, Ratts, Grilo, Henegar, and Rosenbeck – 5
NAYS: None – 0
ABSENT: Robertson – 1

Motion carried by roll call vote of 5 to 0, with 1 member absent.

C) Illinois E-Pay Services for Water Billing Collections

Trustee Grilo stated that he had been reviewing the content on the Village's website in order to find ways to make the resource more useful to residents. He mentioned that he had received information from Illinois E-Pay, a service which would allow customers to pay water and sewer bills by credit card through a secure online service linked from the Village's website. This arrangement would involve a service fee, which could be passed along to the user or paid by the Village. He suggested that having this service available as another option for Village customers might be beneficial. Mr. Reale noted that he did not anticipate any significant addition to staff time would be required to implement the system apart from the initial setup work. He stated that the Illinois E-Pay system was designed to automatically deposit monies collected into the Village's Illinois Funds account through U.S. Bank, adding that this would create some accounting issues since that bank account was a General Fund account. To prevent the commingling of funds, he would then be required to

drawdown any water and sewer receipts from the U.S. Bank account into the Water and Sewer Fund accounts at Gifford State Bank. Following discussion, the Board directed Trustee Grilo to bring a specific proposal forward for consideration at the October meeting.

D) Railroad Property Fencing

Trustee Grilo commented on the poor condition of the fence located on Canadian National Railroad property at the end of Thomas Street. He asked if it would be possible for the Village to clean up the area and bill the railroad. The Village would contact railroad officials about the issue, and this item would again be addressed at the October Board meeting.

E) Property Inspections

President Morris reported that the Village of Rantoul had permitted its building inspection staff to assist Village officials in the inspection of four residential properties in Thomasboro during the month of August. Following site inspections in coordination with Ms. Ward and Mr. Reale, the inspectors provided the Village with a report determining all of the properties to be uninhabitable and recommending demolition. The next step in the process would be to work in conjunction with the Village Attorney to send letters to the owners of each of the properties deemed unfit for occupancy. Trustee Grilo suggested that it may be more cost effective in the long term for the Village to pursue purchasing these properties for back taxes rather than going through the legal process. It was also noted that demolition costs would need to be considered in light of the funds presently available to the Village. The Board directed that this item be placed upon the agenda for its next regular meeting for further discussion and possible action.

Comments and Questions from the Audience

Tyler Martin addressed the Board to express his concerns about the speed of traffic traveling through the Jacobsen-Shelly-John Street corridor at the south end of the Village. He asked if it would be possible to install signage to warn motorists about children at play in the area since vehicles tended to travel very quickly around the corners in the vicinity of the apartment complexes. Chief Willis noted that Village ordinances provided for a universal speed limit of 30mph except where otherwise posted, adding that it would require an amendment to the ordinance to post a lower speed limit in the area in question. The Board then discussed that it may be more preferable to adjust the ordinance to set a universal speed limit of 20 or 25mph on all streets unless otherwise posted. This item would be further discussed at the next regular meeting.

Treasurers Report

There were no comments regarding the Treasurer's Report.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Trustee Grilo moved to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Rosenbeck seconded the motion. Motion carried viva voce vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy A. Reale, Village Clerk

The undersigned Village Clerk of the Village of Thomasboro, Illinois, does hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the approved minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees held September 2, 2014, as the same appears on the records of the Village now in my custody and keeping.

Village Clerk