

VILLAGE OF NORTH PRAIRIE
Village Board Meeting
December 12, 2024

1. Call to Order

Village President Hall called the December 12, 2024, Village Board meeting to order at approximately 7:00 pm.

2. Roll Call

Roll call was taken with the following present: President Deb Hall, Trustee Donna Samuels, Trustee Mike McCormick, Trustee Dave Schroeder, Trustee Frank Rewasiewicz and Trustee Cheri Lampe.

Excused Absent: Trustee Amber Pellegrino

Also Present: Evelyn Etten, Police Chief Sal Tamez and Nancy J. Zastrow, Acting Clerk/Treasurer

3. Pledge of Allegiance

President Hall led the board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Confirmation of Proper Notice of Meeting

Acting Clerk/Treasurer Zastrow confirmed the agenda was posted in three locations and on the Village website.

5. Approval of November 14, 2024 – Village Board Meeting Minutes

Trustee Samuels noted several errors in the minutes along with spelling errors.

Trustee Samuels moved, seconded by Trustee McCormick to approve the November 14, 2024, minutes with the corrections. Motion carried.

6. Reports: Building Inspector, Fire, Police, and Public Works Department

Monthly reports were included in the board agenda packet. There was no report from the Public Works Department or Building Inspector. Staff will follow up and make sure there are reports for next month.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT – (No official action will be taken under Public Comment)

Note: Comments will be limited to 3 minutes per resident

Trustee Rewasiewicz moved, second by Trustee Lampe to open public comment at approximately 7:10 pm.

Jon Russell – 416 Prairie View Drive – He is extremely concerned with traffic and speed in the neighborhoods and asked what the department is doing about this issue.

Village President Hall noted this will go to Police Chief for review and if not resolved will come before the Protective Safety Committee for review.

Mr. Russell also asked if the board agendas are on-line, he was looking for it and could not locate. The agendas are posted on the website and starting this meeting the full board packet will also be on the Village website.

President Hall moved, second by Trustee Samuels to close the public hearing at approximately 7:13 pm.

8. Public Hearing regarding Amending the Zoning Code of North Prairie Chapter I – 1 Industrial Zoning District Section 4.10 (10)

a. Motion to open the Public Hearing

President Hall moved, second by Trustee Lampe to open the Public Hearing at approximately 7:14 pm. Motion carried.

b. Public Comments on the proposed zoning amendment

President Hall explained this comes as a recommendation from the Plan Commission to amend 4.10(10) of the Zoning Ordinances. The amendment is to remove the wording “located in the Village”. This section will now allow any property owner the opportunity to voice concerns about proposed zoning applications. This is a direct result of the situation with the Laue property on Hwy ZZ, North Prairie.

Kevin Mickelberg – He thanked the board for taking this up, this has been very contentious for the neighbors. He encouraged the board to support and approve the amendment.

Katie Mickelberg – She stated she agrees with the amendment and explained the past twenty-two months have been rough. She appreciates the Village Board and Plan Commission and thanked President Hall for all the works on this.

Jon Russell – He inquired where this Laue property is located. President Hall explained the location is on Hwy ZZ and this amendment will be in effect moving forward with any other zoning issues.

President Hall read into record a letter from Jake & Michelle Trussoni – S55W32067 Cty Rd ZZ – they are in support of the amendment. (Letter is on file in Clerk’s office)

c. Motion to close the Public Hearing

President Hall moved, second by Trustee Rewasiewicz to close the public hearing at approximately 7:20 pm. Motion carried.

9. VILLAGE PRESIDENT

a. Report to Village Board

President Hall reported the Plan Commission approved a new business at their meeting. 117 N. Oakridge Drive will have a new towing business.

She attended a servant leadership roundtable through the League of Municipalities recently and stated there will be another one on December 20th. She encourages other board members to participate if they can. One thing she learned from the roundtable is that the governing bodies need to listen to the citizens. She reiterated if the board members have the time this session was valuable and interesting even to just listen in.

b. Discussion and/or Action as Necessary: Approval of Ordinance 2024-Z01 to Amend the Zoning Code of North Prairie Chapter I-1 Industrial Zoning District Section 4.10 (10).

President Hall explained this is amending the wording in the zoning code. The Plan Commission recommends approval, and the public hearing was conducted this evening.

Trustee Samuels moved, second by Trustee Lampe to approve Ordinance 2024-Z01 as presented. Motion carried.

- c. Discussion and/or Action as Necessary: Approval of offer of employment to Evelyn Etten to serve as the Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer for the Village of North Prairie

President Hall explained this is the new offer of employment with Evelyn Etten and the Village. This offer will be effective January 1, 2025.

President Hall moved, second by Trustee Schroeder to approve the Employment Offer of Employment between the Village of North Prairie and Evelyn Etten to serve as the Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer beginning January 1, 2025. Motion carried.

- d. Discussion and/or Action as Necessary: Approval of termination of contract with Evelyn Etten to serve as the Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer for the Village of North Prairie

President Hall explained the previous contract with Evelyn Etten is effective through January 2, 2025, but will terminate as of December 31, 2024 as she will be on staff on January 1, 2024.

President Hall moved, second by Trustee Rewasiewicz to approve the termination of contract dated October 14, 2024, with Evelyn Etten effective December 31, 2024. Motion carried.

- e. Discussion and/or Action as Necessary: Changing the beginning time of monthly Village Board meeting from 7:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

President Hall brought the starting hours of the board meeting for discussion item. Fee & Finance usually meets an hour before the board meeting and the members of the committee verbally agreed to start their meeting at 5:30 to allow the board meeting to begin at 6:30 pm. The board consensus was to change the meeting start time to 6:30 for the Village Board effective immediately.

President Hall moved, second by Trustee Schroeder to change the Village Board meeting times to 6:30 pm beginning with the January 9th, 2025, meeting. Motion carried.

- f. Presentation of Civic Pride Award to Gary Nickerson posthumously

President Hall explained the award would be posthumously. She spoke with his wife Debby Nickerson, and they agreed to postpone the award until January.

President Hall moved to suspend the rules to allow the public to speak to allow John Heinz Taylor – 318 N. Main St, to address the board. Trustee Rewasiewicz second. Motion carried.

John Heinz Taylor stated that his family would like to donate two trees in memory of Gary Nickerson, one tree to the family and one to the Village. The trees would be of his choosing and would not be available until April. He will contact Mrs. Nickerson and let her know of his offer and work with her as to where they should be planted.

10. VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK/TREASURER**Report to the Village Board**

E. Etten reported the following staff updates.

- Dave Molitor is out with rotator cuff surgery and is scheduled to come back December 19th with restrictions.
- Pauline Wigderson has resigned her position as part time Deputy Clerk.
- Melissa Rabay will be out of the office beginning January 16th and a return date has to be determined.

b. Discussion and/or Action as Necessary: Approve the remaining ARPA fund to be used to purchase an additional ExPress Vote voting machine and Badger Books i-Pads

There are funds remaining from ARPA funds. Staff are recommending using the funds to purchase another ExPress Voting machine and also to implement Badger Books. The voting machine is approximately \$4,000.00 and the I-pads for Badger Books are around \$750.00. There may some additional expenses with Badger Books, staff will check into the procedure for implementation. Discussion followed.

Trustee Samuels asked if Thunder Road Asphalt was paid in full along with the additional crack filling and how much of the ARPA funds were used for the 2024 road projects. The road projects were paid by both ARPA funds and General levy.

Acting Clerk Zastrow stated the Village may need to look at adding additional outlets to accommodate Badger Books. Trustee Rewasiewicz asked if the blinds/curtains for Village Hall be paid for with ARPA funds. Staff believe this would be an acceptable use of the funds.

President Hall moved, second by Trustee Schroeder to approve the usage of ARPA funds in the amount of \$14,506.30 and any additional interest to purchase and upgrade election equipment, including implementation of Badger Books and purchasing another ExPress Voting machine with staff discretion. Motion carried.

President Hall moved, second by Trustee Rewasiewicz to suspend the rules to allow Mr. Russell to address the board.

Jon Russell – asked if the board had an electrical quote. He stated this could be quite expensive to add outlets.

c. Discussion and/or Action as Necessary: Approve Resolution No. R09-2024 – Authorized Signature for withdrawal and disbursement of funds from all Village designated depositories.

E. Etten explained the Village should really have two signatures on all payable checks. Currently one signature is required.

President Hall explained there are two signatures on file at the bank and this would bring us to having four signatures on file. She suggests the Admin/Clerk/Treasurer, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer, Village President and Chairman of Fee & Finance.

President Hall moved, second by Trustee Rewasiewicz to approve Resolution No. R09-2024 Authorized signature for withdrawal and disbursement of funds from all Village designated depositories. Motion carried.

d. Update on Election deadlines for Spring 2025 Election

E. Etten explained in the agenda packet is a copy of the 2024 financial report. This is not final, but it does show the Village is financially okay.

Election deadlines, non-candidacy forms must be filled in the Clerk office no later than December 27th. Nomination papers are due to Village Hall on Tuesday, January 7th by 5:00 pm to be on the ballot in April.

11. PUBLIC SAFETY & PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE (Police, Fire, Municipal Court)

a. Report on discussion and/or action taken at previous meetings, reports or future agenda items.

Trustee Mc Cormick reported a meeting was held last week regarding municipal court.

President Hall stated that we need to look at the fire agreement and also look at the percentage rates.

The Police Chief stated they have two unserviceable radios and will need to look at updating so we have four. Trustee Samuels stated the board will need to look at the department and the total needs.

b. Discussion and/or action regarding the safety and security of the Village Clerks office during court

Trustee McCormick reported on the recent meeting where the safety/security of the Clerk office was discussed. Chief Tamez drafted a SOP, and we will be working through this. Trustee McCormick reported several items that will be implemented immediately:

- Village Hall door to Clerk office will be locked on court night.
- The Bailiff will be located in front of the Clerk office door.
- The conference room will be utilized for payments.

Trustee McCormick has a meeting scheduled with the Judge on December 17, 2024 to discuss these items as well as other matters concerning the Municipal Court in more detail.

c. Discussion and/or action regarding the costs or future costs charged to the Municipal Court and other communities that use the Village of North Prairie's facilities.

Trustee McCormick explained discussion was also held regarding the costs of Municipal Court to the Village of North Prairie. There are duties that should be done by the court staff but because of their hours, it falls on the Village Clerk & staff and the Police Clerk. The Village also processes all disbursements and payroll for the court along with deposits. None of the other communities involved with the municipal court help us with the court. We need to make sure we are covering the costs so we can address them at budget time.

e. Discussion and/or action regarding the posted hours of the Municipal Court on our Village Hall and the recent issues of irritated citizens trying to make payment to the Municipal Court when they are not there during posted hours of operation.

The last item discussed at the meeting was the hours of operation for municipal court. Village Hall staff have been dealing more with disgruntled patrons wanting to pay their fines or to schedule court, but they are not in the office during normal business hours. This will be discussed with the Judge.

Trustee McCormick noted we are looking to the future and to see what the best for our staff and the court will be.

12. PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING & GROUNDS COMMITTEE (Streets & Roads, Parks, Community Center, Civic Pride)

- a. Report on discussion or action taken at previous meetings, reports, or future agenda items.

The meeting was canceled – there are no updates.

- b. Snow Removal Policy

President Hall requested the snow removal policy be on the agenda. She stated this had not been enforced and with D. Molitor on medical leave she wanted to make sure the Board was aware of the policy. She noted it is up to DPW to send the snowplows out. She noted past practice was when the county roads were being treated the Village would also send out its snow plows.

Trustee Samuels stated this was implemented when the current public works staff began to clarify the procedure to use. Discussion followed.

Trustee Samuels will speak with the seasonal staff to make sure they are aware of this policy. Discussion was also held on educating the public. This policy will be put on the Village website.

13. PERSONNEL & POLICY COMMITTEE

- Report on discussion or action taken at previous meetings, reports, or future agenda items.

President Hall noted the Personnel & Policy Committee will schedule a meeting in January to begin working on Employee Handbook and other staffing policies.

14. FINANCE & FEE COMMITTEE

- a. Report on discussion or action taken at previous meetings, reports, or future agenda items.

Trustee Rewasiewicz reported on the meeting conducted tonight. Discussion was held on the rental of Community Room policy for collection and refund of security deposit.

The accounting firm (which also acts as the Village auditor) provided notice that they will not be available to work with the Village going forward due to staffing issues on their end.. Clarification was needed on who was going to draft the RFP for new accountant/auditor. E. Etten will create a draft RFP and bring it back to the committee for review and recommendation.

- b. Discussion and/or Action as Necessary: Review and approve monthly bills and payroll.

Trustee Rewasiewicz moved to approve checks for the month in the amount of \$86,402.07 with two voided checks. Trustee Schroeder seconded the motion. Motion carried.

President Hall asked about paying former Village Board President Nickerson's estate for his time served on the Board and that we should do it in 2024. Discussion followed regarding this may have been paid out in November. E. Etten will check and if not will make the payment.

President Hall asked if all road projects have been paid for 2024. E. Etten explained she is confident all bills have been turned in and paid but will check with D. Molitor to make sure.

15. Motion to Adjourn

Trustee Rewasiewicz moved, second by Trustee Samuels to adjourn the December 10th, 2024, Village Board meeting at approximately 8:13 pm. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Zastrow
Acting Clerk/Treasurer