

**VILLAGE OF BETHALTO
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
JULY 24, 2023, 6:00PM
VILLAGE HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Members Present:

Gary Bost	Rachel Sontag
Brady Dugger	Tim Tweedy
Maria Perkhiser	Terri Keister

Also Present:

Village Clerk Sue Lowrance
Village Attorney Ken Balsters
Zoning Administrator Randy Reddick
Public Works Director Rod Cheatham
Fire Chief Brian Buhs

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Gary Bost at 6:00pm in the Council Chambers of Village Hall.

Business Inspection Update

Fire Chief Buhs addressed the board to discuss the progress of the business inspection program. We have 156 total businesses for inspection; 113 of those are complete, 29 are partially complete or are waiting for reinspection, 14 are non-compliant and 2 have permanently closed. Mayor Bost stated that of those non-compliant, two are in the process of moving or shutting down. Discussion revolved around how to move forward with the non-compliant businesses, as these inspections are focused on life safety issues. Buhs stated he has tried to emphasize to businesses that the inspections are aimed at protecting their investment in the community; Mayor Bost noted that the program has been successful thus far, except for the few holdouts. There is no “grandfathering” in, as the codes are mandated by the State and should have been policed for years. Façade grant funding could be utilized by some of the businesses, but Buhs stated that some “are not interested in complying at all”. Trustee Perkhiser stated a timeline is needed in order to address those businesses, and all agreed. Attorney Balsters referred the Board to Chapter 6, Article 7 for our fire code, enforcement and appeals processes. Reddick stated he feels there may be 5 or fewer who continue to be non-compliant and that the others are just slowly dragging their feet. Reddick added after 20+ years of non-enforcement, some delay is understandable. Trustee Keister said she feels overall the program has been successful. Mayor stated that we will continue to reduce the numbers and will come up with an enforcement plan to be discussed at the next committee meeting.

Update on 58 N. Williams

Reddick reviewed the tentative agreement reached with the homeowners for Phase 1 of the rehabilitation project. The house will be lifted and a new foundation poured, the garage will be

lifted and a new foundation poured, and the shed lifted onto a foundation or removed entirely. Permits will be required for this work prior to August 14 with a completion date of November 15. Phase 2 would be required to be permitted by January 1 with completion within 12 months of the original agreement being signed. Reddick noted that the agreement requires a stay in the current case and not a dismissal, that the property owner agrees to progress inspections, that 2015 IRC/NEC and Village codes will be followed, and that our inspector is to approve all plans, etc. Reddick stated we will monitor progress closely and see how it plays out.

Commercial Zoning Code Changes

Reddick presented his thoughts on the need to update part of our General Commercial zoning code in order to better define permitted uses, special uses, and types of buildings allowed in GC districts, especially along 140 and the 140/111 corridor. Reddick noted that there is limited space available along 140 and we should be complimenting what is already there, and the 140/111 area will be vital in bringing in visitors from outside the area. Reddick noted he has received interest from mini storage units, and stated he doubts that is the kind of progress we'd like to see in those areas—although under current code it would be allowed as would tow lots, golf courses, etc. Building codes should be re-written to specify what's allowed in those zones. Reddick added this process will start with the Planning & Zoning Board and will likely take a few months to work out, then a recommendation will be forwarded to the Village Board. Mayor Bost agreed, stating we need to do what we can to steer progress in the right direction. Attorney Balsters referred the board to Code Section 40-5-84 GC Permitted Uses. Reddick asked for as much input as possible during this process.

Mosquito Spray Concerns

A resident expressed concerns at the July meeting regarding the safety of our mosquito spray program, and PW Director Cheatham addressed the board regarding those concerns. Cheatham stated that the Village's process is common throughout the country and that we alternate chemicals that are approved by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and are widely used to combat West Nile and other mosquito pathogens. Cheatham noted that some municipalities choose not to have a mosquito program, some due to citizens' concerns regarding safety and some for financial reasons. The annual program costs the Village approximately \$25k per year, including chemicals, labor, certifications, etc. There was discussion of the health concerns, with it being noted that most issues are if you come in contact with the liquid itself. Bethalto does not have any more of a standing water problem than any other local municipality; some surrounding towns spray for mosquitos and some don't. Trustee Keister stated that her research shows that the spray doesn't do much good unless the insects themselves are hit with the spray. There have been local concerns over mosquitos found carrying West Nile, although coastal areas are more prone to infected insects. Trustees Keister and Perkhiser asked if we spray on a schedule now; Cheatham answered a set schedule is nearly impossible to follow since spraying is dependent on several factors including weather. Currently each area of town gets sprayed about once a month. Mayor Bost added that people will have concerns whether we spray or not; Cheatham agreed. Perkhiser suggested a resident survey; Bost answered we could possibly use a survey but doesn't want our decision based on survey results. Unfortunately, it's

a situation where we can't please everyone as some will argue what residents' health is worth vs. the risks of using the chemicals. It was noted that spraying is always done at dusk; residents who don't want exposure to the spray can go inside when the truck passes—spray goes up into the air and dissipates. Bost added that everyone understands both sides of the situation and that is why it is a difficult decision to make.

Other Announcements

Trustee Keister stated that the Chamber of Commerce is now through Chamber Nation and the website has a new look, with a member directory and economic development information on the site. They have it in their budget to do a Village promo video as well. Their Village branding project is underway and links to participate will be sent out later this week.

Board pictures will be taken prior to the August meeting.

Having no further items for discussion, the meeting was adjourned by Mayor Bost at 6:38pm.

Sue Lowrance, Village Clerk