

**VILLAGE OF BETHALTO
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 27, 2025, 6:00PM
VILLAGE HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Members Present:

Gary Bost	Terri Keister
Brady Dugger	Tim Tweedy

Also Present:

Village Clerk Sue Lowrance	PW Director Rod Cheatham
Police Chief Jason Lamb	Village Attorney Ken Balsters

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

Revised Code of Ordinances Update

Back in 2021, between Mayor Winslow leaving and Mayor Bost taking office, our codifier had sent us suggested updates/revisions to our code that were never acted upon. Some of these revisions are clean-up of outdated code, others are entirely new. Rather than adopting these changes with several specific ordinances, it is recommended that we adopt an entirely revised code with one ordinance. Attorney Balsters has worked with Illinois Codification to ensure that all of our previous code changes (from 2021-present) have been included in the revised version, and noted that there is still some clean up work to do prior to adoption at the February meeting; however, Balsters feels that this action is appropriate and will also provide the Village with an updated electronic version for our website use. There were no questions.

Building Code Update

New State law requires that our building code be updated to reflect at minimum the 2018 International Residential Code as our standard rather than the current 2015 version. This takes effect in January, 2026, but would need to be passed by July 1st of this year. Our Building Inspector has reviewed the 2018 code and states that he is not too concerned with the changes, as most builders are following these guidelines already and nothing is alarming. PW Director Cheatham stated that most changes are structural and energy-related and that it would just update our code to the new standards. The most recent IRC code is dated 2021, but it was noted that 2021 code is “too stringent” and that 2018 is more reasonable to enforce. Chapter 6 would be updated after the previously discussed revised code is adopted, so this would be a separate ordinance for consideration.

Streaming Meetings

There has been a rumor on social media that the Village is not live-streaming meetings due to the recent brown water complaints, and Mayor wanted to address this. Equipment is in place to allow for live streaming our meetings, however there are OMA regulations to consider along

with media storage, how long recordings must be kept, etc., and policies and procedures that must be developed and adopted prior to moving forward with it. Bost further added that the Attorney General suggests having a resolution in place regarding how long to hold onto the video, possibly until written meeting minutes are approved. Utilitra suggested the video be housed on a separate server, which would be quite costly. We are still researching how other municipalities handle their recordings and are waiting for responses to some of our questions.

Surplus Property Update

The mayor reminded the board about the discussion over the summer regarding the property to the west of 255 and south of Culp Lane and whether the Village has any intended use for the parcel or should sell it. Chief Lamb stated that the property has been a recurring problem for the department, with trespassing, two drownings, and most recently a homeless encampment. The mayor stated that there is a buyer interested in purchasing, but he wants to verify that the board wants to move forward with selling. It was discussed that there is currently no infrastructure there and that there is limited access to the parcel. We do not provide water or sewer there, either. The property was appraised at \$225,000 and is 37.7 acres total, some of which is in a flood plain. Attorney Balsters noted that green space, especially at the municipal level, is hard to come by; Cheatham stated that the property is cut off from the rest of the Village by 255 and is hard to access. Bost added that if the Village is not going to sell it, the property at least needs to be secured; Lamb and Cheatham agreed there are a lot of potential dangers and that it cannot be supervised properly in its current state. Bost stated that is the reason we need to determine how to proceed. There was discussion of the current zoning (it would need to be rezoned if someone were to purchase it to build upon) and whether the appraisal is accurate. Keister stated that her concerns with the level of liability there have her leaning toward selling, although she does appreciate the Village's green space. Balsters noted that the process would involve declaring the property as surplus, authorizing the Mayor or Village agent to negotiate any purchase agreement, which the board would have to approve, and then the final sale. There was no stated opposition to moving forward with selling.

Senior Building Lease Request

There is an outside restaurant/catering business that has expressed interest in moving to Bethalto and is particularly interested in the senior building. The old water office is currently being renovated into a potential community center, and Bost has noted we can either have 2 community buildings for rental or we can consider other options. The Trio Café & Catering business model was presented to the trustees. Bost noted that no money had been discussed at this time, as he wanted to see if the board would even consider this avenue before getting too deep into conversations with them. Trio has suggested a 5-year lease to purchase option. Keister stated she would be interested in further pursuit of the proposal. There was discussion of how long it will take to renovate the old water office; Cheatham stated that things are moving along nicely, and it could be done within months if necessary. Bost has a recent appraisal of the senior building at \$295,000. Trustee Dugger asked what the cost is to maintain the building, and what a potential monthly rent may be; Bost stated we would research monthly maintenance costs but that he believes a going rate is about \$1 per square foot per month—or \$4300 per month for the senior building. More research would need to be

completed before any rental fee was determined. Parking would be an issue, but Trio is aware of that. Consensus is to continue to research and move forward with the discussion with Trio.

Having no further items for discussion, the meeting was adjourned by Mayor Bost at 6:37pm.

Sue Lowrance, Village Clerk