

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

Members Present:

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| Gary Bost | Jeff Mull |
| Maria Perkhiser | Rachel Sontag |
| Terri Keister | Jay Wright |

Also Present:

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| Village Clerk Sue Lowrance | PW Director Rod Cheatham |
| Village Attorney Ken Balsters | |

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

RMA Return to Work Requirement

IML Risk Management has a new requirement for membership that states the Village must adopt a return-to-work policy. This policy states we will do whatever possible to bring back an injured employee who is out on workman's comp as soon as medically allowed, by offering temporary, limited, or light-duty assignments. We currently do not have a light-duty policy in place but have historically worked with an employee and any medical restrictions to bring them back to work as soon as possible. Trustee Wright suggested we develop a return-to-work checklist for these situations; Cheatham noted that in the past we have used medical releases from doctors to determine any restrictions, etc. IML has drafted a sample policy, which we have used to draft a tentative policy of our own, and Mayor is asking for the board's input on this draft version. The policy must be in place by September 1st.

Surplus Property Sale-next steps

Mayor Bost provided background information on the property now for sale on the west side of 255, off Culp Lane. This is approximately 37 acres, 46% of which is in a flood plain. The property has limited access and has been a liability to the Village due to homeless encampments, drownings, and other issues. It was declared as a surplus at the May meeting and the resolution authorizing the sale has been published in the paper. The Village is now ready to accept offers, which do not have to be sealed bids. Bost added that money received from the sale could be earmarked for park use, since some concern has been expressed about the sale meaning the loss of green space for the Village. Trustees discussed the quantity of green space already available within the Village, and noted that Bryant Park, the main green space park, gets moderate use at best. Mayor Bost noted that a potential buyer approached him about selling; the Village did not market that the property may be for sale until this buyer expressed interest. Attorney Balsters expressed concern that the current appraisal is based on green space zoning; if rezoned for improvement the land may be more valuable. Bost noted he

is less concerned about the financial gain and more concerned with disposal of what has been a liability for the Village for many years. It was noted that the Village does not have infrastructure to the property and does not provide water or sewer service to that side of 255. A buyer would be responsible for any zoning change and infrastructure improvements made to the property. Trustee Keister added that there is already plenty of commercial land available that is not getting much interest in town, and that makes her less hesitant to dispose of this property (which could also be seen as having some commercial value). Cheatham noted that the piece of property would be very expensive to develop into something suitable for commercial use. Bost asked for guidance to be sure the board is ready to move forward with a sale; trustees agreed that it is time to dispose of that liability. The next step would be to come to an agreement with any potential buyer, draft a sales agreement, and approve it by the board when ready. Bost noted that by law we can accept 80% of the appraised value, but he feels that asking the appraised value in full is appropriate at this point. Trustees agreed, and the process will move forward.

Zoning Appeal Process

With a new member on the board and a couple of recent zoning issues fresh on everyone's mind, Mayor Bost took the opportunity to review the zoning appeals process. Marc Ressler and Paul Hamby share duties of code enforcement for the Zoning Department, and any time a resident disagrees with their findings, the resident can file an appeal with the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Zoning Board of Appeals hears the case and makes a recommendation to the Village Board, who can either uphold their recommendation or override it and make their own determination. Discussion ensued regarding the situation at 413 Whispering Oaks Drive and the appeal filed for the installation of a carport/portico. A building permit was never issued for the project, but while doing rounds Ressler discovered that installation work was beginning and thus put a stop work order on the project. The resident is now filing an appeal against the decision that the carport is not allowed. Bost stated that the Zoning Board will hear the case on June 26, forward a recommendation, and that this board will have the final say. There was further discussion of any documentation of contact with the resident, and it was noted this is likely a case of he said/she said; Cheatham added that he believes there is documentation of former Zoning Administrator Reddick's conversation with the resident. Bost added that the main idea is that we must follow the set appeals process regardless of how it turns out, likening this situation to that of the cows on Roosevelt. The recent Moniger subdivision situation was mentioned, noting that if procedure had been followed with that case, things may have turned out differently. Keister stated that the point she believes should be made is that our processes should be well known and documentation available when needed.

Having no further items for discussion, the meeting was adjourned by Mayor Bost at 6:31pm.