

Village of Westville Regular Meeting**January 17, 2024****6:00pm**

Mayor Weese called the meeting to order at 6:00pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call. Present at Roll Call: Trustees J Slavik, Strebin, Hughes, Ellis, McFadden and Gallion, as well as Village Attorney Barney, Village Treasurer Larson, and Village Clerk V Slavik.

AGENDA Mayor Weese entertained a motion to approve the agenda and place on file. Motion by Hughes; second by McFadden. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (none)

MINUTES Mayor Weese entertained a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of 12-20-2023, the gas & Water Committee Meeting Minutes of 01-04-2024 and the Police Committee Meeting Minutes of 01-10-2024 and place on file. Gallion pointed out that his name was listed twice for attendance. His name will be removed as Trustee and replaced with McFadden. Motion by Strebin; second by McFadden. No further discussion. Motion carried.

CLAIMS Clerk Slavik said that under Rahn Equipment, the invoice was paid out of “Police” rather than “Public Works”. Mayor Weese entertained a motion to approve the Claims and place the report on file. Motion by Gallion; second by Strebin. Motion carried.

CLERK REPORT Mayor Weese entertained a motion to approve the Clerk Report, turn the money over to the Treasurer and place the report on file. Motion by McFadden; second by Hughes. Motion carried.

TREASURER’S REPORT Treasurer Larson’s report was for December 2023. Larson said he has started talks with Chief Varvel and Police Committee Chairman Strebin. He can show them what bills were paid under their committees. He said we are beginning work on the budget now so that it can be ready in March and sit for public review for 30 days and then have the official vote on May 1. Weese said Larson will budget what does not change annually and get with committee heads to see what they need in their departments. Then the Finance Committee would take a look and make suggestions to adjust line items. Mayor Weese entertained a motion to approve the Treasurers Report and place on file. Motion by Strebin; second by Hughes. No further discussion. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS (none)

POLICE REPORT Chairman Strebin deferred to Chief Varvel. Varvel has been working on annual reports for the state and getting evidence ready for annual disposal. He discussed with Strebin the other towns that built what we are looking to do for a new police station and would probably have a meeting in February to present his findings. Chief Varvel’s report covers December 15, 2023 through January 12, 2024 . There were 14 Reports, and 149 calls handled this reporting period. Mayor Weese entertained a motion to accept the Police Report and place it on file. Motion by Gallion; second by Ellis. No further discussion. Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS Streets & Alleys Chairman Slavik, **Sewers** Chairman Ellis, **Gas & Water** Chairman McFadden will wait until #16A, and **Sidewalks** Chairman Ellis had nothing new to report. **Park** Chairman Gallion said we are going back and forth between with the state on the grant for playground equipment. Larson explained the steps

that had to be taken. We just need a signature from the Mayor, and it will be submitted. Gallion also said for the tennis court do they want to have a committee meeting, or the board can shoot some ideas to him. He is thinking maybe do one pickle ball court, for example, and something else down the road. McFadden said we should put in a pickle ball court. Slavik asked Gallion if he put it to the public and Gallion said he did and there are things like a pool, for example, which are outrageous. A small stage was another idea, but he feels it would sit and just cost money. He said there is room for two pickle ball courts and something else. Some playgrounds have bag sets that are permanently affixed to the concrete. He could look at numbers for one pickle ball court next. **Bldgs./Grnds.-Comm. Beaut.** Chairwoman Hughes said Jim Anderson of Festival of Trees/Balloons over Vermilion Committee contacted her because they make a lot of money off of those events. They asked if she knew of an organization that could benefit, and she said Santos Anonymous has been doing their project for 46 years. She needed a letter, got one from Deb Serpinas, submitted it and Jim Anderson said they will give Santos Anonymous \$2500.00. There will be a check presentation 03/21/24 10:30a.m. at the Fisher Theater and everyone is invited, but she especially would like the Mayor to attend.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT BY DIR. MICHAEL BENNETT December 14, 2023 to January 11, 2024

In the Water Department: Changed meters, worked on repairs, took routine samples, changed daily totalizer chart, calculated daily usage, took chlorine residuals, swept, and mopped the plant, had a break on Ellsworth St. on a 6-inch main, spread salt on Ellsworth St after break, had a break on Urbana St. on a 2-inch main, replaced leaking service line under the highway in the 2100 block of South State St, had 4-inch pull behind dewatering pump serviced at Rahn's Equipment, will have class at Aqua in Danville February 6th (all will attend), check meter alerts for leak alarms First St., met with Seidner Company regarding Chlorine System for Pump Station. Surveys are still being turned in MANDATORY RESPONSE REQUIRED PLEASE REMIND YOUR NEIGHBORS these are due BY APRIL 2024! **In the Gas Department:** Changed meters, worked on repairs, changed daily high/low charts, checked odorizer daily, Patrolled system, Took odorant readings, WILL BE SHUTTING OFF ALL DELINQUENT GAS AND WATER ACCOUNTS. Had another incident where someone was digging without calling a locate in – 811, Mike & field team to attend Operator Qualification training on regulators in Sullivan will attend Jan. 23 & 25, held a liaison meeting with Westville Fire and Police departments, will have a pipeline safety meeting in Champaign, Clint & Daniel passed online call taker training, 12-covered tasks. They will do hands-on training in Olney when class is available, changed batteries in all gas charts, LiHeap/CAP program is open for grants. Call 217-554-9110 730a-430p for funding gas bills. **In Village Business:** Tennis court asphalt project has been completed, took delivery of F650 dump truck with snowplow on it. We put the salt spreader on it that we already had, met with IDOT for future IDOT project west of 1st Church of Christ, bucket of rock to C&E alley & South St., straightened electronic speed sign W. Main St., picked up dead opossum on Indiana Ave. There were 10 J U L I E CALLS, 10 Gas & Water Work orders, 13 Water Work Orders, 10 Gas Work Orders, 6 Public Works Work Orders, 2 CO Calls, 1 Odor Calls. Mayor Weese entertained a motion to approve the Public Works report and place on file. Motion by Hughes; second by Gallion. Motion carried.

LICENSES/INSURANCE: Chairman McFadden had nothing to report. **BUSINESS DISTRICT UPDATE** (nothing). **UNFINISHED BUSINESS** (nothing)

NEW BUSINESS

As a result of the consensus of the January 04, 2024 Gas and Water Committee meeting, Mayor Weese entertained a motion to increase the water rate by \$3.00/1000 gallons and the Capital Improvement rate from \$4.00 to \$8.00 per meter to support increased costs in materials and engineering fees. McFadden said we have had six breaks in December and lost over one million gallons of water, there has not been a raise in 6 years; if we do not keep our system and it sells to AQUA the bills would double. Weese said the clamps we use to repair those

issues have gone up 40%. Parts, materials, vehicles are all costing more. Weese said years ago AQUA gave us a 40% increase and we did not raise it more than that. Barney said it would go into effect 30 days after the ordinance that we will prepare is published. That would put the increase around April date. Motion by McFadden; second by Hughes. Motion carried.

Weese said Ron Reagan presented a video to Bennett and the Mayor and Gas clerks. They can save us \$35,000.00-\$50,000.00 a year and it would not cost us anything. Bennett said if we do not get the word in that we are interested, we have to wait another 5 years. They did research and talked to the engineer. Bennett told Missouri Gas again today that Westville wants let out of the remainder of the current 5-year contract. In April, Missouri Gas will bring it up on their agenda and give us their answer. Otherwise, our exit date is not until September. 2025. It used to be a 2-yr "out", but now it is 5-yr. Weese said Missouri Gas is going to mostly electric, and there were several towns on gas with them before; but now we and Stonington are the only Illinois towns in. Bennett said there were thirty towns and the old-timers on their board really did a lot for us. He said when Jeff Slavik was mayor, Jeff checked into other companies and stayed with Missouri Gas because at the time they were the best. McFadden asked if rates would be cheaper. They would be. He also wondered how long we would be locked in. Burks said they can show documentation that there is money back at the end of the year and we would save around \$3,000.00 a month monthly management fees, which is driven by dekatherms. Barney asked if the board is just approving intent to look into it; Gas & Water Clerk Burks said it is to get our name in it. Barney asked if we would be obligated to stay in; Burks said yes, and they can share the burden and spread it out. Slavik asked if there is not a contract, are they committed or locked in by voting tonight to stay in their program. Burks said we would be, but we would be protected to be able to enter into that opportunity and not be excluded. Weese asked if there is something in writing to vote on? Barney asked what does tonight's vote do? Bennett said it shows good faith that we would go with that program. They said if we get out of Missouri Gas and go with someone else, they will not make us beholden to them. Hughes asked for a timeline with new company – how long are we locked in. Bennett thinks maybe it is a yearly. Slavik asked for the name of the company they are looking at. It is Utility Gas Management. Larson said the real question is why we say today that we will go with them in two years for example. Burks said the entry time for the pre-pay program is once every five years, it is closed after this open enrollment and we are not stuck in because we can get out, but we cannot get in after this open enrollment until the next one. Barney asked if there are other suppliers in the same program as long as we meet the deadline and Burks said yes. Bennett got Lindsay (our gas engineer) on the phone to explain the program. It is a 30-year period with 7-year increments. After that, there is a new issue, and they may elect to not participate. We are getting the savings because of the taxable rate on bonds. Bonds are tied in, and we get the savings no matter what happens to the price of gas. Barney asked who issues the bonds. Lindsay said by a municipal community in Iowa and the initial bonds are backed by Goldman-Sacks. It is a bidding process. Barney asked who would determine the % the Village needs to buy. Lindsay said they help us with that and usually suggest 70-75% of what we use annually and that we would want to use all the gas we subscribe to. In some cases, they have been able to take what was not used by a member and move the balance to others in the group and the Village would still receive and keep the savings. The 25% balance of what we buy (or whatever balance up to 100% after our purchase % is determined) is paid at the monthly spot price. Weese asked Lindsay if the deadline to get into program is tonight. Lindsay said no and that we have time. Barney asked if there is a sample contract we can look at and Lindsay can send sample. Barney asked him to send it to the Clerk. Barney asked what the risk is. Lindsay said there is no risk unless the Village does not want their own gas utility any longer and would have to figure out who can use the gas they pre-purchased. Lindsay said whoever puts up the bond gets a bigger discount. Barney asked if bonds are issued in the fall. Ron Reagan had said it could be earlier...once the bonding company is decided they will make the decision. Barney asked if our 7 years start even if we are not buying yet? Lindsay said they could backload our purchase to the end of 7 years from when we start, and the

very end of the program is 30 years, and we can get out at 7 if we want. They may also be able to move the gas Westville would purchase to someone else the first couple years until we can get out of the Missouri Gas contract. Barney asked how many bonds have been issued and Lindsay said this is the first go-round and they are at about 5 years now. There were earlier programs that were not very good savings like 15 years ago; maybe like 10¢/dekatherm. Barney asked what happens if they do not sell enough for the bonds and Lindsay said in the current program, the bonds were gone in like a day or two. He said this next go-around will be a different issue and he thinks the savings will be even higher with this group of new government entities and he does not guess we will have another group starting for several years after this next one. Barney asked how Lindsay's company charges their fee and Lindsay said they get 5¢ per mcf, and it charges on a monthly basis, like we pay Missouri Gas now. Lindsay said there MIGHT be a way to be in for just 5 years if we cannot get out of Missouri Gas and the Village would not pay for anything until we buy. The proposed contract will be sent to Vickie. Lindsay said we are good to table this until next month and the new group will not start until March-April. Mayor Weese entertained a motion to table to vote until the February 21, 2024 Regular Meeting. Motion by Slavik; second by Hughes. Motion carried.

Mayor Weese entertained a motion to advertise to sell the Village lot at 214 W. Short St. and open the bids at the February Regular Meeting. We have around \$7,000.00 in it for demolition and clean-up. There will not be a minimum bid, but the board has a right to accept or reject any and all bids. Motion by McFadden; second by Hughes. Motion carried.

As a result of the consensus of the January 10, 2024 Police Committee meeting, Mayor Weese entertained a motion to solicit RFQ/RFP for a new police station. Motion by Ellis; second by McFadden. Motion carried.

Mayor Weese entertained a motion to go to **CLOSED SESSION** at 6:58p.m. for **5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11) Legal Opinion**. Motion by Hughes; second by Strebin. Motion carried. Mayor Weese entertained a motion to reconvene **OPEN SESSION** at 7:14p.m. The purpose of closed session was for legal opinion on releasing previous closed session minutes. Motion by McFadden; second by Hughes. Motion carried.

Ellis made a motion to release the minutes from 01/11/23, 01/18/23 and 2/15/23 and to not release the remaining minutes for pending legal issues. Second by Hughes. Motion carried.

Slavik said a customers of a trash hauler had a rate increase in January of 2024 and there was a notification on their November bill that there would be a \$2.00/month increase. Burks suggested maybe it was a fee to pay with a credit card; Slavik said this person would not pay with a credit card. The hauling ordinance change stated that the licensee must notify the Village and the customer 60 days before any increase would be allowed. Barney said their license could be revoked, that they would no longer be able to haul in Westville and they would be on the hook for reimbursement to customers, but that someone would have to file a cause of action. Barney said he could start by sending letters to the haulers to remind them of the ordinance requirements. The Clerk will provide contact information and addresses for the four registered haulers in Westville.

Progress on reimbursement for February 2021 natural gas overcharges: Gas and Water is currently working on book five of eight books for the settlement.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Weese entertained a motion to adjourn at 7:16p.m. Motion by Hughes; second by Ellis. Motion carried.