



MEETING MINUTES – VILLAGE BOARD (Regular)

Date/Time: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 (6:00 P.M.)

Location: Village Office, 2990 South Pine Tree Road

ROUTINE ITEMS TO BE ACTED UPON:

1. Call to order/Roll Call:

The meeting was called to order by Rich Heidel at 6:03pm. Rich Heidel, David Dillenburg, Ed Kazik, and Debbie Schumacher were present. Tim Carpenter was excused.

2. Certification of the open meeting law agenda requirements and approval of the agenda:

Motion by Rich Heidel, second by Ed Kazik, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Pledge of Allegiance:

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

None.

5. CONSENT AGENDA:

A. Payment of Invoices

B. Village Board: Minutes of August 3, 2021

Motion by Dave Dillenburg, second by Debbie Schumacher, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

6. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA:

None.

7. CITIZEN COMMENTS, RESOLUTIONS, AND PRESENTATIONS:

None.

8. VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT/COMMUNICATIONS:

A. UPDATE – Village's Preliminary 2021 Equalized Value:

The Village of Hobart experienced another impressive increase in its Equalized Value ("value"). The 2021 overall value of the Village is \$1,137,391,600, which is an eight (8) percent increase over the previous year. The 2021 increase in dollars was \$80,890,000, just shy of last year's increase (\$84,991,400), but larger than the increases in 2019 (\$75,566,300) and 2018 (\$79,612,100). The vast majority in the total equalized value is residential (\$872 million), followed by commercial (\$202 million) and industrial (\$42 million).

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND ACTIONS:

HALO Committee Met – Suamico is working on regulating ATV's on roads and they toured the new Suamico Fire Station. Hobart will host the next meeting.

10. OLD BUSINESS:

None.

11. NEW BUSINESS:

A. DISCUSSION AND ACTION – Future of Law Enforcement in Hobart:

Motion by Rich Heidel, second by Ed Kazik, to suspend the rules to open the discussion to the public at 6:16pm. The motion passed unanimously.

Rich Heidel recommends that the board does not take any action on this item this evening, and to take action at the first meeting in September, to allow the board to fully digest the information provided and make a more informed decision.

Donna Severson – Wants to thank the board for taking up the issue as it is a difficult discussion to have. She appreciates having all of the options on the table regardless of the outcome. Would like to point out that we should take into consideration that we are located wholly within the boundaries of a former reservation and that makes us different than other communities.

Leroy Schlorf Jr – Would the residents be provided a copy of the proposed contract prior to it being approved? He believes there have been prior negative experiences with contracts with the county and is concerned if this is really a good idea. From a residential perspective it seems to be moving rather quickly and he appreciates that Rich does not recommend any action being taken tonight. – Aaron indicated the rough draft provided by the county is in the packet

Jennifer Manders – She believes this should be a vote by the community. She is very pleased with our police department response time and community involvement. She comments that regardless of the enormity of landmass in our two communities, they have done an outstanding job. Does not believe that this should be a budget issue, it should be a safety issue. Reiterates that she believes this should be a vote by the community. She shared her personal experience of how the department has done their best to enforce speed limits.

John Rather – Understands the importance of re-evaluating from a tax-payer standpoint. He believes that sometimes it is better to pay more for something of quality. It's not always about keeping the tax rate low. He believes people would be willing to pay more for the high quality of service.

Amy Dillenburg – As a parent of young children, would we be able to bring liaison services back to the community by going through the county? Most of our contact with the department is through the liaison officer. – Aaron responded that the Sheriff's office would discuss the liaison contract with West De Pere School District and verified that it was the choice of the Pulaski School District to remove the Hobart/Lawrence Police Liaison from the school.

Jenna DeNoble – We have been in this community for about 9 years and enjoy the community aspect. Felt a sense of community with the officers and appreciate everything they do as they even did a drive-by for her kids during the pandemic. Her family would be willing to pay more for taxes to keep this department.

Barry Weger – After hearing about how well the Village is doing financially, he does not understand the reason for this discussion. He believes call times would be drastically affected in a negative manner if we go through Brown County. He has had a personal experience working with them and iterated that the officers go above and beyond to assist their residents. Would like to iterate that he hopes these

Brian Pavlovich – Would like to echo the comments about the financial growth and tax base being able to fill the financial gaps. The board commented that we are pro-growth, but this proposal seems to be the antithesis of that statement.

Linda Hieronimczak – She is a first responder and hometown girl. We value these officers. We know what to expect of them and they know what to expect of us. If we are growing and the tax

base is growing, the financial should come with it. She would be willing to pay more taxes to keep HLPD.

Marcia Casey – She is confused as to why we are having this discussion. She does not know of any issues with our police service and the community seems to be happy with the service. What is the initiation of this discussion? She believes we need to value and respect what our officers do every day. She would like to see exactly what are the pros and cons of this move. She doesn't see why we would get rid of a system that is working well for something that is unknown. If we go forward with the county, how will the community involvement look from our officers? I feel that when there is a bigger entity in charge, we lose the priority. – Rich Heidel responded that the board works for the community that they work for the community and it is their job to spend the money as frugally and responsibly as possible. He answered that this was brought forth as a proposal by Trustee Schumacher and Trustee Kazik. He also answered that we cannot answer how the community involvement will look as we lose control of the officers community involvement.

Ed Kazik – Sheriff Delain did offer all of the officers a job at the County. The county has a lot more to offer than the Village does in regards to backup and detail. This will broaden our horizon as the village grows. The officers have the opportunity to make more money and work more overtime.

Debbie Schumacher – The officers would have more overtime and the officers would still be in our community. There would be more options for evidence and equipment storage.

Sergeant Tremel – We are not guaranteed jobs, we are guaranteed the opportunity to apply for the job. We do not appreciate that this discussion is even on the table. It is seen as a slap in the face.

Officer Manning – The level of tests and requirements are different for every department. There are many officers that had to take the tests multiple times at multiple locations in order to be offered a job. We cannot be guaranteed a job if we have to pass the county's testing requirements. The county is not trying to take over HLPD, they were asked to come and do this proposal. It is concerning that we do not have a 100% guarantee when we already applied and were given a job at the Hobart Lawrence Police Department. We also do not know what Lawrence's opinion is as they have not been brought into this discussion. The officers are all very passionate about this because it is their livelihoods and there is so much uncertainty in this situation.

Aaron Kramer – The discussion keeps coming up that Chief Bani will be retiring in 2 years, and that is why we are considering the county contract at that time. Chief's 5-year contract does not mean that he plans to retire at the end of it. He has not indicated that he plans to retire.

Lorie Francar – Would like to clarify that if our officers are tied up on calls, the County Sheriff's Office and the Oneida Police Dept back up our police department. The growth means we need to add more supervisory positions. During Sheriff Delain's presentation, were any of his questions that he was unable to answer. Were these questions since answered? – Ed Kazik responded that the growth is the reason we are looking into the cost-benefit analysis of internal growth versus contracting with the county. – Aaron responded that late this afternoon we did receive information from the county, and we need more time for analysis.

Officer Schroeder – Does not want to be forced into overtime to make more money. The 6/3 shift leaves less days for the officers to spend with their family. The officers will lose their seniority in terms of overtime and vacation. The majority of the time there is only one sergeant on in the entire county, but in the proposal Hobart is expected to pay \$76,000 for this position. At the end of the day, the officers feel as though they are losing out as the health insurance, vacation, etc, and it's not just the paycheck. The benefits are a major reason for their choice to be in Hobart.

Officer Peterson – We do have critical incidents when our sergeant is not on duty, but our chief is always a phone call away, and has never not answered my call. If we are ever in need of assistance or have a question we need to bounce off of a veteran, the county sergeants have always been willing and able to assist. We are not out here ‘naked and afraid’, we have a network that we use on a regular basis and it works. We have never had an issue.

Katie Herms – Wants to applaud each of the officers. They are our community helpers and they go above and beyond to be a part of the community. This should not be an issue.

Rich Heidel – After the close of the initial contract, I am bothered by the fact that we will have to renegotiate to continue service with no leverage and no control.

Jennifer Manders – As a Lawrence resident, she is concerned at how Hobart’s decision will affect her community. She is concerned that her community is not fully aware of this proposal.

Aaron Kramer – This discussion has not included Lawrence because the direction given by the village board was to look at service in Hobart. The proposal including the town of Lawrence in the title was an assumption on the behalf of the Sheriff. The village cannot speak for the town because they are their own entity.

Officer Cambray – The town is not required to pay for any police service because they are a town. The county is required to cover them at no cost per state law.

Rich Heidel – We do not have any control over the degree of engagement between the Lawrence board and its residents.

John Rather – Would like to state the obvious that just having this conversation could jeopardize our relationship with Lawrence, and should they choose to pull out the village will be responsible for 100% of the budget, instead of 2/3.

Rachel Fontaine Harrison – Read a written statement:

“My name is Rachel and the reason I’m here tonight is very personal to me. In 2015 my dad, Frank Fontaine, called and asked if I knew whether or not Hobart had a K9 unit. I said I didn’t know, but I thought Brown County did. His answer was a very stern ‘That’s not good enough. I’m going down to the station.’ And he did just that when he met with Chief Randy Bani. My dad called me the next day to see what I thought about him fully funding a new K9 program for Hobart/Lawrence. He said he wanted the community to feel safe and the police officers that work there to be safer too. He wanted this K9 program to be his legacy. I had never been more proud of him. A few months later, we handed over a check for more than \$80,000 in a village meeting similar to this one here tonight. My dad believes in this department and wanted to be a part of something bigger than himself.

I grew up in the Village of Howard. My mom was an EMT and my dad drove ambulance and worked the jaws of life. I grew up with an ambulance in my driveway and the scanner on 24 hours a day. They, along with other community minded people in the 1980’s, were founding members of what was known as Emergency Rescue Squad. On Velp Ave. in Suamico, across from Culvers, you’ll see a large stone with the names of those founding members. It meant a lot to that community. It was the first of its kind to service the Howard/Suamico area. That’s the type of feeling this police department brings to this community. We believe in these men and women. We don’t want them to be sold out.

I owe so much to this department. 3 years ago, in August of 2018, my dad had a full cardiac arrest in the garage of his Hobart home. He was gone before he hit the garage floor. Within a few minutes of the 911 call, Hobart/Lawrence Police arrived. They had the needed equipment in their squad car and they shocked his heart 4 times before they got a pulse. 4 times. If those officer had not had the quick response time they did, my dad

would not be here today. When they showed up that day, they knew him, they knew his name. They cared enough to keep trying. They didn't give up on him and I'm not giving up on them.

I can't for the life of me imagine why anyone would want to 'farm' out the important job of protecting this community, but I don't believe it's in our best interest. These officers and Chief Bani have built a trust in this community that cannot just be replaced and handed off to someone else. I will not allow these residents or officers to become just a number. We are worth more than that. I know what's NOT in it for us, and not in it for the police officers, so my question to you is... what's in it for YOU?

Thank you for your time."

We believe in this department; we believe in Chief Bani.

Barry Weger – After all the discussion heard here, there has not been a single voice in favor of transitioning to Brown County.

Karen Swere – When is this decision going to be made and who will make it? – Rich Heidel responded that this will be on the next agenda (Sep 7th) and his hope is that a decision will be made that night. It would be a decision by the 5 board members – Karen believes it should be a community decision. How can 5 people make a decision when all of us here already know what we have and are in support of keeping them here.

Chief Bani –Would like to comment on a few items in the article written by Kazik & Schumacher. If the cost of going with the county is the same, why are we having this conversation? The officer's benefits will be significantly downgraded at the county level. The officers will be forced into overtime because will be at the bottom of the county seniority. If the community is growing, public safety needs to grow as well. Read a written statement:

"This is nothing more than Debbie taking a shot across the bow in an attempt to push her personal agenda.

Debbie is attempting to cut police personnel and defund the police department.

Information that I have received is that the residents of both Hobart and Lawrence are extremely happy with the Hobart/Lawrence Police Department and are getting tired of Debbie's shenanigans and her attempts to sell off the police department to the lowest bidder.

The residents of Hobart and Lawrence enjoy a quiet and low crime area. Hobart and Lawrence are listed as two of the safest communities in the entire state of Wisconsin. This is a great place to live and raise a family in.

I have received many calls in support of our department. One of those calls came from Toni Etter, widow of Officer Bob Etter, who was one of the officers tragically killed in 2002 in the line of duty while trying to help build this department. Toni said that she adamantly opposes this change, stating that we have one of the finest police agencies anywhere.

Every officer of this department including myself opposes this Brown County proposal. I for one am tired of Debbie's attacks on myself personally and believe that this is, in my opinion, bordering on harassment.

I began working here 18 years ago when I was asked to build a professional police department. I did this, fighting along the way to stand up for the officers of this department and get them the tolls they need to do this job safely as we continue to grow.

We cannot build a strong and successful community and ignore the building of our public safety department. The residents can read right through you Debbie and they are fed up.”

Rich Heidel – Requests staff to put together a financial plan for a new police station for the next board meeting so that the board is able to discuss this issue with full clarity.

Aaron Kramer – Along with the police department plan, what other information does the board want prior to Sep 7th in an effort to be able to make a qualified decision at that meeting.

Schumacher – Would like to see a full benefits comparison.

Heidel – Would like to see a staffing study and a police station plan.

Mike Krueger – As an active military member he has lived in quite a few communities. He appreciates that our community is one of the safest in not only the state, but the nation, and believes that the way to keep that is to keep a standalone department.

Sergeant Tremel – Morale in the department is at an all time low. The officers will not look for other jobs, they will stay and fight to serve their community.

Motion by Rich Heidel, second by Ed Kazik, to return the meeting to normal order at 8:09pm. The Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Dave Dillenburg, second by Rich Heidel, to recess the meeting at 8:09pm. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Ed Kazik, second by Dave Dillenburg, to reconvene at 8:24pm. The motion passed unanimously.

B. DISCUSSION AND ACTION – 2022-26 Capital Projects Plan:

Staff presented the proposed 2022-26 Capital Projects Plan, which includes the 2022-31 Road Improvement Projects plan. The major projects proposed in 2022 are: (1) Merrimac Way (Concord to terminus) - This will result in 1,110 feet of road surface being pulverized and repaved; Camelot Court (Hillcrest to terminus) – This will result in 940 feet of road surface being pulverized and repaved; Fire Department - Replace LDH Hose (5”) (\$10,800) – The fire department’s Large Diameter Hose inventory is over 20 years old and is starting to fail yearly inspections. We are proposing replacing a total of 2000 feet in hose over two years; Fire Department - Engineering for New Station (\$50,000) – This will finance the design and architectural work for the new station, replacing the current facility on South Pine Tree Road. The target date for the work to begin is the spring of 2023; Public Works - Replace salt shed – The current salt storage facility has deteriorated to the point where it must be replaced. Motion by Ed Kazik, second by Dave Dillenburg, to approve the 2022-2026 Capital Projects Plan as a planning document. The motion passed unanimously.

C. DISCUSSION AND ACTION – Contract with Brian Ruechel (Accounting & Financial Services):

Motion by Dave Dillenburg, second by Debbie Schumacher, to approve a new contract with Brian Ruechel to provide accounting and financial consulting services to the Village, with the new agreement taking effect January 1, 2022 and the current services contract terminating at the time the new agreement takes effect. The motion passed unanimously.

D. DISCUSSION AND ACTION – Amendment XII of the Brown County Municipal Recycling Agreement:

Execution of this amendment ensures the Village’s eligibility for the 2022 Wisconsin Recycling Consolidation Grant. Motion by Ed Kazik, second by Rich Heidel, to approve Amendment XII of the Brown County Municipal Recycling Agreement. The motion passed unanimously.

E. DISCUSSION – Items for future agenda consideration or committee assignment:

Rich Heidel

F. ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION:

- i. Under Wisconsin State Statute 19.85(1)(g): Conferring with legal counsel for the governmental body who is rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with the respect to litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved. RE: Tribal Affairs
- ii. Under Wisconsin State Statute 19.85(1)(e): Deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session. RE: TID Projects/Development Agreements.

Motion by Rich Heidel, second by Ed Kazik, to adjourn to closed session at 8:40pm. The motion passed unanimously.

G. CONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION:

Motion by Rich Heidel, second by Ed Kazik, to convene into open session at 8:52pm. The motion passed unanimously.

H. ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION:

None.

12. ADJOURN

Motion by Dave Dillenburg, second by Ed Kazik, to adjourn at 8:53pm. The motion passed unanimously.