VILLAGE BOARD MEETING
August 24, 2020

Monday, August 24, 2020, at 7:00 p.m., Mayor Mike Serena called to order the regular meeting of the Gardner Village Board in the Village Hall Council Chambers. Roll call – Commissioners Rob Wolf, Tim Hill, Dick Hileman, Erik Smith, and Mayor Mike Serena. Also in attendance was Village Engineer Casey McCollom. Village Attorney Scott Belt were absent. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of July 27, 2020 were presented. Comm. Wolf made motion to approve the minutes as printed, second by Hill. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Wolf, Hill, Smith, Mayor Serena. Pass: Hileman. Nays: None. Motion passed.

A list of current bills was presented. Comm. Hileman moved to approve the payment of the bills as printed, second by Wolf. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Wolf, Hill, Hileman, Smith, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

The Treasurer's Report for the month of July was presented. Comm. Hileman moved to approve the Treasurer's Report, second by Wolf. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Wolf, Hill, Hileman, Smith, and Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

Public Comments

Resident Dan Bell addressed the Board regarding weeds along the Interstate exit and overpass leading to the four-way stop. He had placed a call to the IDOT office in Ottawa and was told that "they go where the pressure is." He proceeded to comment on several properties that are in poor, unsightly, deteriorating condition, several along Main Street. The Mayor responded that letters have been sent, however, the Village has to consider attorney fees when seeking legal action to determine which properties require the most attention.

Unfinished Business

No unfinished business was presented

Agenda –

In March 2019 funding was approved for $1.2 million for the water tower project. Two bids were presented around $1.5 million, the re-bid came in about $50,000 lower. That does not include around $80,000 for pumps for the water plant, we have paid Chamlin $50,000 for the first go-around of engineering fees, an additional $30,000-60,000 is estimated for engineering fees during construction, Jacobs (TIF attorney) must approve TIF funds. . The Treasurer's report shows $1,492,000 in the TIF fund. If we use this TIF money, the Village will have to tighten our belts. There should be no worries regarding the water tower for 35-40 years and about ten years before it would need to be painted. Comm. Hileman made motion to use $200,000 from the general fund and increase TIF money from $800,000 to $1.4 million, second by Wolf. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Wolf, Hill, Hileman, Smith, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

Comm. Hileman made motion to approve the bid for the water tower, second by Hill. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Wolf, Hill, Hileman, Smith, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

Comm. Hileman made motion to approve the audit report as presented by Mack & Associates in written form, second by Smith. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Hill, Hileman, Smith, Mayor Serena. Pass: Wolf. Nays: None. Motion passed.

A discussion was held regarding inspections, failed inspections, re-inspection fees and possibly increasing fees to $50. Board members were asked to review and present suggestions. Hileman brought up outstanding water bills for properties that were sold. Comm. Hileman made motion to table further discussion, second by Wolf. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Wolf, Hill, Hileman, Smith, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

Resident Don Phillips addressed the Board regarding the status of the Village response to his August 10, 2020 letter regarding grass clippings. The Mayor stated that he did not know who made the complaint. Phillips requested either a response regarding witnesses or a retraction of the letter within five days. He further noted that the letter is a matter of public record and could possibly jeopardize his job.

Resident Don Phillips addressed the Board regarding the status of three FOIA requests submitted to the Village related to inspections conducted by the Village, permits issued by the Village and violation notices issued by the Village during the period commencing 12:01 a.m. January 1, 2016 and ending 11:59 p.m, August 14, 2020, with a requested response of September 15, 2020. He mentioned that he would be open to an extension, to be requested in writing.

Unfinished Business

No unfinished business was presented.

Reports

Atty. Belt – Absent

Comm. Hileman – Followed up on Dan Bell's comments regarding chickens, letters have been sent. The ones on Monroe Street have been removed. He has reached out to Senator Joyce with a request to clean the ditch. Since there is an election coming up, maybe he can get some stuff done for us. He also said that it is up to all of the board members to try to get the town cleaned up.

Comm. Smith – Responded to Mr. Bell that he has been walking around town a lot and has seen some of the issues that he brought up, plus vehicles with stickers that have been expired for years. He has approached some of the owners in person to try to get them removed. As far as circumstances regarding the camper issue, the resident has elderly parents visiting from Florida which is a hot spot for COVID and his mother has cancer.

Comm. Hill – Further response on Hileman's comments on chickens, contact the resident and talk to them.

Comm. Wolf –Sometimes talking to residents ends up in an altercation, so instead we are sending letters. Our attorney's bill last month was $153. There are some instances where we need legal action, but we try to take care of things here with the Board.

Casey McCollom – Nothing to report

Clerk Malinowski – Nothing to report

Mayor Serena – Many trees and large limbs came down in the recent storm and our maintenance workers did a good job cleaning up where residents brought them to the street. The all-town garage sales were held August 21-24. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting and wearing face coverings. We did receive one complaint regarding a business who was not enforcing the mandate.

As there was no further business brought before the council, a motion to adjourn was made by Comm. Wolf, second by Hill. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Hill, Hileman, Smith, Mayor Serena. Pass: Wolf. Nays: None. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

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Pat Malinowski, Clerk