VILLAGE BOARD MEETING
February 28, 2022

Monday, February 28, 2022, 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 Dick Hileman, Rob Wolf, Tim Hill, and Mayor Mike Serena. Comm. Erik Smith was absent, but arrived during Executive Session. Village Engineer Casey McCollom and Village Attorney Bryan Wellner were absent. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of February 14, 2022 were presented. Comm. Hileman made motion to approve the minutes as printed, second by Hill. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Hileman, Wolf, Hill, Mayor Serena. 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. Hileman, Wolf, Hill, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

Public Comments

No public comments were presented

Agenda –

Comm. Hileman made motion to approve Option B of an agreement with Stewart Spreading, Inc. to clean the sewer ponds, second by Wolf. There were two options presented; option A would cost around $100,000 for ponds 2 and 3; option B would run $180,000 for cells 1, 2 and 3. This company will take care of EPA permits but the Village will be responsible for the permit fees. When testing is done, the cost would increase if radium is found due to more restrictive disposal options. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Hileman, Wolf, Hill, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

A public forum was held on February 22 and those who signed up to speak were about a 50/50 mix; those who spoke were mostly against. The proposed ballot referendum would offer a choice to keep the train horns or a quiet zone during night time hours of 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Any costs (engineering fees, signs, etc.) would be the responsibility of the Village. The Main Street crossing would require Grundy County approval. Comm. Wolf made motion, second by Hileman, to table the decision to the March 14 Board Meeting. Mayor Serena will consult with Kay Olson for further instruction. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Hileman, Wolf, Hill, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

The owners of a property at the northwest corner of Main and Railroad Streets have offered to donate the property to the Village. The Village would be responsible for deed transfer and fees, and demolition of the building. There might also be an issue of asbestos. Comm. Hileman moved to table the issue and look into possible options to dispose of or sell the property, second by Wolf. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Hileman, Wolf, Hill, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

Three bids were received to replace the fire hydrant by the bus stop at Jefferson and Depot Streets. Comm. Hileman made motion to accept the low bid of $24,875.00 by Conley Excavating, second by Wolf. The Village will be responsible for patching the road. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Hileman, Wolf, Hill, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

Unfinished Business –

No unfinished business was presented

Reports

Attorney Bryan Wellner – Absent

Comm. Hileman – Bids for power rates negotiations are coming March 3.

Comm. Smith – Absent

Comm. Hill – Nothing to report

Comm. Wolf – Comm. Smith did not meet with Casey due to the snow storm.

Casey McCollom – Absent

Clerk Malinowski – Nothing to report.

Mayor Serena – Reported on the public forum. About 25 people attended. Those that signed up – five were for keeping train horns, four against, two were impartial. Maintenance workers did a good job plowing during the recent snow storm.

There have been issues recently with garbage pick up. Residents should notify the Village Hall if their garbage is not picked up as soon as possible and we will call.

At 7:25 p.m., Comm. Hileman made motion to enter Executive Session regarding 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees of the public body, second by Wolf. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Hileman, Wolf, Hill, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

At 8:15 p.m., Comm. Hileman made motion to Reconvene, second by Wolf. Comm. Hill left and Comm. Smith arrived at 7:30 p.m., during Executive Session. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Hileman, Wolf, Smith, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

Due to COVID, the Maintenance workers were unable to attend classes and obtain licenses for water or sewer. Those employees will be informed that they must obtain a license by April 1, 2023. Once they achieve a license, they will receive a $1.00/hour increase. As an incentive, they will receive a $1,000 bonus if they get a license by December 31, 2022; if they miss that deadline but get certification by April 1, 2023, they will receive a $500 bonus. If they receive another license within six months after the first one, they will receive another $1,000 bonus. If they do not get certification by April 1, 2023, the Village may look into different employees. This does not mean we would dismiss anyone, but the Village needs to have licensed employees on staff. Comm. Hileman made motion, second by Wolf, to approve this policy. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Hileman, Wolf, Smith, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

Comm. Hileman reported on Homewood Disposal's request to debit our checking account on the day of billing. Hileman talked to them and said that we were against that.

As there was no further business brought before the council, a motion to adjourn was made by Comm. Wolf, second by Hileman. Roll call – Ayes: Comm. Hileman, Wolf, Smith, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

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Pat Malinowski, Clerk