VILLAGE BOARD MEETING
August 28, 2023

Monday, August 28, 2023, 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, Brad Kingma, Erik Smith, Tim Hill, and Mayor Serena. Village Engineer Casey McCollom was also present. Village Attorney Bryan Wellner was absent. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of August 14, 2023, were presented. Mayor Serena noted that, under Public Comments, a used combo should be $20,000-$30,000, not $2,000-$3,000; Comm. Smith said that it should be $72,000. Comm. Wolf made motion to approve the minutes with the correction, second by Kingma. Roll call – Ayes: Wolf, Kingma, Smith, Hill, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

A list of current bills was presented. Comm. Wolf moved to approve payment of the bills as printed, second by Hill. The list included a buyout payment for the copier. The contract ran out and we had a chance to purchase it outright. Roll call – Ayes: Wolf, Kingma, Smith, Hill, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

Public Comments

Resident Sharon Pickles addressed the Board regarding trees growing in front of a house on Odell (Pfeifer). Mayor Serena said the lawn is taken care of and our ordinances do not cover trees. We will try to reach out to the owners to see if they can make an effort to clean it up. She also mentioned Gentry's construction business on Main Street. There is no ordinance regarding construction equipment, only farm equipment. The sign in front is actually on the county right-of-way. The house at Wilmington and Center has plywood on all of the windows and the whole backyard is filled with wood from a tree which was recently cut down. A child lives in the house. The health department has been contacted and made a visit.

Resident Rick Marketti addressed the Board regarding Royal Blue. They never did come in for an extension on the building permit, which expires the beginning of September. The state mowed the ditches near the interstate. Marketti mentioned the grant money Braceville received for water lines, but Casey McCollom reported that it was forgiveness loan, not a grant. Mayor Serena provided numbers on TIF payments for last year.

Unfinished Business – No unfinished business was presented

Agenda

A lengthy discussion was held regarding sewer plant improvements and related funding. John and Tyler with T & J Water Wastewater Solutions and Don Bixby from Chamlin were also present to provide information and answer questions. They presented a chart showing sewer plant compliant/ non-compliant issues from January 2022 through July 2023. The non-compliant issues seem to arise during the summer months. Comm. Hill has been doing some research and had questions regarding the system that has been recommended, and feels that other options should be considered before committing to the proposed system. Comm. Kingma made motion to table funding for this project, second by Hill. Roll call – Ayes: Hill, Wolf, Kingma, Smith, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed. A plan for sewer plant improvements should be prepared so that we demonstrate to the EPA that we are proactive and, in the event a grant application becomes available, we are prepared to submit one.

Comm. Kingma moved to approve solicitation of donations at Village locations by Knights of Columbus for their annual fund drive September 15, 16 and 17, second by Smith. Roll call – Ayes: Hill, Wolf, Kingma, Smith, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

Comm. Wolf made motion, second by Kingma, to approve All-Town Clean-up date of Monday, October 16. Roll call – Ayes: Wolf, Kingma, Smith, Hill, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed.

Reports

Attorney Bryan Wellner – Absent

Comm. Hill – The BP outside of town has closed.

Comm. Smith – Someone was trimming the bushes at the Dollar General when he drove into town this evening.

Comm. Kingma – Nothing to report

Comm. Wolf – Asked Casey about grants Morris got for their parks. Casey though they were 50/50 grants, where the municipality has to match grants. Many grants take into account median income.

Casey McCollom – Information regarding use of MFT funds for purchase of equipment. He has not found where it allows for that but he has made a call and is waiting for a response. He has been researching grants that are available and one that might be beneficial is for lead service line. A requirement of all water systems is to have a lead service line inventory done by April 2024. The grant pays to have an outside source put together the inventory. Chamlin has some ready-made forms. Some data will need to be provided by the Clerk.

Regarding the train horn issue, the county transportation committee decided that they did not want to give the jurisdiction of the Main Street crossing. That would eliminate that particular crossing. It was the legal team that does not want to grant the approval. Fortunately, we were able to cancel the signs order.

On the Safe Routes to School grant, we have received letters of support from both the grade school and the high school, as well as about 75 completed surveys from the high school. The grade school has an open house coming up and they will try to get the parents to submit the surveys. The Sheriff said that he would support it, as he is all about safety. Casey needs a hard decision on which route we want to go with. The school bus stops would not qualify for the SRTS grant.

Clerk Malinowski – We have received a thank you from Dad's Day for our support.

Mayor Serena – Concerning the property at Main and Jackson which was purportedly the Dunlap gas station, we can find nothing from the EPA or Morris records that it might have been a gas station and that there might be an underground gas tank on that site. If the Village does accept the donation of the property, we have to be very careful that it is free and clear of any contamination.

As there was no further business brought before the council, a motion to adjourn was made by Comm. Hill, second by Kingma. Roll call – Ayes: Wolf, Kingma, Smith, Hill, Mayor Serena. Nays: None. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

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Pat Malinowski, Clerk