

VILLAGE MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a meeting of the La Farge Village Board will be held on Monday, October 12, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. at the Emergency Services building, located at 201 S. Cherry Street. To reduce transmission of COVID-19, All participants, including the public, can join by calling 634-6666 or 888-366-4316 and entering ID 14048. Any questions, please call 608-625-4422.

AGENDA:

1. Call to order/Roll Call
2. Verification of Meeting Posting/Publishing
3. Approval of previous meetings minutes
4. Correspondence
5. Public Comment
6. Auditor Melanie Lendosky (Johnson Block & Co), for an audit financial review
7. Meaghan Gustafson, La Farge School District Administrator, to share information about the upcoming referendum question and related project.
8. Jerry Den Boer, Benefit Advisors Insurance, to review/approve health insurance changes
9. Regular Utility Business
10. Discussion on Main Street Reconstruction project
11. Discussion on the EDA grant:
 - **Present Reports of Assessments
 - **Overview of Site Selection and Feasibility
12. Any old business
13. Action on a new operator license application
14. Discussion/Action on an ad in the Driftless Wisconsin map
15. Discussion/Action on an Animal Care Provider Agreement
16. Police report and ordinance update
17. Committee reports and updates
18. Approval to pay the Bills
19. Motion to convene into closed session, in accordance with Wisconsin State Statutes section 19.85 (1)(c),
for considering employment for the Utility Clerk/Bookkeeper position
20. Motion to return to open session and continue with the board meeting.
21. Action to hire a new Utility Clerk/Bookkeeper for the Utilities
22. Adjournment

Village Clerk/Treasurer

Kimberly Walker,

Posted 10/9/2020

VILLAGE OF LA FARGE
Regular Board Meeting Monday, October 12, 2020

*President Cheryl Purvis called the regular meeting of the La Farge Village Board to order at 6:30 p.m. at the Emergency Services building. Due to COVID-19, participants were offered a conference calling option.

Roll Call - Present at the meeting:

All Board Members: Cheryl Purvis, Barbara Melvin, Aaron Nemec, Terry Jensen, Aaron Appleman, Frank Quinn, and Reggie Nelson (conference call).

Joining by conference calling: News reporter Bonnie Sherman, Nick Burnard, and Jerry Den Boer.

Also present: News reporter Lonnie Muller, Public Works Manager Wayne Haugrud, Meaghan Gustafson, Police Chief Jonathon Brown, Melanie Lendosky, and Clerk Kimberly Walker.

*Verification of meeting publishing in the La Farge Episcopo and posting at the Bank, Post Office, and Village Office on October 9, 2020 was given.

*Jensen moved, Quinn seconded to approve the previous meetings minutes: (9-14-20/Regular Village board meeting; 9-24-20/Finance & Personnel committee meeting; 9-28-20/Economic Flood Recovery committee meeting; 9-29-20/Finance & Personnel committee meeting; 10-6-20/Regular library board meeting; and 10-7-20/Finance & Personnel committee meeting). (Carried).

*Correspondence: None.

*Public Comment: None.

*Melanie Lendosky, village auditor with Johnson Block & Company, was present to review the financials for the village and utilities for the year ending 12-31-2019. Three handouts were given: the main audit report with all funds and activities, a communications report for the board, and a summary sheet of the two which was reviewed. There were no problems with any of the reports. Overall, the general fund increased the fund balance by \$75,000. The village is recovering nicely. The sewer utility had losses, so need to do something with the rates. The PSC just approved the electric for a rate increase, which will be put into effect soon. Water did a 3% increase in 2020, which has helped them out. A summary of the TIF district was given of where things are currently at and looked at the long-term debt obligations. The village has 42% of its debt capacity remaining. Melanie was thanked for attending.

*Meaghan Gustafson, School District Administrator, was present to give a presentation on the upcoming 5.5-million-dollar school referendum question on the ballot for the November 3rd election. She explained what they've been working on for the past year for projects and repairs, for infrastructure needs, updating the HVAC system, storm water drainage improvements, addressing accessibility issues, and conversion of the old boiler room into academic space. The tax impact is \$2.24 per 1,000 of valuation. With the low interest rates now, this is a good time to do these to invest in the children.

*Jerry Den Boer, from Benefit Advisors, was present on conference calling, to review the changes in the upcoming renewal of the health insurance. Current carrier, WEA Trust, is taking a 30% increase in premiums, due to a lot of major claims this past year. Frank said at the last personnel committee meeting, this was discussed. Jerry got us quotes from many other companies, and the Quartz G403 came in the best for the employees, at a 16% decrease from our current rates. Jerry said many municipalities are getting out of the consortium, as it's too expensive. Quartz is an HMO, with Gundersen and the UW system. This is a \$40,000 savings from the current plan. The rates could change about 1% with Quartz on January 1st, as these rates only went to December 1st. The vision is a separate cost with WEA. We can stay with this. Rates are low and shouldn't change much. Jerry said he would do an employee meeting to explain the new plan to everyone. Quinn moved, Melvin seconded to switch to the Quartz Gold G403 plan. (Carried).

*Utility business:

**Today there was an unplanned outage from Dairyland Power. Someone hit an underground wire around 11:40 a.m. We started our generator shortly after noon, for about 1 ½ hours until the problem was fixed.

**October 19th is going to be a planned outage with Dairyland, from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. We will be running our generator as they're updating equipment at their substation.

**October 27th is a stack test (air emissions test), which is required every 5 years. It's a 4-hour run. Cost is paid thru UMMEG. The 18 communities involved have a fund set aside. We may have to pay up to \$500.

**The electric rate case was approved. It will go into effect either on the December or January billing.

**A copy of the annual Compliance Maintenance Annual Report was in the board packets. This was submitted to the DNR. The influent flow was the only problem, with a "C" grade. High rainfall is a major problem. With the upcoming Main Street sanitary sewer project, this may help reduce the inflow. The rest of the report received "A's". Good report!

**Three new electric poles have been set up in the ESB field (out back). Originally, the pole at the Free Methodist Church was going to be replaced, but decided to tie it together, to have a loop, to have better circuits control. The only cost is for the poles. The braces were free as we helped Viola out a few days.

*Main Street reconstruction project: Wayne met with Delta 3 and the DOT last Friday and went over some options with the paving project. In 2025, Hwy 82 will be ground and repaved. So we're looking at some ways to offset our costs. The DOT is looking at some options. They are going to discuss this with their supervisors more in depth and get back to us.

*Discussion on the EDA grant: Three maps were brought in for the board to review on what the Economic Flood Recovery committee has been working on. One showed a levee system, which Cheryl explained the 2 preliminary ideas being proposed. The other maps show future subdivisions. The planning being worked on is for 10-20 years out, showing what opportunities that may be available for development.

*Old business: None.

*New business: Jensen moved, Quinn seconded to approve an operator license for Natalie Morris. (Carried). (She holds a current license in the Village of Cashton).

*Nemec moved, Appleman seconded to approve an ad in the Driftless Wisconsin map for 2021, for \$251.00, along with LAPA's \$100.00 contribution (total of \$351.00). (Carried).

*Quinn moved, Jensen seconded to approve the Animal Care Provider Agreement with the Driftless Humane Society for the 2021 year, for the per animal dogs only plan. Cost is \$228.51 per unclaimed dog, and an initial fee of \$228.51 due in January. (Carried). (This is an increase of \$3.51 from 2020).

*Police report/update: Chief Brown had 75 calls for service in September. There were 4 grass/weed violations, and one arrest. On an ordinance update, one violator they're taking to court keeps filing motions to change judges, so still waiting on that one. Working on other ones, also.

*Committee Reports:

**Finance: Set budget meetings: 6 p.m. on October 27th is the finance/personnel. October 28th at 5:30 p.m. is the Clinic, followed by Police at 6, Parks at 6:30, and Streets & Utilities at 7 p.m.

**Library: Barb reported the library budget is finished, and the library is semi closed with the current COVID numbers being up. They're offering curbside service until the numbers go down.

**Economic Flood recovery committee: October 29th is the first public workshop at 6 p.m. at the community center.

**Cheryl has done training for Zoom. Will be working with Kim next week for using at future meetings.

*Quinn moved, Jensen seconded to approve payment of the bills. (Carried).

*Quinn moved, Appleman seconded to convene into closed session, in accordance with Wisconsin State Statutes section 19.85 (1)(c), for considering employment for the Utility Clerk/Bookkeeper position. (Carried). Public in attendance left the room at this time.

CLOSED SESSION

*Nemec moved, Appleman seconded to return to open session and continue with the meeting. (Carried).

*Quinn moved, Jensen seconded to hire Greg Lawton as the new Utility Clerk/Bookkeeper. (Carried 5-2, with Purvis and Appleman voting no).

*Quinn moved, Appleman seconded to adjourn. (Carried). Adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Kimberly Walker, Village Clerk/Treasurer