

VILLAGE OF COCHRANE
VILLAGE BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2020, 7:00 PM
VILLAGE HALL, 102 E 5TH ST, COCHRANE, WI

Notice of meeting was posted at the Post Office, Village Hall, Alliance Bank
and on the Village's website Monday, December 7, 2020, 12 PM.

Members Present: Village President Dave Busch, Trustees: Stan Meier, Greg Hofer, Chuck Speltz and Kari Wilde and Tim Bossert. A resignation from the board was received from Dallas Dworschack on 12/7/2020.

Meeting was called to order by Village President Dave Busch at 7 PM and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public comments: Edna Meier asked why the board meeting notice was not published in the paper. The village is not required by law to publish the notice, only to post the notice in three places. By not publishing in the paper the village saves approximately \$120 per year. Edna also asked who is responsible to follow up on ordinance violations and it is the responsibility of the ordinance committee. Orlin Brommer thanked the board for reading his letter regarding the ambulance funding.

Various options and thoughts were presented and discussed for funding SVEMS (Scenic Valley Emergency Medical Service). Per legal counsel, the village could charge a fee per household; fees will vary depending on municipality participation and the dollar amount budgeted. The various amounts ranging from \$36.63 to \$96.28 per household annually. Some concerns regarding the fee option are, the village would have to manage the logistics of the billing, the receivables and the associated costs. Additionally, if not all residents pay the fee, the village is still responsible to pay SVEMS and where in the budget are those funds going to come from? The only other possible resource is the pool funding, but we can't keep taking from that as they need the funds too. The village has no way to enforce payment of these funds from the households, except perhaps through an ordinance. The board is also concerned that if one entity wants bills sent to residents, it might set a precedent for other entities to do the same. The village could also propose a referendum in the April election which, if passed, would increase the property tax levy, which in turn would fund the requested increase, however those funds would not be available until 2022. The referendum has to go through the village because SVEMS is not a governmental agency. SVEMS presented a petition which had 43 Cochrane resident signatures who were in favor of the funding increase. SVEMS has payment options of monthly, quarterly and annually. SVEMS stressed the severe shortage of volunteers which is currently 5 active volunteers covering a 24/7 schedule. Covid-19 has affected the decrease in volunteers. They have had 68 runs year-to-date, 14 non-transports and 12 have been charged the on-scene care call fee. There have not been any calls that have been dropped. They do have a collections company that works to increase payments to SVEMS and they will try to increase the percentage collected, but nothing is guaranteed. All four municipalities have to agree to the full funding increase for SVEMS to continue operation. The increase funding request is strictly to fund on-call pay of \$2/hour. The goal for the on-call pay is to attract more volunteers. Even though on-call pay has not worked in other municipalities, SVEMS feels they have a younger population pool to pull from and will be successful in their recruiting efforts. If the recruiting is not successful, SVEMS states that they will not come back to the municipalities and request more funding. When asked if they considered merging with Alma, SVEMS stated their volunteers didn't want to drive that far. If this plan for recruitment does not work, SVEMS has no secondary plan; many ambulance services are having funding issues. Winona ambulance service is funded through the hospitals and bills are sent directly to the service call resident. With 3 volunteers on-call 24/7, that is an increase of \$52,560, \$12,375 of that being the Village of Cochrane's portion. Previously the board approved \$4,500 of that request, which is an additional \$1,125 over previous year requests. Once our audit is completed, we will have actual fund amounts to see where we could

possibly pull money from; perhaps start a separate ambulance fund to prepare for possible future increase requests, but again where is that money going to come from? Motion Chuck, second Tim to schedule a Special Meeting on Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at 7 PM at Village Hall to further discuss SVEMS funding. No resolution for ambulance funding due to the need for further financial review and discussion.

The January Caucus is scheduled for Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 6:45 PM at Village Hall. Offices up for election are Village President: Dave Busch, Board Trustees: Tim Bossert, Greg Hofer and Stan Meier and also board seat held by recently resigned Dallas Dworschack. Notice will be published and posted at least 5 days before the scheduled Caucus.

Clerk reported that it costs on average \$100 per month to publish monthly meeting minutes and \$10 per month to publish monthly meeting notices.

The sewer lagoons were prepared for winter by blowing out the lines and sucking out the manhole. The reservoir is at the winter level and currently has no leaks.

Maintenance reported that some residents are getting sewer backflow when the sewer lines are jetted and should we give notice to residents so they are prepared for the possible backflow. The board agreed that a notice should be given to the residents, which maintenance will provide.

Maintenance will work with the county on the 2022 Road/Bridge project running from the bridge on County Road OO, up Main Street to County Road O. Tom Platteter, Maintenance Supervisor, will acquire estimates for the resurfacing of the parking areas along Main St from the edge of town to County Road O. The Local Road Improvement Program funds are earmarked for the resurfacing of 5th St from Main St to Park St.

Motion Chuck, second Stan to approve the Operator Licenses for Abby Husser, Desiree Koenig, Brent Greene, Lori Wicka and Katie McFarlin at the Buffalo Saloon.

Motion Greg, second Kari to approve the bills. All yes, approved.

Motion Kari, second Chuck to approve the November 10, 2020 board meeting minutes.

The building permit for Dennis & Kathleen Speltz was approved.

At 8:25 PM, Motion Tim, seconded Chuck to adjourn the meeting. All yes, approved.

/s/ Marcia Drysdale, Village Clerk/Treasurer