

# REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

VILLAGE OF HEMINGFORD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

February 20, 2024-6:00pm

700 Box Butte Ave. Hemingford, NE. 69348

Zoom Virtual Meeting information

Meeting ID 832 6655 8591 Passcode 293082

Pledge of Allegiance

Opening prayer by – Jake Frost

Public Open Meeting Act poster location was pointed out on the north wall of Council Chambers located at the Village office.

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Mahony, Hunter, Frost, Wacker

Absent: Novotny\*

Motion to excuse absent Trustee Novotny from the February 20, 2024 meeting of the Hemingford Board of Trustees by Frost, Second by Mahony

Voting Aye: Mahony, Hunter, Frost, Wacker

\*Zoom: Novotny\* Note: Novotny appeared virtually by Zoom out of matter of convenience, not pursuant to an emergency declaration as anticipated by Neb.Fev.Stat.81-1411(7)(a), and therefore, Novotny absented from voting throughout the meeting.

**Consent Calendar** items included the Minutes of the January 16, 2024 Regular meeting Claims against the Village of \$50,706.74, Claims against the Utilities of \$127,619.07. January 2024 Village Financial Statements and Bank Reconciliations reports. January 2024 Library Report. Appointment of Taelar Krause to the Hemingford Redevelopment Authority (CRA).

**Motion** by Hunter, second by Mahony to approve the consent calendar as read.

**Voting Aye:** Mahony, Hunter, Frost, Wacker

**Absent:** Novotny

**Hemingford Care Center update:** Jeremy Summers and Char Zandar from the Hemingford Care Center reported all is going well, the conversion from Assisted Living to a locked Memory Care Unit has gone smoothly and now has five residents and one new one moving in the next day. The nursing home side of the building has 21 residents, for a total of 26. The short-term goal is 30 residents total by June 1, 2024. Care Center staff and Vetus Foundation want to become a part of the community through community events, Chamber of Commerce and the Box Butte Development Corporation. The Care Center is hosting the BBDC Perfect Blend Coffee on Tuesday March 12, 2024 at 9 am. Staffing continues to be in issue as it is across the state, Char attended the job fair at the Alliance High School early in February and fielded lots of questions about long term healthcare from the students there. At this time there are no requests of the Village or concerns regarding the facility.

**Discussion and possible action:** Hemingford Volunteer Fire Department update and approval of the Interlocal Agreement between the Hemingford Volunteer Fire Department, Hemingford Rural Fire

Protection District and the Village of Hemingford. Barb Keegan reported the department has a full roster, there have been 3 fire calls and 22 EMS calls. The new ambulance is #112 in line to be built, the new billing company is able to complete and send out bills within 24 hours.

- Barb Keegan

**Motion** by Hunter, Second by Frost to approve the Interlocal Agreement between the Hemingford Volunteer Fire Department, Hemingford Rural Fire Protection District and the Village of Hemingford.

**Voting Aye:** Mahony, Hunter, Frost, Wacker

**Absent:** Novotny

**Discussion and possible action:** Abatement Agreement

**No action** was taken regarding approval of the agreement with Blumanthals. The Village was informed less than 24 hours prior to the meeting that Blumanthals no longer wished to enter into the prepared abatement agreement with the Village and there were no longer represented by an attorney. Due to the non-emergent nature of the matter, the agenda could not be amended to include the Blumanthal's previously requested nuisance hearing, originally scheduled for the Village's November 21, 2024 regular meeting and then continued at the request of the Blumanthals and their representative to the January 16, 2024 regular meeting, and finally to this meeting. Due to the understanding that parties had reached an abatement agreement, which alleviated any need for a hearing on this matter, the Village removed this hearing from the agenda. At the meeting in the presence of Michael Blumthal and Betty June Blood, the Village Board set a special meeting for Monday, February 26, 2024 at 6:00 P.M. to allow the Blumanthals to show cause at this time as to why the nuisances identified on their property should not be abated. No objection as to the date and time of the special meeting was made by either Blood or Blumanthal. Notice of the special meeting will be posted in three prominent places around the Village.

**Discussion and possible action:** After discussion at the January 16, 2024 Board meeting Trustee Frost continued researching the cost of an AED (Automatic Electronic Defibrillator) to be purchased by the Village for safety and health precautions to be stored at the Pool during the operating season, and at the Village utilities shop or Village office at times when the pool is closed. Frost requested that the Village purchase Philips HeartStart AED model M5066A-RO1 in the amount of \$1687.32.

**Motion** by Mahony, Second by Hunter to purchase 1 Philips HeartStart AED model M5066A-RO1 in the amount of \$1687.32, to be kept available at the pool during the operating season then during off season at the utilities shop of Village office.

**Voting Aye:** Mahony, Hunter, Frost, Wacker

**Absent:** Novotny

**Discussion and possible action:** Potential purchase of a 2016 Bobcat Toolcat utility vehicle on Purple Wave Auctions. The vehicle would serve many uses in the village, winter time it would be able to help with snow removal and sanding, in the summertime spraying and fertilizing, along with other uses. This vehicle includes 3 equipment attachments.

**Motion** by Mahony, Second by Hunter to have Hemingford Utility Superintendent bid up to \$20,000 plus 10% auction fee and shipping on the 2016 Bobcat Toolcat item number L09487 on Purple Wave Auctions.

**Voting Aye:** Mahony, Hunter, Frost, Wacker

**Absent:** Novotny

**Discussion and Possible action:** The final design for the Splash pad is a bit bigger than planned. If the original location is used, the pad will overlap a 4" water line, which would be problematic if the line ever needed to be accessed. The Splash pad will fit well on the east side of the pool, and won't interfere with existing infrastructure and have room to spare. Water and electric connections will be just as easy but sewer will be a larger but very doable project. There will also be a need to hire a general contractor to make the utility connections to ensure the project is up to state code, there will be some additional concrete work and fencing that a general contractor should take care of.

**Motion** by Mahony, Second by Frost to move the splash pad from the northwest side of the pool to the east side of the pool, also have the Administrator work with MC Schaff to put together a "Request for Proposal" for general contracting services to make utility connections, additional concrete work and fencing for the splash pad.

**Voting Aye:** Mahony, Hunter, Frost, Wacker

**Absent:** Novotny

**Splash Pad Update:** Invoices are starting to come in for the splash pad parts and components. Grant funds can be drawn down only twice, it is up to the Village when to make the drawdowns. Village Board of Trustees instructed the Administrator to wait and draw down one time at the end of the project.

**Street Project Phase 1:** Surveying is completed and design is on schedule to bid out late spring/early summer, most likely May.

**Utilities Department Report:** Lead Service Line Inventory letters have been sent out again, Seth and Kyle have recertified pesticide licenses, regular monthly water samples were delayed (postal service issue) twice last month, and if that continues to be a problem the state could ask us to find a closer lab. There is a lab in Scottsbluff that is associated with MC Schaff but the samples will have to be driven to Scottsbluff and the testing fee is unknown. We will start advertising for summer help -Kyle Huss  
Chairman Wacker ask the Clerk to check into the testing fee at the Scottsbluff lab.

**Discussion and Possible action:** Upgrade of the Village office, banking dedicated laptop to a solid-state driver. This will increase the life of the machine by 5 to 7 years as well as increase the speed of the machine. Purchasing of a new laptop to use remotely while traveling to conferences and trainings, as well as a training tool for office personnel. The new laptop will be set up to mirror the office desktop machines, and can be used to assist remotely.

**Motion** by Hunter, Second by Frost to purchase a new laptop and upgrade the existing bank dedicated laptop to a solid-state driver as quoted by Mobius Communications in the amount of \$1393.74.

**Voting Aye:** Mahony, Hunter, Frost, Wacker

**Absent:** Novotny

**Discussion and Possible action:** The BMO bank credit card is charging high interest rates (17%) as well as a \$39 fee if payment is late. Nebraska Bank is now offering a bank credit card that the Village could apply for. The Administrator is seeking authority to close the BMO bank card account provided the interest rate on the Nebraska Bank card is lower.

**Motion** by Frost, Second by Mahony to close the BMO bank card account and reopen a credit card account with Nebraska Bank provided interest rates are lower.

**Voting Aye:** Mahony, Hunter, Frost, Wacker

**Absent:** Novotny

**Administrators Report:** Clerk School is March 17<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> I will return to the office on Monday March 25. Kyle will be working in the office for the most part and will take my place at the March 19<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting. Box Butte County Sheriffs Office reports 29 calls for service and 4 traffic stops, a full report is included in the board packet and is available at the Village office during business hours. The Hemingford Development Corporation (Wheatridge Apartments) has requested that the Village Board look into the feasibility of incorporating Wheatridge into the Village Housing Authority or a similar entity. More information will be presented at the April regular meeting. Strategic Planning session will be April 2, 2024 at Mobius Communications, as a part of the planning session I will be sending out a community survey as well as an internal survey with the results to be shared at the planning session. The Village will also be participating in a “Where’s Thermie” promotion to increase more community engagement in the Choice Gas program. - Barb Straub

**Discussion and Possible action:** Hemingford Board of Trustees instructed Village Office staff to offer a \$10 utility credit or \$10 Chamber Buck incentive for completion of a Community Survey that will be produced and distributed by the Village Office staff. Incentives will be limited to one (1) per household. The survey will be available March 1, 2024 – March 22, 2024. Results will be presented and discussed at the April 2, 2024 Hemingford Board of Trustees Strategic Planning Session. The community survey will focus on what residents see as needs in the Village, projects that enhance the quality of life in Hemingford, and economic growth of the community.

**Code Enforcement Report:** In January 2024 there were 3 new cases opened and closed, there are 25 cases still open and in progress. There have been 4 individual complaints of aggressive dogs. The incidents involve two different dogs, letters have been sent to the owners, and will continue to work with Box Butte County Sheriffs Office if the animals need to be deemed dangerous. With the number of complaints and dogs seen “at large” within the Village Cotant, Straub, and Attorney Stobel will research the requirements of certification of an animal control officer in the Village, and the feasibility and benefits of such an officer to the Village. - Kyla Cotant

**Public Comment:** There were no comments or questions from the public.

**Motion** by Mahony, Second by Hunter to adjourn at 7:31pm.

**Voting Aye:** Mahony, Hunter, Frost, Wacker

**Absent:** Novotny

ATTEST:

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Richard Wacker, Chairman

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Barb Straub, Village Clerk