

Village of Franklin  
Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
February 7, 2023  
7:00 pm

Mayor Paul Turpin called the regular monthly meeting of the Village of Franklin Board of Trustees to order at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, February 7, 2023 in the town hall. Trustees present in Village Hall were Abby Flynn, Wyatt Smith, Lauren Whalen, Sarah Carter, Vickie Adkins, and Amanda Ahlers.

Jim Morris from Benton & Associates was present to discuss the Route 104 water project. He gave the invoice to the board. The estimated construction cost is \$330,000. Andy, Jim and Mayor Turpin met to discuss what materials to use. They will use a HDPE 3" pipe like the gas system has. Jim and the board discussed purchasing materials in advance to avoid issues with backorders. Jim will do some more paperwork and get the new piping materials approved by the state. It will cost a bit more to resend the paperwork to the state, but in the long run, the pipe costs will save the Village approximately \$16,000.00. The board also agreed to move forward with bids on the construction. It will be a 30-day bid window, opening on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March. Wyatt Smith made a motion to accept the Benton & Associates invoice for \$3,944.98. Vickie Adkins seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Abby Flynn-yes, Wyatt Smith-yes, Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-yes, and Amanda Ahlers-yes. The motion was carried.

Treasurer Susan Smith presented the Treasurer's Report for January. Susan discussed each business profits & losses, current balances, year-to-date balances and check details. Sarah Carter made a motion to accept the Treasurers Report for January. Lauren Whalen seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Wyatt Smith-yes, Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-yes, Amanda Ahlers-yes and Abby Flynn-yes. The motion was carried. Vickie Adkins made a motion to accept the Bills Paid and to be Paid for January. Amanda Ahlers seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-yes, Amanda Ahlers-yes, Abby Flynn-yes, and Wyatt Smith-yes. The motion was carried.

Clerk Ashley Turpin presented the trustees with minutes from January. Amanda Ahlers made a motion to approve the minutes from January. Abby Flynn seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-yes, Amanda Ahlers-yes, Abby Flynn-yes, Wyatt Smith-yes and Lauren Whalen-yes. The motion was carried.

### **Committee Reports:**

Andy Fairless presented the Utility Supervisor Report. For the lead survey report, Andy received 246 out of 393, thus far. There are 20 that he's received back that the residents are unsure about their materials. Three do believe they have some lead piping. Andy will send another mailer to those who have not responded this week. Nick Speaks passed his water test and is scheduled to take the sewer classes soon. Hopefully by the end of Spring, he'll be certified in sewer also. It is a week class in Edwardsville. The remote camera came in today, but the company will need to come set it up. All of the boards for the picnic tables are painted and the FFA students are now ready to start disassembling the old boards and reassembling with the new

boards. Andy proposed the idea of giving a donation to the FFA class for their work. They volunteered to do the project for the experience. Andy mentioned how much money the village is saving by having them do it and a small monetary donation would show the boards appreciation, but also continue to save a lot of money for the village. Christmas lights are on sale if the village would like to purchase any additional décor. The clear, white lights on the snowflakes need replaced and they are also on sale. Andy said there is a 3.2% loss for the end of the year in water. Possibly next year the company who comes to do leak surveys should come and review the system again. It will not cost as much as it did last time because they have our water system already mapped out. We sold more gas than we bought last year. Andy handed out the bids for snow plow lights for the Ford. They no longer make the old version so the whole system has to be changed. The roof repair company, Sunley Roofs said they'd be here a couple of weeks ago and have not come. Andy gave the board bids for an electrofusion machine that would be used for the water line being put in on Route 104. He's used one about five times in the last five years.

Buildings, Roads, and Drainage – There is nothing new to report from this committee.

Finance/Payroll – There is nothing new to report from this committee.

Insurance – There is nothing new to report from this committee.

Personnel – The board was asked to look into what it would cost to provide dental insurance to the employees. The trustees agree to look into the cost and Mayor Turpin will have the Village insurance agent provide a quote for the next meeting.

Utility Reconnect – There are some people expecting to make payments by the end of the week.

Utilities – Later in the meeting, the board reviewed the 10-month budget for the fiscal year. Natural gas prices are currently down. Our customer's price for the month of January is \$10. The Village did not have any extra natural gas to sell back. Mayor Turpin had Reitha raise the rates to Alexander by .50 cents. We can charge up to .08 cents per gallon for water also. The water provided to Alexander does not provide profit for the Village. They've been charged the Village cost for years. Rate increases will begin in January. If the board waited until February, the Village would lose money which is why Mayor Turpin went ahead and raised the rates by .50 cents.

## **Old Business:**

Jim Morris provided an update on the Route 104 Water Project.

Amanda Ahlers made a motion to go into closed session to discuss property legal action. The board entered into executive session at 8:09 and re-entered into open session at 8:30. Mayor Turpin will have the attorney send letters for the properties discussed during closed session.

The board discussed the burned trailer options in closed session.

Andy Fairless provided an update on the picnic table repairs. He also suggested a monetary donation for the FFA class as an appreciation for their work on the 19 picnic tables. Lauren Whalen made a motion to donate \$500.00 to the Franklin FFA for the work on the picnic tables, upon completion. Abby Flynn seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Abby

Flynn-yes, Wyatt Smith-yes, Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-no, Amanda Ahlers-yes. The motion was carried.

The remote camera is in, but not set-up yet. The company is coming in to get it started.

The Village roof repairs were bid out twice last year. The second company has not showed up when scheduled to come. Mayor Turpin asked the Trustees what they felt should happen. Mayor Turpin will have Andy call to see if the material costs have increased significantly and see if we need to have the project re-bid, even by the same company.

#### **New Business:**

The Board donated to the South County Boosters Club Drawdown event last year. They are asking for donations again this year. Abby Flynn made a motion to donate \$250.00 Lauren Whalen seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Wyatt Smith-no, Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-no, Vickie Adkins-no, Amanda Ahlers-no, and Abby Flynn-yes. The motion failed.

Mayor Turpin updated the information on what is owed from the Lake Water project that was done in 1990. At the end of this year, they will have 3 or 4 months left to pay. They are averaging between \$4,800.00 to \$5,200.00 per year. Once it is paid, there will no longer need to be a separate lake amount in the billing system.

Panhandle wants another FERC trial since FERC ruled against them. Our attorneys said they are going to put in that there should not be a re-trial.

When the Village received the new credit card machine, it had a converge option. However, we already have an email system. It does not charge the debit cards, but it does charge a percentage fee for all credit cards.

Mayor Turpin presented the budget so far. Water will lose significantly due to the Route 104 water project. Water rates may need to be raised. Gas showed a profit last year because of the loan the Village received from the state for the high natural gas prices. We still owe about \$36,000 on that loan. Susan Smith is going to pay it off in April and figure out how much of it is owed by residents. Overall, we are in the hole. About 4 to 6 years ago, we added a \$4 charge to the base of the bill to help offset some of the costs. There are a lot of things that are seeing high price increases within the gas business. There are three possibilities to help. The Village could raise the meter charge, which would provide very little help for expenses. The Village could raise the O&M. Lastly, the O&M could change depending on the season. The winter months can often be difficult for people to afford with high gas prices, so the O&M could be highest in the summer or other low gas usage seasons. The trustees discussed possibly a 3-tiered process for the O&M rates. Summer would be the highest, spring and fall would be in-between, and winter the lowest. Mayor Turpin will speak with Heather from IMGGA to get a monthly breakdown. The board will discuss further in March. Sewer shows a profit in the budget. Municipal looks great. The wind farm money will most likely go to the Route 104 project this year. MFT will use \$40,000.00 approximately, in roadwork this year.

Andy presented bids for the Ford snow plow lights earlier. Wyatt Smith made a motion to purchase snow plow lights from Autoplicity for \$499.82. Vickie Adkins seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-yes, Amanda Ahlers-yes, Abby Flynn-yes, and Wyatt Smith-yes. The motion was carried.

The trustees discussed the Electrofusion machine. All of them agree that they would prefer to wait until all of the water project is complete before spending the money on one.

Sarah Carter made a motion to order white light bulbs for the Christmas snowflakes, as replacement bulbs. Amanda Ahlers seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-yes, Amanda Ahlers-yes, Abby Flynn-yes, Wyatt Smith-yes, and Lauren Whalen-yes. The motion was carried.

Stefanie from Benton & Associates calculated the same work we proposed to have done last year with MFT funds, and it went up about \$20,000.00 this year. We will have \$43,850.00 in roadwork done. Wyatt Smith made a motion to approve the MFT proposal for \$43,850.00. Vickie Adkins seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Vickie Adkins-yes, Amanda Ahlers-yes, Abby Flynn-yes, Wyatt Smith-yes, Lauren Whalen-yes, and Sarah Carter-yes. The motion was carried.

Mayor Turpin explained that a property owner who neighbors Boyers lot, approached him about renting part of Boyers lot or to purchase part of the lot. They would be willing to pay for their half of the surveying. Right now, it is empty. The Village does not use it. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Wyatt Smith made a motion to adjourn. Amanda Ahlers seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Amanda Ahlers-yes, Abby Flynn-yes, Wyatt Smith-yes, Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-yes, and Vickie Adkins-yes. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.