

# VILLAGE OF KALKASKA

MINUTES OF A REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2024  
AT THE KALKASKA COMMISSION ON AGING, 303 S. CORAL STREET, KALKASKA,  
MICHIGAN 49646.

## **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

President Larsen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Aaron Popa, Village Manager; Angie Koon, Village Clerk; Valerie Tracey, Accountant/Treasurer.

PUBLIC PRESENT: Andy Long, Damien White, Christine Bishop, Emily Six, Mark Six, Brian Birgy, Nancy Wright, Connie Farrier, Gayenell Gentelia, Al Parker, Jessica Swift, Lisa Anderson, Brian Fisher, Chris Sorensen, Kathy Sanborn and Cash Cook.

President Larsen led with the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **APPROVAL OF REGULAR AGENDA**

Motion by Miller, second by Yanz, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried on a voice vote.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion by Needham, second by Miller, to approve as presented. Motion carried on a voice vote.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Andy Long, owner of Biggby Coffee at 556 S. Cedar Street, repeated concerns on the Village Master Plan draft. These statements were also made during the Public Hearing held by the Planning Commission on this same date. Long applauded Village boards for their involvement in governmental interests. Long identified his understanding of the Downtown Historical District boundaries, and stated he believes that certain limitations exist on signage in this area. Long stated he believes more funding may be available if the Downtown District had a larger footprint. Long also stated he believes the downtown area should coincide with parade routes through the Village.

Long referenced page 49, table 6, of the Master Plan, which illustrated a goal “*to ensure water and sewer systems are self-supporting through annual ongoing reviews of connection fees and operation and maintenance charge*”, and stated the water quality meets only the minimum standards. Long reported the filters used at Biggby, which cost \$1,649.00 each, are designed to last (3) years. However, due to water quality, these filters must be changed every (4) months. Long stated that merely meeting minimum standards causes customers to spend additional money for better water quality, and encouraged the board to look into this matter.

Judy Archambault and Ricky Allen introduced themselves as the owners of downtown business Hidden Treasures. Archambault stated they had been trying to change the former Bargains Galore sign

when a complaint was made by another business owner. Archambault stated they were originally told by the Village Manager that the sign could be changed but, the day the new sign was purchased, were told it must be removed.

Christine Bishop stated the Bargains Galore sign is older than she is, and believes it should be grandfathered. Bishop added that, after reading the Village Ordinances, she did not see any problem with the sign remaining in place. Bishop referenced the Kalkaska welcome sign, which she has observed for over 20 years and reads “Space to Grow”. (At some time, the unauthorized addition of the word ‘pot’ was placed on this sign). Bishop stated she believes that Kalkaska is only growing pot, and small businesses are being pushed out of town. Bishop further stated she believes small businesses will keep the town, including Railroad Square, going. Bishop encouraged the Village to support small businesses, as she believes Kalkaska will decline without them. Bishop added she has observed other signs to be bright and obtrusive, but there are no complaints being made against these. Bishop asked that Village Council reconsider the matter and allow the sign to remain.

Nancy Wright, a small resale business owner, spoke in support of Hidden Treasures. Wright stated she is a frequent customer of Hidden Treasures, and loves both the store and its owners. Wright stated she feels this store is growing and thriving; and the owners are contributing to the Village of Kalkaska. Wright asked why the Sign Ordinance was changed with no grandfather clauses. Wright stated she believes the store owners’ treatment by the Village and the DDA is appalling, as they are working to obtain a new sign. Wright added she believes the Village should be backing Hidden Treasures as its success helps the Village as well. Wright stated that resale is one of the fastest growing businesses, and she feels the Village should help it to grow.

Justin Chavalía stated he has been assisting the owners of Hidden Treasures with the development of a new sign. Chavalía noted the sign in question has been in place for more than 50 years, and believed there to be a grandfather clause for its protection. Chavalía reviewed the design of the proposed new sign, and stated that vinyl proof work is on pause pending the outcome of this issue.

Christine Bishop stated the owners of Hidden Treasures have made her feel at home, and have personally helped countless families in the area. Bishop reiterated these small business owners are trying to help the community.

**PUBLIC HEARING: To hear public comments on an amendment to the Downtown Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan.**

Motion by Dunham, second by Yanz, to open the Public Hearing. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried. The Public Hearing was opened at 6:19 p.m.

Trustee Dunham asked for clarification as to whether the DDA TIF District is being extended. DDA Associate Director Gayenell Gentelia stated the DDA District is not being changed. Gentelia explained that, per State Statute, a Master Plan and Downtown Development Plan must be adopted every five years. Gentelia further explained these documents reflect upcoming plans for both the Village and the DDA, and demonstrate how revenue is used. Gentelia advised the Downtown Development Plan’s amendment consists of removing completed projects and inserting new ones.

Dunham asked whether the charts and tables within the Downtown Development Plan will be labeled after adoption. Gentelia advised it was necessary to ensure there were no recommended changes by the Council or public before labeling these.

Motion by Needham, second by Miller, to close the Public Hearing. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried. The Public Hearing was closed at 6:23 p.m.

### **BILLS/FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Trustee Needham stated the committee met on February 12, 2024 to review current invoices, payroll reconciliations, monthly payroll, journal entries and bank reconciliations.

Motion by Needham, second by Dunham, to pay bills as presented in the amount of \$81,393.17. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

Needham stated the committee also reviewed a proposed amendment to the Village Fee Schedule, and recommend its approval.

Motion by Needham, second by Miller, to adopt Resolution 2024-007 Amendment to Village Fee Schedule. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

Needham reported the committee also reviewed a proposed amendment to the Village Returned Payment Policy, and recommend its approval.

Motion by Needham, second by Dunham, to approve the Village Returned Payment Policy. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

### **REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES**

**Public Works Committee** – Trustee Bishop stated the committee considered a request from the property owner at 129 E. Kalkaska Street for a utility bill adjustment due to a leak, as the water did not enter the Village sewer system.

Motion by Bishop, second by Yanz, to issue a credit to the utility customer in the amount of \$598.95. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

Bishop stated the committee also discussed water rates, with no recommendation at this time.

**Housing Development Committee** – Trustee Miller stated the committee discussed the proposed short-term rental Ordinance, specifically where to allow short-term rentals and how many to permit. Miller stated the consensus was to allow short-term rentals only in the Downtown Commercial and Regional Commercial zones, with a limit of five to see how it works. Miller stated the committee proposed to revisit the limit in a year, and possibly allow more if it is working well. The committee is

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still working on licensing and violation fees, as well as terms and conditions; and hopes to meet again prior to the March Village Council meeting to prepare a recommendation. There is no recommendation at this time.

## **REPORTS FROM VILLAGE OFFICERS**

### **POLICE REPORT**

Chief Popa stated that new officer Nehemiah Proehl is beginning his fifth week with the Department of Public Safety. Popa stated Officer Proehl brings experience from Antrim County, and is a great fit for the department.

### **MANAGER'S REPORT**

Manager Popa reported attending a meeting at the Kalkaska Memorial Health Center this evening, and found it very informative. Popa recommended holding a special Council meeting to advise members what is being proposed by the hospital.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Larsen stated that Council is trying to resolve several issues that have not been examined for a while. Larsen assured the public they are doing their best for both the Village and its residents. Larsen advised they will re-examine the issue with the sign downtown to determine if something can be resolved, but the Village Ordinance must be followed.

Judy Archambault, owner of Hidden Treasures, stated the current sign is the only means of promoting both the business and the parking lot behind it.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS** – None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Consider Adoption of Ordinance 2024-002 Adopting Downtown Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan**

– Motion by Miller, second by Needham, to adopt Ordinance 2024-002. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

**Consider Adoption of Resolution 2024-003 Village Master Plan** – Trustee Needham stated that multiple entities worked together in the drafting of the Master Plan, and appreciates the work of all those involved. Trustee Dunham stated that a survey result found on page 34 seems to repeat itself.

Connie Farrier of the Kalkaska Memorial Health Center thanked the Village for removing medical marijuana from the Medical District, as she stated this is not part of the core District. This comment was also made during the Public Hearing held by the Planning Commission on this same date. Farrier also stated the hospital intends to request that all properties it owns be re-zoned as Medical District. Farrier stated these requests are forthcoming.

Motion by Needham, second by Miller, to adopt Resolution 2024-003. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

**Consider Approval of Contract for North Country Trail Site Improvements Package** – DDA Director Cash Cook explained the (3) bids received are for the dirt work to create the trail’s parking lot and boardwalk/bridge assembly. DDA Associate Director Gayenell Gentelia added the contract under consideration is for the construction and development of the project, except for construction of the actual bridge. Cook stated that bids for the bridge component will be let next week.

Motion by Dunham, second by Miller, to approve the Contract with Miller Contracting, LLC. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses and Needham; Nays – Trustee Yanz; Absent – None. Motion carried.

**Consider Recommendation from Village DDA to Appoint Rick Matley to Vacancy on Board** – Motion by Miller, second by Yanz, to appoint Matley to the DDA. Motion carried on a voice vote.

**Consider Recommendation from Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to Re-Appoint Stephen Gilman (Expiring Term)** – Motion by Needham, second by Yanz, to re-appoint Gilman to the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. Motion carried on a voice vote.

**Consider Recommendation from Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to Re-Appoint Faith Ramsey (Expiring Term)** – Motion by Miller, second by Needham, to re-appoint Ramsey to the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. Motion carried on a voice vote.

**Consider Adoption of Resolution 2024-004 to Decertify Portion of S. Coral Street** – Trustee Yanz asked for the purpose of decertification, and who will be responsible for maintenance once decertified. Manager Popa explained that this decertification, as well as a portion of Second Street (Resolution 2024-010 below), are the result of a 2017 street abandonment request from the Kalkaska Memorial Health Center (KMHC). Popa advised the Village of Kalkaska is not responsible for the maintenance of these areas. Popa further advised the KMHC pays a stipend to the Village to offset loss of MDOT funding associated with these vacated streets.

Motion by Bishop, second by Miller, to adopt Resolution 2024-005. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

**Consider Adoption of Resolution 2024-005 to Decertify Portion of Fourth Street** – Manager Popa advised this area is owned by Kalkaska Public Schools, and they are responsible for its maintenance.

Motion by Dunham, second by Yanz, to adopt Resolution 2024-005. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

**Consider Adoption of Resolution 2024-010 to Decertify Portion of Second Street** – Motion by Needham, second by Bishop, to adopt Resolution 2024-010. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

**Consider Approval of Act 51 Map** – Motion by Miller, second by Yanz, to adopt the Act 51 Map. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

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**Consider Adoption of Resolution 2024-006 to Adopt the 2023 Kalkaska County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan** – Motion by Miller, second by Bishop, to adopt Resolution 2024-006. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

**Consider Adoption of Resolution 2024-007 Amendment to Village Fee Schedule** – Handled under Finance Committee report.

**Consider Approval of Amended Village Returned Payment Policy** – Handled under Finance Committee report.

**Consider Adoption of Resolution 2024-008 Budget Amendment No. 3 for FYE 2-29-2024** – Motion by Miller, second by Bishop, to adopt Resolution 2024-008. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

**Consider Adoption of Resolution 2024-009 Budget Amendment No. 4 for FYE 2-29-2024** – Motion by Miller, second by Bishop, to adopt Resolution 2024-009. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

**Consider Adoption of Ordinance 2024-003 Amending Planning Commission Membership** – Motion by Miller, second by Bishop, to adopt Ordinance 2024-003. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

**Consider Adoption of Ordinance 2024-004 Authorizing Conveyance of Village Property** – Manager Popa reviewed Habitat for Humanity’s proposal for the construction of townhouses at the Court Street property. However, a Public Hearing is planned to obtain public input.

Motion by Dunham, second by Yanz, to adopt Ordinance 2024-004. A roll call vote was then taken: Ayes – President Larsen and Trustees Bishop, Dunham, Miller, Moses, Needham and Yanz; Nays – None; Absent – None. Motion carried.

**Appoint Village Representative to County Tax Allocation Board** – Motion by Yanz, second by Bishop, to appoint Trustee Needham as the Village representative to the County Tax Allocation Board. Motion carried on a voice vote.

**Schedule Village Official Training with MML** – Trustee Dunham advised the training of Village Council members will be held separately from FOIA training of Village staff. The Village Council training is scheduled for April 18, 2024 from 4:00-7:00 p.m. at the Railroad Square Pavilion.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business coming before this Council, President Larsen adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

Recorded By: Angie Koon, Village Clerk