

**EDMORE VILLAGE COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
UNAPPROVED JOURNAL OF MINUTES
July 11, 2022**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Village of Edmore Council was called to order on Monday, July 11, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. by **President Gloria Burr**.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **ROLL CALL:** Members present – **Colburn, Green, Griswold, Guild, Moore, Rasmussen, Burr**. Also present: **Justin Lakamper** – Village Manager, **Shirley Drain** – Village Treasurer, **Kerri Peterson** – Village Clerk.
4. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Motion by **Colburn** to approve the agenda with additions under 10. New Business: F. resolution to accept Consumers Energy lighting service agreement for new lights. G. Presentation: Frank LaFata: State House Representative Candidate District 91. Seconded by **Rasmussen**. **VOICE VOTE: ALL YES: MOTION PASSED 7-0.**
5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.
6. **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:**
 - A. **POLICE: Deputy Tanis (absent):** Total Investigations 38, Total Arrests 4. Traffic Stops 39, Citations Issued 5, Verbal Warnings Issued 34. Highlights included on June 22nd, an attempted larceny from an automobile complaint was investigated in the 400 block of north First Street. One of the victims heard car doors opening and closing in a nearby parking lot. Upon inspection he spotted a juvenile in a vehicle. After a brief exchange, the juvenile ran off. It was learned many vehicles were entered but nothing was stolen. The 13-year-old offender has been identified and a report has been sent to the prosecutor's office for review of charges.
 - B. **FINANCE: Burr** reported for **Tracy**. Completed our water quality report which was sent out with the tax bills. Mailed out the tax bills. Been working with Pontem Software to recover our cemetery database. **Lakamper** stated the old computer died so the database needed to be recovered.
 - C. **DDA: Lakamper** reported the DDA held a meeting on June 29th but there was no quorum. They continued the conversation about the treescape progress. No decision has been made. Some discussion took place among the board about the streetscapes in other towns and there was some question as to the watering of the new trees and/or flower planters. Lakamper responded that the DPW would take care of watering and the DDA would fund the flowers. Once a design is in place it will be brought to the Council for approval. The next DDA meeting is July 20th, 2022 @ Noon.
 - D. **DPW: Burr** reported for **Andy**. We had 2 cremains burials at the cemetery. We have treated the pond again to try and control the algae growth. This is having some effect but is not completely effective. We completed our annual water main flushing, jetted some problem sanitary sewer lines, and rebuilt the phosphate pump at well 5. We installed a new chlorine booster pump at well 6, cleaned the retention pond lift station, fixed a water leak on Home Street, and summarized the well houses.
 - E. **MANAGER: Justin Lakamper: Lakamper** reported on the following: **CODE ENFORCEMENT** – Spent a lot of time dealing with loose dogs coming from one house who were chasing residents and animals. Collected photos and video and gave to animal control who took the dogs. Been working with the owner of the house to repair a broken door and windows from

which the animals were getting out. DEVELOPMENTS – Lots 5 and 6 on Sunrise has had its water turned on and is still waiting for HVAC equipment to be delivered. The exterior of Lots 7, 8, 9 has been finished. They are waiting on subcontractors to continue working on the interior. DOWNTOWN SIDEWALK SALE - Local business owners have organized another sidewalk sale that will take place on July 30th, which will include other vendors. They have been working with new DDA member Kristin Callow in organizing. ELF COMMITTEE - The ELF committee met to consider the application from Edmore Property LLC. The new Huntington Bank Branch manager, Kayla Beadle, joined the board to replace departing Branch manager, Zak Okke. The committee voted 5 to 0 not to recommend awarding the requested loan amount to Edmore Property LLC. GRANTS – The County has transferred \$50,000 to the Village from their allotment of ARPA money, which they have given to all 27 municipalities in Montcalm County in lieu of awarding grant requests. Our original request was for \$35,000 to pay for the vac truck that we purchased. This leaves an additional \$15,000 which will be placed in the general fund. PERSONNEL – The DPW again has only two employees. Our most recent hire has quit. We immediately advertised the position beginning last week and invited five individuals to interview. Only three interviewed. We are hoping to have a decision made next week to find a replacement as quickly as possible. Hoping to start new hire August 1st. PLANNING COMMISSION - The Planning Commission will hold a meeting on July 21st at noon to hear a special use permit request for a marihuana grow facility at 655 E. Main Street. VACATION – I will be gone July 25th through August 16. I will prepare the August packet before leaving and finalize it while I am gone. I will email everyone copies on the Thursday prior to the meeting. You will get printed copies like normal. I will be out of the country but will still be available by email and phone.

F. PRESIDENT: Gloria Burr: None.

7. TREASURER'S REPORT: Shirley Drain

A. TREASURER'S REPORT & COMMENTS: Drain reported the books are closed for June and balanced with the bank statement. The cash balances look good. ELF loans – All current. Drain asked Lakamper if we were going to be starting the water digging soon. Lakamper replied that the DPW worker quitting has set us back. The DPW is currently identifying sidewalk problems and getting bids. Drain asked if we were still getting our new truck. Lakamper responded that after several calls the truck is still not ready for us. It has been a year and a half since we approved the purchase.

B. APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF BILLS: Motion by Moore to approve the payment of the bills. Second by Griswold. **ROLL CALL VOTE: YES: Colburn, Green, Griswold, Guild, Moore, Rasmussen, Burr. MOTION PASSED 7-0**

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS: Moore reported the Personnel Committee met and discussed hiring new office help. They could not justify recommending a new hire right now based on financial obligations.

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING June 13, 2022: Green moved to accept the minutes. Seconded by Rasmussen. **VOICE VOTE: ALL YES: MOTION PASSED 7-0**

10. NEW BUSINESS

A. MDOT CONTRACT RESOLUTION 2022-6: Lakamper reported the Village applied for a received a 50-50 matching grant from MDOT last year totaling \$34,093. The final contract between the Village and MDOT which outlines the duties of all the parties must be authorized by resolution. It is standard MDOT contract and is required for us to receive the money. The

resolution simply authorizes Gloria and I to sign this specific contract. Motion by **Rasmussen** to accept the MDOT contract Resolution 2202-6. Supported by **Griswold**. **ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL YES: Colburn, Green, Griswold, Guild, Moore, Rasmussen, Burr. MOTION PASSED 7-0**

- B. RECYCLING COMPACTOR PROJECT:** **Lakamper** reported the representative from Republic Waste who runs the program for the County met with us to go over the site location. We have identified the space where the dumpsters are currently located. This site is already paved so we will not need to pour a new pad and it also has electrical wires running from the DPW shop right in front of the location that we can use for installation of the compactors. They would be installed in a staggered fashion to allow for residents to access both openings from the same side. We would pull the existing fence from the DPW yard forward to the back of the dumpsters to prevent people from leaving larger items behind the dumpsters. To cut down on the amount of trash and other items that get left at the site, we would like to install security cameras. The cameras would be attached to a small DPW building which is right next to the dumpsters. There is power there so we can place a recording unit in that building and review the tape should there be any issues. The insurance company has stated the compactors are not an exempt item from our general liability insurance and would therefore not affect our premium. Since the Village would not own the compactors, we are not responsible to insure them against loss. The total cost for this project is estimated at \$8,064. I would like to ask for approval to move forward with the project at a cost of up to \$5,000 which is our half of the project, with the other half being paid for by the County. Once approved the County Waste Committee must move to accept Edmore as the location. They will hold a meeting on July 12, 2022. Construction will start as soon as we get the go ahead from the County. Some discussion was heard on if the fence needs to be moved due to having cameras. Motion by **Guild** to proceed with the recycling project with the County, minus the fence, not to exceed \$5000. Supported by **Colburn**. **ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL YES: Colburn, Green, Griswold, Guild, Moore, Rasmussen, Burr. MOTION PASSED 7-0**
- C. ELF LOAN REQUEST:** **Lakamper** reported we received an ELF loan request for \$290,000 to partially fund the construction of a medical marihuana grow facility on Industrial Park Drive. The request was \$290,000 be financed by a 7-year ELF loan at an interest rate of 3.25%. Currently the yield on a 7-year Treasury Bond is 3.39% and the Wall Street Journal prime rate is 4.75%. The 3.25% requested would comply with both standards set for interest rates in the ELF fund. The ELF fund has \$291,372.51 in cash, and \$94,864.45 in CDs. This request would represent 99.5% of our available cash and 74% of our total funds. They also have not offered any collateral other than the building itself. The medical marihuana industry is also unclear in the future. The ELF Committee voted 5-0 not to recommend this loan. Some discussion took place. Motion by **Guild** to follow the manager and ELF Committee's recommendation to deny the request of Edmore Property LLC. Seconded by **Green**. **ROLL CALL VOTE: YES: Colburn, Green, Griswold, Guild, Moore, Rasmussen, Burr. MOTION PASSED 7-0**
- D. QUARTERLY BILLING:** **Lakamper** reported when the Village changed from quarterly to monthly billing, the main reason given for this change was to make monthly budgeting for fixed and low-income residents simpler. It has been observed that fewer customers have had their water shut off since switching. The Village also began putting door tags out the day before shutoffs occur around that same time, which could also be playing a role as to the fewer shutoffs. The idea behind this proposed change is straightforward. Quarterly billing reduces the amount of bills that needs to be processed by two thirds. At 500 accounts, the move would eliminate the need for the office to process approximately 4,000 payments per

year and would free up significant amounts of time that could be committed to other projects. Changing to a quarterly billing cycle would also reduce the amount of time the DPW works on water shutoffs. Each month we prepare about 30 shut-off notices which the DPW hangs on doors. Approximately 90% of those who receive a door tag will come in and pay or call to schedule a date and time by which they can pay. The other 10% will be shut off or the resident will immediately come to the office when the DPW arrives to turn off their water. This results in about 1-2 homes being shut off each month. With quarterly billing we will have the time to address some longer standing organizational issues in the office as well as to work more strategically in the planning and implementation of projects, rather than reacting issues as they arise. We are aware there is the continued concern that a quarterly billing schedule can be difficult for some of our residents who are on fixed incomes. This can be resolved, in part, by informing the residents that they can still come in and pay each month despite not receiving a bill each month. If this change is approved by the July meeting, residents would receive their last monthly bill on July 1st for their June usage and they would receive their next bill on October 1st for their July, August, September use. Along with informing everyone on our website and social media, we would send letters to all residents explaining the changes and their options for payment. If you are not hiring a new office position, I would recommend moving to quarterly billing to help with office efficiency. Discussion ensued among members. **Coburn** stated that for the people who forget to pay now, it is going to be a lot more difficult for them to immediately come up with three months as opposed to one. It is probably going to be a small minority, but do we have the flexibility to work with that? **Lakamper** responded that we are typically flexible on shutoffs if someone calls in and says hey, I will pay tomorrow or in a certain period. Then we can grant some flexibility there. **Colburn** replied, especially when it first starts. Because if they are forgetting monthly, they may forget on a quarterly basis. It will take a little bit to get up to speed. I think it is going to be a very small number. **Lakamper** agreed but also wanted to make clear that we do not have a payment plan on the books. **Green** stated that she is employed and make a good salary. She attempted to quarterly budget for water/sewer, and it was hard. You have a monthly budget all set, you know what the money is going to be and by the third quarterly payment that was going to come out, it was getting difficult. People on Social Security are going to struggle with it. **Moore** responded that you still have the option to pay monthly if you want. They are only sending bills out quarterly. More discussion took place about lower income and people living on a fixed budget not being able to afford quarterly billing. That they can still come in monthly and make payments on their quarterly bill, but they need to do it in advance of the bill becoming due as it is for the prior three months. They cannot wait until they receive their bill and come in and start making payments or their water will be shut off because the bill will be overdue. Turn on and turn off fees are still active. A letter would be sent out to the residents immediately explaining that we are moving to quarterly billing and how it will work. It will also be put on the website and social media. **Guild** pointed out that we have a problem. We do not want to go to quarterly billing, but we do not want to stay with monthly billing. We also do not want to hire parttime office help to help alleviate some jobs. Some may, some may not agree. Does anybody have an answer to this? **Drain** responded that she does not think the whole thing about hiring someone had to do with water/sewer billing. It had to do with somebody learning how to do books in case something happens, and Tracy cannot be here. Managers do not have time to learn this. They are too busy being a manager. This is bookkeeping type stuff. **Moore** responded that you cannot just hire anybody in. You have got to have somebody that's

- got some background. **Colburn** asked if we could send it back to the Committee to discuss it again? Discussion took place on if we should have a workshop session and when to have one. **Guild** commented that he must agree with **Green**, and he does not like it either, but he also agrees with **Lakamper** because he is in the office every day and knows what is going on and has made a recommendation to the board and we should have faith in what he is recommending. More discussion took place on hiring office help. **Guild** does not like having to move to quarterly billing but on the recommendation of the manager he will. Motion by **Guild** to move to quarterly water/sewer billing with advanced monthly payments still available online or in person. Supported by **Moore**. **ROLL CALL VOTE: YES: Colburn, Griswold, Guild, Moore, Rasmussen, Burr. NO: Green. MOTION PASSED 6-1** (full audio recording is on file for more detailed discussion)
- E. **FISCAL YEAR 2021-22 AUDIT REVIEW:** No Discussion. **Drain** reported that she reviewed the audit. On page 29 revenues were more and expenditures were less than the amounts budgeted. Everything went great and we owe Tracy a thank you. She is the one that watches over the budget and makes sure we do not go over budget. The State gets this, and they check this, and they know. We should appreciate what Tracy does for us in that respect.
- F. **RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT CONSUMERS ENERGY LIGHTING SERVICE AGREEMENT FOR NEW LIGHTS:** **Lakamper** reported a long time ago Consumers contacted us about replacing seven center suspension lights on M-46 on the west side of town. The Council voted to have them install the seven lights. They have recently sent paperwork for the installation of 3 of those new lights. The Council must pass a resolution to accept the standard lighting services agreement for these 3 new lights. Motion by **Colburn** to accept the Consumer Energy lighting service agreement for new lights. Supported by **Griswold**. **VOICE VOTE: ALL YES: MOTION PASSED 7-0**
- G. **PRESENTATION: FRANK LAFATA: STATE HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE CANDIDATE DISTRICT 91:** **Frank LaFata** introduced himself to the Council and is excited to run for this office and represent everyone living in District 91.

President Burr closed the regular meeting at 8:25 pm. and opened the closed session at 8:29 p.m.

11. CLOSED SESSION: MANAGER ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

President Burr closed the closed session and reopened the regular meeting at 8:35 p.m.

12. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.
13. **COUNCIL COMMENTS:** **Green** asked for an update on the hanging of the latest order of Hometown Heroes banners. **Lakamper** stated that there was a mix up on the size of the brackets, but it has been taken care of and they are hung. **Green** also asked for an update on the playground.
14. **ADJOURNMENT:** Motion by **Burr** to adjourn. Supported by **Moore**. **VOICE VOTE: ALL YES: MOTION PASSED 7-0.**
- President Burr adjourned the meeting at 8:41 p.m.**

Village President

Approved for Publication

NEXT MEETING: August 08, 2022

Village Clerk