**VILLAGE OF LA FARGE**

**Special Board Meeting Monday, September 30, 2024**

1). Village President Frank Quinn called the special meeting of the La Farge Village Board to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Emergency Services building, at 201 S. Cherry Street.

Roll Call – Present at the meeting:

Board members: Karen Leis, Aaron Nemec, Jill Stoltz, Dave Fish, Terry Jensen, and Frank Quinn. Absent was Barb Melvin.

Also: News reporter Lonnie Muller, Utility Clerk Greg Lawton, Jeanne Erlandson, Police Chief Steve Palmer, and Clerk Kimberly Walker.

2). Verification was given of meeting publishing in the La Farge Episcope, and of posting at the Bank, Post Office, and Village Office on Friday, September 27, 2024.

3). Quinn explained a new agreement has been written up, per 7th District Judge Scott Horne who oversees municipal courts, for the reformation/certification and operation of a joint municipal court, to go with a non-attorney for Judge and not including the City of Viroqua (who wanted to leave). This needed to be done by 10-1-2024, so this special meeting needed held tonight. The current three in the Hidden Valleys Municipal Court are the City of Westby, Village of Cashton, and La Farge. More may join later.

\*\*A change included not having a Police Chief from a municipality to be a voting member on a judicial committee. All the chiefs agreed, as they’re the ones giving the citations. Frank had our Attorney Nikki Swayne look at this and the ordinance, and she had no concerns, but she’s just going to check if the state statutes listed were still relevant. Nemec moved, Jensen seconded to approve the agreement. (Carried).

4). We previously amended Municipal Court ordinance 5-1-10, to change the language from having an attorney as a Judge, to having a non-attorney, but we need to amend it again to show in writing Viroqua isn’t included, just Westby, Cashton, and La Farge. And under Section 9 (c), the court costs were changed/updated. Moving forward, Cashton will be taking care of the money and will have a separate account. Stoltz moved, Fish seconded to approve the ordinance. (Carried).

5). Discussion on the court operations: Frank gave a background on what happened in the past and what they are planning in the future. They talked about budgeting. Frank asked where the budget was at and found out Viroqua didn’t have a separate account for this. It went in their general budget. Cashton, Westby, and La Farge paid yearly checks for their percentage to the City of Viroqua, and Viroqua didn’t pay anything. They said some years the budget was over, so they paid the difference, and some under, so they kept the money. Tammy Bekkum, who will be overseeing it from Cashton, is going back to 2012 to see how the figures should’ve come out. They’re working on costs for next year. We should have a surplus this year of $9,000, which will be forwarded on. Then to begin the year, the 3 entities will each put in $7,000. The judges’ wages and the prosecutor wages were cut down. The prosecutor only gets paid when he prosecutes a case, and the charge goes to each municipality when they have a case. Frank feels it’s heading in a good direction. Trying to get it to be self-sufficient. So for 2025, Frank suggested we budget $8,500 for this. We will get our bill at the end of the year from the court for our share. It may not be this much. The court will be held in Cashton and is to start in December.

6). Jensen moved, Leis seconded to adjourn. (Carried). Adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Kimberly Walker, Village Clerk/Treasurer