**VILLAGE OF LA FARGE**

 **Regular Board Meeting Monday, October 14, 2024**

1). Village President Frank Quinn called the regular meeting of the La Farge Village Board to order at 6:30 p.m. at the Emergency Services building, at 201 S. Cherry Street.

Roll Call - Present at the meeting:

All Board members: Karen Leis, Dave Fish, Terry Jensen, Jill Stoltz, Aaron Nemec, Barbara Melvin, and Frank Quinn.

Also: News reporter Lonnie Muller, Mark Digman from Delta 3 Engineering, Brad Steinmetz, Todd Camlek, Samantha Laskowski, Alan Buss, Public Works Manager Wayne Haugrud, Utility Clerk Greg Lawton, 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 Thursday, October 10, 2024.

3). Melvin moved, Fish seconded to approve the previous meetings minutes: (9-9-2024/Regular Village board meeting; 9-30-2024/Special Village board meeting; 10-2-2024/Finance & Personnel committee meeting; and 10-8-2024/Emergency Services Building committee meeting). (Carried).

4). Correspondence: The annual Area Fire Association and Ambulance Association meetings are Thursday, October 24, starting at 7 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

\*\*Received a letter today from Frontier Property Management, requesting the ordinance restricting mobile homes that are older than 10 years to be revised. Will talk with our Attorney on this.

5). Public Comment: None.

6). Samantha Laskowski & Alan Buss were present, along with Michael Woods (on zoom), for a virtual presentation on the Microgrid study results summary. They had a 20-minute slide show and explained things. This study is part of a grant we received. Looked at La Farge’s current backup power. With our generator, we can sustain about 2 days of backup power. Looked at Solar, wind, and battery designs. Four possible sites have been looked at for solar fields. We have a lot of flood areas, which makes it harder to find an area. The cost financially is between $6,800,000 to $7,700,000. Annual revenues are $165,000 to $255,000. Reviewed the key takeaways. Frank said he’s interested in what’s out there, but the big question is where to put it. We look forward to the full report when it’s finished.

7). Utility business: Mark Digman, with Delta 3 was present to review pay application # 3 for Badger Environmental & Earthworks for $416,159. The water main on Highland, North, Mill, and Seelyburg is complete. The sanitary sewer replacement is done on Highland, North, and Mill Streets. And the curb and gutter and street building on Highland and North Streets are finished. Nemec moved, Jensen seconded to accept pay application #3. (Carried).

\*\*The contractor sent a letter requesting a time extension. Paving on the West side of town will be completed for sure this year. Gasser Construction is planning to pave around November 1st. On the East side, depending on weather, it may be best to not dig up the highway in that area, and complete the work in 2025. The State is planning to pave the East side next year, and this could save us money on asphalt. But to be cautious, they’re asking for an extension until Spring. There are no implications for the grant program. We would file a change order, showing a time extension. Fish moved, Stoltz seconded to approve the extension with a deadline of May 23, 2025. (Carried).

\*\*With the CDBG grant program, we need to approve a Proclamation declaring the week of October 14-18, 2024, as Fair Housing week. Jensen moved, Leis seconded to approve of this. (Carried).

\*\*Mark Digman said he will put us on the list for Safe Drinking Water and Clean Water Fund grants from the DNR for future projects in case something comes up. There’s no fee for Delta 3 to file this for us. There are areas in town to replace water & sewer lines, including Adams, Oak, Highland, Penn, & Pine Streets. And he said Delta 3’s customer appreciation day is Friday, December 13, at Platteville. All are invited.

\*Wayne had no additional utility business to report.

8). Old Business: None.

9). Snow Pusher: Like to upgrade the current blade. This goes on the skid steer, and the new one would have back drag capability. Received two quotes: Pro Truck Equipment was for a Boss Plow for $6,250 and an Artic from Titan Machinery was $9,950. The old one will be put on the Wisconsin Surplus. Jensen moved, Leis seconded to go with the Boss for $6,250 from Pro Truck Equipment. (Carried).

10). Dollar General has made an application for a new business alcohol beverage license. Leis questioned why we need this, as we already have 2 bars and 2 stores selling beer and liquor. Nemec moved, Jensen seconded to approve the license. (Carried 6-1, with Leis voting no).

11). No operator license applications to vote on. They were associated with the Dollar General, and none were returned in time.

12). Trick or Treat hours in the Village will be from 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. on Thursday, October 31, 2024.

13). Melvin moved, Stoltz seconded to approve the Animal Care Provider Agreement with the Driftless Humane Society for the 2025 year, same fees as last year. (Carried). Cost is $250 for an initial fee in January and $200 for each dog brought in from us during the year, that is “unclaimed”.

14). Chief Palmer and Greg Lawton have been working on a camping ordinance, after the City of La Crosse has pushed the homeless out of the community. Steve looked at our ordinances and we don’t have any rules in place for camping on village or private property. Steve’s not anti-homelessness, we just need rules in place as far as camping in our community goes. Ordinance 12-1-6, “Ordinance Regulating Camping in the Village of La Farge” was modeled to La Crosse. Steve wants to be proactive and recognize the problem. The board felt this was a good idea. This ordinance includes Private Property and Village-owned Property. Village Attorney Swayne has reviewed and approved this. Jensen moved, Leis seconded to approve this camping ordinance. (Carried).

15). Todd Camlek has been having issues within the school with kids having electronic vaping devices. Chief Palmer contacted the Municipal court prosecutor, and he said Steve could cite off our current ordinance, but it would be better if we updated it to include vaping devices specifically. Our ordinances were written in 1996, so those fines are old, so this was also updated. Fish moved, Jensen seconded to amend Ordinance 11-5-9 on the Purchase or Possession of Tobacco Products and approve the $92.50 fine. (Carried).

16). Police Report/Update: Chief Palmer reported on their first chronic nuisance property committee meeting. Barry Donovan is the Chair. They introduced themselves and talked about what they were expecting. Talked a possible sidewalk display ordinance and a possible permit for vehicles that are not registered. More will follow, with the next meeting on October 28th. Steve also thanked Greg for his help with the ordinance stuff, with emails and research. And for our forfeiture amounts, at a recent chief’s meeting, it was discussed to be on the same page with the others in the municipal court group.

17). Committee Reports and Updates:

\*\*Library: Barb reported the annual budget meeting is tomorrow night.

18). Jensen moved, Leis seconded to approve payment of the bills. (Carried).

19). Nemec moved, Melvin seconded to convene into closed session, in accordance with Wisconsin State Statute’s section 19.85 (1)(c), to discuss personnel matters on compensation for the Village and Utility employees. (Carried).

 \*\*\*CLOSED SESSION\*\*\*

\*\*Frank reported the Finance & Personnel committee met on October 2nd and discussed compensation for the village and utility employees for 2025. He reviewed each employee, and the pay raise that has been recommended to present to the whole board.

20). Leis moved, Fish seconded to reconvene into open session and continue the meeting. (Carried).

21). Melvin moved, Nemec seconded to approve what was discussed in closed session for compensation for the village and utility employees for 2025. (Carried).

22). Jensen moved, Leis seconded to adjourn. (Carried). Adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

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

 Kimberly Walker, Village Clerk/Treasurer