**VILLAGE OF LA FARGE**

**Regular Board Meeting Monday, August 9, 2021**

\*Village President Cheryl Purvis called the regular meeting of the La Farge Village Board to order at 6:30 p.m. at the Emergency Services building.

Roll Call - Present at the meeting:

All Board Members: Barbara Melvin, Aaron Nemec, Terry Jensen, Frank Quinn, Karen Leis, Aaron Appleman, and Cheryl Purvis.

Also present: News reporters Lonnie Muller and Bonnie Sherman, Public Works Manger Wayne Haugrud, Police Chief Jonathon Brown, Utility Clerk Greg Lawton, Brad Steinmetz, Joan Kent, Don Foy, Jerry and Sherri Ballard, Jan Gremban, Samantha Laskowski, and Clerk Kimberly Walker.

\*Verification was given of meeting publishing in the La Farge Episcope, and of posting at the Bank, Post Office, and Village Office on August 6, 2021.

\*For the minutes, Cheryl asked to add one thing to the regular board minutes, on page 2, right before utility business, to further clarify after Dean Steinmetz comment that communication should be more open, work together…., put in that “we communicated the information as we knew it and what we were able to”. Quinn moved, Leis seconded to approve the previous meetings minutes, with the update: (7-12-21/Regular Village board meeting; 7-19-21/Special Village Board meeting; and 7-27-21/Regular Library Board meeting). (Carried).

\*No Correspondence.

\*Public Comment: Jerry and Sherri Ballard, from 614 N. Oak Drive, were present, along with some neighbors for moral support, to voice concern over a fence around a retention pond that is located next to their property. The pond is for water runoff in the area. The current snow fence is down in some places, and they feel it’s a danger. There’s a couple group homes on the street, along with other homes. They’d like to see a better fence around it to protect everyone. Wayne mentioned they could remove the fence, mow, and remove trees to see what we have first, and get pricing. Then the board can decide on what to do. It was agreed something needs done. They were thanked for coming and expressing their concern.

\*Utility business: Nothing to report from Wayne.

\*Main Street Project: Gerke has all the new water and sewer in from Mill to Bird Street. The laterals for the businesses in that area are also hooked into the new system. They started Friday to install the storm sewer, from the Kickapoo River to Bird Street. This will be the project for the next two weeks. Then they’ll go from Bird to State and install water and sewer and all laterals in that section. There is also an on-site public meeting tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. by the Post office.

\*Reviewed Pay request #2 for Gerke Excavating, Inc. in the amount of $164,179 ($99,179 is TIF and $65,000 is grant). Jensen moved, Nemec seconded to approve paying Gerke for pay request #2. (Carried).

\*Update on Grants: The EDA matching grant for approximately $980,000 that was applied for on the electrical substation project passed the first hurdle. Now need to submit more documentation to move forward. Should hear back on this late fall. We heard back on the grant thru Ron Kinds budget bill that it’s not moving forward to the appropriations committee. The Safe Drinking Water Loan was approved. Not sure on the amount yet, which may come out in September.

\*In July, solicitations for proposals were sent out for the second phase of the CDBG-DR (Disaster Recovery) 80/20 grant. Only received one proposal back, from CDA (Community Development Alternatives, Inc.). Two other firms expressed interest, but didn’t turn anything in. CDA has proposed a 7-unit apartment building, with garages, on their land by the softball field. No less than 51% of the units are to be rented to LMI tenants for a period of no less than 5 years per the grant requirements.

\*The tax base can add approximately $8,000, along with more utility customers. Total project cost is $1,755,556. CDA anticipates in taking out a $500,000 loan, a private investor is investing $565,000, and

looking at the grant amount of $690,556. Our consultant said we can submit more than one proposal. We have time, as the grant application isn’t due in until November. The board agreed to send out another round of proposals to see if we get more. Nemec moved, Appleman seconded to approve the proposal by CDA for the multi-housing units to move forward. (Carried).

\*Dollar General Update: Cheryl reported the village had sent the developer 2 alternative sites and are waiting to hear something back. They are still interested in the Church property. Kim and Gary (from CDA) are working to see if we can do the gravel parking lot (on village land South of the Church), and of relocating the skatepark on FEMA purchased land. Cheryl tried the developer this morning, but didn’t hear back, and Mark Phillips has been contacted on what’s been going on.

\*Ordinance Update: Chief Brown updated the 121 S. State Street situation. The property has received an ordinance citation, but nothing is getting done. The fines are $1,000+. The stuff is now “spilling out” in the street. We have an ordinance for encroaching. It’s a 24-hour notice to get stuff out, and if not, the village can go in and remove any encroachments in the street and send out a bill. The fines associated with this range from $25 - $500. If not paid after 60 days, it can put on the tax bill. It doesn’t say what to do with the storage of such items. We need to make sure on the process, so check with the Attorney. The board agreed this feels like a danger. Cheryl has been talking with Senator Brad Pfaff in great length on what we can do. He is having his people investigate this further. The fines can’t be put on the taxes. To condemn it would be $30,000+? We need to see: 1). Where to locate the stuff if removed, 2). See the costs of storage and contracting the removal out, and 3). Come back to the board next month with figures and options. Will follow up with the Attorney.

\*No old business.

\*Jensen moved, Quinn seconded to approve an operator license for Jenna Hamilton. (Carried). She holds a current license in the Town of Whitestown (Rockton Bar).

\*Police report/update: Chief Jonathon Brown reported he had 88 calls for service in July. Municipal court was August 5th. He reviewed the arrests for July.

\*Committee Reports:

\*\*Library: Barb reported the library board met. They were hoping to open up, but with the Covid numbers in Vernon County being substantial, masks are still requested. And they had a good summer program with kids and adults participating.

\*Quinn moved, Melvin seconded to approve payment of the bills. (Carried).

\*Jensen moved, Appleman seconded to adjourn. (Carried). Adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

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Kimberly Walker, Village Clerk/Treasurer