

## **Village of Creston Minutes Tuesday, September 7, 2021**

President Byro called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Trustees Kerns, Hopkins, Katzman, Hibshman, Williams and Ward were present. Attorney Crull was present. Clerk Payton was also present.

Minutes from August 3, 2021 regular meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Trustee Kerns to accept the minutes and Trustee Hopkins seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with all yeas.

**Visitors & Communication** – President Byro announced that Kristi Scherer was going to talk about the library later in the meeting. There were no other visitors or communications to discuss.

Casper talked about the property at 303 E Depot St. He had sent a letter out about a month ago and someone has purchased the property. The new owners got a permit and had a new roof put on it, and Casper was going on Thursday 9/9/21 to do an inspection on the electrical, so they are doing a pretty good job of fixing the property up so far. The little house at 105 W Depot St has an abandoned car and high weeds, so that letter went out the previous week. There are 2 properties on Woodlawn south of the bank which had garbage out front and high weeds. The residents have moved out, so that is also being addressed. Trustee Kerns got a couple of complaints about 105 Transit regarding vehicles in the yard and an engine puller. One of the residents that complained brought up garbage on the sidewalk and lots of kids. Trustee Hopkins says it has been that way for 5-6 weeks or more. Curtis Loyd stated that it is rumored there are 2-3 families living in that house. President Byro asked about the garage that Dick Young is building. Casper stated that Mr. Young did get a permit for that construction.

Attorney Crull spoke about final letters that were sent to 2 residents along with the complaints. There has been no response and one of the letters came back as undeliverable. They are trying one final time and if nothing happens, they will file all 3 complaints at one time unless Casper tells him that progress has been made. Atty Crull said he had nothing else that won't be discussed later.

Kevin Bunge spoke about the sewer manhole grouting. He said he had spoken to President Byro regarding this issue and he remembers the board said to go ahead with it, but he couldn't remember a dollar value or if the board said to schedule a day or two. Trustee Katzman responded that the board decided to schedule a day's worth of work. Kevin said the cost would max out at \$5000, but it will depend on how much grout is needed. He said it typically runs about \$4000 a day. He said he would schedule a day and do his best to make sure that the cost does not exceed \$5000. President Byro said that Curtis Loyd had come up with a list for Kevin and that he had a couple that were high priority. President Byro stressed that the grouting should be done this fall, if possible.

### **Committee Reports**

Finance - Trustee Hopkins had nothing to report

Streets & Sidewalks - Trustee Ward had nothing to report

Water & Sewer - Trustee Kerns had nothing other than the water leak that got fixed.

Health & Safety - Trustee Hibshman had nothing to report. President Byro mentioned he had seen the mosquito sprayers out and that the mosquitos did not seem bad at all this summer.

Zoning & Planning - Trustee Katzman had nothing to report

Subdivision - Trustee Williams asked Atty Crull if the subdivision owners had only mowed once this year and Atty Crull said that he thought that was correct. Trustee Williams said they need to mow again. Trustee Ward also said that the trees needed to be trimmed along the curb line. The weeds along the curb need to be sprayed as well. Atty Crull asked if they were both on the yard side and the inside of the curb. Trustee Hopkins confirmed that they were on the asphalt side and the yard side of the curb.

**Old Business** - Atty Crull spoke about the Liquor License ordinance that would provide for Headon's to become a class A sales location that would allow them to sell wine, beer and hard alcohol out of the store during the same hours as a tavern would. It was also modified so that the class D license would allow for street vendor situations during farmer markets. It makes it possible for him to apply for one class D license for multiple dates during the months that the farmer's market is open. The location would have to be given to President Byro and President Byro, as the Liquor Commissioner, would have to approve that. The revisions to the class A license would also allow the Moose Knuckle to do similar events if they so choose. President Byro asked if that covered what Trustee

Hibshman was talking about and Trustee Hibshman said yes. Trustee Hopkins made a motion to accept Ordinance No. 090721 amending Chapter 14 Article III Alcoholic Beverages. Trustee Katzman seconded. President Byro asked for questions. There were none. Roll call vote was taken. Trustees Kerns, Hopkins, Ward, Williams and Katzman voted yea, and Trustee Hibshman voted present. Ordinance passed.

**New Business** - President Byro introduced the ordinance pertaining to the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund for the Village of Creston. This ordinance outlines how the Village can spend the money once they receive it. This came from the Illinois Municipal League so that the Board knows what can and cannot be done. President Byro asked if anyone had questions. Atty Crull expressed that this is what all municipalities are doing. Trustee Ward moved to pass Ordinance 090721a, the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund. Trustee Hibshman seconded the motion. President Byro again asked if there were any questions. There were none. Roll call vote was taken. Trustees Kerns, Katzman, Hopkins, Hibshman, Ward and Williams all voted yea.

President Byro discussed the Resolution 060220C Declaring Rates or Charges for the Use of Water and Sewer Services. A copy of the 2020 version was distributed and President Byro pointed out that changes need to be made to the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph to reflect the new rates, which will raise from 3% to 5.5%. Trustee Ward asked if that 2.5% increase overall would cover our expenses. The concern was that only increasing the rate by 2.5% would not cover what RMU is charging the Village in addition to the Village's own expenses. Trustee Ward asked Treasurer Payton about the status of the Village sewer fund and Treasurer Payton replied that the Village is holding its own. Treasurer Payton expressed that with the way things are and with inflation going up, she couldn't see burdening the residents by increasing it to 8.5% rather than 5.5%. Trustee Kerns agreed that it is pretty expensive already. Treasurer Payton felt that the Village is fine presently. Trustee Ward said that the Village can set the rate at the 5.5% but monitor the sewer fund and Treasurer Payton can let the Board know if the fund heads toward a loss. Treasurer Payton also stated that the Village is getting money from ARPA and some of that may be able to cover repair expenses and such. Trustee Williams asked for confirmation that the rates are increasing to 5.5% and not 8.5%. President Byro confirmed that the increase would be 5.5%, not 8.5%. The increase will go into effect 1/1/22, even though RMU's rates increased 8/1/21. President Byro asked for a motion to make a new ordinance. Atty Crull said that we would make a resolution to increase the rates to 5.5% annually instead of 3%. Trustee Ward brought up that RMU is charging us 5.5% per year over the next 3 years, and Trustee Kerns asked if we should include the 3 year time frame into the resolution. President Byro said that we can do that, and Atty Crull confirmed that that could be done. Atty Crull stated that the 5.5% increase could be done over the course of 3 years, and then the rate would decrease back to 3%. President Byro asked for a motion and Atty Crull said that we could adopt it next month. President Byro agreed to that and stated that Atty Crull would write up the resolution and the board would adopt it next month.

President Byro introduced Kristi Scherer from Creston-Dement Public Library to speak. Kristi stated that they hope to do Christmas in Creston this year. She is working with Trustee Hibshman and the Booster Club on planning and she asked if the Village could pay to decorate the gazebo. She paid for her out of her own pocket the last few years and would like some help with it this year. President Byro asked what they were looking at cost-wise and she said about \$600. Lawncare by Walter comes and puts it all up, and takes it all down. President Byro asked if we could do it ourselves, and Kristi said that we can, but it's hard to get people to help. Trustee Katzman said he would bring it up at the Park District meeting and Treasurer Payton said she would bring it up at the Dement Township meeting as well. President Byro asked if anyone had any objection to helping them out and no one voiced any. Kristi also spoke about a mobile ax throwing event the library is hosting on 10/18/21. She would like North Street to be closed to the railroad tracks on 10/18 from 5:30 to about 8:00. Since that is a Monday, Headon's will be closed that day so it won't interfere with their business. She also asked if the Village had barricades the library could use and President Byro said yes. Trustee Ward suggested that she touch base with Hueber's to make sure they are aware of the closure. Kristi also spoke about a program on Lizzie Borden that will be held at the Opera House on 10/16. It is for older teenagers and adults and it starts at 6pm.

President Byro asked if there was anyone there regarding the library lot. The lot is across the street from the library and someone wants to put a business there. President Byro stated that the lot is way too small for a business. Trustee Katzman asked if it is the lot by the railroad tracks and President Byro said yes. The interested party wanted to put a trailer on the lot, but people can't put trailers up in Creston. The library is interested in selling the lot, and Trustee Williams stated that perhaps the Village should own the lot. Trustee Williams said that someone from the Board may want to talk to the library and find out if they are truly interested in selling it.

President Byro introduced the farm lease and wondered if the board should go into Executive Session and discuss it. Trustee Hopkins stated that from what he understood, farm rents are going up but he didn't know how much. President Byro stated that he felt the board needed to discuss it in Executive Session. Trustee Hopkins moved that the board go into Executive Session to discuss the lease of farm property owned by the Village. Trustee Katzman seconded. Roll call vote taken. Trustees Hibshman, Williams, Kerns, Hopkins, Katzman and Ward all voted yea. Executive Session moved to President Byro's office for discussion at 7:35:14 pm.

Board returned to the Conference Room at 7:49:52 pm. Trustee Ward made a motion to return from Executive Session and Trustee Hopkins seconded the motion. Roll call vote was taken. Trustees Kerns, Katzman, Hopkins, Hibshman, Ward and Williams all voted yea.

President Byro informed Erik Petry that the board talked and that they were agreeable to the price, but the Board would like to limit the lease to one year. President Byro expressed that they value Mr Petry and don't want to lose him, but there are some other things coming up and they wanted to shorten the time frame of the lease for that reason. Mr Petry stated that he was amenable to that and Atty Crull said that he would have the lease drawn up for the next meeting.

President Byro asked if there was anything else. Trustee Ward brought up something that came up on Facebook regarding an ordinance and the code on file was 10 years old. Trustee Ward suggested that we look into having it updated to reflect the changes that we've made over the past 10 years. Atty Crull stated that the MuniCode staff will be at the IML Conference and that is a good place to discuss it with them. Treasurer Payton stated that every time an ordinance is passed, it is supposed to be sent to them. The Village pays \$900 a year for maintenance, plus \$225 for administrative fees. Atty Crull said he would check into that. If they don't have ordinances, he will make sure they get them.

President Byro asked if anyone was interested in going to the IML Conference. He stated that he was going in with Attys Tess and Crull and wanted to know if anyone else was interested. No one expressed interest.

Trustee Williams brought up a comment on Facebook regarding why Nixle wasn't being used in regards to the water leak that happened. Clerk Payton replied that she was still learning how to use it, and that she thanked the resident for bringing it to her attention. She has since downloaded the app to her phone and has set everything up so that the next time we have an issue, she can use Nixle to communicate it.

President Byro brought up the water meter reader position. He holding off on hiring someone, and has received 17 applications, some from as far as Chicago. President Byro prefers to hire someone from town. Trustee Kerns asked if some of the applications were received to satisfy unemployment or child support requirements. Trustee Williams asked what it would take to be able to read the meters in the office. Trustee Hibshman stated it would cost about \$225 per meter to install the radio readers. We have a tower, but we need a transmitter. The Village has some that are radio read, but not all of them are. There are 261 meters in town and 65 of them can be radio read. Trustee Hibshman stated that the puck could be removed and a radio transmitter could be installed, and then the transmitter would have to be installed on the tower. The transmitter is the big expense. President Byro announced that he was delaying so that we would be estimating readings this month and next month.

**Treasurer's Report** – President Byro introduced the Treasurer's Report to approve the bills. President Byro addressed the extra page that pertained to the debit card that the Village got. He also referenced the lady that was hired to clean Village Hall monthly. Trustee Kerns made a motion to approve the bills. President Byro asked if there were questions or discussion. There was none. Trustee Ward seconded the motion. Roll call vote was taken. Trustees Ward, Katzman, Kerns, Hibshman, Williams and Hopkins all voted yes. Bills were approved.

President Byro said he had nothing else. Trustee Ward made a motion to adjourn. Trustee Katzman seconded the motion. All voted in favor. President Byro adjourned the meeting at 8:00 pm.