

**Village of Creston Minutes (Amended)**  
**Tuesday, May 3, 2022**

Trustee Hopkins called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Trustees Kerns, Hibshman, Katzman, Ward, and Williams were present. President Byro was not present. Attorney Tess was present.

Trustee Hopkins introduced the minutes and asked for additions or corrections. Trustee Ward made a motion to approve the minutes and Trustee Kerns seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Minutes were accepted.

**Visitors & Communication** – Trustee Hopkins asked for visitors or communications. Mary Korth spoke on behalf of the Creston-Dement Public Library. She stated they are going for a referendum on June 28, 2022. The library is asking for \$2.7 million for the new library building. They have been researching grant opportunities and have received some grants and some donations already. They have hired an architect out of Chicago. The genesis of this project started 14 years ago, and since then they have had the 2 acres of land donated at the corner of Main and Cederholm, and the project has garnered much support. Pre-pandemic, the library averaged 780 patrons per month. When the pandemic started, the library continued to do outreach work and continued to serve about 350 patrons per month. The library hosts different kinds of programs, and Ms. Korth highlighted a program that taught 3D printing, which resulted in the building of a weather tower, and Creston is now on the NOAA site as a weather station. She also spoke about a child who learned to play chess through the library and is now a nationally ranked player. She stated they have had to use Booster Hall to host some of their events as the library simply does not have enough room to accommodate larger crowds. The taxes on a \$100,000 house would go up \$70 per year, over 20 years. They are still applying for grants. Ms. Korth stated that they had a community meeting in March that about 30 people attended, and they received nothing but positive feedback from it. She is not asking the Village to put anything in writing. The library board just asking for support, and each person must decide individually whether they will support it. Trustee Hopkins asked if anyone else had anything, and no one else spoke up.

Attorney Tess presented an ordinance for the restriction of certain commercial vehicles within the Village. It would be unlawful to drive or park any large vehicles, including but not limited to semi-tractors, semi-trailers, or other commercial vehicles in excess of 2 axles or having a gross weight of 10,000 lbs or more on any village street other than a state, county or township road, except for direct pickup or deliveries or upon the truck route as established in the ordinance in which case such a vehicle may not be driven on such a street for more than the minimum distance required for that purpose. The truck routes are Woodlawn Road, Main St from 38 south to the intersection of Depot westbound, and then Depot St from Center St to Prairie St. The trustee designated as Commissioner of Streets and Alleys shall cause appropriate traffic signs to be posted. Penalty is \$100 minimum and not more than \$5000 maximum. Trustee Ward asked for clarification about Depot St. Trustee Ward stated that there have been issues on South St due to trucks going to the landfill. There have been issues with trucks running the stop sign by the school. Trustee Hopkins asked if the ordinance was the step that creates the truck route. Atty Tess said that there is no layover for this type of ordinance, and it could be passed that night. Trustee Williams asked if the truck route would run through GPS. Trustee Ward explained that the truck route would go onto the state database, and if someone had a "trucker's GPS", it would show up on that GPS. If someone used the GPS on their phone, then the truck routes would not show up. Trustee Ward stated that the Village was not trying to interfere with anything Huebers was doing. The objective is to stop the OTR truck drivers from going down streets that were never designed for that kind of traffic. Trustee Williams brought up the fact that there is really no way to enforce it. Trustee Hopkins stated that the signs might deter trucks that "get lost" and meander through town. Trustee Hopkins asked for a motion. Trustee Williams made a motion to accept Ordinance 050322. Trustee Katzman seconded the motion. A Roll Call Vote was taken. Trustees Katzman, Ward, Williams, Hibshman, Kerns, and Hopkins all voted yea. Ordinance passed unanimously. Atty Tess said he did not have anything else.

Casper Manheim stated he had 3 permit applications that month: 2 for fences and one for a patio. He also got a call regarding the Jeep at the house on Depot St. The owner wants to junk the vehicle, but they cannot locate the title. Casper said that the Ogle County Sheriff may help with that. As soon as they find the title, the Jeep will be removed. He also sent out 2 other letters regarding inoperable vehicles. If he doesn't get a response, he will talk to Atty Tess or Atty Crull about those. There is a residence on west North St that has several vehicles parked in the yard with flat tires, and this residence is a repeat offender. The other residence was on Cederholm St. All those vehicles are in the driveway but have flat tires. Casper anticipates that those vehicles will be taken care of. He stated that was all he had to report.

Kevin Bunge stated they were continuing to work on the water main project. He also submitted the invoice from Duke's for the manholes they grouted. It cost about \$3500 and they got 4 manholes done. They will have Duke's come in again when the Village has about 5 or 6 more that need to be done. That was all Kevin had to report.

## **Committee Reports**

Finance - Trustee Hopkins had nothing for Finance.

Streets & Alleys - Trustee Ward said he had nothing.

Water & Sewer – Trustee Kerns had nothing.

Health & Safety - Trustee Hibshman stated that he didn't have anything health & safety related, but he announced that the first Street Fair would be taking place on Saturday 5/7 and they would be blocking of part of North St. for that from 9am to 2pm. Trustee Hibshman asked Curt Loyd for more signs/barricades and Mr. Loyd said he would drop them off.

Zoning & Planning - Trustee Katzman stated that the only thing he had was the library, and Ms. Korth had already done a good job of addressing that. He did state he was not at the previous month's meeting, and he understood that Reid Elliot stated they should have a meeting. He asked if there was anything specific that needed to be discussed. Mr. Elliot stated that there were no specific issues to be discussed. It had been a while since they had a meeting, so he thought they should have one.

Subdivision - Trustee Williams said he had nothing.

**Old Business** – South Main St repair by Hueber's. Mr. Loyd stated that he had spoken with President Byro regarding the issue. He said it was up to the board, but President Byro suggested that Mr. Loyd call Queens and have them come out and assess the area to be repaired and give us an estimate. Trustee Williams asked if the repair could be done in a day and Mr. Loyd said they could probably repair it in a day, but the street would have to be shut down so that the repair could be done and the asphalt could cool down and set before Hueber's could run any heavy loads over that stop. Trustee Williams asked if we had a bid yet, and Mr. Loyd said we do not. Kevin stated that they should go down at least 18" and then lay a 6-8" base before filling it and paving over it. Trustee Kerns felt that the Village should just have them come out and fix it. Trustee Ward had reservations about that because the price of asphalt had just increased by about \$10 a ton, and a bid situation could run the cost up to about almost \$20,000. Trustee Hopkins stated the best course was to get an estimate and then back down the scope of the project if the estimate is too much. Mr. Loyd asked what would happen with Hueber's traffic for a day or two while the road is closed. A couple of alternative routes were discussed. Trustee Hopkins felt confident they would work with the Village for the repair to be completed.

Railroad Crossing/Quiet Zone/Train Horns: President Byro wanted discussion about the direction the board is headed with this, and Trustee Hopkins asked if we want to move forward. Trustee Hibshman asked about the amount that was discussed at the previous meeting. Trustee Williams brought up the concerns about the parking on Main St. because a median must be put in for the quiet zone. Trustee Hibshman said he understood that, but he wanted to know how much the study cost would be. Kevin said that engineering plans were \$10,400, which takes the project up to the start of construction. Trustee Hibshman asked if there were any other options besides a median. Trustee Williams asked what the minimum was for the median, and he asked if it had to be a concrete barrier or if it could be cones. Trustee Ward said it does not have to be concrete. There must be a 6" tall barrier, which could be something like Quick Curb. There are also other options, but anything that interfaces with the signals is very, very expensive. Trustee Williams asked what the difference was between the median we would put in and the system they use in DeKalb. Trustee Ward stated that DeKalb uses the wayside horns, and those horns sound at the crossing. Because they interface with the signals, the railroad would have to install them, and the Village would have to pay to maintain them. The medians are the most cost-effective option. Trustee Ward brought up that the board is just going off the parameters as listed in the Quiet Zone regulations, so everything at this point is speculation. Supplemental safety is predetermined by the Federal government. If the Village does anything outside those regulations, the Village accepts all the liability. Trustee Hibshman stated that based on what he's seen in other communities, the areas where they have their medians don't have parking. Trustee Hopkins asked if the board thought we should move forward. Trustee Williams stated that we need to move forward, but more discussion should be had. Trustee Katzman said that he had spoken to a lot of people, and he found it was about 50-50 split about whether residents wanted the quiet zone. Trustee Kerns said that in order to move forward, the board must spend money. Trustee Hopkins said that there is a possibility it might not work, but the board doesn't know at this point, and it has been something a lot of residents have mentioned to various board members. Trustee Hibshman asked if the long-term plan was to fix Main St and revitalize downtown and take care of the infrastructure, should the Village not do that first, and then worry about the Quiet Zone. Trustee Ward said the process takes about a year before anything concrete can be done. By the time the process is complete, the Village should know whether they received the grant for downtown. Kevin said that the data the board comes up with is for 3 crossings and it would still be applicable if the downtown project is done. It would be the same thing, just built out of something different. Trustee Williams asked if, after Kevin does his engineering part and all the necessary conversations are had, and the Village get bids on this, can the Village decide not to move forward? Kevin stated that yes, the Village would not have to move forward if they didn't wish to. There is no commitment until a contract is signed. Reid Elliot asked if Kevin had a set of plans he used somewhere else. Kevin said yes. Mr. Elliot suggested bringing a set of plans, having the board look at them, and then go out to the sites, measure and mark the area, and then decide. Kevin stated that looking at prior plans won't really help. What would help is looking at a map of the area. Kevin

asked Trustee Ward if he had done a map like that. Trustee Ward said he attended a diagnostic meeting about 20 years ago, but the Village's signals weren't constant warning at that time, so the project was cost prohibitive. Everything is up in the air until meetings are held with FRA, ICC and the railroad. Trustee Hopkins asked again if the board felt they should move forward. Trustee Katzman stated that the board needs to know what it will cost. The first step is to have Kevin do the engineering work and get the bids together, and then a decision can be made. Atty Tess asked Kevin how long the process is to get to the bid package. Kevin stated it would take about a year to get through the meetings and such. Kevin said his actual engineering work would take about a month, but it's the rest of the process that takes so long. Mr. Loyd stated that the longer the board holds off, the higher the cost is going to be as the cost of everything keeps going up. Trustee Hopkins stated that the most common complaint he hears from residents is about the train horns. Trustee Williams stated that the board should keep moving forward. Trustee Hopkins asked if he was making a motion, and he said yes. Trustee Katzman seconded the motion. Roll Call vote was taken. Trustees Hopkins, Kerns, Hibshman, Williams, Ward, and Katzman all voted yes. Motion passed unanimously.

**New Business** – Mary Korth spoke about the library referendum at the beginning of the meeting as she had a Library Board meeting to attend.

Mike Megurdichian spoke regarding the Nitrification Action Plan. Everything is stable. The Village was converted from monochloramine treatment to free available chlorine, and it has been very stable the last few months. The chlorination treatments have kept the ammonia out of the water, and the complaints are way down.

Mike spoke about a cost estimate from Layne Western concerning pulling and maintaining wells 2 and 3. Well 3 is submersible and was drilled in 1980 and it has never been pulled. It has performed very well. The problem with the wells is that the Village will not have a lot of lead time when they start to fail. The wells are currently producing to specs, but the estimates are not cheap. Because well 3 is submersible, once it is pulled it will have to be replaced and the cost is about \$40,000. The lead time will be 4-8 weeks due to supply chain issues. Mike is not comfortable with running on one well for that length of time, but it can be done if need be. Mike recommended that any bid that goes out would include a backup plan in which a temporary pump is put in the hole. If something would go wrong with the other well during that time frame, the Village would have a day to a day and a half before there would be problems. In the short term, it's a funding issue. The other well, number 2, is much more expensive to pull and service. It could easily run \$100,000. It was last done in 1996. Mike said he was here when that was done, and they used a camera to examine the hole. He has some thoughts on what to do with that well, if the Village goes forward with it. In the short term, the funding will be the key. It is not an emergency, but it is something to consider as problems can happen quickly. Mike asked for questions. Penny Payton, Village Treasurer, stated that the Village does have the money to do this project. Mike explained that the Village would need to sign a contract, and the contractor would come and pull the pump to determine what needs to be done, and then the necessary equipment would be ordered from there. With a submersible pump, the Village is not going to want to spend the money to have it pulled and inspected, and then say everything is fine. For the money being spent to do the inspection, the Village would want to replace the old pump with a new, modern one. Well 2 has a line shaft turbine pump with the motor above ground. Mike asked Layne Western what it would cost to convert to a cabled pitless adapter, which would be like a home well, where it sits on a shoe under the ground. There is a lot of advantage to having the motor in cold water. It is more efficient, and the motor will stay cool. Layne told Mike it would be about the same price, but there was no way to know for sure until they dig into it. Mike said he would do the well that hasn't been pulled first. Trustee Ward voiced the same concerns about the lead time. He asked if it would be beneficial to wait a year to see if the supply chain issues resolve themselves. Mike said he monitors the wells daily and if a problem develops, you might have a week before real issues set in. The wells run 20-30% of the day. The wells are mechanical devices, and they will break down, and if you are down one well, and something happens to the other one, the Village would be out of water. Trustee Hibshman asked if they could pull it out, see what model it is, then drop it back in for 6-8 weeks until the new one comes. Mike said that they would not put the old one back in. Once they pull it out, it is done. If anything goes back into the hole, it will be a clean, temporary pump rather than the old one. Questions arose about using well 1, and Mike said it has been abandoned. There is no pump, and it was legally abandoned, so it is not an option. Trustee Ward asked what the life expectancy was on wells like that. Mike said the life expectancy for a municipal well that is well constructed is 50-100 years with suitable maintenance during their lifetimes. Mike said that while it would be nice to dig a new well, there is a lot of monitoring that the EPA requires up front that we are already doing with the existing wells. Minimum cost is \$4 million, and depending on issues that could arise, the cost could be an additional \$3 million.

Trustee Hopkins asked what the board thought about moving forward with the project. Trustee Ward stated that the Village should at least do well 3. Mike recommended that if we plan to do it this year, it should be done after the summer. The best time to do it is in the spring or the fall. Kevin asked if Mike had been Layne exclusively and Mike said yes. Trustee Ward asked if Layne was the only company or were there other competitors. Kevin said there are other companies, but he would call Layne 10 out of 10 times. Trustee Ward asked if a case could be built to waive competitive bidding. Mike said there are only a couple of other companies out there, and Layne does what they say they are going to do. Trustee Ward asked about access because of the record store and the library. Mike said that the Village would have to look at an easement. Trustee Williams made a motion to move ahead with the project. Trustee Hibshman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Trustees Williams, Hibshman, Kerns, Hopkins, Katzman and Ward all voted yet. Motion passed unanimously.

Mike also discussed the new work that the IEPA is requiring. There are two deadlines with this project and the objective is to determine the material of the service lines from the water main to our box, and to the box to the meter, and from the meter into the house. They are looking for lead service lines. Once all the communities across the state have turned in their information, the end game is that the lead service lines will have to be replaced. The first step is to do an inventory. The Village is doing lead and copper this year, and between June and September, 10 residents that have been collecting over the years will submit their samples. The inventory of materials for the 23 sites chosen by the state has to be submitted by October. By April of 2023, the rest of the Village needs to be completed. Mike has what he needs to go, to download and transfer the data for the 23 sites, but they haven't told him how to submit the rest yet. What he needs from the Village is help determining what is in the ground. He needs the age of the properties, and whether they are residential or commercial. The residents will need to assist by giving access so that the material can be determined. Mike said that some assumptions will be made. He can tell if the service lines coming into a house are lead. If they are, it doesn't matter because the line will be replaced anyway. If it's lead in the house, they will say it is a lead service. Rarely has he seen a galvanized service switch to lead. Trustee Ward stated that the state will mandate that the Village replace the lines all the way to the house. Trustee Katzman expressed concerns about tearing up lawns in order to do the replacement. Kevin looked into grant possibilities and the only grants available now are for drastically disadvantaged communities. Kevin thinks they will come up with other grants, but the IEPA does give loans if a lot of lines need to be replaced. Mike said that Jay Timm from the state told him that if there are any lines that the Village does not decide on, the state will say they are lead and they will need to be replaced. Mike has the spreadsheet requirements for his 23 sites for the lead and copper survey, so he can get those taken care of and off the books. The rest will be on a spreadsheet or punch list that has the approximate age of the property. The breakdown is pre-1983 and post-1983. He must do his best due diligence to get the best information and the state will decide what to do from there. Trustee Williams asked if a letter would go out to residents asking permission to access the water lines. Mike said it was up to the board, but he recommended that a letter be sent out letting the residents know what is going on. Trustee Kerns stated that we should get a list together of structures built before 1983, so we don't send letters to someone whose building was constructed after 1983. Mike said that he needs to determine the age of the properties. Trustee Kerns stated that nothing after 1983 is going to have lead pipes. Mike said it isn't just lead pipes. It can also lead soldered joint copper. The new subdivision should be all copper. Kevin asked if Mike could just say that we are 100% sure that the new properties are okay without looking at them and Mike said he is comfortable with that.

Mike referenced the main break that happened a while back. In January, February, and March, 2.3 million gallons a month were used. April was the first full month run since the break was repaired and usage dropped to 1.7 million; a 27% reduction in production and a 29% reduction in chlorine usage.

Water Bills – Clerk Payton stated that first batch of bills was sent out with actual readings since the new equipment arrived. Some bills were very high. Clerk Payton suggested that the Village work with residents as there are some that will not be able to pay their entire bill in one lump sum. She suggested monthly payments over 6 months, and waive late fees for that period, just to help people out. Treasurer Payton did state that some people had been paying their bills in full without problems, but Clerk Payton referenced a bill that was over \$700 and another bill that was over \$2200, and it would be very difficult for people with bills that high to pay them off in one or two payments. The Village did give residents the option to send in their readings, but it is not their responsibility to read their meters. The estimated readings went on way too long and the algorithm is not designed to do estimated readings for that long a period. Trustee Kerns asked how we know if the same person has been in that residence the entire nine months. Clerk Payton said we don't. Properties have changed hands, and it will be a challenge to determine how to prorate those charges and how to determine who is responsible for what portion of the bill. Clerk Payton said she was open to any ideas as to how to handle that. Trustee Ward stated we can definitely work with the residents on large bills, but they have to at least pay their current amount and then pay additional on top of that. Trustee Hopkins suggested taking the overdue amount and dividing it by the number of months that the board determines and assess that on top of the current monthly charges. Trustee Kerns stated that he thought there should have been 2 readings, and then start over. Trustee Kerns said with the cost of fuel and food, it is too much to ask them to pay huge water bills as well. Treasurer Payton brought up that they still used the water, and the Village had to pay to process the water, and Trustee Kerns agreed with that. Treasurer Payton stated that the Village can't lose all that money. Trustee Ward stated that basically the Village would be writing off the people that have the high water bills. Trustee Kerns asked how would they know? He stated that it is not their fault that this situation happened. Treasurer Payton stated again that they still used the water. Trustee Ward brought up concerns about the people who kept up with their bill and paid extra because they thought they used more and asked how would writing off the high bills be fair to those people. Trustee Hopkins said he was sure that his bill would double what it normally was, but he also knew that he was underpaying, so he expected it. Trustee Hibshman stated that some of the cities that he's bid for has had that happen and most of those communities did a 50/50 split with the residents, and then spread that out over a 6-month period. The billed the resident for the current amount, and then took the "overdue" amount and divided by 2 and spread that amount out over 6 months. Trustee Katzman asked if that would have to be done on an individual basis and asked if that would create more work for someone. Treasurer Payton asked if we would have to go back and refund people who paid. Trustee Hibshman stated there is no easy answer to any of this. Trustee Williams suggested just letting the clerk and the treasurer work it out. Curtis Loyd said if it takes them 9-10 months to pay it off, then it takes them 9-10 months to pay it off. Trustee Ward suggested only charging late fees on current amounts due that are late, and Clerk Payton stated that the late fees can't be separated. Late fees are charged on the entire amount due, not just the current amount due. Attorney Tess stated that the Village has an ordinance regarding the charging of late fees and if the board decides to waive late fees, then a

motion must be made to do that. Trustee Hopkins asked if the board wanted to go 6 months or 9 months. Trustee Hibshman stated that 6 months was a good place to start, and it could be extended to the end of the year if necessary. Trustee Hopkins asked for a motion to waive the late fees on the water bills. Trustee Katzman made a motion and Trustee Ward seconded it. All in favor voted aye. There were no nays. The motion passed unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report** – Trustee Williams asked Treasurer Payton about Vadim Municipal Software. He asked if was paid annually or monthly. Treasurer Payton said it is paid annually, and Trustee Williams wanted to know why it was paid twice. Treasurer Payton stated that she split it between the water department and the general fund. Trustee Williams was satisfied with that answer. Trustee Williams asked if Duke's Root Control was the group that did the grouting. Treasurer Payton said yes. Trustee Williams asked if that was the same group that did the grouting the last time. Kevin stated that there are 2 groups that do grouting, and Duke's is one of them, and they have done it in the past. Trustee Hopkins asked for a motion to accept the bills. Trustee Ward made a motion, and Trustee Williams seconded the motion. Trustee Hopkins asked for further discussion. There was none. Roll call vote taken. Trustees Hopkins, kerns, Williams Hibshman, ward, Katzman all voted yes. Passed unanimously.

Trustee Hopkins said he had nothing else. Trustee Williams made a motion to adjourn. Trustee Hibshman seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Trustee Hopkins adjourned the meeting at 8:20:32 pm.