

# VILLAGE OF TWIN LAKES VILLAGE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 18, 2024 – 6:30 p.m.

Village Hall, 105 E. Main Street, Twin Lakes, WI

## CALL TO ORDER AT 6:30 PM BY TRUSTEE KAROW/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/ ROLL CALL:

Present: Trustees Kevin Fitzgerald, Bill Kaskin, Barb Andres, Ken Perl, Aaron Karow. Absent: Trustee Sharon Bower, President Howard Skinner. Also Present: Administrator Laura Jager, Police Chief Katie Hall, Clerk Sabrina Waswo

**APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS FOR PAYMENT:** Karow/Andres motion to approve Corporate Checking (including General Fund, Sanitation, Capital Projects-E/M, Sewer Utility, Lake Rehab, Sewer Hook-Up, Sewer Replacement, and Tax Account): 36491-36551, 489-519 Expenses – \$440,404.64. Motion carried 5-0.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Karow/Fitzgerald motion to approve the October 7, 2024 Special Board Meeting and October 21, 2024 Regular Board Meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS & QUESTIONS:** None.

## PRESIDENT AND TRUSTEE REPORTS

### TRUSTEE SHARON BOWER - ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE, JUDICIARY, LICENSING

#### **Discussion and possible action regarding the “Class B” License at 1903 West Bar.**

Clerk Waswo stated the business has not been open in almost a year, which puts their license at risk of revocation. The building owner, Ann Webb, is in the process of trying to sell it and having problems with the Laundry Mat spillage from 2006. James Kellard 11137 268<sup>th</sup> Court, Trevor, stated he would like to be open for one day to keep the license. Board was in agreeance. They will notify clerk of date.

### TRUSTEE KEVIN FITZGERALD - STREETS & ROADS, EQUIPMENT, STREET LIGHTS, WEEDS, LAKE PLANNING AND PROTECTION

#### **Discussion regarding an Ordinance related to the Occupancy of Public Rights-Of-Way.**

Administrator Jager introduced this ordinance in response to TDS entering the area. Currently, there is no right-of-way permit in place to authorize or enforce restrictions. This ordinance establishes such a permit. Fitzgerald raised a question about the insurance language, asking whether homeowners would be required to obtain insurance. Both Fitzgerald and Karow agreed that homeowners would not need to secure insurance.

### TRUSTEE AARON KAROW - BUILDING AND ZONING, PLAN COMMISSION, AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS

October 2024 Building Permits: 37; Valuation: \$1,794,604.63, Fees Collected: \$15,556.75

#### **Discussion and possible action regarding a quote from Wanasek for demolition.**

The board discussed the potential demolition of a hazardous property at 503 N. Lake Ave, which has been a long-standing issue. The property is uninhabitable, filled with black mold, pests, and has a history of fires. Chief Hall noted that the house has been the site of numerous police calls for drugs, battery, and disturbances, and its condition poses significant health and safety risks to the surrounding community. Despite being vacant, it is suspected that individuals are still occupying the property illegally. The cost to repair the home exceeds its value, and the building inspector has withheld permits for any renovations.

Efforts to notify the property owners have been thorough. They have been served raze order documents, published notices, and engaged in communication with the building department. The owners expressed a preference to repair and save the building, but their actions have been inconsistent. They recently filed for bankruptcy, which has delayed past court actions to address the property, a tactic they’ve used before. The

property is also six years behind on taxes, and the county has struggled to take possession due to the lengthy legal process.

A demolition bid came in at \$50,000, which the village would need to pay upfront and add to the property's tax bill. However, the board recognized that it might take 5–10 years to recover the costs, given the property's condition and ownership issues. The board agreed to obtain additional bids for the demolition, considering that the cinder block foundation might impact the cost. Members also discussed alternative solutions, such as requiring the owners to present a viable remediation plan or finding a fair price for purchasing the property outright.

Chief Hall emphasized the immediate health and safety risks, noting that she became ill after spending an hour inside the house. The board highlighted the importance of acting quickly, rather than waiting for the county to take possession, which could delay resolution for years. The discussion concluded with a plan to revisit the matter after obtaining additional demolition quotes and legal advice.

### **TRUSTEE KEN PERL - POLICE, FIRE, LAKE CONTROL, PARKS AND BEACHES**

October 2024 Code Enforcement: Active Cases: 11, Closed Cases: 8

*Perl/Fitzgerald motion to approve a Memorandum of Understanding for investigation of all law enforcement-involved fatalities/great bodily harm. Motion carried 5-0.*

*Perl/Fitzgerald motion to approve a request by Twin Runners Snowmobile Club to allow snowmobile access through Legion Park. Motion carried 5-0.*

*Perl/Andres motion to approve a request by Twin Lakes Fire & Rescue to cover the costs of the Annual Fire Department Turkey Dinner. Motion carried 5-0.*

### **VILLAGE PRESIDENT HOWARD SKINNER**

#### **2025 Budget Workshop #3**

Administrator Jager presented the updated budget, highlighting a reduced village mill rate due to increased property values and a \$30,000 levy increase. For a \$300,000 home, the village portion of taxes would be \$938. Trustee Fitzgerald noted that significant department cuts were made to balance the budget, leaving borrowing as the only option for additional needs. Trustee Karow mentioned that the \$150,000 previously allocated for roads would no longer be budgeted, suggesting a review of the debt schedule for future road projects. The board revisited donations, deciding to cut them by half instead of eliminating them entirely, as discussed in the previous meeting.

Chief Hall provided an update on the proposed School Resource Officer (SRO) position. Randall School has committed \$50,000 toward the role, while Lakewood School is interested but lacks funding until at least the 2025-2026 school year. The Lake District would also contribute, as the SRO would assist with water patrol in the summer. Fitzgerald emphasized the need for a long-term agreement with the schools, citing concerns about the village being permanently responsible for the position if schools withdrew funding. He suggested staffing the role internally for the first year to evaluate its feasibility.

Izabela Jones, 353 Hillview Court, shared her concerns about drug activity and safety near the laundromat, emphasizing the need for increased police presence in the area. She strongly advocated for having School Resource Officers in schools, stating that children already face challenges in society and deserve to feel safe at school. She emphasized that safety measures for children should not even be a question of debate.

Jameson Worley, 1923 Pheasant Street, expressed opposition to the implementation of SROs. Drawing from personal experience, Jameson noted that armed officers in schools on the north side of Chicago did not guarantee safety and added that the presence of armed officers might create discomfort for some children. His children attend Lakewood and feel safe. Adding SROs might disrupt this sense of security. He inquired about the potential

response time for emergencies involving an SRO and questioned whether a single officer could effectively respond to such incidents.

Bryan Neal, 142 East Lake Shore Drive, commented that respect for law enforcement starts at home. He voiced opposition to the Village funding SROs, arguing that schools, as independent taxing entities, should manage their own safety measures. Neal stressed the importance of fiscal responsibility, stating that the community has already expressed a desire for fewer services and tighter budgets.

Bill Poetker, 1607 East Lake Shore Drive, criticized budget increases in administrative salaries and health insurance premiums. He argued that these funds could be better allocated to other areas. Poetker also raised concerns about prioritizing EMS services over other departments, such as road maintenance, and noted that the Village's borrowing for various projects, including roads, would need to be closely monitored.

Kristina Fauria, 545 Arrowhead Drive, expressed her support for SROs, emphasizing the importance of safety in schools. However, she noted the Village's need for better communication with the public, particularly regarding meeting notices and agenda updates. She suggested more proactive outreach to keep residents better informed about important issues.

Kelly Dejonge, 372 Tindalls Nest, is a retired law enforcement officer with 10 years of experience as an SRO, discussed the multifaceted role of SROs. She explained that SROs are not just security personnel but also mentors and educators who build bridges between schools and police departments. Dejonge recommended a collaborative funding approach, such as splitting costs between the Village and schools, and suggested a more detailed dialogue with the community to reach a consensus.

Diana Slominski, 279 West Park Drive, with 25 years of experience working in schools, questioned whether representatives from the schools were present at the meeting. She expressed frustration over the lack of information available to the community regarding the SRO proposal, comparing it to the lack of communication during the failed referendum. Slominski called for more transparency and outreach from both the Village and the schools to ensure residents are fully informed.

Chief Hall provided an overview of current police involvement in schools, including safety education on topics such as internet safety and drug prevention. She noted that officers make regular visits during drop-off and dismissal times, often in both full and soft uniforms, to build relationships with students and create a sense of safety. She emphasized the importance of mentorship in fostering trust between students and law enforcement.

Trustee Karow highlighted that half of the students attending Randall School come from the Town of Randall, suggesting that funding for SROs should involve contributions from other communities. Trustee Fitzgerald added that if schools decided to cease funding, the Village would bear 100% of the costs for SROs, which could pose a significant financial challenge.

The Board discussed the Village's proposed borrowing of approximately \$311,000 for various projects, including \$80,000 for a new squad car, \$56,000 for other police items, \$10,000 for sidewalks, \$15,000 for a lawnmower, and \$150,000 for road improvements. Trustee Fitzgerald explained the challenges of balancing the budget within state levy limits and noted that borrowing would be necessary to maintain essential services. Trustee Karow stressed the importance of reallocating funds responsibly while ensuring the Village continues to meet its obligations.

A special board meeting was scheduled for Thursday, November 21 at 5:00 p.m. to finalize budget discussions and address outstanding concerns.

**ADJOURN** – Fitzgerald/Andres motion to adjourn at 8:32 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.