

VILLAGE OF TWIN LAKES COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

December 2, 2024 – 6:30 p.m.

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

CALL TO ORDER BY PRESIDENT SKINNER AT 6:30 PM/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/ROLL

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS.

Steve Severt, 1186 Spyglass Court, raised concerns regarding the recent property revaluation, highlighting significant errors in how properties were measured. He criticized the use of inexperienced workers to measure buildings, which resulted in discrepancies, such as one neighbor's property being overestimated by 6,000 square feet. Severt noted that many properties had incorrect square footage, and upon reviewing other parcels in the village, he found similar issues. Having a background in data processing and consulting for Kenosha County, Severt identified over \$13 million in building assessment errors. He suggested that some changes were made behind the scenes to avoid going through the Board of Review, and questioned whether others might also be inaccurate. Severt shared an example of a property that was misclassified, with a residential property being treated as agricultural. He pointed out that less than 5% of properties were adjusted, raising concerns about the fairness of the revaluation process, especially since it led to his own property being assessed higher than a neighbor's despite their being similar. He expressed frustration with the BOR process, calling it nearly impossible for homeowners to challenge assessments. He cited a case where a house's assessment went from \$512,000 to \$950,000, and after a reduction, it was adjusted to \$725,000.

President Skinner explained that market fluctuations, particularly with lakefront properties, have driven up prices, affecting the overall assessment values. Fitzgerald acknowledged that the revaluation process was challenging, particularly due to state laws that limited assessors' ability to gather data and assess square footage accurately, especially when homeowners did not allow assessors inside. Fitzgerald noted that if another revaluation were necessary in two years, it would be an expensive process. Severt emphasized the importance of accurate building data, arguing that square footage should remain constant and that the system for measuring properties was flawed. He advocated for sending a new crew to reassess properties to ensure that the data used for the revaluation is correct.

PRESIDENT AND TRUSTEE REPORTS

TRUSTEE SHARON BOWER - ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE, JUDICIARY, LICENSING

Discussion on Correcting Assessor Errors for parcels located on 1400 Richmond Road.

Clerk Waswo was notified by the assessors that three parcels on Richmond Road were incorrectly assessed with a residential classification instead of agricultural. The assessor confirmed that these parcels should be reclassified as agricultural, as it was determined they were being farmed. Since the tax bills have already been issued, the assessments cannot be changed at this point. However, under state statute, we can refund the excess taxes due to this being a palpable error. We have done this process twice in the past with Accurate Assessor.

The process is as follows: the Village Board would approve the correction of the assessed value and authorize the Clerk to send out corrected tax bills. The village would then issue the new tax bills, and the village would pay the excess property taxes. The village can later request a chargeback of the taxes from the Department of Revenue, which would notify the taxing agencies, and they would refund the village.

Clerk Waswo spoke with the Kenosha County Treasurer's office, which is aware that these parcels need the conversion notice removed. They are awaiting a response from the assessor to confirm that there are no other parcels requiring this agricultural conversion charge removal. Letters will be sent to property owners informing them of this change. This applies to parcels 2, 3, and 6. Clerk Waswo also noted that the common element is still listed under the legal description. The assessor explained that they account for the additional common

element as part of the other parcels when assessing the land. Clerk Waswo stated she personally checks the roll the following year to ensure it is corrected moving forward.

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

Discussion regarding the road closure of Legion Dr. in the spring.

This is in Randall Township. President Skinner stated according to the letter, the road will only be closed during the day, with one culvert being worked on per day. The road will be reopened at the end of each day. He believes this plan is reasonable for the two days of work.

Discussion regarding Ordinance 2024-12-1 relating to the Occupancy of Public Rights-Of-Way.

There are no updates to this ordinance, except that the Public Works Foreman has been designated as the final authority, replacing the Administrator, with the exception of the board. The Administrator is still looking into liability insurance.

Other – Fitzgerald noted that we received a second email regarding a parcel on the channel in Lake Mary. Skinner confirmed that the issue is being resolved, as they are removing the pier from village property. He plans to build a boardwalk along the end of the channel, which the DNR has approved. Fitzgerald mentioned that once the pier crosses the coterminal line for riparian rights, it will be entirely on the village’s riparian rights. Skinner clarified that the DNR had no issue as long as the village has no issue. Fitzgerald requested further discussion on the matter.

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

Discussion regarding a contract agreement for Rescue and Emergency Medical Services from the Twin Lakes Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad Inc.

This is to present the agreement to the board for approval at the December 16th meeting. The Village Attorney is currently reviewing it for comments.

VILLAGE PRESIDENT HOWARD SKINNER

Discussion regarding driveway access to 1316 Second Street:

The property owner is requesting a more permanent solution for accessing his garage. Kaskin asked if the owner wanted to purchase the property; Skinner did not gather that information but noted potential buyers might be hesitant due to lack of deeded access.

Fitzgerald clarified that the property is an unimproved public road, but Skinner explained it’s now a village right of way. Karow suggested drafting a letter giving the property owner permission to improve the right of way for the driveway, with a sketch kept on file. Laura agreed, provided the attorney approves. Kaskin raised concerns about the 20 feet needed due to a culvert and ongoing flooding. Karow recommended the engineer review the owner’s plan to ensure it doesn’t interfere with drainage. Kaskin confirmed the driveway would need to be pitched toward the culvert.

ADJOURN – Skinner/Fitzgerald motion to adjourn at 7:14 p.m. Motion carried 6-0.

/s/Sabrina Waswo, Village Clerk