

## VILLAGE OF TWIN LAKES COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

February 3, 2025 – 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, Tim Infusino, President Howard Skinner. Also Present: Engineer Greg Droessler, Administrator Laura Jager, Police Chief Katie Hall, Deputy Clerk Colleen Hoyt.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS.

Steve Severt, 1186 Spyglass Court, stated that he was present on December 2, 2024, and made remarks about property assessments that he wanted included in the minutes. He noticed that the square footage for some buildings was incorrect. He also pointed out that his comments regarding the Village Clerk, Sabrina Waswo, were missing from the minutes. Sabrina and her staff did a wonderful job, and Steve wished his comments had been included in the previous meeting minutes, as he feels the village residents need to understand the effort it took, not only in handling the voting process but also the assessment process, which was quite a mess. He mentioned that he knew Sabrina and her staff received many calls, and he believes their hard work should be recognized, as they went above and beyond at that time.

When he reviewed the minutes, he noticed a line stating that one of the neighbor's properties was overestimated by 6,000 square feet. However, what he actually said was that it was over by 600 square feet. It wasn't an estimate; it was a factual measurement error. This needs to be corrected to reflect that the property was over by 600 square feet, not 6,000, and that it wasn't an estimation error.

Steve believes someone should look into this issue, noting that it's the board's responsibility, not his. He found many other properties with similar issues. Even if a property is off by just 200 square feet, it makes a significant difference. Multiply that by \$120 per square foot (which is on the low end), and then again by the mill rate—just think about how much that adds up. He knows that there are other properties with similar problems, and this isn't an isolated case.

Steve said somebody needs to look into it. He mentioned that the county has transitioned to a new system, and it lacks sufficient data fields to store certain details, or they simply aren't being displayed. However, the primary focus should be on square footage. Some people brought up that square footage is normally measured inside the building, but that's not how it's done in this case. They measure the outside of the building to maintain consistency across properties. He specifically referred to the first-floor square footage. He doesn't care about the upper floors or the basement, as those might have errors too, but his main concern is the first floor. He checked other properties, including some owned by board members, and found that they were pretty close, but others had discrepancies. He emphasized that this isn't Tyler's fault; it's part of the crew that was doing the measuring.

When he bought his house, he had an assessor come out to verify the square footage and land measurements, and provided the blueprints for accuracy. The assessor confirmed everything was correct. But in this revaluation, Associated recorded his first-floor square footage as 2,392 square feet. This would have made the total building size over 3,000 square feet, including the basement. Tyler came out and remeasured the property correctly, and it turned out to match the 2023 county data. The original measurement was off by 624 square feet.

This isn't the only case. During his review, he checked between 50 and 100 properties and found several with discrepancies. Some were off by 20–25 square feet, which isn't a big deal, but others were significantly inaccurate. There were even cases where properties were underreported, which isn't fair either.

Steve expressed gratitude for the opportunity to bring this up again, as it's a critical issue. If your own property were off by 100 square feet, you'd want it corrected. He understands that it might be too late to address this now, but he had brought it up previously. While verifying every property would be costly, property owners could check their own records and compare them to the county data. He noticed that some of the incorrect drawings still haven't been updated. However, he knows that some of his neighbors successfully had their errors

corrected. One person's property was off by over 200 square feet, and they were able to have it changed. If you consider 200 square feet, that's a lot of money. This issue affects more than just the present—it impacts the starting point for future revaluations. If we don't correct errors now, they will carry forward into future assessments, compounding the problem over time. Steve hopes something can be done.

## **PRESIDENT AND TRUSTEE REPORTS**

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

#### **Discussion regarding the reduction of the Letter of Credit for the Oak Meadow Phase 2A**

The discussion began with the reduction of the letter of credit for Phase 2A of a subdivision located on the northwest side of town. This subdivision, consisting of 39 lots, was purchased by Mr. Keating several years ago. At that time, Mr. Keating expressed concerns about the financial risks of developing all 39 lots at once, which led to the subdivision being divided into three phases: Phase 2A, 2B, and 2C, with each phase containing 12 to 14 lots.

In Phase 2A, seven homes have been completed, and one more is at the shell stage, with several other building permits for homes set to begin construction in the spring. The completion of Phase 2A is well underway. The current proposal is to reduce the letter of credit for this subdivision. Initially, a letter of credit was issued for the full scope of Phase 2A, which had been reduced twice in the past: once when underground work, curb, and gutter installation were completed, and again when the surface coat of asphalt was paved. The current reduction is based on the installation of sidewalks.

Approximately 10,000 square feet of sidewalk is required for the project, and 5,400 square feet has already been completed, leaving about 4,200 square feet to be done. With this in mind, the letter of credit would be reduced from \$45,265 to \$21,672, reflecting the estimated cost of the remaining sidewalk work.

Trustee Andres raised concerns about this reduction, noting that the original agreement required all sidewalks to be completed by November 1, 2021, which was three years ago. She questioned why a reduction would be made for work that should have been finished already. The engineer clarified that the agreement with the developer stipulated that sidewalks would be installed as homes were completed and yards finished to prevent damage during construction. If all sidewalks were completed at once, a third of them could be damaged during construction, resulting in costly repairs. This phased installation ensures more consistent and aesthetically pleasing sidewalks. Thus, all completed homes have sidewalks installed, and the remaining sidewalks correspond to undeveloped lots.

Trustee Fitzgerald inquired whether any lots had been sold to private buyers, which could potentially cause interruptions in sidewalk continuity if homes were built on one lot and not the other. The engineer assured that the purpose of the letter of credit is to ensure sufficient funds are available to complete the sidewalks and public infrastructure if Mr. Keating were to walk away from the project. Trustee Andres expressed concern that with rising construction costs, the village should ensure enough funds remain in the letter of credit to cover any unfinished work. The engineer replied that this reduction should be the final one until all homes in Phase 2A are completed, ensuring that the remaining letter of credit covers any unfinished sidewalk installation. The board agreed that the remaining amount in the letter of credit is sufficient to cover the cost of completing the sidewalks for the remaining lots in Phase 2A. The issue of sidewalk continuity was discussed, with the board noting that in previous developments, no completion date for sidewalks had been stipulated, leading to problems in projects like Spring Oaks. In the case of Phase 2A, the letter of credit ensures that sidewalks will be completed. Trustee Andres suggested adding a sunset clause in the developer's agreement for Phase 2B, establishing a clear deadline for sidewalk installation if any lots remain undeveloped for an extended period. This could be addressed if Phase 2B is approved.

#### **Discussion regarding the potential development of Oak Meadow Phase 2B.**

The discussion then moved to Phase 2B, the next phase of development, which consists of 13 lots and an extension of Grove Trail. The phase will include sanitary sewer lateral installation, storm sewer drainage, road

construction, and sidewalks. The village is running low on available lots for development, and opening these 13 lots will help meet demand. Mr. Keating has built high-quality homes in the subdivision, and Phase 2B is expected to continue this trend.

Keith Keating, 39300 87<sup>th</sup> Street, Burlington, addressed the board, explaining that three homes in Phase 2A are already under contract and that a fourth lot is currently being used for road base material. He assured the board that the remaining sidewalks would be completed within 9-10 months. He emphasized that Phase 2B would be more efficient because construction could occur on both sides of the street. Additionally, his lender has requested that the existing letter of credit be finalized before financing for Phase 2B can proceed. The timeline for Phase 2B was also discussed. Mr. Keating stated that if construction begins in July or August, major improvements could be completed within six months, with the goal of having the base pavement in place before winter.

The board asked for updates on Phase 2A's infrastructure. It was confirmed that the roads and streets have been accepted by the village, the sewer system has been finalized, and the stormwater basins are functioning as expected. The stormwater system in Phase 2A will also accommodate drainage for Phase 2B.

Engineer Droessler stated, normally, the developer's engineer would provide the quantities and estimated price. As the village engineer, he would then review those quantities and assess the pricing to ensure that it's reasonable. The letter of credit is then held at 120% of the value of the improvements. This is intended to protect the Village, ensuring that if the developer walks away at any point, there are funds set aside to finish the development. Additionally, when the village attorney reviews it, they will further define the timeline.

He would recommend that we aim to have the binder down by November 1st, for example, and then hold off on placing the surface course of asphalt, typically for one year. The village board would reserve the right, as we did with the last development, to extend the timeline. For example, instead of one year, we extended the surface course to two years because the market was not favorable at that time, and there was limited construction.

There will need to be an amendment to the developer's agreement, which the village attorney will review to define the timeline and establish the new letter of credit amount for Phase 2B.

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

### **Discussion regarding the use of Boat Launch Fees to help fund Water Patrol.**

The Lake District is considering allocating some boat launch fees towards funding water patrol, with an initial proposal of \$5,000. Revenue from boat launch fees is slightly lower this year due to a delay in kiosk installation, but it's expected to improve moving forward. There was discussion about whether \$5,000 is the right amount or if a higher allocation should be considered, especially in light of maintenance costs for the launches, which total \$11,000 annually. The Lake Elizabeth launch has additional funding sources, while Lake Mary does not.

The plan is to allocate \$25,000 from the Lake District and \$25,000 from the launch/marina fund. However, the breakdown of this fund, especially the portion from marina fees, needs to be clarified. There are concerns about commingling marina and launch fees, and some members suggest reviewing whether they should be separated.

Before committing additional funds, a financial review of the situation is recommended. The plan is to confirm the \$50,000 total allocation (\$25,000 from the Lake District and \$25,000 from the launch/marina fund) and then bring it back for formal approval at the board meeting.

**ADJOURN – Skinner/Andres motion to adjourn at 7:09 p.m. Motion carried 7-0.**

/s/Sabrina Waswo, Village Clerk