

VILLAGE OF BERRIEN SPRINGS REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Village of Berrien Springs Regular Council Meeting held on Monday, April 01, 2024.
President Barry Gravitt called the council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: President Barry Gravitt, Pro-Tem Jack Davis, Trustees: Zach Fedoruk, Lonna Johnson, Sheila Snyder, Kristin von Maur, Mark VandeVere, Village Clerk Rachael Kuzda, and Attorney DeFrancesco.
Absent: None.

Also Present: *The Journal Era*, *The Herald Palladium*, and Naomi Reese.

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

***Moved** by Sheila Snyder seconded by Zach Fedoruk to approve the agenda with addition to discuss the demo and asbestos removal of 115 E. Pitt Street. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Approve the minutes of the Public Hearing held on March 18, 2024.

***Moved** by Jack Davis seconded by Mark VandeVere to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing held on March 18, 2024, as presented. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

Approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on March 18, 2024.

***Moved** by Lonna Johnson seconded by Zach Fedoruk to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on March 18, 2024, as presented. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Comcast Programming Advisory was received.
2. Comcast notice of updates to their Xfinity Residential Services Agreement.
3. *Central County Senior Center* April 2024 newsletter received.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE AND PERSONNEL – Chair: President Barry Gravitt

*The next Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

Pay the bills.

***Moved** by Kristin von Maur seconded by Mark VandeVere to pay the bills in the amount of \$38,764.67. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

Approve Invoice from County of Berrien Community Development in the amount of \$500.00 for Administration Fees for the Berrien County Water & Sewer No. 29 Bond.

***Moved** by Lonna Johnson seconded by Zach Fedoruk to approve Invoice from County of Berrien Community Development in the amount of \$500.00 for Administration Fees for the Berrien County Water & Sewer No. 29 Bond. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

PUBLIC PROPERTIES AND ORDINANCE – Chair: Kristin von Maur

*The next Public Properties and Ordinance Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.

Approve “An Ordinance To Amend Chapter 42 Entitled “Vegetation”, Article III Entitled “Noxious Weeds”, Section 42-56 Entitled “Responsibility For Cutting”.

***Moved** by Mark VandeVere seconded by Jack Davis to approve “An Ordinance To Amend Chapter 42 Entitled “Vegetation”, Article III Entitled “Noxious Weeds”, Section 42-56 Entitled “Responsibility For Cutting”. Roll call vote: Kristin von Maur/Aye; Lonna Johnson/Aye; Jack Davis/Aye; Mark VandeVere/Aye; Sheila Snyder/Aye; Zach Fedoruk/Aye; President Barry Gravitt/Aye. Motion carried.

Discuss demo and asbestos removal of 115 E. Pitt Street.

***Moved** by Jack Davis seconded by Zach Fedoruk to increase the not to exceed amount for the demo & asbestos removal of 115 E Pitt Street to \$33,500.00. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

FIRE –Village President Pro-Tem Jack Davis and Trustee Lonna Johnson are the Village Representatives.

*President Pro-Tem Jack Davis gave a synopsis of the Fire Board Meeting held on Wednesday, March 27, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.

PUBLIC UTILITIES – Chair: Lonna Johnson

*The next Public Utilities Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.

SHAMROCK PARK COMMITTEE – Chair: Jack Davis

*The next Shamrock Park Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.

LIBRARY BOARD – Lonna Johnson

Re-appoint Sylvia Wallace-Boal as a Village Representative on the Berrien Springs Community Library Board for a three-year term from April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2027.

***Moved** by Jack Davis seconded by Kristin von Maur to approve re-appointing Sylvia Wallace-Boal as a Village Representative on the Berrien Springs Community Library Board for a three-year term from April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2027. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

MEDIC 1 – Clerk Rachael Kuzda

*Clerk Rachael Kuzda gave a synopsis of the Regular Medic 1 Board Meeting held on Thursday, March 28, 2024.

*Council received copies of the Medic 1 2024-2025 approved budget and budget updates.

RECREATION AUTHORITY – Jack Davis

*Jack Davis reported that little league will start soon and construction on the new fields is to start in April.

POLICE COMMITTEE – Village President Barry Gravitt is the Village Representative

*The next Police Committee Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 25, 2024, at 3:30 p.m.

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMITTEE: Chair: Sheila Snyder

*The next Historic District Committee Meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 08, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Berrien County Historical Association.

COMMUNITY COORDINATOR/SOCIAL MEDIA COMMITTEE: Chair: Sheila Snyder

*The next Community Coordinator/Social Media Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.

AD HOC COMMITTEE: FERAL/STRAY CATS: Chair: Sheila Snyder

*Nothing new to report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS:

Naomi Reese addressed the council to ask about neutering male cats. Trustee Sheila Snyder said we do both spaying and neutering. She also asked about getting a light on South Harrison. Trustee Zach Fedoruk said that the Village is looking into it, but it takes some time because AEP owns the poles. Ms. Reese was encouraged to contact AEP as well with her concerns.

COUNCIL COMMENTS: Trustee Mark VandeVere addressed the council:

“I have been honored to serve as a Trustee on this Village Council since November of 2023. I have learned so much from each of you, and from all the supporting staff. I continue to be increasingly proud of all that the Council and Village staff accomplishes with so few resources.

I have also learned some of the frustrations that go with working in government. I’ve learned to strongly dislike the following phrases: “We’re working on that”. “We’ll take a look at that.” “We’re discussing that.” “The wheels of government turn slowly.”

So, briefly, I want to challenge all of us to make this the year that those things are heard less often. That our constituents – our fellow citizens and residents – NEVER hear us say them. To make the wheels of government turn more rapidly. To spend less time pondering and talking, and more time taking action.

I know everyone on the Council well enough at this point to know that we all have the community’s best interests at heart. I’m already encouraged by recent progress on Wolf’s Prairie Playground, and the Historic District.

Let’s continue to make this a year of giving the good people of this Village the action they deserve.

Thank you.”

ADJOURNMENT:

***Moved** by Mark VandeVere seconded by Zach Fedoruk to adjourn at 6:35 p.m. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0.
Motion carried.

Rachael Kuzda, MiPMC
Village Clerk

Barry Gravitt
Village President