

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE  
VILLAGE OF STEGER, WILL & COOK  
COUNTIES, ILLINOIS

The Board of Trustees convened in regular session at 7:00 P.M. on this 6<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2017 in the Municipal Building of the Village of Steger, with Mayor Kenneth A. Peterson, Jr. presiding and Village Clerk Joseph M. Zagone, Jr. attending.

Village Clerk Zagone called the roll. The following Trustees were present; Joyce, Sarek, Lopez, Skrezyna and Buxton. Trustee Perchinski was absent. Also present were; Village Administrator Mike Tilton, EMA Chief Tom Johnston, Community Center Director Diane Rossi, Director of Public Infrastructure Dave Toepper, Police Chief Ken Boehm.

PRESENTATION Presenters were not in attendance. Trustee Lopez made a motion to table indefinitely the presentation regarding apartment units at Steger Road and Cottage Grove Avenue. Trustee Skrezyna seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

**MINUTES**

Trustee Lopez made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Board meeting, as all members have copies. Trustee Buxton seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Mayor Peterson shared presentation on the water rate increase ordinance, prior to opening the floor to residents' comments. He explained that the Village has been using the General fund to supplement the Water fund, and that is not how it should operate. He explained that as a government, certain funds must be established. He explained that water funds can only be used for water expenses; employees, water mains, etc. Mayor Peterson explained that even with the proposed water increase, Steger will still be among the lowest in the area. He explained that water rates must be increased to be fiscally responsible.

A resident asked about the bi monthly minimum rate in the Ordinance. Mayor Peterson explained that the minimum rate was an error in the draft Ordinance. The correct bi monthly minimum is \$29.46.

Mary Laws of 3437 Jennifer Court approached the Board and discussed problems with her water. Ms. Laws stated she cannot drink, cook or bathe in the water at her home. Ms. Laws said her bath tub is brown and she changes her whole house filter monthly. She buys and brings water to her home, salt for her softener and reverse osmosis filters. Ms. Laws feels it unfair to pay more for water she is unable to use.

Another resident felt it especially unfair to residents of Miller Woods, as they are all on well water and also use reverse osmosis and water softeners. If the village needs to use funds from the General Fund to cover water costs, it will cost them for water they don't receive.

Mayor Peterson added that it is a usage tax. The Village is trying to see that those using the water are those paying for it. Those without village water shouldn't pay for it.

A resident came forward and read a letter from Thomas Smith at 3427 Wallace, who could not attend. Mr. Smith shared concerns for residents on fixed incomes. He said even with a week or two extension to pay he struggles, because he is paid monthly. Mr. Smith added he has to pay a plumber three times a year to rod his pipes.

Mayor Peterson explained that the company assessing the Village water system is costing about \$22,000.

The same resident asked about what appears to be pipes that will be installed around town. Mayor Peterson explained those pipes are not the Village's project, but Thorn Creek Sanitary District's. Thorn Creek is lining the sewer pipes from Cook County to Will County and will be installing these pipes for temporary use. Then she asked why the water rates had not been increased gradually over the years. She suggested a gradual increase instead to make it easier on residents. Mayor Peterson explained the increase is to bring the village up to budget with a little surplus.

Vicky Kaiser of 3436 Jennifer Court came forward. Ms. Kaiser had questions about the minimum cost on water bills. Mayor Peterson explained that the Village's costs have increased each year to maintain water service. Ms. Kaiser asked that the Board table the Ordinance and make the corrected Ordinance available for review by residents.

Another resident suggested that if the wrong amount has been charged, that could explain the deficit. Mayor Peterson explained that while calculating the water rate he discovered a software glitch that did not charge residents correctly for almost a year. The glitch has been corrected.

Mayor Peterson explained the error in the Ordinance regards the price per hundred cubic feet of water usage.

He also explained that for example, dog tags, business licenses and village sticker revenues go to the general fund. Real Estate taxes may go to several funds. The general fund can be used for any Village need. Specialized taxes can only be used for the specialized fund. Water funds can only be used for water. Motor Fuel Taxes can only be used for transportation type issues.

A resident asked what the water assessment is expected to say? Mayor Peterson explained he will receive information on alternate water sources. He explained that Lake Michigan water could add \$7 (or more) per hundred cubic feet to Steger water

bills. If Lake Michigan water were purchased, it would still be delivered through Steger infrastructure. That could still churn up sediment from pipes. Lake Michigan and Kankakee water are similar in price.

A Sally Drive resident expressed concerns of his neighborhood not being flushed in some time. Mayor Peterson will see that the area is flushed.

Steve Thurmond of 3443 Butler asked for the figure of revenue brought into village every other month for water billing. He asked how much revenue on a bi monthly basis for water. Mayor Peterson did not have that figure at hand. Mayor Peterson stated for the 9 month period ending September 30, 2017 \$644,697.00 was paid for water bills.

Mr. Thurmond reminded the Board and the audience that November 17, 18 & 19 Bloom Trail T3 will perform “Little Shop of Horrors”.

Another resident asked if any grants are available for water. Mayor Peterson replied that none were available, but he continually looks for grants. He is hopeful of getting a capital bill out of Springfield.

A resident asked about water pressure. Director of Public Infrastructure Dave Toepper explained that in flushing his Department is trying to change the pressure.

Administrator Tilton explained that water grants usually come from FEMA. Mr. Tilton added with all the disasters recently in the country, FEMA grants will be scarce for some time to come.

A resident asked about flushing following water main breaks. Mr. Toepper explained that the flushing is usually conducted downstream of the main break.

A resident asked for clarification of “minimum use” on a water bill. If she doesn’t use enough water, she’ll be charged the minimum? Mayor Peterson said “that is correct” the minimum would be 100 cubic feet. There are certain costs, including the cost of having the system itself.

A resident asked if the wells were viable and would they continue to be viable. A recent study was performed on the wells. How much water remains in the well and how long the water would be available? The water table can be traced back to Lake Erie.

In reply to a resident’s question, Director Toepper explained that the water is tested the first and third Tuesday of every month. Public Works tests seven houses on the first Tuesday and five houses the third Tuesday. Results are sent to the state for testing of E Coli, coliform bacteria, chlorine, etc. Mr. Toepper said there are many reasons a sample can come back as contaminated, then the sample is retested. The state determines which homes are to be tested.

A resident inquired about “blowing out the lines” to the house and how does flushing help with sediment. Mr. Toepper explained residents can call the Village Hall and request having the line blown out. A faulty pipe can be found while the pipe is blown out, this can be costly to homeowners. The pipes are lead, but do not deteriorate. Pipes collect sediment.

Another gentleman asked about sulfur smell in his water. Mr. Toepper explained the sulfur smell is usually from the water softener.

A resident at 35<sup>th</sup> and Phillips commented she’s had poor water pressure since last winter’s two main breaks in her area. Mr. Toepper said he could come and assess her water pressure. Perhaps blowing the water meter out could fix it for her.

## **REPORTS**

**Village Administrator Tilton** reported that the 1988 court case between the Village of Crete and the Village of Steger has ended. Steger is in possession of 8.2 acres and the plat has been recorded with the Recorder of Deeds. That makes Steger eligible for grants through IDNR.

**Assistant Administrator Mary Jo Seehausen** had no report.

**Director of Public Infrastructure** reported street sweeping has begun and will continue throughout the week.

**Fire Chief Nowell Fillion** referred to his weekly report and reminded everyone of the Santa parade and food drive Saturday November 25th.

**Police Chief Ken Boehm** had no report.

**EMA Chief Tom Johnston** had no report.

**Community Center Director Diane Rossi** reported on the success of the annual Halloween Party. 220 children participated.

**Housing and Community Development Director Alice Peterson** reported that donation drop boxes will be at Village Hall, Community Center and the Library for canned goods for Christmas baskets.

**Village Attorney** had no report.

## **TRUSTEES’ REPORTS**

**Trustee Buxton** referred to his financial report. His report is attached to the official minutes.

**Trustee Skrezyna** no report, but clarified with Director Toepper that lawn and leaf pick up for the season end at the end of November.

**Trustee Lopez** no report.

**Trustee Sarek** had no report.

**Trustee Perchinski** was absent.

**Trustee Joyce**

**CLERK'S REPORT** Holiday Hours for Thanksgiving (for all non-essential services) Closed Thursday November 23 and Friday November 24.

**PRESIDENT PETERSON** thanked the residents for coming to meeting to discuss water concerns.

Mayor Peterson also reported on success of the Halloween bonfire.

The annual Christmas Tree Lighting will be Saturday November 25<sup>th</sup> on Halsted Boulevard.

### **BILLS**

Trustee Skrezyna made a motion to approve the bills as listed. Village Trustee Sarek seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Joyce, Sarek, Lopez, Skrezyna and Buxton. Mayor Peterson voted aye. Motion carried.

**CORRESPONDENCE - none**

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Trustee Lopez made a motion to table "Childrens Home Center" indefinitely. Trustee Skrezyna seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Trustee Joyce made a motion to approve RESOLUTION NO. 1117 CDBG SUBRECIPIENT RESOLUTION. Trustee Sarek seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Joyce, Sarek, Lopez, Skrezyna and Buxton. Mayor Peterson voted aye. Motion carried.

Trustee Lopez made a motion to table ORDINANCE NO. 1178 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 86, SECTION 86-2 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF STEGER, ILLINOIS REGARDING UTILITY RATES FOR THE VILLAGE OF STEGER, ILLINOIS. Trustee Sarek seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

Trustee Lopez made a motion to approve the tentative tax levy year 2017. Trustee Skrezyna seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Joyce, Sarek, Lopez, Skrezyna and Buxton. Mayor Peterson voted aye. Motion carried.

Trustee Joyce made a motion to approve the Business License Application of Coda Carpentry at 27 E. 36th Street pending inspections. Trustee Buxton seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye; Joyce, Sarek, Lopez, Skrezyna and Buxton. Mayor Peterson voted aye. Motion carried.

Trustee Skrezyna made a motion to approve the recommendation of Assistant Administrator Mary Jo Seehausen that the Village will honor the Christmas Eve holiday, for all applicable employees on Friday December 22. All village services will also be closed Monday December 25 in observance of Christmas holiday. Trustee Lopez seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

Trustee Joyce made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss Personnel. 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (1) Appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees, pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the Open Meetings Act. Trustee Skrezyna seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye: Joyce, Sarek, Lopez, Skrezyna and Buxton. Mayor Peterson voted aye. Motion carried.

**8:11pm**

Trustee Lopez made a motion to return to Regular Session. Trustee Sarek seconded the motion. Roll was called. The following Trustees voted aye: Joyce, Sarek, Lopez, Skrezyna and Buxton. Mayor Peterson voted aye. Motion carried.

**8:40pm**

Trustee Joyce made a motion to adjourn. Trustee Skrezyna seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:41pm**

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Kenneth A. Peterson, Jr., Village President

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Joseph M. Zagone, Jr., Village Clerk