

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MEETING FOR THE
VILLAGE OF STEGER, WILL & COOK
COUNTIES, ILLINOIS

The Board of Trustees convened in Committee of the Whole Meeting at 7:30 P.M. on this 18th day of August 2025 in the Municipal Building of the Village of Steger, Illinois. Mayor Joyce led all in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

The roll was called. The following Trustees were present; Kaminski, Stewart, Thurmond, Trotier and Perchinski. Mayor Joyce was present. Trustee Hanus was absent.

Also present: Director of Public Infrastructure Dave Toepper, Fire Chief Mike Long, Police Chief Greg Smith, EMA Chief Jason Stevenson and Village Attorney Vlado Branjes. Village Administrator Mary Jo Seehausen was absent.

Mayor Joyce opened the meeting asking for approval of the minutes of the July 21st meeting.

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 21st meeting as all members have copies. Trustee Stewart seconded the motion. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2026 Water Rates

Mayor Joyce: At today's Committee of the Whole Meeting, the only thing that we have to discuss is discussion of everyone's favorite topic, raising the price of something. In 2026 there will be a raise in water rates that will be discussed over the next few months. Currently on the last raise that we have, we are charging \$2.42 for 100 cubic feet of water. Combined with the sewer rate that Thorn Creek makes us charge, which is based on the amount of water we use, we are paying approximately \$3.82 per 100 cubic feet of water. A lot of towns around us have Chicago Water, but there are 8 communities that have their own municipal well system. Of these 8 communities, Steger charges the least for water it sells to it's residents. The next closest is double what we charge. The highest is much higher. This year, the Village of Steger has had 90 water main breaks. Mayor Joyce went on to explain the amount of water lost with every water main break. This lost water is water we would have to pay for if buying Lake Michigan Water, or water from another source. We are losing more water, than residents are paying for. While the water main breaks are certainly a problem having to do with our water infrastructure, the bigger problem is that it is costing us more to run the water system then we are taking in from residents who pay for their water from the Village of Steger. Short falls created by this are made up for by borrowing from the General Fund to keep the system operating.

Committee of the Whole August 18, 2025, Pg 2

We cannot shut down the water system. There are questions about the quality of the water in our system, and the Village Water Committee will be starting up again soon. We have brought in some other professionals in the water field to work with the committee to work on the quality of the water in our system.

Mayor Joyce asked if there was any public comment on this issue.
There were no comments from the public.

Mayor Joyce: I do not have specifics on the amount of a raise, I am waiting for more figures from our finance department. Once I have that at the next Committee of the Whole Meeting, I will have a better idea of what type of raise we are going to look for so that we can at least break even or potentially take on more, so we can do more repairs.

Does anyone have questions or concerns?

Trustee Trotier: Someone mentioned that they had the potential of having their own well.
Mayor Joyce: Right now because there is a municipal water system, they are prevented from having a private well. Miller Woods currently is not part of the municipal water system, they all have their own wells and are not affected by this increase.

Many complaints about the amount of the water bill to not take into account the cost of water is only part of that bi-monthly bill. There is also the charge from Thorn Creek for sanitary sewer service and for the cost of garbage pick up.

The last raise in water rates was 8 years ago.

A resident asked if there were any chance of privatization of the water system.
Mayor Joyce explained: Over the years it has been brought up, it's been looked into, and that is a decision that would have to be made by referendum. We could put it on the ballot, but ultimately that would have to be decided by the residents. When that subject comes up, the numbers you have to look at are the amount of water loss we would have to pay for. If we are losing half the water we pump now, we would have to double rates to keep up with the losses.

The water committee will begin meeting again soon and the public is welcome to attend. The meetings will take place prior to the first Village Board meeting of the month. Further information will be forthcoming.

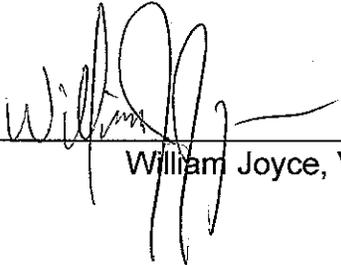
Mayor Joyce: One final note, a sad note, Mary Jo Seehausen, our Village Administrator has announced that she will be retiring from the Village of Steger effective September 5th. At the first meeting in September we will have something for her. Please come out to support her.

There was no action taken regarding water rates increase.

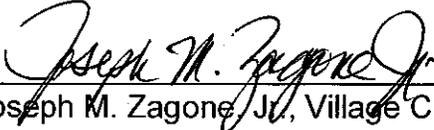
Being no further business:

Trustee Perchinski made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Trustee Trotier seconded the motion to adjourn. Voice vote; all ayes. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.



William Joyce, Village President



Joseph M. Zagone Jr., Village Clerk