

VILLAGE OF LYNDON STATION  
Special Board Meeting Minutes  
January 22, 2015

The meeting was called to order by 6:34 p.m. The roll call was taken by the Clerk. Present were President David Klicko, Trustee Rebecca Coley and Trustee William Blank. Also present was Clerk/Treasurer Lori J. Scully, Police Chief Greg Jessen, Fire Chief Larry Whaley, Rodney Senzig from the Recycling Department and Public Works Director Steve Klicko. Citizens present as per the sign in sheet.

President Klicko explained that the purpose of the meeting is to meet with the Department Heads regarding the Village Budget and its finances. This meeting is a stepping stone to future meetings where it is going to be more involved and what we are going to do in future years. Trustee Coley said that is pretty plain that the Village is short on cash. We are constantly robbing Peter to pay Paul. The Village cannot keep on going this way forever and in order to make improvements we have to make changes. The Sewer Budget at the last meeting reflects the need to audit it over 2-3 years to give an idea of where there are opportunities to have any cost savings. It is important to do this with all the department budgets and to make department run more efficiently. Trustee Blank said it should be every politician's mindset not to raise taxes. The unfortunate reality is that sometimes tax increases are necessary because of situations like we are in now. When you look at things in the Village wearing out such as, squad cars, fire equipment, street and maintenance equipment and not having enough to buy these things at some point you have to bite the bullet and say the ugly words of raising taxes. But it is necessary to pay our bills and if it is necessary to raise taxes, we may have to. Trustee Coley said it may be necessary in order to keep the services that the Village already provides. The public needs to tell us what we have to cut to make ends meet. President Klicko said that taxes were frozen many years ago (by State Statute) and that is all the Village has (to spend). Every year gas goes up, insurances go up and a little piece of the pie that we use to allocate for our budget is getting smaller and smaller. I believe we are now at a number of years out where we are not going to be able to pay for standard operating and to having reduced services. It is the same with water and sewer. We had to raise that by 40% and that was just to get us above water. We have discussed debt services at prior meetings. Vehicle replacements can be done through the debt service.

This Cost reduction will involve all departments and what can we all do to save money? We don't have any money set aside for Economic Development. If we don't grow then we have less income coming in. I wish people would come to the meetings to let us know what direction they want us to take. This is a long term issue. The Village is really in a tight spot financially from past board policies

#### **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Trustee Coley said the Board looks at their Budget every month and the Fire Department stays within their Budget. She said she feels that the amount of people on calls has been corrected and it used to be a problem. Trustee Blank said the Fire Department is a little different than some of the other departments in the fact that their current budget is based on equalized value of property. Discussion took place regarding the equalized value for the Fire Department. Why aren't the Townships paying more for the Hydrant Rental, insurances and the Village covering the costs? President Klicko said we cannot do that as they are contracted and cannot pay 1/3 of all the costs. More discussion took place regarding the Fire Department Contracts and the Town of Lyndon and Kildare.

President Klicko said at a meeting in March, 2006 (when discussing the adding onto Village Hall/Fire Station), the Fire Department agreed to pay the Village back \$100,000 out of their Fundraiser Account over a period of ten years (\$10,000 per year). That was never done. At the time the money went for new vehicles which is fine. President Klicko said he feels it is an agreement and the Fire Department should look at repaying whatever they can to cover that cost of \$10,000 per year.

I'm sure this won't be received very well. Chief Whaley questioned the \$100,000 and would like to see a copy of the minutes.

He continued to say the truck fund should have a certain amount contributed each year and match that amount from the Fundraiser Account or else we will never be able to replace any trucks. There was \$1,651 left in the 2014 Budget and the Fundraiser could match that amount in a CD. Chief Whaley discussed the wage payment for fire fighters and how the department is now all active. We are the lowest paid Fire Department around in 100 miles. No one is complaining.

Discussion took place regarding training. President Klicko said the payroll for the Fire Department should be done monthly so that the Board can stay in touch with the Budget. Chief Whaley continued to say that he tries to do things as cheaply as he can to stay within his budget.

He said that if the EMS would charge even \$50 per call, this would bring in more income. Trustee Coley said there would be enough people in the community to support to maintain the EMS Department. This would have to be discussed with Attorney Chiquoine.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Trustee Coley said that the Police Department is warranted and is a necessity as far as the Budget is concerned. It is a tough call with not enough money to spare. Trustee Blank said he looks at the Budget for 2015 and I see that this is a pretty reasonable budget (in the Police Department). Where do you even squeeze a nickel out of this (budget)? Discussion took place regarding Police Protection from the County and the Budget paid for an Officer.

(Concerning enforcement of ordinances, etc. within the Village) Chief Jessen said leave him a list of things that the Board would like him to do. More discussion took place regarding finances. President Klicko said it is a shame not to be able to pay people what they are worth, same with Larry (Whaley). Chief Jessen discussed how people come to his door and the Village is not even charged (wages). He said he does legal searches on his own laptop that he does not charge the Village. He puts in 10 to 12 hours per week to be up to date that the Village is not charged for. When he worked for the Federal Government he would take two to three weeks' vacation every year to take care of business in town. There is probably \$60,000 to \$70,000 of time that the Village was never been charged for. It has been 17 years since he had a raise. In 1975 he started at \$8.00 per hour and he is now at \$13.00 per hour. I am probably the longest employee that the Village has. He would like to shoot for two more years of employment. He said he holds a Master's Degree and is only paid \$13.00 per hour. He would like a little bit more and is the cheapest paid police officer around. He doesn't think his budget is out of line. I use my personal cell phone. Over \$2,000 is paid for Parkfest. The County pays approximately \$600.00 for Parkfest. (Parkfest totals for police officers for 2014 were \$945.00). President Klicko said he wishes people would come forward and say "Do you want a Village Cop?" Chief Jessen said the squad maintenance is very behind and the back door does not open as it is rusting.

He said in the past \$2,500 was to be allocated for a replacement fund as long as he can remember. Currently, according to this plan there should be \$27,500 in that squad replacement fund. There hasn't been anything added to that fund as there was nothing left at the end of the year to place in the account. Chief Jessen said there are many items that need replacement on the current squad and he doesn't think the budget is out of line, he would just like more "pennies" coming to him (as raise in salary) as in two years he would have 42 years of service to the Village. Chief Jessen said he put in for over \$100,000 from his program (1033). Discussion took place of the end loader from the 1033 program to be used in purchase of new squad.

## **RECYCLING CENTER**

President Klicko said the Recycling Center is running very well and more clients have been added and Rodney does bring in money to the Village. Some items that may help the Recycling Center operate better would be a leaf vacuum (for streets), a brush grinder. Trustee Coley said that the Recycling Center has come forward in a huge way.

Rodney Senzig said that there is one area that we have an ability to raise revenue - to promote more (recycling) services by sending something out with the water and sewer bills.

Some people probably don't know we have the services and don't know they can bring their garbage up there. It's cheaper, much cheaper than having pick up services. For a small family this could only cost \$5 to \$9 per month.

The grant we receive is based on the recycling for the whole Village. Certain communities make it mandatory to recycle. President Klicko said a Recycling Ordinance could be put in effect to make this mandatory through the Planning Commission. Another area Rodney is working on the wood and brush piles. When he first worked for the Village there was no charge for brush and wood (trees).

He is now charging to take wood (construction) as he has to get a 30 yard dumpster to remove the wood which costs money. The charge offsets the dumpster fees. Rodney charges for any large quantity of brush and wood from trees.

Brush cannot be burned in the Village Recycle Center.

Discussion took place regarding the type of wood (construction) and the \$1.25 fee for the bag for residents. More discussion took place regarding the types of garbage people try to bring into the recycling center. There are more customers added each week. Rodney works approximately 7 hours per week. Recyclables and Cardboard and newspapers are separated and can be loose.

## **STREETS**

On Streets, Trustee Blank said they receive a monthly report and didn't have any questions. Trustee Coley said the only thing she heard of was when "was the last time a street was put in?" She said they haven't looked at Cemetery Street. She said people don't realize that we are doing a little bit at a time. President Klicko said that the Streets are always robbed of improvements funds because of other funding issues. Streets suffer in the (annual) budget along with the vehicle replacement, which needs to be put on a schedule.

Discussion took place regarding the street equipment and services. Steve Klicko mentioned the problem of how the snowplow and mower and are bleeding the Village each year in repair costs. He needs a new main broom for the street sweeper. He discussed the problems with snow plowing. For the van, it needs new tires cost at Kudick's is \$800.00. The options for the vehicle replacement is through debt service. Trustee Blank said the unfortunate part of the debt service, by the time it is paid off, it is time to replace the vehicles again. It is almost a never ending cycle. Discussion was about the vehicle replacement and how it should be prioritized as over three quarters of the vehicles need replacing. Steve said the Village is already committed to two street repairs for about \$15,000 each. (these streets are to be paid partly with grant money from the county) He already has prices for doing West Julius Street and Lyndon Road. and Industrial Avenue will be in the \$20,000 range and will be the Village responsibility. Other Grants were discussed and what roads will need to be repaired.

## **WATER AND SEWER**

President Klicko said the Water and Sewer does not mix with the Villages General fund. They are two separate accounts. Taxes have nothing to do with Water and Sewer. The public needs to understand that those utilities are based on the fees billed to them.

The DNR requires a new Village well will have to be installed by 2024, which will cost \$500,000 to \$1,000,000. Money will start to have to be put away next year. The next five years will be testing. Discussion took place regarding finances for the Water Department and what projects have to take place.

Trustee Blank said at what point and time will it become too expensive to live in Lyndon Station? The growth goes out the window because it is too expensive and he doesn't know how. He sees water and sewer bills from other communities and they are much less than the Village. The answer is because we are small. President Klicko stated that you need to compare us to communities our size.

(Connecting current septic to water and sewer) The Twelve more people added onto the system is not going to add that much difference. Steve said an average family would add \$1,200 per year. President Klicko said that was the reason for the sewer consolidation plan so that you aren't only looking at connecting the current septic but there could be opportunities for new construction along that new line.

There is no way to solve the problems by raising the rates by 3%. (3% rate is more a cost of living raise)

**SUMMATION**

Discussion took place regarding taxes, debt service and a referendum to raise taxes. The public needs to be involved in the Village Board decisions and let the Board know what to do financially. At the next Board meeting, an item will be added so the public can hear the discussion of finances and get more input from the Department Heads. Discussion.

Trustee Blank made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Trustee Coley; three ayes carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lori J. Scully, Village Clerk