

VILLAGE OF SPARTA
Kent County, Michigan
Village Council Meeting
Monday May 8, 2023 at 7:00 PM
75 N. Union St. (Sparta Civic Center)

Present: President Robert Whalen, Council members Brenda Braybrook, Robert Carlstrom, Dave Cumings, Courtney Mais, Tom Peoples, and Bill Taylor.

Also present: DPW Supervisor Dennis Brinks, Finance Director David Carpenter, Rob Smith (Infrastructure Alternatives), DDA Director Elizabeth Morse, Dan VeltHuizen (Siegfried Crandall CPA), Police Chief Andy Milanowski, Village Manager Jim Lower, and Village Clerk Katy Shelton.

Absent: None.

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. **Roll Call:** Formal roll call was taken. Those in attendance/absent are noted above.
4. **Additions or Corrections to Consent and Business Agenda**
Consent Agenda:
 - a. Approve Regular Village Council Meeting Minutes of April 10, 2023
 - b. Approve Regular Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of April 3, 2023
 - c. DDA Minutes of April 11, 2023
 - d. Fire Board Minutes of April 20, 2023

None.
5. **Approval of Consent and Business Agenda:** Motion by Carlstrom with a second by Braybrook to approve. Motion passed unanimously.
6. **Public Comment for Agenda Item:**
Please Note: This Public Comment portion of the meeting is reserved for comment on agenda items. Personal or abusive attacks on Council members, staff members, or other participants will not be tolerated and may result in the Village President taking action, up to and including, having the speaker removed from the meeting by law enforcement officers.

None.

7. **Old Business**

- a. None

8. **New Business:**

Before the new business portion of the meeting was started, Mike Kryciok was introduced to the Council as the new airport manager. Mike most recently comes from Holland where he was the assistant airport manager for nine years. He has extensive experience with FBO's, private entities, and general aviation. Sparta is fortunate to have someone of his experience managing our airport.

- a. **Audit Report Presentation:** An extensive report was given by Dan VeldHuizen of Siegfried Candall PC. He mentioned that overall the Village is in very good shape financially, and also that David Carpenter is doing an excellent job as Finance Director. After his report, he entertained questions from the Council members. Robert Carlstrom asked about the decrease in the Village water fund. That is primarily due to the costly lead/copper pipe inspections and might necessitate a rate increase at some point.
- b. **DDA Food Truck Policy Change Request:** DDA Director Elizabeth Morse has submitted a request to the Village Council to limit or even to not allow at all food trucks to operate in the Village on a daily basis as well as to significantly increase the daily fee that food trucks currently pay in order to operate within the Village. She said that a nine person subcommittee consisting of Village staff, property owners, and business owners met to discuss this issue. It was determined that having daily food trucks operating in the Village is having a significant negative impact on existing brick and mortar restaurants in the area. In addition, food trucks do not pay Village taxes, contribute to water/sewer costs, and other things that are associated with operating a business within the Village. She said that this reduction/elimination of food trucks would not apply to a business private event or to a community public event/celebration. She said that she had surveyed surrounding communities regarding this issue and had found out that there was no real clear cut trend. Some communities allowed them while others prohibited them. The Village Manager said that he would survey council members by email to discuss various options on this issue, and that the council would revisit this at the next council meeting.
- c. **Ord. 23-05 An Ordinance to amend Administration Compensation:** Village Council compensation is set by ordinance and has not been updated in 20 years. Planning Commission compensation is set by the Village Council. This ordinance will bring Village compensation more into alignment with Township compensation. Motion by Braybrook with a

second by Cumings to approve this ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

- d. **Res. 23-05 A Resolution to designate eligible meetings for additional council member compensation & set planning commission compensation:** After extensive discussion among council members, it was decided to have the Village Manager redraft this resolution and for it to be discussed at the next Council meeting.
- e. **Res. 23-06 A Resolution (Airport Grant Funding):** The Village Manager stated that MDOT requires an official resolution authorizing him to accept grant funding on behalf of the airport. He said that these are done individually for each grant funded project. This resolution is specific to the reconstruction and expansion of the ramp/apron area. The project is slated to start later this year. Out of the \$94,400 total project cost, the Village will only pay 5% (\$4720.) Motion by Cumings with a second by Mais to approve. Motion passed unanimously.
- f. **Res. 23-07 A Resolution to appointing GVMC (Grand Valley Metro Council) & REGIS (Regional Geographic Information System) Representatives:** Due to the previous Village Manager leaving, there are vacancies on the REGIS and GVMC boards. This resolution appoints current Village Manager Jim Lower to those seats. Motion by Carlstrom with a second by Mais to approve this resolution. Motion passed unanimously.
- g. **Water Tower Painting Bid Selection:** Bids were recently solicited for the repainting of the water tower by the Sparta High School. The Council also discussed the design of the images scheduled to be painted onto the water tower ("Sparta" and an apple). Although one bidder, E&L Contractors, was not the lowest bidder, it was recommended by Sparta Village's water superintendent Randy Carter that we accept E&L's bid. That was due to the fact that they have a good track record with the Village. In addition, their bid was only a few thousand dollars more than the lowest bid. The Council also discussed the design of the images on the water tower. The consensus of the Council was to add the "Spartan Head" to the water tower at a not to exceed amount of \$5000. Motion by Braybrook with a second by Mais to award this contract to E&L Contractors at a not to exceed amount of \$67,000. Motion passed 6:1 with Bill Taylor dissenting.
- h. **Centennial Storm Sewer Replacement:** The Village has four engineers of record. They were all asked to provide an engineering cost for the project, an engineering cost for the design of the project if awarded, and an engineering estimate of the construction project. All four firms submitted proposals. It was noted that storm laterals also need to be installed at the same time in order to save both time and money. The Council discussed the pros and cons of designing the project now and

then putting the actual construction bid out later, as well as whether to do just Centennial now or combine Centennial with Washington St. Motion by Cumings with a second by Carlstrom to award the project to Prein and Newhof and to combine the Centennial and Washington projects. Motion passed unanimously.

- i. Civic Center Policy Changes:** The Village Manager stated that the Village has not updated the policies and procedures for the Civic Center in many years. In that time technology has advanced and other aspects of renting the building have changed. He presented the Council with a list of changes that he would like to see made regarding the rental process and procedures. These changes specifically involve the cleaning of the building by users, the locks on the doors of the facility, the costs to rent the building, and potentially installing cameras to monitor illicit alcohol use. It was brought up by Council members that a specific date by which renters of the facility must pay for the use of the building as well as provide proof of insurance needs to be determined. Council members spent a considerable amount of time talking about the cameras as well as alcohol use in the building. Motion by Braybrook with a second by Taylor to approve all of these changes EXCEPT those relating to cameras to monitor alcohol use. The Village Manager stated that he would have the Village attorney review that portion and would report back next month. Motion passed 6:1 with Robert Carlstrom dissenting.
- j. Additional Vehicles Purchase:** The Village Manager stated that as previously discussed, lead times to obtain new vehicles are extremely long. At this time, it will take until the end of the year or the beginning of next year for any new vehicles to arrive. Since the Village has funds in the 2024 CIP to fund these vehicle purchases, he would like to order two 2024 Chevy 3500's with the same equipment options outlined previously. The actual costs are not yet known but will be in the range of \$55,000 each. Motion by Carlstrom with a second by Braybrook to approve this motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- k. Alma Street:** Bids were solicited from three contractors for the mill and fill of Alma St from N State St to N Elm St, excluding the intersection of N Union which was completed several years ago. All three contractors said that they would be able to do the work this year. A1 Asphalt was the lowest bidder, but it was mentioned that the previous work that they did in the Village was not satisfactory. Therefore a motion was made by Braybrook with a second by Peoples to award the contract to the second lowest bidder, Superior Asphalt, in the amount not to exceed of \$87,198. Motion passed unanimously.

9. Village Manager & Department Reports: The Village Manager stated that he had nothing more to add to his previously submitted report. Council Member Taylor asked if the Village staff approved of the recent changes in the days/hours that the Village office is now open. Rob Smith from IA discussed his memo. Council member Carlstrom stated that it was nice to see that there had been no significant problems at the WW treatment plant.

10. Communications: None.

11. Payment of Bills

March Payables

PAYABLES	
(101) General Fund	\$112,840.70
(202) Major Street Fund	\$4,905.06
(203) Local Street Fund	\$3,296.95
(581) Airport	\$7,354.30
(590) Sewer Department Fund	\$72,314.27
(591) Water Department Fund	\$27,907.49
(661) Equipment Rental Fund	\$8,388.81
Total	\$237,007.58

Informational:

(206) Fire Department	\$17,030.90
(208) SRA Park Fund	\$2,743.16
(248) Downtown Development Authority	\$3,748.69
Total	\$23,522.75

Motion by Mais with a second by Carlstrom to approve the payment of bills in the amount of \$237,007.58. Motion passed unanimously.

12. Public Comment: Rob Steffens, 4344 13 Mile Rd, Sparta, commented on construction schedules.

13. Council Member Announcements: President Whalen stated that Betty VanPatten has resigned from the Planning Commission. A replacement is currently being sought.

14. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:48pm.

Submitted by Katy Shelton, Village Clerk.