

VILLAGE OF SPARTA
Kent County, Michigan
Regular Village Council Meeting
Monday January 10, 2022 at 7:00 PM
75 N. Union St. (Sparta Civic Center)

Present: Village President Robert Whalen, Council Members Brenda Braybrook, Robert Carlstrom, Dave Cumings, Jayne Heath, Bill Taylor, and Gale Taylor.

Also present: Natalie Davenport (Code Enforcement Officer), Dennis Brinks (DPW Supervisor), Andrew Milanowski (Police Chief), Shay Gallagher (Village Manager), and Katy Shelton (Village Clerk).

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 or absent are noted above.

4. Additions or Corrections to Consent and Business Agenda

Consent Agenda:

- a. Approve Regular Village Council Meeting Minutes of December 13, 2021
- b. Approve Regular Fire Board Meeting Minutes of December 16, 2021
- c. Approve Regular DDA Meeting Minutes of November 9, 2021
- d. Approve Regular DDA Meeting Minutes of December 14, 2021
- e. Approve Regular Planning Commission Minutes of January 2, 2022
- f. Approve ZBA Minutes of December 29, 2021
- g. Reappointment of George Freeland to the Downtown Development Authority Board to a four-year term

5. Approval of Consent and Business Agenda

The Village Manager stated that item “f” needed to be changed to reflect that this hearing was in front of the Village Council and not the ZBA. With that change, there was a motion by Carlstrom with a second by Heath to approve the Agenda. 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.

- a. None

7. Public Hearing

- a. None.

8. Old Business

- a. None

9. New Business

- a. MDOT Aero Resolution #22-02: The Paul C. Miller – Sparta Airport will begin working on the redesign of the existing runway lighting system. The current system is aging and potentially unsafe. This resolution will authorize a contract with MDOT Aero. This project is anticipated to cost \$97,000 for the design phase, with the Village responsible for \$4,850 of that cost. Motion by Gale Taylor with a second by Braybrook to approve the resolution. Motion passed unanimously.
- b. Fee Schedule Update Resolution 22-03: There are two parts to this fee schedule update: 1) Code Enforcement Administration Fee and 2) Hangar Rental Late Fee. The Code Enforcement Administration Fee would be 5% on all imposed fines and fees. This would help cover mailing costs. The Hangar Rental Late Fee would be 10% of the monthly hangar rental fee. Motion by Braybrook with a second by Cumings to approve the resolution. Motion passed unanimously.
- c. Celtic Festival – Gaming License: The Celtic Festival is based in Sparta. They want to hold a poker tournament in Grand Rapids as part of their activities. Because of their being based here, the Village must grant local approval. Motion by Braybrook with a second by Cumings to approve this. Motion passed unanimously.
- d. Ordinance Amendment Resolution 22-01 – R-4 District Site Development Requirements: This resolution allows for a greater density standard in the multi-family section of R-4 zoned properties. This brings Sparta’s density standards more closely into alignment with other West Michigan communities. It will be done on a sliding scale based on the type of unit. It also raises the maximum building height allowed in the R-4 district to 40’ or 3 stories, whichever is less. This amendment does not impact minimum dwelling unit size, which will remain unchanged. Fire Chief Olney has no problems with this amendment. Motion by Carlstrom with a second by Bill Taylor to approve this resolution. Motion passed unanimously.
- e. Ordinance Amendment Resolution 22-02 – Chapter 1 General Provisions: This resolution amends the definition of “person” to allow for more effective zoning enforcement prosecution. Motion by Heath with a second by Braybrook to approve this resolution. Motion passed unanimously.

- f. WWTP Generator Replacement: The current generator is 34 years old and, while presently working well, a replacement generator needs to be purchased. Low bid was by Shoreline Power Service in the amount of \$75,000 which includes installation. Motion by Gale Taylor with a second by Braybrook to award the contact to Shoreline in an amount not to exceed \$75,000. Motion passed unanimously.
- g. WWTP Makeup Air Unit Replacement: The current units are failing and need to be replaced. Temporary repairs are just that – temporary. Low bid was received by Northwest Kent Mechanical in the amount of \$30,215. Motion by Bill Taylor with a second by Cumings to award the contract to Northwest Kent Mechanical in an amount not to exceed \$30,215. Motion passed unanimously.

10. Village Manager & Department Reports

The Village Manager updated the Council on the current status of the Sparta Fruit and Storage property. There is another court hearing on Jan. 11, 2022. There was a question about the stability and safety of the house at 110 S. State Street sitting over the excavated basement. The Village Manager stated that it’s been inspected by the fire department and appears to be stable. The owner has a permit and a contractor in place, and the Village will give him until the spring to make the promised improvements.

Dennis Brinks from the DPW reported that it’s been too cold for effective salting. His department prefers not to put too much sand down because of it ending up in the catch basins.

11. Communications

- a. DDA Communication: moved to next month.
- b. The Village Manager mentioned that the Village received a Water Fluoridation award for providing very clean water to its residents. He also mentioned that the Airport is scheduled to receive a grant for proposed lighting improvements at the airport. Council members were unanimous in stating how outstanding of a job the airport manager, Marty Coaker, is doing.

12. Payment of Bills

December 2021 Payables

(101) General Fund	\$ 53,053.46
(202) Major Street Fund	\$ 128,369.20
(203) Local Street Fund	\$ 37,166.38
(230) Civic Center	\$ 4,417.31
(401) Sidewalk Fund	
(581) Airport	\$ 40,152.12
(590) Sewer Department Fund	\$ 59,269.55

(591) Water Department Fund	\$ 23,317.53
(592) Sewer Capital Improvement Fund	\$ 18,856.97
(593) Water Capital Improvement Fund	\$ 7,317.29
(661) Equipment Rental Fund	\$ 7,116.89
(378) 2008 USDA Sewer Debt	\$ 13.87
Total	\$ 379,050.57

Informational:

(206) Fire Department	\$ 10,187.89
(208) SRA Park Fund	\$ 76,100.61
(250) Downtown Development Authority	\$ 29,871.36
Total	\$ 116,159.86

- a. Motion by Gale Taylor with a second by Braybrook to approve December payables in the amount of \$379,050.57. Motion passed unanimously.

13. Public Comment

Landon Bartley, 40 Pearl NW, Grand Rapids, was here on behalf of “Nature’s Releaf” which seeks to be allowed to sell cannabis products within the Village of Sparta. He provided information on various licenses which the Village could grant, and explained about the income this could potentially generate for the Village.

Joe Jangda of Nature’s Releaf in Sparta was here on the same issue. He provided letters from several Sparta residents stating that they were in support of this and giving their reasoning.

Lesley Wyman, PhD, of 266 Grandville in Grand Rapids also spoke on this issue. She discussed the medical benefits of cannabis use, specifically as it relates to Parkinson patients.

The Village Manager mentioned that, IF the Council supported these cannabis licenses and retail establishments, that the Village would benefit from an excise tax on any retail establishments within the Village boundaries as well as license fees. This could potentially fund expanded manpower at the Police Department. Several council members asked questions and made comments. The next step would be to draft an ordinance which would govern potential retail cannabis

establishments. The Village Manager will explore existing ordinances in nearby communities. It's much like liquor law ordinances. The Village would regulate zoning. The state would handle "vetting" of the applicants for cannabis licenses. The Village President stated that if Council Members support allowing these retail establishments, they need to communicate that support to him, and we could set up a workshop to discuss the pros and cons of granting licenses and potentially allowing cannabis retail establishments within Village boundaries.

14. Council Member Announcements

A. None.

15. Adjournment

A. The meeting was adjourned by President Whalen at 8:02pm.

Submitted by Katy Shelton, Village Clerk