

# VILLAGE OF OAKWOOD

Regular Board Meeting Minutes – June 14, 2021

## CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Heather McArty called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

ROLL CALL	PRESENT	ABSENT	OTHERS PRESENT
Jason Elliott	X		Caroline Darr – Int. EMS Coordinator
Cathi Fritz	X		Lori Fields – EMS Billing
Bob Parr	X		Julie Leverenz – Office Manager
Doit Roberts	X		Janet Hambright – Treasurer
Ferrell Stroh	X		
Robert Wright	X		

## APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES (May 10, 2021)

Mayor Heather McArty asked if any changes to the minutes are requested, that this must occur during the open meeting and not requested before the meeting. This is in accordance with the Open Meeting Act.

Ferrell Stroh made a motion to approve the May 10, 2021 minutes with a second by Doit Roberts.

	ELLIOTT	FRITZ	PARR	ROBERTS	STROH	WRIGHT
YES	X	X	X	X	X	X
NAYS						
ABSTAINED						

Motion Carried

## APPROVAL OF BILLS

Janet Hambright stated there is no need for any transfers this month as the state money was received.

There are 2 CDs from the sale of the water company that has matured, and Janet recommended renewing with First Farmers and only 12 months with the hopes of the rates going up. She also stated Longview would like to be considered next year but can't take large funds at this time.

Robert Wright stated the value of the CD money is decreasing every year because the investments we have chosen do not outpace inflation. Year over Year inflation is 5% and the CDs are earning 0.2%. The community is better off using this money in the near future on long-term value-added projects than continuing to save it in a low interest-bearing investment. He strongly recommended using the money in those CDs for community projects/upgrades in 2022.

Doit Roberts made a motion to keep the CDs at First Farms with a second by Bob Parr.

	ELLIOTT	FRITZ	PARR	ROBERTS	STROH	WRIGHT
YES	X		X	X	X	
NAYS		X				
ABSTAINED						X

Motion Carried

LOCUS came in and did the audit.

<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	\$ 45,329.55	<b>POLICE</b>	\$ 3,022.91
<b>MOTER FUEL</b>	\$ 674.56	<b>EMERGENCY RESCUE</b>	\$ 2,212.61
<b>ROADS/BRIDGES</b>	\$ 1,393.38	<b>BUILDING FUND</b>	\$ 87,295.47

Doit Roberts made a motion to approve the bills with a second by Bob Parr.

	<b>ELLIOTT</b>	<b>FRITZ</b>	<b>PARR</b>	<b>ROBERTS</b>	<b>STROH</b>	<b>WRIGHT</b>
<b>YES</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>NAYS</b>						
<b>ABSTAINED</b>						

Motion Carried

### ATTORNEY REPORT

No Report

### GUESTS

Representatives from the Oakwood Youth Football presented to the board several concerns:

1. The increase of the deposit
  2. Parking on the grass
  3. Storage shed ventilation
1. There was discussion on why the deposit has gone up from \$300 to \$1,000. The football board explained that this additional cost would end up getting passed onto the parents. The village board explained that there was significant damage reported in 2019 that caused violations with the health department, damage to tables, and issues with cleaning the bathrooms. The cost of the damaged tables was taken out of the \$300 deposit. The football board stated that everything was cleaned and that it was the Village's word against the football board when they locked up the doors. It was recommended that a video be taken when locking up facilities that can be reviewed if there are any future issues. The football board also requested that the Village complete a walk-through after each home game to be on the same page.
  2. The football board had concerns regarding not being able to park on the grass. This would cause an overflow of cars outside of the park, along with concerns with kid's safety. The parking has been done in a more organized way than in the past. Doit Roberts stated he has been watching the grounds since baseball has started, and he doesn't see any issues with parking on the grass. Robert Wright said the Village should address this issue and put in additional parking. Doit felt putting in blacktop or rock would take a look away from being a park.
  3. The football board has concerns regarding the ventilation in the storage shed. Without any ventilation, they see mold starting to grow on the equipment, which is costing the organization additional money to remove. There is also the need to have electricity within the storage shed. The power lines have already been run, but they were told to stop. It was explained a certified electrician was required since it was a village property. The Village received a quote from Glescoe Electric for \$5,215.00. The football board has a volunteer that is willing to do the work if allowed to. Robert Wright will look into what other towns have done when using volunteers to complete work in this manner. Mayor McArty reminded them that the park is Village Property and that permission would need to be obtained before any modifications are to be done in the future.

Mayor McArty told the football board that the village board loves to see the park full and is willing to partner with the football board.

Robert Wright made a motion to keep the youth football deposit at \$300 with a second by Bob Parr.

	ELLIOTT	FRITZ	PARR	ROBERTS	STROH	WRIGHT
<b>YES</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>NAYS</b>						
<b>ABSTAINED</b>						

Motion Carried

Doit Roberts made a motion to allow Oakwood Youth Football to park on the grass with a second by Bob Parr.

	ELLIOTT	FRITZ	PARR	ROBERTS	STROH	WRIGHT
<b>YES</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>NAYS</b>						
<b>ABSTAINED</b>						

Motion Carried

Holly Holt from Lake Bluff Mobile Homes requested the exception of the remodel of a mobile home that is 2001. The board did not grant this request as no units older than five years old can be transferred into the park. There have been other quests that have been declined, and it would be setting a precedence for allowing someone else.

#### VILLAGE HALL REPORT

No Report

#### PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Mayor McArty reported that clean-up day was a huge success, and a thank you from one of the residents was received at the village office.

#### POLICE REPORT

Mayor McArty reported that the department had hired the following two officers:

- Misti Smitley Full-time Sergeant/School Resource Officer
- Anthony Juvinal Full-time officer

Mayor McArty also read a thank you note that was sent to the office regarding a positive interaction with Officer Juvinal. He was also credited for following up on a call that ended up confiscating a tremendous amount of heroin.

## EMERGENCY RESCUE REPORT

Caroline Darr reported there had been no word on the grant that they have applied for. Last year the grants were announced at the end of June.

The department hired van divers to help with transfers and anticipates the transfer volume to return where it has been. The two drivers were Jessica Mitchell and Charles McMahon.

There were (42) 911 calls and (10) transfers for the month. The department is down 1 unit because of the stretcher, and she wanted to publicly thank Arrow for the use of their stretcher for the last six months. If awarded the grant, it would allow for the purchase of a stair chair and stretcher.

## VILLAGE CLERK RESIGNATION

Mayor McArty asked for a motion to accept the resignation of Julie Leverenz as the village clerk.

Doit Roberts made a motion to accept the resignation of Julie Leverenz as village clerk with a second by Bob Parr.

	ELLIOTT	FRITZ	PARR	ROBERTS	STROH	WRIGHT
YES	X	X	X	X	X	
NAYS						
ABSTAINED						X

Motion Carried

## MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS

Mayor McArty announced the mayoral appoints for the following positions:

- Police Chief – Ron Soderstrom
- Housing Inspector – Dave Biggerstaff
- Village Clerk – Connie Young

## BUDGET ADOPTION

Mayor McArty asked for a motion to approve the ordinance presented at last month's meeting for the 2021-2022 budget.

Bob Parr made a motion to accept the proposed ordinance for the 2021-2022 budget year with a second by Ferrell Stroh.

	ELLIOTT	FRITZ	PARR	ROBERTS	STROH	WRIGHT
YES	X	X	X	X	X	X
NAYS						
ABSTAINED						

Motion Carried

## RESIDENT RECOGNITION – IDOT SIGNS

Mayor McArty publicly recognized Bobby Pierce and Abby Foster for their accomplishments and making the community of Oakwood proud. Their IDOT signs that have been displayed will be delivered to them directly.

## 2021 FIREWORKS DISPLAY

Bob Parr reported that due to COVID, the deposit paid for last year's fireworks display was granted an extension and rolled into 2021. The board voted no to having the 4<sup>th</sup> of July events for 2021 due to the governor's restrictions at that time. Now that the governor has lifted the restrictions, the Village cannot find the police coverage that would be needed. After discussion, it was decided that Bob Parr would contact the display company and see about having the fireworks for another type of celebration (Columbus Day, Labor Day, etc.). Bob will report back on what he finds out.

## PAVLOV MEDIA PRESENTATION – Fiber Internet

Representatives from Pavlov Media presented the possibility of having fiber optic available to village residents and the surrounding area. One restriction that the village faces are the distances of the high school, junior high, and unit office from the Village. If the Village has any plans to expand its business in and around the Village, companies are going to demand this service to run efficiently for their businesses. Services that would be provided to residents would not require signed agreements as most cable franchises require. It would just be a monthly cost with the opportunity to cancel at any time. Pavlov has already established Monticello, Mahomet, Mansfield, Downs, Savoy, and Tolono, to name a few.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT – Oakwood Township

Mayor McArty reported that Officer Soderstrom has partnered with the Oakwood Township in developing an ordinance that would effectively police the Village and surrounding areas. Currently, if the department responds to a call outside of the village limits, it is not getting compensated for its services provided, but this agreement will provide compensation for those services.

Robert Wright voiced concerns about officers being all over the Township and could be located far by the county line. The agreement confirms that Oakwood officers would only operate outside the Village, Oakwood Schools, and direct roads between if dispatched to the scene and not as a pattern of Township patrol. It was stated that Officer Soderstrom could turn down any assignments given to him outside the village limits. After review, the board would like to negotiate US 150 between the Oakwood village limits west of Oakwood Street and Oakwood High School, especially on school days and when there are children present within the agreement. Police will only be out in the Township when dispatched, and Oakwood will receive funds for what is currently being done for free. This recommendation will be presented to the Oakwood Township board and reported back next month.

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Bob Parr made a motion to approve the agreement if Township agrees to include verbiage under concession #6 that includes US 150 to Oakwood High School with a second by Ferrell Stroh.

	ELLIOTT	FRITZ	PARR	ROBERTS	STROH	WRIGHT
YES	X	X	X	X	X	X
NAYS						
ABSTAINED						

Motion Carried

## FOOD TRUCK UPDATE

At the May board meeting, an ordinance was presented to charge food trucks \$1,200/yr. Cathi Cannon researched what other villages do with food trucks requests. She reported the following:

- Tilton – nothing
- Westville- \$50/yr solicitor

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- St. Joe - \$50/yr
  - Danville - \$50/mo or \$600/year
  - Catlin - \$25/year

Ferrell Stroh stated that business owners already pay taxes and disagree with the ordinance as long as it is not hurting or competing with a business within the Village. Cathi Fritz asked if there should be an application process, but is there a need for an ordinance? After more discussion, it was decided that there was no need to change the process at this time.

## **WATER ATTORNEY**

At the May meeting, the board voted not to hire an attorney to fight the water and rate increase based upon a letter provided to the Village Board by former mayor Clay Woodard. Cathi Cannon did some research into this matter and talked to several people. She spoke with Attorney Eric Robertson over the phone, and he did not recall saying the cost would run from \$90,000 to \$300,000. In the conversation, Attorney Eric Robertson would not comment on how successful he thought he would be. He would neither confirm nor deny that a 1/2% savings was reasonable and a typical savings in these types of cases. Stroh pointed out that we agreed ½% was not enough to spend that amount of money. The question about how much the attorney would cost was unclear as Clay had one range of costs in his letter, and Fritz stated the attorney did not agree that those figures were firm. Significant discussion was also exchanged regarding the overall sentiment of Clay's letter which indicated the attorney was not supportive of taking any action. Fritz comments from her discussion was that the attorney was optimistic of having a good chance for success if the Village hired him to represent them.

The discussion then quickly turned to a new piece of information via Fritz from Attorney Eric Robertson that the opportunity to take any action had passed as there was a June 2nd deadline to file with the ICC. Therefore, according to Fritz even though there was a chance to do something, we have missed our chance. Also according to Fritz, 4 of 24 other municipalities or groups have hired attorneys and Oakwood "may" also benefit if those lawyers are successful. It is not clear if Attorney Eric Robertson is representing any of those groups. Fritz indicated at least one is represented by a former ICC Administrative Law Judge. Since 4 out of 24 affected groups hired lawyers, it is possible Oakwood will benefit from any success they have, but it is not a guarantee and there may be other dealings with those 4 apart from the other 20. We will have to wait and see how the process works out.

Robert Wright felt like things need to be cleared up on what information the board was provided last month and feels decisions should be based on something in writing directly from the attorney. Not from a casual conversation. Wright asked McArty to investigate this issue fully and determine which version of the facts are correct concerning Attorney Eric Robertson. The new board was seated earlier than normal at the end of April. The vote on the water was held at the first regular meeting in May and now the basis for that vote is in question. In response to Fritz comments regarding her conversation with the attorney, Wright requested that Clay Woodard attest to the letter provided to the Village regarding his conversation with the same attorney.

Julie Leverenz stated the board should not bad mouth any past board members or mayor on what was provided when they are not here to defend themselves. She feels they should be invited to next month's meeting to inform the board of what they know.

Cathi stated she would following the ICC for updates as things move forward.

## ABANDONED/VACANT PROPERTIES

Bob Parr reported to the board concerns in regards to 81 Forrest Park. The property is 30 years old and has been empty for 2-3 years. He is concerned that it doesn't meet current ordinance guidelines that state the property should be 20 feet away from the property next door. Currently, it is around 6 feet away. The issue is all property was grandfathered in that were there before the ordinance being signed. When talking with Attorney Miller, he stated if the Village were to go to court, the Village would win. Attorney Mudd said the Village would not win. Parr is recommending the Village take it to the court system. Robert Wright recommends getting more information on the cost versus the risk of leaving it there. Cathi Fritz stated we need to figure out how the board needs to do things moving forward.

Mayor McArty recommends that the board have a study meeting to plan how the board deals with vacant properties and create a more uniform procedure. She also recommends having Biggerstaff involved in the setting up of these new policies and procedures.

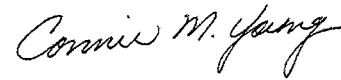
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## ADJOURNMENT

At 9:10 pm, Robert Wright made a motion to adjourn with a second from Bob Parr.

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Respectfully submitted,



Connie M. Young, Clerk

Approved: July 12, 2021