

Minutes
Village of Alanson
7631 US 31 North, Alanson, MI 49706
Regular Council Meeting of January 13th, 2025

Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Village President Greg Babcock at 6:00pm.

Pledge of Allegiance- Recited.

Council Present: Trustee Mark Fairbairn, Trustee Scott Latva, President Greg Babcock.

Council Absent:

Staff Present: Jason Losey, Jennifer Murphy, Craig Wilson.

Approval of Agenda: *Motion* by Trustee Scott Latva to accept the agenda as written for January 13th, 2025. Seconded by Trustee Mark Fairbairn. All votes in favor. 3/0 Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: *Motion* by Trustee Scott Latva to approve the minutes as written for the regular council meeting of December 9th, 2024. Seconded by Trustee Mark Fairbairn. All votes in favor. 3/0 Motion carried.

Public Comment: Wayne Blomberg, on behalf of the Inland Water Route Historical Society, proposed that a flag pole be donated and maintained by the IWRHS. Longtime past resident Don App builds flag poles and would like to donate a flagpole to Sanctuary Island with a dedication in memory to his family. Blomberg also said that Tom Fairbairn Sr. had suggested, before his passing, a memorial for Dick Weidenhammer at Sanctuary Island. Blomberg proposed having a large rock with a plaque in dedication of the years Weidenhammer served on the board, at no cost to the Village. Council was in support of the proposal.

Resident Howard Garms of 7750 Milton Road, brought forth that his neighbor at 7726 Milton Road, placed his propane tank in close proximity to Garm's driveway (photos provided to Council). Garms feels this is a safety and zoning issue. Garms stated that the neighbor placed the tank there in September he believes to irritate him. Garms is hoping the Village could do something to have the tank moved. President Greg Babcock responded that the Village does not get involved in civil matters.

Visitors:

A: N/A

New Business:

A: Accept Doug Larson, Trustee Resignation-

Motion by Trustee Scott Latva to accept Doug Larsons resignation. Seconded by Trustee Mark Fairbairn. All votes in Favor- 3/0.

B: New Trustee Appointments- President Greg Babcock reminded the board of the two seats currently open on Council. Babcock stated that a request was made to the Village for interested parties to submit



a letter of intent. Babcock reported that a letter of intent was submitted by resident Gail Greenwell, present at the meeting. Babcock advised that there were two open seats with differing terms- a 2-year and a 4-year term but the appointee would have to run in the next election, regardless of the term. Babcock allowed for the appointee to choose which term to fill. Greenwell elected for the 2-year term.

Motion by Trustee Scott Latva to appoint Gail Greenwell to the Village Council for a 2-year term. Seconded by Trustee Mark Fairbairn. Roll call vote. Trustee Mark Fairbairn- Yes, Trustee Scott Latva- Yes, President Greg Babcock- Yes. All votes in favor. 3/0.

C: Contract Renewal Bendzinski & Co. - Sewer Information Dissemination Agent- Clerk-Treasurer Jennifer Murphy recommended renewing the proposed contract. The contract amount is for \$1,000 a year for Bendzinski & Co. to collect and disseminate the required sewer information.

Motion by Trustee Mark Fairbairn to enter into the contract with Bendzinski & Co. Seconded by Trustee Scott Latva. Roll Call Vote. Trustee Mark Fairbairn- Yes, Trustee Scott Latva- Yes, President Greg Babcock- Yes. All votes in favor. 3/0.

D: Budget Approval

Proposed General Fund Budget FY 2025-2026:

Clerk- Treasurer Jennifer Murphy reviewed the proposed FY2026 General Fund budget. Murphy highlighted the recommended increases from the previous budget. For the expenses Murphy added a slight increase to utilities and payroll (highlighting raises to DPW and office staff) of 4-5% for inflation and a slight increase in healthcare costs.

Motion by Trustee Scott Latva to accept the proposed 2025-2026 General Fund budget as presented. Seconded by Trustee Mark Fairbairn. Roll call vote. Trustee Mark Fairbairn- Yes, Trustee Scott Latva- Yes, President Greg Babcock- Yes. All votes in favor. 3/0.

Proposed Sewer Fund budget FY 2025-2026:

Clerk- Treasurer Jennifer Murphy reviewed the proposed FY2026 Sewer fund budget highlighting changes from prior year. Murphy suggested the village increase the sewer fees 5% to match the increase that the Harbor Springs Area Sewer Authority is implementing. That would increase the sewer fee from \$45 to \$47.25. Murphy also noted that the Sewer Clerk pay has also increased.

President Greg Babcock advised that the Sewer Authority has requested we refrain from use of R&R funds. Babcock said there are 2 generators the Sewer Authority is wanting to replace. The cost is estimated to be around \$120,000. Village contribution to be 10%.

Motion by Trustee Scott Latva to accept the proposed 2025-2026 Sewer Fund budget. Seconded by Trustee Mark Fairbairn. Roll call vote. Trustee Mark Fairbairn- Yes, Trustee Scott Latva- Yes, President Greg Babcock- Yes. All votes in favor. 3/0.

Proposed Major Streets Fund Budget FY 2025- 2026: Clerk- Treasurer Jennifer Murphy reviewed the proposed FY2026 Major Street fund budget. Murphy went over the few changes she recommended from the previous year. President Babcock asked Street Commissioner Jason Losey about repair costs for the swing bridge. Losey advised an approximate cost of \$20,000. Murphy highlighted a \$7,500 budgeted amount for Preservation Structures. President Babcock advised an increase to the Preservation Structures budget line item by \$12,500.

Motion by Trustee Scott Latva to accept the proposed 2025-2026 Major Street Fund budget with the increase to Preservation Structures. Seconded by Trustee Mark Fairbairn. Roll call vote. Trustee Mark Fairbairn- Yes, Trustee Scott Latva- Yes, President Greg Babcock- Yes. All votes in favor. 3/0.

Proposed Local Street Fund Budget FY 2025-2026: Clerk-Treasurer Jennifer Murphy reviewed the proposed FY2026 Local Street fund budget. Murphy highlighted recommended changes from the previous year.

Street Commissioner Losey advised he is planning for using the budgeted Construct Streets line item. Deputy-Clerk Craig Wilson stated that Village residents on Terrace and Pine Streets have inquired when their streets will be done. Discussion ensued. Losey mentioned he would make those streets a priority.

Motion by Trustee Scott Latva to accept the proposed 2025/2026 Local Street Fund budget. Seconded by Trustee Mark Fairbairn. Roll call vote. Trustee Mark Fairbairn- Yes, Trustee Scott Latva- Yes, President Greg Babcock- Yes. All votes in favor. 3/0.

Old Business:

A: Sewer Easement Agreement:

President Babcock reported he received the sewer easement agreement from the Army Corp of Engineers with an approval deadline of 1/31/25. President Babcock advised that he was awaiting Village Attorney Graham's review and approval. Discussion regarding Babcock approval of the agreement without changes or if changes were required Council would hold a special meeting for review.

B: DNR Grant Update:

President Babcock reported that the Village did not receive the DNR grant funding for this cycle and that we can reapply in the Spring.

C: Barbara Boz-7837 Lake Street:

Babcock reported that Village Attorney Graham advised that the alleyway between Boz and her neighbor is for public use and under Village jurisdiction. Babcock advised that a survey would need to be completed to determine the exact location of the survey but that this is not recommended by the Village Attorney. Discussion ensued. Trustee Mark Fairbairn volunteered to secure 3 survey bids.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:



Trustee Mark Fairbairn:N/A

Trustee Scott Latva: N/A

President Greg Babcock: Babcock reported having received a memo and phone call from the Village attorney. The attorney has sold his practice and is retiring. A new company will be taking over February 1st, 2025. Babcock said they have an office in Portage and Harbor Springs and are leading municipal attorneys in the state. Our current attorney will be staying on during the transition for 4 months.

Babcock reported that some mailboxes were damaged by the snowplow. Babcock reported researching Village policy regarding mailbox reimbursement.. Babcock went onto the Emmet County Road Commission website. The county provides \$30 for damage to the mailbox, \$20 for damage to the post or \$50 for damage to both the mailbox and post. Babcock did mention there is a clause that states the mailbox and/or post has to be hit directly by the snowplow. Discussion ensued.

Babcock reported having no update from the Sewer Authority this month. Babcock said there was no Lock Consortium meeting.

Babcock highlighted the January Planning & Zoning meeting. Babcock advised that the P & Z board had 2 vacant seats. P & Z Board Chair: Mark Fairbairn, Vice Chair: Deanna Yockey, Secretary: Charles Rehmann. The board has removed Monique Kilmer. Babcock asked Murphy to update the Village website.

Clerk- Treasurer Jennifer Murphy:

- Sewer Fees - 5% increase would put fees at \$47.25
- ESTA - we are in compliance with our current policies

President Babcock advised a resolution would be required for an increase in sewer fees.

Deputy Clerk Craig Wilson: N/A

Street Commissioner: Losey reported the holiday decorations are down and put away. Losey also reported he's been working on keeping the plow truck running.

Ordinance Enforcement Officer Jamie Breithaupt: N/A

Monthly Bills: *Motion* by Trustee Scott Latva to pay the current monthly bills. Seconded by Trustee Mark Fairbairn. All votes in favor. 3/0. Motion carried.

Public Comment: N/A

Adjournment: *Motion* by Trustee Mark Fairbairn to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Trustee Scott Latva. All votes in favor. 3/0 Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:04pm.