

**VILLAGE OF BALDWIN
BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING and
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
November 8, 2023 – 6:00pm**

The Village of Baldwin Board of Trustees held their regular board meeting on Wednesday, November 8, 2023. President Lance Van Damme called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

Village Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer Tracy Carlson took roll call. Those present included: President Lance Van Damme, Trustees Kristine Forbes, Matt Knegendorf, Amy Jurgens, Doug Newton, Austin Van Someren and Chad Wernlund.

Others present: EMS Chief Tom Boyer, Librarian Rita Magno, Engineer Erik Henningsgard, Attorney Paul Mahler, Jodi Peterson, Angie Chandler, Melissa Anderson, Mike DeLong, Mike Findlay, Brent Rolling, Josh Maurer, Jason Schulte, Eric Quam, Mike Stoffel, Todd Ptacek, Dale Crowley, Allie Carroll, and Kathleen Hiu

PUBLIC HEARING to review the 2024 Proposed Budget

Van Damme called the public hearing to order at 6:01pm.

Van Damme called for public comments on the 2024 Budget. None were heard.

Van Damme adjourned the public hearing at 6:02pm.

The Budget/Finance Committee cut over \$500,000 from the proposed budget for it to balance. Trustee Forbes updated the board on budget highlights, which includes the following: the “general property tax” line item reflects an additional \$445,201, which is considered “debt levy” to cover the payment on the general obligation debt carried by the village, including the debt for the new EMS building. The employee wages/benefits include a 4% wage adjustment for staff, a 5% wage adjustment for the police officers as stated in the union contract, and a 9% increase in health insurance premiums. EMS rent will increase. Current street projects will be at a minimum. Police car sinking fund provides for one new car; however, if financing is available, two vehicles may be purchased. The EMS building payment is \$393,171 (principal and interest).

There were concerns by some trustees about the lack of street projects being completed in 2024. It was explained that the village has completed large projects over the last three years and there are no available funds to continue the level of street replacement seen in the past.

Resolution 2023-18 – Van Someren **moved** to approve Resolution 2023-18 – Budget and Tax Levy Adoption, setting the budget and tax levy. Seconded by Jurgens. Motion carried 6-1 by roll call vote with Knegendorf opposed. The 2024 tax levy is set at \$3,053,615. The 2024 Baldwin Ambulance budget was also approved.

Resolution 2023-19 – Van Someren **moved** to approve Resolution 2023-21 – Amending Premium Only Plan. Seconded by Forbes. Motion carried by roll call vote with all in favor.

CONSENT AGENDA

Newton asked for review of the tax collection agreement with St. Croix County to be removed from the consent agenda. Forbes and Wernlund asked for the proposed wage adjustment for the deputy clerk to be removed from the consent agenda.

Van Someren **moved** to approve the remaining consent agenda items. Seconded by Newton. Motion carried. Items approved included:

- Checks written #42030-42150; payroll vouchers #28845-28970; and online checks for payroll taxes, HSA contributions, deferred comp/Roth IRA contributions, Payment System Network (PSN) payments and WI Retirement System (WRS) contributions.
- Financial reports (including budget comparisons) for October 2023.
- Minutes from October 11, 2023 Regular Village Board Meeting
- Municipal court report – October, 2023
- Building inspector report – October, 2023
- Closure of Main St for BW Chamber of Commerce Horse Parade (Dec. 2)

Newton was opposed to approving a contract with St. Croix County to collect property taxes. After Administrator Carlson informed the board that additional staff and software would be needed to collect the property taxes, Van Someren **moved** to approve the one-year contract. Seconded by Forbes. Motion carried 6-1 with Newton opposed.

Wernlund **moved** to adjust the wages of Deputy Clerk, Jodi Peterson by \$1.00 for completion of the WI Municipal Clerks Institute. Seconded by Forbes. Motion carried 6-1 with Newton opposed. The wage adjustment will be retroactive to July 21, 2023.

REGULAR AGENDA

Public Comments: President Van Damme called for public comments. No public comments were heard.

Resolution 2023-20 – Authorizing the issuance of \$1,285,000 General Obligation Promissory Note, Series 2023B to provide interim financing for various Village capital projects. Josh Lowe (Ehlers) presented a sale report for this bond issue. Pillar Bank (Baldwin) was low bidder with an interest rate of 6.3%. Kneendorf **moved** to approve the Resolution and award the bid to Pillar Bank. Seconded by Jurgens. Motion carried by roll call vote with all in favor.

EMS Building Project Change Order #5 – Eric Quam discussed this change order which includes additional flooring and drywall upgrades as required by the State of WI. The change order totals \$35,790.20. Van Someren **moved** to approve the change order. Seconded by Jurgens. Motion carried.

700 80th Ave. Driveway – At the request of Todd Ptacek, property owner of 700 80th Ave., Van Damme **moved** to approve a second driveway for his property per Ordinance 271-3 (B).

Seconded by Forbes. Motion carried.

BW Ball Association – Josh Maurer requested improvements be made at Mill Pond Park for the fencing around the fields and over the backstops to prevent balls from flying and hitting someone. He presented one quote from American Fence Company. The board discussed this at length and requested two additional quotes be submitted for review. The board sent this to the Parks/Rec Committee for further review and to determine who will pay for the improvements. Maurer stated that the ball association may be able to contribute \$12,000 to the improvements. No action taken.

BW Hockey Association – Mike Findlay explained to the board that the compressor to create ice at the United Civic Center is failing. A new compressor and equipment will cost \$525,000. The Hockey Association is requesting that the village board finance the project and create an updated lease that provides that the Hockey Association make the payments. The improvements should be completed in the spring/summer of 2024 to ensure that ice can be made properly for the next skating season. The board sent this to the Streets/Building Committee to discuss the improvements and to the United Civic Center Commission to discuss the terms of a lease. No action taken.

Windmill Days/Recycling Initiative – Melissa Anderson (Windmill Day Committee) asked for permission to place up to 3 NexTrex Recycling Challenge containers in the village to gather plastic items that are not allowed to be recycled in general trash pick-up. She agreed to be responsible for emptying the containers on a regular basis and delivering the plastic garbage to the recycling center in Eau Claire. Forbes **moved** to allow for one container to be placed in the village municipal building and others to be placed where Anderson sees fit. Seconded by Jurgens. Motion carried.

North Water Tower bids – At the request of staff, Knegendorf **moved** to table review of the bids for repairs and updates to the north water tower, giving staff additional time to review the information submitted. Seconded by Newton. Motion carried.

Water/sewer rate increases – Van Someren **moved** to approve an 8% water rate increase as set by the WI Public Service Commission and a 1% sewer rate increase as was determined when the new sewer plant was being built. Seconded by Wernlund. Motion carried. New rates will be effective Jan. 2024.

Funding Windmill Days request – From the October board meeting, the funding request made by the Windmill Days Committee for \$7000 for the overall event and \$6000 for the laser light show were added to the 2024 budget. Van Someren **moved** to approve the request for funding. Seconded by Jurgens. Motion carried.

Old EMS Building – Newton **moved** to approve hiring a real estate agent to list and sell the old EMS building. Seconded by Knegendorf. Motion carried. Carlson will consult with an agent to get the property listed.

Retirement of Brad Boldt – The board acknowledged the retirement notice of Public Works Director Brad Boldt effective Jan. 5, 2024. Carlson was instructed to begin the succession plan and post the position.

Change in Christmas paid holiday schedule – The board considered changing the current policy in the employee handbook for the recognized days off for the Christmas holidays as Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday and Christmas Day falls on a Monday (2023). The stated policy provided that Friday, Dec. 22 would be observed as Christmas Eve. The requested change was to allow Dec. 26 to be the recognized holiday. Newton **moved** to leave the policy as stated. Motion failed for a lack of a second. After further discussion, Forbes **moved** to change the policy to provide that Dec. 25 and 26 be recognized as the holidays. Seconded by Van Someren. Motion carried 4-3 by roll call vote with Jurgens, Newton and Wernlund opposed.

Sewer plant project expenditures – Van Someren **moved** to approve the sewer plant expenses. Seconded by Knegendorf. Motion carried 6-1 with Van Damme opposed. Expenditures approved include pay request #27 – Jurowski - \$235,510.99; SEH - \$22,177.40; Wipfli - \$5,956.98; Bakke Norman - \$75.00.

2023 Street Project – Van Someren **moved** to approve pay request #5 for the 2023 Street Project to Albrightson’s in the amount of 91,061.05. Seconded by Jurgens. Motion carried.

2022 Street Project Final Pay Request – No pay request was submitted. No action taken.

EMS building pay requests: Van Someren **moved** to approve pay request #9 - \$618,197.98, Wold Architects - \$4,109.95; Kraus Anderson – \$66,397.54; American Engineering Testing - \$3,768; Bolton & Menk - \$5,550. Seconded by Jurgens. Motion carried.

REPORTS -

Village Engineer – Erik Henningsgard (SEH) – Written report submitted.

Dept. Heads

Public Works – Not present. No report.

Police Department – Not present. Report submitted. In October, there were 245 calls for service, 3 arrests, 89 tickets written (most being parking tickets). The department has two cars in the shop for repairs. The deadline for applications for a new officer to replace Officer Z. Anderson is Nov. 17. There are few applications that have been submitted.

EMS – Report submitted. There were 180 calls for service in October 2023. Chief Boyer commented that there is a federal grant available for rural EMS services that could be used to bolster the community paramedic program. More details will be provided about the grant and possibly applying for it at the December board meeting.

Library – Librarian Magno on October programming. They participated in the BW Chamber of Commerce Main St. Trick-or-Treating event and gave away over 800 books.

Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer's Report – Administrator Carlson reported on the following:

- The 2022 Audit Report was distributed. The board is encouraged to review it carefully.
- Windmill Park and the Main St. Farmers Market were recognized as a finalist in the “best of Baldwin” survey conducted by the Baldwin Bulletin. Mill Pond Park won at “Best Park” in the area.

Recess: 8:12pm
Reconvene: 8:20pm

Closed Session: Van Someren **moved** to convene to closed session pursuant to 19.85 (1) (c) – Consideration of employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any village employee who is subject to the jurisdiction or authority of the board. Seconded by Jurgens. Motion carried by roll call vote. Closed session convened at 8:21pm.

The board discussed a compensation package for the candidate chosen by the Police Commission for the Police Chief position. Knegendorf moved to approve a wage of \$95,000 to be offered to the candidate. Seconded by Newton. Motion carried 5-2 by roll call vote with Forbes and Van Someren opposed. The hiring a new chief will be contingent on successfully passing an extensive background check, drug screening and psychological exam.

Being no additional business, the closed session and meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.

Submitted by Tracy Carlson, Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is for Lance Van Damme, and the signature on the right is for Jodi Peterson. Both signatures are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lance Van Damme
Village President

Jodi Peterson
Deputy Clerk