

**VILLAGE OF ELBERTA BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
SPECIAL MEETING  
March 5, 2014 • 7 PM**

The Village of Elberta Board of Trustees held a special meeting on Wednesday, March 5, 2014, at the Community Building, 401 First Street, Elberta, Michigan.

The meeting was called to order by President Pro Tempore Robin Rommell at 7:03 p.m.

Present were: Robin Rommell, Diane Jenks, Linda Manville, Ken Holmes, Jennifer Wilkins

Not present: Reggie Manville, Joyce Gatrell

Public: Bill Soper, Emily Votruba, Holly O'Dwyer

Recitation of Pledge of Allegiance.

7:04 pm Public Input

None

7:06 pm Public Input Closed

**Agenda:**

Motion by L. Manville, seconded by Jenks, to approve the agenda as presented. Ayes: Rommell, Jenks, Manville, Holmes, Wilkins Nays: None Exc: R. Manville, Gatrell Motion carried.

**Minutes:**

No minutes presented for approval.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Rommell read brief letters of retirement from Clerk Sharyn Bower and Treasurer Laura Manville. Rommell received both letters on Sunday, March 2. The retirements were effective for Monday, March 3. No reasons were cited. She also read a resignation letter addressed to Reggie Manville, council, and Ken Bonney, dated March 5 from DPW assistant Corey Toms. Toms cited the cut in hours and benefits, which necessitates him finding other work. His resignation is effective EOD March 18, 2014.

L. Manville consulted with the village attorney on hiring replacements to carry out clerk and treasurer duties. Attorney advised that clerk and treasurer must be village residents unless all required steps are taken to make the positions appointed rather than elected (requires 5 yes votes to pass this measure; such a motion was defeated at February meeting). Rommell read from atty letter regarding a "catchall statute": "which permits the village council to adopt ordinances and make regulations, for the general benefit of village residents, which are not inconsistent with the general laws of Michigan." Atty goes on to advise that persons qualified to do one or both jobs, who already hold those jobs elsewhere, may be appointed on an interim basis. But council can't claim to be filling either of the positions and the worker(s) would not have the title clerk or treasurer; they

would be contract labor/consultants. Jenks said the "interim" period was not specified; if we didn't get anyone from the village who was qualified we could appoint someone on an interim basis. Council could also assign duties to a "village manager." Holmes said an ad in the paper has to appear 15 days prior to hiring anyone. Wouldn't blame state for appointing an emergency manager to us at this point. Rommell: Spoke with Eric Cline; not to worry, but make every effort to take care of business.

**AGENDA 1: Accept Retirements/Resignations**

Motion by Linda Manville, seconded by Jenks, to accept resignations from Sharyn Bower, Laura Manville (effective March 3), and Corey Toms (effective March 18). All ayes. Motion passes.

**AGENDA 2: Declare Positions of Clerk and Treasurer Vacant**

Motion by Linda Manville, seconded by Jenks, to declare the two positions vacant. All ayes. Motion passes.

**AGENDA 3: Approval of Job Descriptions for Clerk and Treasurer**

Council made some amendments to the job descriptions, which were taken mostly verbatim from the Village Law Handbook. Both positions will be filled by at will, temporary employees. The clerk position ends with the November 2014 election; the treasurer's term ends with the November 2016 election. Pay shall be set by a majority vote of council and be based on experience.

Motion by Holmes, seconded by Li. Manville, to amend the job descriptions as discussed. All ayes. Motion passes.

**AGENDA 4: Hours for Clerk and Treasurer**

Rommell: The DEP and budget were based on the clerk at 16 hours/wk and the treasurer at 24. We have an opportunity to save more money.

Motion by Rommell to make both positions 16 hours per week.

Li. Manville: An experienced person will be fine with those hours. Holmes: Hours inadequate given the requirements of the state for internal controls. Rommell: We will either end up with someone experienced or we will have to hire a person with experience to train that person. Wilkins: The job descriptions call for experience. Holmes: Descriptions don't include everything. Rommell: Treas. job specifies 2 yrs experience in municipal gov't and an associate's degree in business or some equivalent combination of experience.

Motion by Wilkins, seconded by Li. Manville, to change both clerk and treasurer positions to 16 hrs/week. Ayes: Wilkins, Jenks, Li. Manville, Rommell. Nays: Holmes. Motion passes.

**AGENDA 5: Review Policy for Filling Vacancies (passed 2/26/2014)**

Jenks: Suggests waiting to set the schedule until applications are received, since some good applicants may already have other part-time positions. Li. Manville: Ideally someone local who already holds the equivalent position. State only that job is 16 hours. Rommell: Thinks policy developed 2/26 for filling vacancies "will serve us well." Announcement must be date stamped and posted at Village office, post office, newspaper, and village website. Some discussion of the Village website. Jenks: Outgoing phone message should be changed. Holly O'Dwyer: Message could request applications. Rommell: Discussed contact info for Reggie while he's on leave of absence (for medical reasons), since he no longer has email through Laura Manville at Village office. Says Reggie does not want to be contacted and did not specify period of leave of absence. Jenks: Why doesn't he resign? Rommell: He said he asked MML and they said he could take a leave of absence. Jenks: Contact info for every council member should be on website. Rommell: Has asked for something in writing from him. Jenks: Attendance policy is miss three meetings and you're done. Li. Manville: We've been through this before [with Reggie].

#### **AGENDA 6: Schedule/Timeline for Appointment Process**

Rommell: We can appoint people for the clerk/treas positions by the March regular meeting. Procedure: Advertise/post; Employee Relations Committee (ERC) reviews applications and does initial screening. ERC is Jenks, Gatrell, and Rommell will sub for R. Manville. Application deadline will be 3/17 at noon (10 days from posting). Handbook says applications must be considered at a public meeting, and a decision made at the next regular meeting. ERC to meet 6 pm on March 18 to look at applications and check references. Initial interviews held 6 pm March 19. Public review of finalists 6 pm March 20, before regular council meeting at 7 pm.

#### **AGENDA 7: Posting at Village Office, Post Office, Village Website, Record-Patriot** (Already discussed under Agenda item 5)

#### **AGENDA 8: Designation of Check Signatories**

Reggie Manville, Laura Manville, and Sharyn Bower are current check signatories. Need to present bank with new official signatories. Jenks: Take Reggie off. Rommell: Can we remove him without his permission? Motion to confirm with Reggie that he'll be taken off check signing authority. Wilkins: We should make a temporary decision now. Li. Manville: [Signing] is listed as a duty and power of the Village president.

Motion by Jenks, seconded by Li. Manville to designate Robin Rommell and Linda Manville to replace Bower and Laura Manville as signatories to sign checks until a new clerk and treasurer are appointed. All ayes. Motion passes.

Motion by Li. Manville, seconded by Holmes, to authorize Rommell to speak with R. Manville re: his wishes regarding signing checks. All ayes. Motion passes.

#### **AGENDA 9: Water Bills**

Holmes: Payments must be made to BLUA every month. Rommell: Meters aren't read for this month. Ken Bonney needs a disc. Jenks: Have people pay an estimated bill.

Everyone's needed to run their water [to prevent pipes freezing]. Frankfort doesn't read meters in Jan/Feb/Mar. They estimate and do a true bill in April. Wilkins: Perhaps ask Dwayne for help. He has had to come to the office several times to help Laura with bills. He can show one of us how to do it. Rommell: Send everyone bills based on a comparable period last year?

Motion by Jenks, seconded by Li. Manville, to issue estimated water bills for March and April, with a true reading in May. All ayes. Motion passes.

#### **AGENDA 10: Dropbox for Payments**

Rommell showed examples of dropboxes. She had consulted with Ken Bonney, who said for security the box should be inside the building with just the slot open to the outside, and that the box should be installed in a wall rather than in the door of the office.

Motion by Holmes, seconded by Jenks, to authorize purchase of locking dropbox item no. WSS159 at a cost of \$169. Ayes: Rommell, Li. Manville, Jenks, Holmes, Wilkins. Motion passes.

#### **AGENDA 11: Logistical Plan for Interim**

Rommell said she has been collecting the mail and has opened the water bill payments. She's made a list of people who were to receive shutoff notices and has been collecting invoices that need to be paid. Li Manville, Holmes, and Rommell will go to office the day after the meeting to open the safe and count the petty cash. Wilkins: That should have been done as soon as the clerk and treasurer resigned. Rommell: Talked to Ken Bonney about changing the lock on the office door. The safe has a combination and a key to override it. The combination should be reprogrammed. Need new locks between the DPW department and the office. Ken has a key only to the door between the garage and the office. Wilkins: Suggests asking Dwayne for "mirror copies" of all the hard-drives. Also discussed changing website password as a matter of policy. Rommell: Bought cubby hole style mailbox system and put it on table inside office. Each official and commission has a cubby. Wilkins: Curious to know if Solstice chili cookoff fundraiser money was ever deposited. Jenks: Need to compile a list of tasks to divvy up; not fair for Rommell to have to do everything. For example, council members' packets for next meeting. Do any insurance payments need to be made? Rommell: Lots of things were supposed to happen by March 1. At the [February] meeting, council voted to direct Sharyn to complete application to Schmuckal oil for a fuel card. This hasn't been done.

Motion by Jenks, seconded by Wilkins, to authorize Rommell and Li. Manville to investigate what needs to be paid and pay the March bills, including payroll and complete the Schmuckal oil application. All ayes. Motion passes.

Payroll is every two weeks now. Li. Manville has made a chart for employees showing pay periods and pay dates. Next pay date is March 13.

#### **AGENDA 12: Contract with Clerk and/or Treas. from Elsewhere**

Rommell: Chris Olson had provided names of several local clerks/treasurers who might be willing to fill in.

Motion by Li. Manville, seconded by Holmes, to authorize Rommell to contact local clerks/treasurers (2 people) with an offer \$14.50/hr, 16 hrs/wk. All ayes. Motion passes.

**AGENDA 13: Meeting Minutes**

(Discussed under a Agenda item 11) Meeting minutes will be taken by Emily Votruba in the meantime.

Motion by Jenks, seconded by TKTKT, to hire Votruba to compile and post the draft minutes within 8 days of each meeting and the final approved minutes within five days and send synopses in to the *Record-Patriot*, for the per-meeting rate of \$28. All ayes. Motion passes.

9:05 pm Public Input

Emily Votruba asked if she should talk to Jon Maue about changing the passwords to the website and getting the passwords for the Farmers Market and Solstice pages from Maue and possibly change all passwords to a single password. Jenks: The admin password should stay separate to protect minutes from changes. General agreement.

Holly O'Dwyer (who had left the meeting briefly) asked whether the Schmuckal oil card application was going to be taken care of.

Jennifer Wilkins requested that DPW hours/staffing be put on the agenda for the March meeting in the wake of Corey's resignation. Agreed.

Diane Jenks requested that council discuss having Michael Engels, of the Michigan Rural Water Association, review/assess our Water Reliability Study, for free, before we raise water rates.

9:10 pm Public Input Closed

Motion by Holmes, seconded by Rommell, to adjourn the meeting. All ayes. Meeting adjourned.

**SYNOPSIS SUBMITTED TO RECORD-PATRIOT**

VILLAGE OF ELBERTA SYNOPSIS  
SPECIAL MEETING MARCH 5, 2014

Meeting called to order at 7:03 pm by Pres Pro Tem Robin Rommell. Pledge of Allegiance. Present: Robin Rommell, Diane Jenks, Linda Manville, Ken Holmes,

Jennifer Wilkins. Absent: Reggie Manville, Joyce Gatrell. **Public Input:** None. **Agenda:** Motion carried to approve as presented. **Minutes:** No minutes presented.

Correspondence: Letters of retirement from Clerk Sharyn Bower, Treasurer Laura Manville (effective March 3), and resignation of DPW assistant Corey Toms (effective March 18). Letter from atty regarding filling of vacated clerk and treasurer positions.

**Agenda 1:** Motion carried (unanimous) to accept retirements and resignation. **Agenda 2:** Motion carried (unanimous) to declare positions of clerk and treasurer vacant. **Agenda 3:** Motion carried (unanimous) to amend job descriptions of clerk and treasurer as discussed. **Agenda 4:** Motion carried to change both clerk and treasurer positions to 16 hrs/wk (Ayes: Wilkins, Jenks, Li. Manville, Rommell. Nays: Holmes). **Agenda 5:** Discussed policy/process for filling clerk/treasurer vacancies. President Reggie Manville is on leave of absence for medical reasons. No vote. **Agenda 6:** Council agreed on a schedule for interviewing people for clerk/treasurer duties. Appointment to be made at regular March council meeting. **Agenda 7:** Method of posting notice of vacancies (already discussed under Ag. 5) **Agenda 8:** Motion carried (unanimous) to designate Robin Rommell and Linda Manville to replace Bower and Laura Manville as check signatories until appointment of new clerk/treasurer. Motion carried (unanimous) to authorize Rommell to ask R. Manville if he still wants check signing authority during absence. **Agenda 9:** Motion carried (unanimous) to issue estimated water bills for March and April, with true reading in May. **Agenda 10:** Motion carried (unanimous) to authorize purchase of locking dropbox for receipt of water bills/tax payments. **Agenda 11:** Council discussed logistics for interim clerk/treasurerless period. Motion carried (unanimous) to authorize Rommell and Li. Manville to handle payment of March bills, including payroll, and complete Schmuckal oil application. **Agenda 12:** Motion carried (unanimous) to authorize Rommell to contact local clerks/treasurers (2 people) for temporary fill-in with offer of \$14.50/hr, 16 hrs/wk. **Agenda 13:** Motion carried (unanimous) to hire Emily Votruba to handle meeting minutes for a per-meeting rate of \$28. **Public input** was heard from Votruba, Wilkins, Holly O'Dwyer, Jenks. Motion carried to adjourn meeting at 9:10 pm. Complete minutes of these proceedings are available for inspection in the Village Office, 151 Pearson Street, Elberta, MI and at [villageofelberta.com/about-us/village-government/meeting-minutes/](http://villageofelberta.com/about-us/village-government/meeting-minutes/)

Submitted by Emily Votruba, March 24, 2014.