

**VILLAGE OF ELBERTA BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING
June 25, 2014 • 7 PM**

The Village of Elberta Board of Trustees held a special meeting on Wednesday, June 25, 2014, at the Community Building, 401 First Street, Elberta, Michigan.

The meeting was called to order by trustee Robin Rommell at 7:07 p.m.

Recitation of Pledge of Allegiance

Present: Robin Rommell, Linda Manville, Ken Holmes, Jennifer Wilkins, Joyce Gatrell

Absent: Reggie Manville, Diane Jenks

Public: Ken Bonney, Cathy Anderson, Emily Votruba, Jim Gilbert, Francine McPherson, Dan Link, Mary Link, Rosemary Tanner, Jacquelyn Thies, Sheila Applebee, Donna Olson

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Holmes, seconded by Manville to approve the agenda as presented.

Agenda Conflict: Rommell: I may have a conflict with items 3 or 4.

7:08 pm Public Input

None

7:09 pm Public Input Closed

AGENDA 1: Deputy Treasurer Candidate Interviews

Rommell: Employee Relations Committee met with each candidate for 1/2 hour.

Sheila Applebee: Resides in Benzonia, has lived in area 8 years. Currently night auditor at Crystal Mtn. Formerly in accounting department at University of Minnesota for 7 yrs. Loves working with numbers. Loves the area, has wanted to be involved in community government work.

Donna Olson: Resides in Beulah, in area 24 years. Working part-time as a bookkeeper. Was with Platte Valley Automotive ("the honest ones"). Enjoys working with people.

Jacquelyn Thies: Born and raised in Elberta. Great granddaughter of Alan Blacklock, granddaughter of Jack Blacklock. Four yr degree in business marketing and 1 yr of accounting. Would like to help the neighborhood. Has been back in area 2 yrs, resides Gilmore Twp.

Manville: Please tell us how you heard about the position and why you applied.

Olson: Heard about it from Toni Flynn. I need a job and I enjoy a challenge. It will be mutually beneficial.

Applebee: Saw in *Record-Patriot*. Have been looking for a part-time job.

Thies: Heard about the position the first time it opened, but wasn't able to apply because of residency requirement. Looking for a local part-time job. My marketing skills will be helpful, can bring accounting skills up to speed.

Manville: Regarding schedule (16 hrs/week). What times/days are you not available?

Thies: Open except for occasional trips to Grand Rapids. Has other jobs she can work around.

Applebee: Days are free. Night schedule flexible, has backup at other position

Olson: Flexible with other position.

Manville: Accounting is important to us. Multitasking with funds, departments, account lines, organizational skills very important.

Thies: Will take webinars/classes, if necessary. Willing to put in extra unpaid hours.

Knows basic accounting.

Applebee: Balances general ledger every night. Works with variety of programs and willing to learn something new. Understands the principle of balancing each day and does that at current job.

Olson: I've had to learn new programs, am a quick study. Worked at banks with daily balancing. Used to multitasking.

Rommell: We will make a decision tonight and will notify you either way tomorrow.

Tuesday would be the start day. [Candidates leave.]

Rommell: Pleased to get 3 applications. Concerned about Thies's lack of accounting experience.

Manville: I wasn't at interviews. Comparing Olson and Applebee, see that Applebee is accustomed to allotting money in different categories.

Rommell: What she does at Crystal Mtn replicates what we need. Balancing different accounts. And you don't move on until what you've done today balances.

Gatrell: She is knowledgeable about spreadsheets.

Rommell: She creates and alters them.

Holmes: Why does she want this job?

Gatrell: Crystal Mtn is only part-time.

Rommell: Was at interview with Sheila and Donna but not Jackie. When Applebee worked at UofMinn she had a broad range of relevant experience (maintenance contracts, accounts payable, accounts receivable, dealing with personnel, customer svc. etc.)

Gatrell: Prefers Donna to Sheila (some confusion as to names; she actually prefers Sheila).

Holmes: What other information is there about Donna's background? [Handed her resume.]

Motion by Manville, seconded by Gatrell, to appoint Sheila Applebee as deputy treasurer. All ayes. Motion passes.

Rommell: Will inform candidates and provide Sheila with wage offer of TKTK commensurate with her experience.

AGENDA 2: Yard Maintenance

Holmes: "Has been a sore spot for a lot of years. One sore spot makes a lot more of them." Great improvements being made at the end of Lincoln Avenue. At the other end of town there are piles of dirt, sand, rocks. Right behind the hardware store, pile of rocks [likely referring to Michael Murphy's cairn]. Rommell: When was ordinance passed?

Holmes: Grass height ordinance passed a couple of years ago, 5 or 6 years ago junk ordinance was updated to conform with the law. Wilkins: Reads yard maintenance

ordinance (see below). Adopted November 17, 2011. Rommell: So, eight inches. Some lawns exceed that for sure. Manville: We as council need to stand firm on what we direct DPW Superintendent to do. Holmes: We've told him to do this or that and nothing is followed up. Manville: Ask Mr. Bonney to make us a list and speak with the owners first. Give the five days' notice, after which citation issued. Holmes: 10 days. Lot of people out of town. Most of the ones who are very careless with their yard live right here in town. Across from Jim Gilbert's house there's half a city block full of used cars.

Motion by Manville, seconded by Gatrell, to authorize village DPW superintendent to make a list of residents in violation of Village yard ordinance. Initial contact will be made by Ken Bonney, giving people 10 days to comply. If after ten days they have not complied, he will issue a citation. All ayes. Motion passes.

AGENDA 3: Supervision of Employees

Decision to delay discussion till later in meeting in case Jenks shows up to meeting, since she is on the Employee Relations Committee.

AGENDA 4: President Pro Tempore Wilkins: We received an email from Eric Cline regarding the signatory issue. We have to pass a resolution regarding Robin's removal as signatory from all village accounts. Manville: President Pro Tem may by choice remove herself but there should be some acceptance of that. Holmes: [At previous meeting] It was a motion not a resolution. He and Joyce did not get the email from Cline. "If we're not informed of it before the meeting, it's null and void." Wilkins reads Cline letter (see below). Rommell: I asked Mary to copy this letter for everyone at 10 am on June 24 and she did not, nor did she make copies of other items I asked to be added to council packets (agenda, yard ordinance). Holmes: She's overwhelmed. Manville: Has read accounting procedures manual, pages referencing how to handle cash disbursements. To me Cline's comments about a resolution had to do with transferring money, not signatory. And that council needs to be aware of transfers when they take place. Mary is still on as signatory. Suggested waiting until we appointed a deputy treasurer. "Reggie has been absent for a while and we don't know when he's coming back." Cline suggested removing him. Before we left his name on so that he could go to the bank and sign. Rommell: If we leave him on and he decides that he's coming back then we don't have to do the paperwork again. Bank has no limit for number of people listed. Manville: "It's a shame that [Reggie]'s leaving us in limbo." Rommell: Unclear what Cline is referring to regarding the resolution. Manville: We had 4 yes votes and 2 no votes for accepting Robin's resignation as signatory at the regular meeting.

Proposed resolution by Rommell to remove President Pro Tem Rommell as a signatory on all bank accounts associated with the Village of Elberta. She will do therefore be removed from access to any online banking or financial transactions. Seconded by Wilkins. Wilkins: Aye. Gatrell: No. Holmes: No. Manville: Yes. Rommell: Yes. Resolution fails.

Wilkins: Second item. Concerned about management techniques Rommell uses with Village employees.

Motion by Wilkins to have Ken Bonney report to Joyce Gatrell and Diane Jenks instead of Robin Rommell regarding time and labor issues, because of recent hostility between Bonney and Rommell.

Discussion: Rommell: The hostility is coming from Mr. Bonney. Wilkins: It started when you tried to fire him. Rommell: No. Since Reggie's leave of absence I have told Bonney to do 3 things: (1) Stop signs needed to be put up. 3 weeks later, told him that if stop signs are not put up within 30 days of our knowing about it our insurance won't cover us in event of an accident. In the fourth week, he put up the signs. (2) When I realized Clark Wilson was driving Village vehicles without a license, I consulted with Sheriff's Department, who said he couldn't drive the vehicles on public roadways without a license. Informed Bonney of this. (3) Boardwalk. His job description says the boardwalk will be put out by May 1. Unless the council gives him an order to the contrary, he should do what his job description says. But none of those is the cause of the animosity. When I signed on to this council it was for one reason only, and that was to pay attention to the bottom line. First thing I did in November was look at financials. At December meeting I said Bonney had worked \$20K of unbudgeted overtime. I proposed an end to the overtime. And his comment was: You stole my overtime. All I asked is that he live within the budget. The minute he realized that someone was going to say he couldn't work the overtime he wanted because the Village didn't have the money to pay him, that's when the problem started. It's not my supervision, it's because I said he couldn't work the overtime. Wilkins: Why didn't you bring any of this up at council meetings during the Employee Relations part of the agenda? Council wasn't aware of the stop sign, Clark Wilson, or boardwalk situations. Rommell: Council was aware of the boardwalk and Clark Wilson situation. Wilkins: It wasn't brought up during any of the meetings. Manville: to Joyce, was the ground frozen and that's why the stop signs couldn't be put in? What vehicles did Clark drive? Rommell: He drove the Do-Mor. Manville: He has a license for farm equipment, but he couldn't drive the Village trucks. Rommell: I told Ken Clark couldn't drive Village vehicles. Mary Kalbach had told me he had a farm license. I asked if a farm license entitled him to drive our Village vehicles. Manville: As far as the boardwalk, everything's behind this year because of the weather. Maybe May 1 wasn't a good time to do it. One man can't do it by himself, and we don't have Clark. Doug is doing a good job mowing for \$7.40/hr, but he has physical limitations and can't help with boardwalk. Holmes: If Ken needs extra help he's supposed to hire them. Manville: asks Gatrell's opinion of Gatrell and Jenks supervising Bonney. Holmes: Inappropriate to have Employee Relations committee also supervising. Manville: How is it different from Robin issuing orders and then judging his performance? Holmes: I worked 12-14 hours a day for 4 or 5 years. Ken Dolph was my helper in the summer. Expresses wish that SEEDS come back and help. Rommell: Several people volunteered to Ken and were told they weren't needed. Holmes: I wouldn't want any volunteers to put out the boardwalk. Manville: For liability reasons. Holmes: Charlie did a good job for a long time but he left with a really bad distaste in his mouth. Wilkins: No one wants to be yelled at at work, when they have their own list and they know what to do. No one wants to be hounded or belittled when they're doing the best they can, especially new people. Rommell: I don't yell at Ken, he yells at me. You were there to witness it. Wilkins: You yelled at me that it

was none of my f----- business and to get out. I've got witnesses. People also witnessed you yelling at Ken and Doug to get the boardwalk out, in front of village businesses, screaming at them. Manville: I've had that report as well. Holmes: When I was Village man, I had the whole council separately telling me what to do. He does not have to do what everybody says. Wilkins: He knows what needs to be done. If he had been approached calmly he might have had an explanation for why the tasks didn't get done. Rommell: The first time I asked Ken about the boardwalk was in an email. I said I had been approached by some fishermen who wanted to know when it would be out. I asked what the plan was for the boardwalk. He emailed me back and said "budget cut. not going out." If he had told me it was going out the week after Solstice, none of this would have happened. Manville: There's obviously some friction here. Rommell: It's all to do with the fact that I "stole" his overtime. Bonney: I never said you stole any overtime from me. All you want to do is sit there and lie, call me a thief. I lost one good guy because you belittled him. That's why he quit. Rommell: How did I belittle him? Holmes: I'd like you to bring him in here and explain this. Rommell: In my entire life I have said 4 words to Clark Wilson. I was in the village office, this guy walked in, he stood in front of Mary's desk, he didn't say anything, I turned to him and I said Can I help you? I didn't have a clue who he was. Mary looked up and said Oh Clark, I'll get your check in just a minute. That's my one and only interaction with Clark Wilson. That was a week and a half after he quit, when he came to get his check. So I don't know how I belittled him. Before that I had gone to Ken and said he can't drive the Village vehicles. If that was belittling, maybe that's why he quit. Wilkins: We'll have to hear his side of the story.

Motion (above) by Wilkins, seconded by Manville. Gatrell: No. Wilkins: Yes. Holmes: No. Manville: Yes. Rommell: No. Motion fails.

Holmes: I don't like to see that truck sitting up there in front of the beauty shop. Is he getting orders?

Motion by Manville, seconded by Gatrell, to adjourn the meeting. All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm

Emily Votruba compiled these minutes and submitted them to Elberta Village clerk Mary Kalbach.

_____ (date)
Elberta Village Clerk

TEXT OF VILLAGE YARD MAINTENANCE ORDINANCE (No. 26)

Yard Maintenance and Duty of Owner

Every owner of property within the Village shall maintain his/her property and the Village right-of-way in a safe condition and free of debris and rubbish. Except for trees, gardens, and other landscaping, all growth shall be cut and maintained to a height of not more than eight (8) inches. If any owner does not comply with this Section, the Village DPW may issue a corrective order. Should the owner fail to comply with this order, the Village may perform the necessary work. The cost of the work may be collected by suit or in any other manner permitted by law.

All:

I have some suggestions to help address some of the current questions/debate regarding Bank signatories.

I do not know if this will address every question, but it might address many of them.

I have reviewed my recommendations with both the Financial Specialist in my office (who is a licensed CPA) and the Administrator of the Local Audit and Finance Division, so I am confident in these recommendations.

- First, in and all action in these matters should only be done by Council resolution and authorization.

Attached is the **Accounting Procedures Manual** issued by the State. Pages 23 and 24 address much of what is currently being discussed.

- The Manual states that the Clerk, Treasurer and their deputies must be authorized signatories.
- As the Village is currently short a Treasurer and both deputies, please consider:
- Consider removing President Manville from the list. If he remains on indefinite leave, he does not need to be listed and it will reduce confusion as to who signs when. If he returns to full-time status, he can be added again later.
- The Clerk must remain a signatory. · If the Council has appointed a trustee as Acting Treasurer (to me it sounds like Linda is filling this role), then they should be added as the second signatory.
- When new deputies are appointed, they should be added as well.
- If the President (or in this case Acting President) has traditionally been an alternate signatory in lieu of an empty deputy position, that is ok. If Robin really does not want to do it and the Council is ok with this, then someone else should be appointed until the staffing situation stabilizes.

On another matter, as recently as yesterday, I commended the Village for its continued efforts to correct a number of its ongoing issues and put remedies in-place. I firmly believe that the Village has made a lot of strides since we first engaged with you, but I see some of your implementation being slowed by uncertainty. Let me suggest that if an issue is being researched and debated and questions remain, then delaying an appearance before the Council may be in order until there is some confidence in the recommendation. I am not suggesting needless delay, but rushing an issue is not necessarily the answer either. Continue to assign topics to individuals for follow-up and continue to do your research. If questions remain, Roxanne and I can provide guidance on a number of fiscal and operational issues if we are given enough lead time and our input could help “smooth over” the rough areas.

I hope that this information is considered. If there are other questions, I encourage you to follow-up and we can provide any guidance we can.

Keep in mind that setting these procedures up is time consuming but as they take hold and are implemented that the entire process becomes easier over time.

Regards,

PS. Please provide this message to those Village officials without email.

SYNOPSIS

VILLAGE OF ELBERTA SYNOPSIS SPECIAL MEETING June 25, 2014

Meeting called to order at 7:07 pm by Pres Pro Tem Robin Rommell. Pledge of Allegiance.
Present: Robin Rommell, Linda Manville, Ken Holmes, Jennifer Wilkins, Joyce Gatrell. Absent: Reggie Manville, Diane Jenks. **Agenda:** Motion by Holmes, seconded by Manville, to approve agenda as presented. All ayes. Motion passed. **Agenda Conflict:** Rommell said she might have conflict with Ag3 or Ag4. **Public Input:** None. **Correspondence:** None presented. **Agenda 1:** Deputy Treasurer Candidate Interviews. Council interviewed three candidates: Jacquelyn Thies, Sheila Applebee, and Donna Olson. Candidates departed. Motion by Manville, seconded by Gatrell, to appoint Sheila Applebee as deputy treasurer. All ayes. Motion passed. **Agenda 2:** Yard Maintenance. Motion by Manville, seconded by Gatrell, to authorize village DPW superintendent to make a list of residents in violation of the Village yard ordinance. Initial contact will be made by Ken Bonney, giving people 10 days to comply. If after 10 days they have not

complied, he will issue a citation. All ayes. Motion passed. **Agenda 3:** Supervision of Employees. Discussion delayed till Jenks (member of Employee Relations Committee) is present. **Agenda 4:** President Pro Tempore. Proposed resolution by Rommell to remove President Pro Tem Rommell as a signatory on all bank accounts associated with the Village of Elberta. She will therefore be removed from access to any online banking or financial transactions. Seconded by Wilkins. Wilkins: Aye. Gatrell: No. Holmes: No. Manville: Yes. Rommell: Yes. Resolution fails. Motion by Wilkins to have Ken Bonney report to Joyce Gatrell and Diane Jenks instead of Robin Rommell regarding time and labor issues, because of recent hostility between Bonney and Rommell. Seconded by Manville. Gatrell: no. Wilkins: Yes. Holmes: No. Manville: Yes. Rommell: No. Motion fails. Motion. **Adjournment:** Motion by Manville, seconded by Gatrell, to adjourn meeting. All ayes. Motion passed at 8:23 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/ Submitted by Emily Votruba, July 22, 2014.