

Village of Milledgeville  
County of Carroll  
State of Illinois

Minutes from a Regular Meeting, May 2, 2016

A Regular Board Meeting was Called to Order at 7:30 p.m. at the Village Hall in Milledgeville. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and Roll was Called. The following Trustees were present, Bill Stage, Gene Behrens, Gary Geirnaeirt, Wayne Sprecher and Bryan Trotter.

Others Present: Mark Wiersema, Stephen and Jayci Webster, Ethan and Riley Horton, Tammy and Zack Diehl, Jennifer Geerts, Susanne Parker, Travis Hines, Larry Spencer, Jermaine Pigeo, Jeff Hackbarth and Jim Haag.

MOTION was made by Stage, sec. by Geirnaeirt to approve the Minutes from the April 18<sup>th</sup> Regular and Special Meetings. Motion carried (5-0) by omnibus vote.

MOTION was made by Stage, sec. by Geirnaeirt to pay all current bills as presented. Motion carried (5-0) by omnibus vote.

Business from the Floor: Galen asked all interested parties to ask their questions and state their viewpoints about chickens in town as the Board was going to discuss this further next. Larry Spencer first asked what the ordinance was on dogs. Do they have to be leashed? Haag said in their own yards they don't if they have an invisible fence or stay in their yard. Larry asked what he could do with a dog that went after a baby and dumps in neighbors' yards. Stage asked if he called the police when the dog went after the child and Larry said no, he got the child away from the dog. Stage said he needs to call the police and then something can be done.

Tammy Diehl said the Board encouraged the residents to petition to see if others wanted chickens in town. She said she didn't even really try and she presented 51 signatures on a petition. One was her son who is too young to sign a petition but she said he wants them. Travis Hines asked if after the Board discussed the Ordinance, he would have a chance to rebuttal the points made. Stage said after we vote on it there can be no rebuttals. Travis then pointed out that the current Ordinance does not completely cut chickens out of town. He said some people already have them and have for a long time. He said he was told he should get ducks as they are allowed. Turkeys, pheasants and other birds are also allowed. He said he heard the Board was worried about run off from the birds feces and he said they don't even make enough to fill the palm of his hand. Stage said if he stepped in it he would still complain. Hines said he used to do derby cars and the parts he left in his yard made more run off and no one complained about that and Stage said yes, people did complain. Susanne Parker said she lives almost in the country on Freeman Ave. and she has grandchildren that are there all the time and want to know why grandma doesn't have animals. She would like to get some for her grandchildren. Hines said some people have bigger yards and can have chickens and that's not fair to the people with smaller yards. He said he would pay a registration fee to have them each year as long as it was reasonable.

Larry Spencer said if Travis wants to be a chicken farmer then he should live on a farm. He asked what happens if a chicken gets in his yard and his dog kills it. They said it wouldn't be his fault. He said that he would have a lawsuit on his hands. He said if these people want birds they need to move to the country and get them. He said he is trying to raise the property value of his home and this is not going to help. He said they are just antagonizing their neighbors. He also said you can't tell the sex of a bird when they are little and Travis Hines said he can with a string and a washer. Jennifer Geerts commented about the

dog that went after a baby. She said if he was there he should have shot the dog and Galen reminded her that there are gun laws in town and he agreed with her but residents need to remember that. Larry said he doesn't want the smell and he is a neighbor to someone who wants them. Stephen Webster asked if there is a change in the Ordinance tonight could it be put into effect tonight and Galen said there will be a proposal as there is nothing written up tonight. Hines said he wondered if the distance could be shortened as they don't smell as bad as a pile of dog feces.

As there were no more comments at this time, Galen said he proposed that they keep the distance of 100 feet from any other residence, change the wording from chickens to fowl/poultry, limit the number to 4-6 and set a yearly fee to register the chickens.

Hines then said there is a person in town that has chickens and Galen said she has the 100 feet so she is fine. Jennifer said she also has a rooster and he is louder than the quail she has. She would like to be grandfathered in.

Stage said he thinks we should leave the Ordinance as it is and change the wording to be poultry/fowl. He said we can leave the roosters at 250 feet. Bryan, Gene and Gary think there should be no roosters allowed in town as you can hear them on good days. Wayne agreed with the 100 foot, no roosters and only chickens. Galen asked if they felt there should be a limit on the number allowed if they have the 100 feet and the trustees voted on 4. The next question was should there be a yearly fee and they again thought \$25.00 per year was good. At this time Galen said they would not pass this tonight as we need to have it on paper before we vote on it. Galen said he will type it up and it will state 100 feet from any neighbors, chickens only, no roosters, no other fowl, a yearly fee of \$25.00 and only 4 chickens. Jennifer said she was told during the last meeting that it was a dead issue and so she got quail. She was upset that she would have to get rid of them. Galen said it became a major issue in town with people making calls to media outlets and there has been direct defiance to the Ordinance so he felt it needed to be re-addressed. Jayci Webster asked what fowl/poultry were going to be banned and was told all except chickens. She asked about parakeets in homes and the Board said they are in homes, not in the yards and not bothering neighbors. The Board was then asked if they could have chickens in their garages. The Trustees said if they are 100 feet away from the neighbors. Stage said we were getting off subject and non-relevant questions were being asked. Tammy said Stage thinks he runs this town and Larry Spencer asked Tammy if that was the same as her standing outside yelling "I run this block!" Tammy said people have been saying she has the birds outside and she doesn't. Galen said 100 feet from the neighbor's house is the ordinance and she is too close. Tammy said the Board can pass a hard liquor Ordinance in one day but can't do something family friendly for its residents. Tammy informed the Board that Jim Haag is fine with chickens etc. and Stage said it is the Trustees job to make the Ordinances and Jim's job to enforce them.

Stage said we have given the residents a chance to speak and the Trustees then decided that the Ordinance will change to not allow roosters, only chickens, 100 feet from the neighbor's house, limit of 4 hens, and no other fowl/poultry and a registration fee of \$25.00 each year. Galen will get this written up and have it at the next Board meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

The budget will be put on hold until after the executive session.

Jeff said there is a wireless communication for the water and sewer plant that he had looked into. He said we were struck by lightning again and Metropolitan Industries came. There are two systems. One is \$13,765.00 and includes new equipment for both wells and would also link the sewer plant. Jeff said we could get rid of the land lines also but would have to get cellular service for the lines. The other system is \$17,957.00. Jeff said without going into too much, he wondered about Dan from Metropolitan coming

and talking to the Board about the difference in each system. Galen said have Dan pick a date that would work for him and get back to us.

New Business: Mark Wiersema was present at the meeting to discuss the spring clean-up date. The date will be set at May 16, 2016 this year. No chemicals, tires, batteries, paint, electronics or construction materials will be picked up. The next item Mark wanted to discuss was the garbage contract they have with the Village for the last 13 years. Mark said they greatly appreciate the business from Milledgeville and he came to propose that Wiersema Waste will purchase a 30 yard dumpster and give us two months of free recycling. He said they would ask the Village to extend the contract for three more years. He said the price would be refigured after one year. Galen said we have never had a complaint about Wiersema Waste but the Trustees had discussed putting it out for bid as we are a government agency and we feel everyone should have a chance to bid. Mark said this is a take all town. He said if someone puts out five cans they will pick it up. He figures it all comes out in the wash.

John Helms, who is in charge of Ordinances, was not present at this time so we will wait to do the Ordinance book until he is here.

Water testing was next on the agenda. Jeff said Dixon, Il will no longer be testing water samples. Jeff said that will be a problem when there are water main breaks. A one day boil order will turn into a three day boil order. Jeff was told to contact other towns and see what they will be doing and he was asked also to call Dixon and see if they would just raise the prices. Galen said if they are having trouble with making money, it would still help us to get the testing done there and pay more.

Wanda Rohn, Village Treasurer, gave a letter of resignation to Galen Wirth. Galen said she feels it is time to retire. Stage made a MOTION, with regrets; a sec. was given by Geirnaeirt, with regrets, to accept her resignation. Motion carried (5-0) by Roll Call vote. Galen said Wanda had a list of her duties attached and he feels we need to advertise right away and see if Wanda can train her replacement. Christy is to advertise in the Prairie Advocate for a new Treasurer.

Committee Reports: Stage said two T.V.'s have been dropped off at the street department and we can no longer recycle them. He wanted to know about stopping the electronic recycling. The Trustees said one or two people have again ruined it for everyone else. The other Trustees wondered about getting a camera to put at the street department and fine whoever drops one off. The Trustees decided that was the way to go. If it doesn't work it will be reassessed at a later time. Galen asked Jim Haag to purchase a camera so we can get it installed.

Stage sad the guys are putting risers on manholes so we are ready for the paving on the roads. They will be flushing hydrants this week also so will have to do these two things before anything else can be done.

Any Other Business: Travis Hines was wondering if we could ban leaf burning. He said his Grandmother has had to leave town to stay in the country when some people burn leaves. She has asthma and can't breathe. He said we have an area outside of town to take yard waste and we have employees pick up yard waste every Monday. We shouldn't have to burn. Galen said he will put it on the next agenda so the Trustees can discuss it.

At 8:43 p.m. MOTION was made by Stage, sec. by Geirnaeirt to go into executive session to discuss employment compensation, or performance of employees for the Village.

At 9:17 p.m. MOTION was made by Trotter, sec. by Geirnaeirt, to return to Open Session.

Galen told the employees that they had gone over wages. Jim Haag will go from \$24.16 per hour to \$25.25. Chris White will go from \$18.96 per hour to \$20.00. Jeff Hackbarth is at \$18.00, he will go to \$19.75. Ryan Schryver is at \$15.00 and will be raised to \$16.00. Christy is at \$16.30 and will be \$17.50. All these raises start on June 1, 2016. MOTION was made by Geirnaeirt, sec. by Stage to give the employees these raises. Motion carried by Roll Call vote (5-0).The employees thanked the Trustees.

Any Other Business: Stage said Jeff has two days of vacation to carry over. The Board will allow this as long as he uses it in 45 days. Jeff thanked the Board.

With no further business, MOTION was made by Stage, sec. by Behrens, to adjourn at 9:23 p.m. Motion carried.

Approved Minutes Taken By  
Christine A. Ottens, Village Clerk