

VILLAGE OF POPLAR GROVE

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 22, 2010 – 6:30 PM

(Unless noted otherwise – all motions approved are Unanimous. All funding requests go to the Finance Committee for approval at the next Village Board meeting).

Present:

President Bradley Rightnowar, Chairman Kris Campbell, Trustee Judi Zangs, Trustee Ronald Quimby, Trustee Cliff Stetter, Trustee John Neitzel, Attorney Charlotte LeClercq, Secretary Maureen Brzinski and Public Audience.

Minutes of February 22, 2010:

A motion was made by Quimby, 2nd by Zangs to approve minutes as presented.

Public Comments:

Anthony DalPra / Pacemaker: Mr. DalPra stated he was opposed to the change in the liquor ordinance requiring persons 21 years of age or older to serve or sell alcohol. He felt it would cause undue economic hardship because new and existing businesses, in this economy, are struggling to establish liability in their businesses.

Mr. DalPra also stated, in his particular business, quality is improving and they have great hopes for the future but he had to make adverse decisions regarding cutting staff and hours substantially and it seems only people under 21 years of age are willing to work the late afternoon/evening shifts. Because of this, it wouldn't be unusual for Management to be stocking shelves or be in the stockroom leaving employees under age 21 in the front of the store as cashiers. Mr. DalPra stated he realizes they have an important civic duty to enforce the liquor laws. Their registers require that age be typed in before liquor is sold and hopefully the employees under 21 are trained properly but that doesn't stop mistakes from being made.

If this change occurred, there would need to be an employee over 21 in the front of the store at all times to verify the purchase of alcoholic sales which would be an inconvenience not only for the customer but also for the store financially. In Belvidere their store is under the over age 21 rule, but the store is a viable business unlike the Poplar Grove location. Unfortunately he is trying to establish a customer base at the Poplar Grove location and to his surprise this community has not been as supportive of this local grocery store as anticipated by the company that did the market study.

Public Comments Continued:

Mr. DalPra stated he would like to see the Village help encourage the local community to support all of the local businesses.

Willa Moen / Snyders: Ms. Moen stated if the change in the liquor ordinance occurs, she would have to layoff employees who have been with her since before the store opened. She also stated this is the only income these employees have. She suggested grandfathering these employees in because of their start date.

Ms. Moen stated at orientation of employees, fifteen minutes is spent specifically on the procedure for the sale of alcohol. She also stated employees are told immediate dismissal and a fine of \$500 would be paid by them, besides court appearance, if they are caught in a sting operation that has failed.

Sadly enough, there was a sting operation by the State Police at her store and the Cashier failed. She stated this made it real for the rest of her employees whether they were under 21 or not.

Ms. Moen also stated all cashiers are to check the driver's license of all customers under the age of 40 and no matter what age a customer is, the birth date is put into the register in order to complete the sale. When Snyders first opened, Ms. Moen actually fired employees for using the same birth date for all customers buying alcohol.

Joseph Ocello / Bravo Pizza of Poplar Grove: Mr. Ocello wrote a letter stating he was apposed to the change in the liquor ordinance requiring persons 21 years of age or older to serve or sell alcohol. He wrote this proposal would not only have a negative effect on his business but also to individuals under 21 who are responsible employees.

The percentage of applications received for workers/waitresses under the age of 21 is higher than over 21. If his business can't operate with a full staff, good service would be depleted which would have a negative impact on his business overall. He stated the staff, under age 21, have acted in a responsible manner and promoted the success of his business. These individuals rely on income from their job to pay for childcare, educational and living expenses and require this type of employment to survive.

Mr. Ocello stated this proposal would create hardships on businesses within the Village more than the Village realizes. He also wrote, the Village must remember the need for sales tax revenue which is generated through businesses of this nature and may be reduced by the impact of the proposal at hand.

Savannah Oaks Golf Club: Owner of the Club stated he currently has employees over the age of 21 serving alcohol. He has an employee under age 21 who takes care of emptying trash, washing golf clubs, carts, etc. and if ordinance passes, this employee would still be able to do his duties but not be able to go behind the bar as he currently does to retrieve the trash.

Old Business:

Village Beautification Budget: Stetter made a recommendation that when it comes time for the Trustee's to donate 50% of their salaries to the Village, each Trustee donate \$107 to the Beautification Program.

Stetter stated there is money allocated in the budget, for two treatments, to weed and fertilize the lawn around the Village hall.

Stetter stated the Beautification Committee would like to relocate half dozen pine trees from the arboretum, to use as screening in different areas of the Village.

Every year the Immanuel Lutheran Church of Belvidere volunteers their services for a community project in Boone County and asked Nancy Stetter what they could do to help the Beautification Committee. Stetter asked the Administration Committee if they had any ideas of how the Village could utilize this resource.

Rightnowar stated the Community Foundation of Illinois, located in Rockford, donates money for projects such as the beautification project.

There is a program offered by the Arbor Foundation called the Tree City Program which makes arrangements for pricing on the purchase of trees.

Rightnowar stated there is a green program for the placing of fruit trees in municipal parks as a way of providing low cost fruits to the public.

Stetter stated he will be talking with Jeff Strate, Public Works Director, about utilization of public works for moving and planting of trees from the entrance of Hills Street.

Park Advisory Committee: Quimby stated he is looking at have meetings on Tuesdays, which will begin in April or May. Since there is no money available, the first meetings will be towards exploring leads and possible grants.

Quimby also spoke with the Lions Club and they stated they would like to look at getting grant money to redo the entire park and reconsideration of drainage system.

Community Garden Development Project: Stetter stated the Community Garden would be a great place to have young adults, in the community, or a classroom adopt a plot to learn how to grow vegetables and garden.

Stetter also stated there is a grant that has been applied for, which they expect to receive \$1200 to \$1500 to buy fencing, water storage barrels, hoes and rakes, hoses and other essentials. The committee is looking at buying to types of fencing, a decorative one to border Hill Street and rabbit fencing in the other areas to keep animals out of the planting areas.

Community Garden Development Project continued:

The Committee is looking at having an educational session by mid to late April at the Village Hall and will be inviting all the customers from the Food Pantry and even some of the other communities who are thinking about developing a Community Garden.

A volunteer, Jeff Reininger, has offered to plow the grounds for the Garden project within the next two weeks.

Stetter stated there is a possibility Shafala will provide funding for seeds and the use of his staff for the Garden project.

Planning Commission: Rightnowar stated there are three strong applicants in a variety of fields and he doesn't want to ask members that have been actively involved on the committee to step down. He stated whenever you have a level of expertise that is willing to volunteer on the Planning Commission they should all be utilized.

The three applicants have been asked to attend the April 6th meeting to make sure they are onboard before the formal appointments have been made.

Fire Department Training Tower: Rightnowar stated the structure he is thinking of is a staircase made out of cinderblock that the fireman practice on. He stated one of the great things this village has is the Fire Department, Village Hall and Lions Park and how they flow into each other. What Rightnowar recommends is that we definitely want to see the tower here and recognizes the Fire Dept. needs it for training purposes, but why not put the structure by one of the waste water treatment plants.

The Fire Department hasn't formerly approached President Rightnowar at this point.

Permits / Zoning:

Lane's: There is no update as of this time.

Ordinances:

Police Referendum: Mr. Jay Ackley, retired police officer, has had conversations with President Rightnowar regarding the Sheriff's random patrol which the Village is currently paying for. Mr. Ackley ran some studies on random patrols and what most of the studies say is that random patrols have no effect on crime, especially in low crime areas such as Poplar Grove. Campbell stated the Village has mainly gang related crime.

Rightnowar asked if community policing was a direction to go. Mr. Ackley stated community policing puts officers in areas where there are problems, almost a continuous presence in those areas.

Police Referendum continued:

Rightnowar stated the Committee needs to develop the policy arguments and make sure not to take any political position as an elected public body.

Zangs stated there are some gang seeds in certain areas and we would like to be able to keep a lid on their activity. Mr. Ackley stated that Belvidere spends a lot of money on a gang crime task force but we don't have those types of funds and he isn't sure how many officers, if any, are dedicated to gang crime in the Sheriff's office. He also stated the uniformed officer has no affect on gangs.

Zangs than mentioned a neighborhood watch and Mr. Ackley stated those are great. It requires dedication on the part of the citizens though.

Quimby stated maybe we could look at subcontracting like other municipalities do, example Machesney Park. He stated it seems to be the way of the future.

Zangs is to set up public meeting with Sheriff's office.

Village Attorney LeClercq will have police referendum drafted for Administration Committee by July 2010 so the ordinance can go to the Board by August.

Ordinance Process: Village Clerk and Secretary are drafting process.

Ordinance Officer: Kurt Dunlap is working with Attorney LeClercq regarding towing ordinance.

3-2-4 Number of Dogs: Zangs stated in our ordinance if you have more than two dogs you have to have a special kennel permit. We don't have a permit referencing that so Zangs suggested replacing the ordinance with a new one encouraging responsible pet ownership and have it reflect not a certain number of dogs but reasonable amount of pets.

President Rightnowar stated Boone Animal Control should be contacted for situations that are not covered under our ordinance.

Other Administrative:

Prairie Green: President Rightnowar stated there is a meeting scheduled between himself, Tim Miller our Attorney, and Michelle Courier to see if there are no criminal concerns. Once that has taken place and Ms. Courier states there is nothing there, we will then make a presentation to the homeowners in the community.

Commercial Development Committee: Secretary Brzinski will find out when the North Boone Business Exchange meets so Village Committee members can participate and utilize our business leaders.

FEMA: Quimby stated he will contact Ms. Veronico regarding the letter that was sent in response to the zoning and boundary maps. One of the issues we have, in her comment about elevations in her letter, is that Mr. Quimby is not an engineer and he was talking in lemans terms about the drain tiles and drainage, but FEMA is looking for the elevations. Quimby feels we need to get our engineers involved.

Village Sign: Quimby researched the possibility of an electronic sign and stated the cost is about the same as a new car. He stated we need to communicate better with the town. If one is put up at the Fire Station than maybe we can get the fire district, school district, Lions Club and local businesses involved which would reduce the cost. Quimby stated it would be a place for citizens to get information about Village and Community activities. The sign could also be used to communicate changes the Village is making.

Zangs stated maybe the Village could buy some time on the Byron Bank sign.

Character of the Village: Quimby has been taking pictures of different Villages and Towns and will be giving a presentation to the Administration Committee soon.

New Business:

Fall Festival: President Rightnowar suggested having a Fall Festival and tying it in with when Edwards Apple Orchard is open and hopefully get them involved. Rightnowar would like to see this festival happen the end of September or early October.

Zangs stated the Village hall was a great place for games for the kids. Chubby Rain told Rightnowar we could have bands for the festival, the Fire Department does a great job selling refreshments, the Lions Club and local Restaurants could be involved. A taste of Poplar Grove!

Zangs stated a volunteer committee would do the ground work with the Village Secretary overseeing the progress.

Website / Internet: Quimby suggested being able to discuss issues that might be coming up at a meeting on Facebook. Rightnowar stated the policy debate has to occur at the Committee meeting.

Scavenger: Brzinski stated new quotes will need to be requested. Quimby stated the public will need to know the Village is looking at adopting this process.

Brzinski stated only garbage fitting in a 95 gal. tote/container and recyclables are included in these quotes. If a homeowner has a large amount of garbage because of a move, etc. the homeowner would have to contact the scavenger service for pickup and the service would bill them directly for the additional amount needed. Also, in the fall if homeowners would like yard waste pickup, they would need to contact the scavenger service and the service company will bill them directly.

Campbell is concerned the homeowners wouldn't like the Village making the decision as to the service they will be receiving.

Quimby stated leave everything the way it is and charge the scavenger company a license fee.

Performance Bonds & Business Licensing: Quimby went to a conference and they talked about performance bonds. A contractor sitting next to Quimby stated every time they want to do work they need to get a Performance Bond and they have to get a license to do business in the community. A performance bond helps to ensure the person receiving the services isn't left with a job not done if the contractor leaves before hand and also if the contractor damages any of the proper.

Quimby requested Attorney LeClerc see if we can implement a performance bond on the subdivision which have yet to be developed.

Quimby stated a lot of municipalities already have Performance Bonds and Business Licensing in place.

Fire Alarm System: It was suggested by Simplex Grinnell to install smoke detectors in the office area and also have the alarm system automatically notify the Fire Department. Campbell requested Dunlap to look at the construction of the Village and give a report as to its fire safety.

Motion was made by Quimby, 2nd by Zangs to go into executive session at 7:09 pm.
2(c)(1)

Motion was made by Quimby, 2nd by Zangs to come out of executive session at 7:18 pm.
2(c)(1)

Adjournment:

Motion made by Zangs, 2nd by Quimby to adjourn at 9:29 pm.