

**REGULAR MEETING  
MAY 11, 2026  
MINUTES  
6:00pm**

**CALL TO ORDER**

- 1) The Regular Board Meeting on May 11, 2026 was called to order by President Steve Buss at 6:00pm.

Board present: Steve Buss, Claudia Simpson, Christin Keeffer, Brian Peight, Brooke Baldauf, Dean Rood, Brandon Smith, Tillie Coomber and Nicole Callos. Not present: n/a. Also Present: Brian Nott, Tom Green, Ashley Heilman, Louise Workinger

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL**

- 2) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 13, 2026**

On a motion by Peight second by Keeffer approving the minutes from April 13, 2026. ALL AYE.

- 3) **APPROVAL OF BILLS PAYABLE REPORT**

On a motion by Keeffer second by Baldauf approving the Bills Payable Report as presented. ALL AYE.

- 4) **TREASURER’S REPORT ACCEPTANCE**

Callos presented the report for March. On a motion by Keeffer second by Peight to accept the Treasurer’s Report as presented. ALL AYE

- 5) **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ashley Heilman was present to state the following regarding Lena residents’ ability to rebuild after the tornado: She does not live within the Village limits, but she does own property here. Many residents are finding that their structures are approved by insurance to repair, but are nonconforming according to the Village code. Village Ordinance requires structures with damage more than 60% the assessed value to be built to code and be conforming, and would require ZBA approval/variance that takes at least 60 days. The issue primarily being structures in the set-back. Heilman referenced Rockford and the City of Chicago’s ordinances that allow for rebuild. The following were mentioned: Amending the code to allow for an alternate process during emergent circumstances; each application to be evaluated on its individual merit; property owners to pay for inspections, SafeBuilt contracted; would require a special meeting for approval; liability for the Village if someone is hurt due to a structure not being brought to code; It was agreed the Village amending the ordinance would be beneficial to residents affected. Tom Green wanted to confirm logistics with the State Statute further.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**ATTORNEY’S REPORT, HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC SAFETY, ZONING & PLANNING, CEMETERY BOARD – NO REPORT / LISTED ON THE AGENDA**

**FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION**

Baldauf wanted to say thank you to all employees and everyone who has helped return the Village to normal in recent weeks.

**VILLAGE ENGINEER**

Nott reported the following updates: Fischers came in yesterday to address settling on Townline Road. Working with John on sewer lining and inlets where storm sewer and sanitary were crossed.

**TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS**

Rood stated one summer help, Luke, starts May 26<sup>th</sup>. There will just be one summer employee.

**WATER & SEWER**

Smith reported the following: working with several companies on obtaining quotes for back-up power. Quotes over \$25,000 will require going out to bid. Let the vendors know to use Sourcewellll.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- 6) **DISCUSS/APPROVE RESOLUTION 26-102, JOINING IPWMAN**

Buss stated other surrounding municipalities are part of IPWMAN., an agency allowing for mutual aid. On a motion by Peight second by Keeffer approving Resolution 26-102 allowing the Village of Lena to join IPWMAN. ALL AYE.

- 7) **DISCUSS/APPROVE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR IPWMAN**  
On a motion by Peight second by Smith approving the Intergovernmental Agreement for IPWMAN. ALL AYE.
- 8) **DISCUSS/APPROVE BATTERY STORAGE SYSTEMS ORDINANCE 26-007**  
On a motion by Rood second by Smith approving Battery Storage Systems Ordinance 26-007. ALL AYE.
- 9) **DISCUSS/APPROVE LOW BID FOR 2026 STREET IMPROVEMENTS**  
Nott stated a bid opening was held on May 7<sup>th</sup> and 4 bids were received from: Helm Civil, O'Brien Civil Works, Inc., Fischer Excavating, Inc. and Louie's Trenching Service, Inc. Helm's bid included an alternate that the Village is forgoing at this time. On a motion by Peight second by Keeffer approving the base bid from Helm Civil for 2026 street improvements in the amount of \$556,034. ALL AYE.
- 10) **DISCUSS/APPROVE PROPOSAL FOR 2026 GENERAL ENGINEERING SERVICES**  
On a motion by Keeffer second by Peight approving the proposal for 2026 General Engineering Services not to exceed \$48,750. ALL AYE.
- 11) **DISCUSS CBDG PROGRAM**  
Buss stated Bridgette Stocks, the Village's legal representation for grant eligibility, will be bringing new information to the next meeting.
- 12) **APPROVAL OF NEW STREETS DEPARTMENT HIRE**  
On a motion by Smith second by Baldauf approving hiring Brandon Warner, starting May 26<sup>th</sup> with the Streets Department. ALL AYE.
- 13) **DISCUSS USPS MAILBOX AND CLUSTER BOX MAINTENANCE**  
Callos explained it has been brought to the office's attention that the Village is to be responsible for keeping keys and maintaining mailboxes within the Village. Callos asked for clarification and documentation from the postmaster. It was discussed to inquire with the Freepost postmaster.
- 14) **DISCUSS WATER/SEWER MINIMUM FEES FOR STORM DAMAGE**  
Brandon Smith stated several residents reached out regarding fees they are charged despite the fact they cannot live in their home. Capital improvements and storm drain would still be charged at an average of \$41.50 even if water is turned off. It was discussed whether to freeze part of the utility bill while residents rebuild; starting with a 90 day freeze. This can be done by administrative policy.
- 15) **DISCUSS TORNADO EFFORTS**  
Buss gave the following update: SBA for commercial and business assessment from IEMA had 166 residents fill out the survey. Eleven were destroyed, Buss confirmed they had all the info they need to be presented to the Governor; waiting on the disaster determination. SBA will offer assistance loans. NWIL Foundation is putting together numbers as well. NWIL Realtors gave \$25,000 with the State of Illinois. Homes that are not being repaired after the tornado may be subject to the blighted home process.

#### **WELFARE OF THE VILLAGE**

Buss stated Dr. Pamela Farris sent a handwritten letter stating she was donating money toward planting trees within the Village, as she lived through a tornado years ago and knows the sadness of losing so many trees.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

- 16) On a motion by Peight second by Keeffer to adjourn the May 11, 2026 Regular Board Meeting at 7:47pm. ALL AYE.

**CLAUDIA SIMPSON**  
VILLAGE CLERK

**STEVE BUSS**  
VILLAGE PRESIDENT