

**REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 14, 2026
MINUTES
6:00pm**

CALL TO ORDER

- 1) The Regular Board Meeting on September 14, 2026 was called to order by President Steve Buss at 6:00pm.

Board present: Steve Buss, Claudia Simpson, Brooke Baldauf, Dean Rood, Brandon Smith, Tillie Coomber, Nicole Callos. Not present: Brian Peight, Christin Keeffer. Also Present: Brian Nott, Tom Green, Bridgette Stocks, Louise Workinger, Lou Ann Hayes.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

- 2) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 10, 2026 – Board Meeting and Public Hearing**
On a motion by Smith second by Coomber approving the minutes from August 10, 2026. ALL AYE.
- 3) **APPROVAL OF BILLS PAYABLE REPORT**
Buss stated the line item for Volunteer Park will be reimbursed. On a motion by Smith second by Baldauf approving the Bills Payable Report as presented. ALL AYE.
- 4) **TREASURER'S REPORT ACCEPTANCE**
Callos presented the report for August. County tax distribution started in July and is now reflected. On a motion by Smith second by Baldauf to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. ALL AYE
- 5) **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
Lou Ann Hayes from *Birth to Five, Illinois*, was present to discuss the prevalence of child care in the area and what the needs are for the local economy.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION, HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC SAFETY, ZONING & PLANNING, CEMETERY BOARD – NO REPORT / LISTED ON THE AGENDA

VILLAGE ENGINEER

Nott reported the following updates: Helm is 99% complete, final punch list and landscaping. Still need a date scheduled to go over Subway Property. Grant updates from Bridgette Stocks: ITEP Resolution to be approved tonight; applications are due October 5th. Letter of support and updated photos are being worked through. An online survey will be posted on social media for resident response regarding the need for sidewalks. Stocks stated the Village will need an allowance letter for IDOT for work on Route 73. Stephenson County Highway Department will require an allowance letter for work on Stage Coach. Letter of efficiency for a grant for Village Hall; ask George Gaulrapp from ComEd for an assessment (report needed before September 30th), and Stocks will submit the Grant forms. Stocks requested that Buss list items for the efficiency assessment, specifically windows. Buss inquired about a fast track for demolition funding for a property that allows the property owner to keep the lot. Ownership must be long-term and the land can only be green-space or a parlet.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Tom Green reported the following: 1) F4 Fighter Jet Property update: Currently, government property forms are filled out annually, property taxes are paid by Northwest Illinois Aerial Combat Committee, and the Village maintains the grounds. It was requested that an intergovernmental agreement to allow for funds to be available for painting and general condition be the responsibility of the committee but transfer real estate to the Village. Green is getting title work and creating a resolution allowing for the transfer. 2) Stephenson County Building Codes will be adopted, Chapter 23 will still exist, but steps will be included allowing for inspections. 3) Cemetery referendum notes: Cemetery revenue is under the Village tax revenue. County Code will have the specific current rate. Currently the Cemetery allocation is \$15,000 a year.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Buss reported that the new police hire is doing well one month in, and will be off training soon.

TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

Rood gave report from Brandt Esling who wanted to make the Board aware that he will be switching to Sewer Department October 5th. Ben Cheeney will be taking over Brandt Esling's previous street department role. 1) Buss stated the \$10,000 Donation to the Village from Pamela Farris after the tornado provided 50 trees and planting arrangements are taking place. Buss asked that people make him aware of areas that need trees. Pamela Farris requested that some trees planted be oaks.

WATER & SEWER

1) Water tower cleaning is complete. 2) Nott and Smith will set up a meeting regarding televising for smoke testing. 3) Buss spoke with Congressman LaHood regarding grants and projects.

ZONING & PLANNING

Andrea Winter provided all documentation for the Enterprise Zone. Two houses are already being built in Meadow Ridge.

NEW BUSINESS

6) DISCUSS VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

Baldauf and Madi Becke have a template ready to go and asked that everyone have photos and things to be included before September 21st.

7) DISCUSS TRUSTEE SEATS

There will be four trustee positions up for election in April; three 4-year terms and one 2-year term. Petition circulation begins August 25, and petition submission is held between November 16-23.

8) DISCUSS EXISTING SALES TAX REFERENDUM

The referendum would need to be ready by October to be on the April Ballot.

9) DISCUSS/APPROVE BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEMS ORDINANCE 26-014

The BESS ordinance will be going to the ZBA before being approved in October.

10) DISCUSS/APPROVE ORDINANCE 26-015 AMENDING CH23 BUILDINGS

Green explained this ordinance allows the Village to use Stephenson County Building Codes. Inspections are required. On a motion by Smith second by Rood approving ordinance 26-015 regarding chapter 23, Buildings. ALL AYE.

11) DISCUSS ACCESSORY BUILDINGS

The Board was made aware of a tent being used as a permanent structure. Tents and carports are not allowed in front yards and police will notify resident.

12) DISCUSS BUILDING DEMOLITIONS

The property near the Iron Horse parking lot has been demolished and demo permit received.

13) APPROVAL OF PAY APPLICATION #2 FOR HELM – 2026 STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

On a motion by Rood second by Smith approving Pay Application #2 for Helm in the amount of \$449,235.08 for the 2026 Street Improvement Project. ALL AYE.

14) DISCUSS/APPROVE CHANGE ORDER #1

On a motion by Rood second by Smith approving Change Order #1 in the amount of \$19,598. ALL AYE.

15) DISCUSS/APPROVE RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT & COMMITMENT OF FUNDS FOR ITEP

On a motion by Smith second by Baldauf approving Resolution 26-109 of Support & Commitment of Funds for ITEP. ALL AYE.

WELFARE OF THE VILLAGE

JC Fiber granted the Village of Lena an award.

Buss stated it was another successful Fall Festival this year.

All bars need to request a noise ordinance request during Fall Festival.

ADJOURNMENT

- 16) On a motion by Rood second by Smith to adjourn the September 14, 2026 Regular Board Meeting at 7:15pm. ALL AYE.

CLAUDIA SIMPSON
VILLAGE CLERK

STEVE BUSS
VILLAGE PRESIDENT