

**Committee of the Whole**  
**September 22, 2025**  
**MINUTES**  
**6:00pm**

Board present: Steve Buss, Claudia Simpson, Christin Keeffer, Brooke Baldauf, Dean Rood, Brandon Smith, Joe Hallstrom, Nicole Callos. Not present: Brian Peight. Also present: Brian Nott, Bridgette Stocks, Lindsay Buss, Joyce Roling, Louise Workinger, Brandon Wirtjes, Ervin Klaas, Marty Haas, Fritz Werhane, Robin Walton, Louise Workinger

**Call to Order**

1) The Committee of the Whole meeting of September 22, 2025 was called to order by President Buss at 6:00pm.

**Public Participation**

2) There was no public participation at this time.

**Approval of Minutes – August 25, 2025**

3) On a motion by Smith second by Keeffer approving the meeting minutes from August 25, 2025. ALL AYE.

**Recognition of Cemetery Service Members: Fritz Werhane, Ervin Klaas and Martha Haas**

4) Buss presented plaques to long-time Cemetery Service Members Fritz Werhane, Ervin Klaas and Marty Haas. Their hard work and dedication has been greatly appreciated within the Village.

**Discuss Village Newsletter**

5) Baldauf stated the Village Newsletter is set to be mailed October 1<sup>st</sup>. A draft was sent out by Madi Becke and was reviewed by the Board. It was agreed it looked great so far.

**Discuss Blighted Homes**

6) Buss gave the following updates: Attorney Green is working with the company SafeBuilt that did the home inspections to get an update. Smith asked that this be a budget line-item to allocate funds for demolition if needed. Letters will be going out to residents stating issues and concerns found during home inspection.

**Discuss Safe Routes to School Grant Application**

7) Bridgette Stocks was present to give the following information: Safe Routes to School application is due 10/15. School and parent surveys will be done. Data will be from the last cycle and new data from this year along with submitted application. Ink and signature letters are best. Buss wanted to include downtown businesses in the letters. Nott mentioned Stephenson County Highway Department for a signature. 2) ITEP (sidewalk projects) opens in August with a September 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. Letters will be needed for ITEP as well. 80/20 grant. Pricing for the project will need to be revisited. Using the IL Bike Path Grant (\$200,000 max, 50/50,) can be used to match the 20% of ITEP. Bike Path Grant gets applied for in May 2026 and know results in early October. ITEP does not get announced until following March or April. Stocks stated the loan amounts can be phased. 3) Stocks will be checking on the first disbursement from the IEPA loan. No new pay apps for lining from Hoerr yet. There was no Storm Water forgiveness update. IEPA water main 5-year plan is to be submitted in March, draft plan in June and goes live July 1. Waiting on the State to generate the grant agreement for Local Improvements, Milfred Street water main replacement. Helm is delayed a week. Nicor completed locations on Milfred. 4) Buss noted that potholing the roads first made a difference and allowed for work to go more smoothly. 5) Brian Lamphere has given a list of grant options for the Police Department to Bridgette Stocks that she is following up on.

**Discussion of Ordinance Review**

8) Nott followed up on the line items that were reviewed at a previous meeting regarding ordinance assistance and insight from Fehr-Graham. The fee is estimated to be \$6,750 bundled for looking into all ordinance items. The Board was open to looking more into it. Buss agreed it costs more than the fee amount to take someone to court for going against an ordinance. 2) Buss stated a building permit was applied for to tear down where buildings are attached. Nott stated there are steps necessary: A structural engineer would need to certify whether there are hazardous materials before tear down and to confirm that taking one down wont allow for the other building to fall. Nott confirmed it would be the responsibility of the individual or entity tearing the original building down to do the exterior repairs of the adjoining building. Rood inquired about easements and whether a structure is on the historic building registry.

**Adjournment**

9) On a motion by Smith second by Keeffer to adjourn the September 22, 2025 Meeting at 6:40pm. ALL AYE.

Submitted by Claudia Simpson, Village Clerk