VILLAGE OF ELMWOOD
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Monday, October 13, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.
Elmwood Village Auditorium – 323 W. Winter Avenue

NOTE: APPROVED MINUTES

1. **Call to Order**
   Village President Neil Boltik called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
   a) Roll Call – Board members present: Neil Boltik, Pam Marson, Mike Burke, Dawn Toth, Jason Severson, Mark Wolf, and Paul Unser.
      Staff present: Holly Malaszuk – Clerk/Treasurer, Bryan Bechel – Public Works Director, Chief Darren Ekholm – Police Department, and Nick Andrews – Library Director.
   b) The meeting was noted in compliance with the Open Meeting Law.
   c) Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. **Open Regular Board Meeting**
   The regular monthly meeting of the Village of Elmwood Board of Trustees was opened.

3. **Approval of Minutes**
   Motion by Paul Unser, seconded by Neil Boltik, to approve the minutes of the September Board Meeting.
   Roll Call Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

4. **Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)**
   The following members of the public were present: Carl Schroder, Amy Bechel, Andrea Wallen (Staying Put), and Brian Reilly (Ehlers Public Finance Advisors).

   - **Andrea Wallen** from *Staying Put* thanked the Village for being welcoming and stated she would like to see more community events take place in Elmwood. She noted that *Staying Put* is based out of Spring Valley.
   - **Nick Andrews** mentioned that he also serves on the *Staying Put* board and encouraged residents to share suggestions and ideas for future activities.
   - **Amy Bechel**, speaking on behalf of the *Elmwood Community Club*, shared that their *Fall Family Fun Day* went well but attendance was lower than last year, with approximately 50 gift bags handed out compared to about 75 in 2024. She asked for input on whether people would prefer the event to be held on a Saturday or Sunday. Amy also mentioned the next Community Club event will be the *Porch Pots*.

5. **New Business** *(Discussion and possible action unless otherwise noted)*
   a. **Sewer Rate Increase – Presentation by Ehlers Public Finance Advisors**
      Brian Reilly (Ehlers) presented the sewer utility rate study and noted the sewer account has been in deficit for quite some time and needs a capital improvement plan to get back on track. He recommended that the Village work with engineers to evaluate the existing sewer system, identify upcoming infrastructure needs, and establish a long-term capital plan.

In 2023, the Sewer Utility required an interfund transfer of $260,000 from the General Fund to cover operating expenses and deficits. This type of transfer means that money was moved from one Village fund to another — in this case, from the General Fund to the Sewer Utility — to ensure bills and obligations could be met. He cautioned that this practice is not sustainable, as it reduces the General Fund balance and indicates that sewer rates are not currently generating enough revenue to support the system independently.

He also noted that, at current revenue levels, if a catastrophic event occurs, the utility may be unable to qualify for a loan, as rates do not demonstrate sufficient repayment capacity, and there is no reserve for emergencies.

The study recommends increasing the average monthly sewer bill from $40.03 to $60.85 (an increase of $20.82, approximately 52%), with implementation targeted for January 1, 2026.

Clerk/Treasurer Holly Malaszuk questioned whether a Public Hearing is required and recommended holding one, to provide residents notice and an opportunity for input.
-Motion: Paul Unser moved to postpone action on the sewer rate increase until the Village Attorney confirms whether a Public Hearing is required. Seconded by Dawn Toth.
Roll Call Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

b. Trick-or-Treat Time Discussion

Chief Darren Ekholm stated he would prefer that parents take responsibility for setting their own trick-or-treating times rather than the Village establishing a specific time frame. He plans to share a public safety post with recommendations to help keep children safe, including: If residents are not handing out candy or run out, they should turn off their outside lights and children should only visit homes with porch lights on.
-Motion: Jason Severson made a motion to not set a specific time for Trick-or-Treating within the Village. Seconded by Dawn Toth.
Roll Call Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

c. Operator's Licenses

Village President Neil Boltik asked Clerk/Treasurer Holly Malaszuk to clarify regulations regarding operator's licenses after questions were raised. Holly explained that while licensed establishments may open as early as 5:00 a.m.**,** alcohol sales are not permitted until 6:00 a.m. under Wisconsin State Statute**.** She further noted that a licensed operator must be on the premises at all times when the business is open, even during hours when alcohol sales are not allowed.
-Motion: Jason Severson made a motion to approve the operator's licenses as submitted**.** Seconded by Dawn Toth.
Roll Call Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

d. 118 S. Main Street – Lawn Maintenance Charges

Clerk/Treasurer Holly Malaszuk informed the Board that a certified letter was sent to the property owner on September 16, 2024, due to repeated failure to maintain the lawn and unpaid utility bills, resulting in the Public Works Department having to perform mowing services. The letter advised that a $75 charge would be applied each time the Village was required to mow the property.

Although multiple mowings occurred in 2024, the owner was only charged for the two mowings that took place after the certified letter was sent, totaling $150, which was placed on the 2024 property tax bill after nonpayment of the invoice.

In 2025, the property again was not maintained, and Public Works mowed the lawn 16 times, totaling $1,200 in charges. A certified letter dated September 9, 2025, was sent explaining the charges and including the invoice. The property owner came into the Village Office shortly after, stating he would pay half ($600). Holly informed him that the matter would be placed on the October Board Agenda and that he should attend or call in to discuss it. The property owner did not appear or make further contact.

The Board agreed that the owner received ample notice and opportunity to address the issue and that the full amount should remain due.

-Motion: Pam Marson made a motion to charge the full amount of $1,200 as invoiced. Seconded by Dawn Toth.

Roll Call Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

e. Certificate of Deposit (CD) Maturities

Clerk/Treasurer Holly Malaszuk informed the Board that two Certificates of Deposit (CDs) are coming due for maturity. She noted that one of the CDs was originally designated for Sewer Plant System Upgrades (see Item 5(g)). Due to inflation and updated project estimates, the cost of the upgrades has increased significantly from the original quotes, with the current estimated cost totaling approximately $207,578. Because the combined value of the CDs is less than the total project cost, the upgrades will likely need to be completed in phases or portions as funding allows.

-Motion: Dawn Toth made a motion to apply the maturing CDs toward the Sewer Plant System Upgrades. Seconded by Paul Unser.

Roll Call Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

f. KerberRose Audit Services Proposal

Clerk/Treasurer Holly Malaszuk reported ongoing issues with the Village's current audit firm, noting that the 2024 audit draft has still not been received. In addition, the final TID closure numbers have not been provided, and the PSC report was not submitted on time, resulting in a late filing fee. Holly stated that after speaking with the current auditor, he indicated he would handle the PSC filing, which has now been submitted, but no other progress has been made on the remaining audit items.

Holly reached out to several auditing firms and received a prompt and professional response from Greg Pitel with KerberRose Audit Services. Greg expressed understanding of the Village's frustrations with the audit delays and confirmed that he is familiar with the Village's accounting software and can assist with proper categorization of accounts. He also offered to help with the PSC report for 2024 to ensure it is completed.

KerberRose provided a three-year proposal for audit services, with fees not to exceed a specified amount per year. Their rates were comparable to CLA's, but Holly noted that CLA's billing schedule has been irregular—they do not bill consistently throughout the year, so when the Village believed a payment was the final one, additional invoices

would unexpectedly follow, making it difficult to determine the total annual cost for their services.
-Motion: Paul Unser made a motion to contract with KerberRose Audit Services to conduct the 2025 audit, to be completed in 2026. Seconded by Neil Boltik.
Roll Call Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

g. **Sewer Plant System Upgrades**
This item was discussed in conjunction with Item (e) regarding the use of the Village's maturing Certificates of Deposit (CDs) to help fund the Sewer Plant System Upgrades. The Board acknowledged that due to increased project costs, the upgrades will likely need to be completed in phases as funding allows. No further action was taken.

h. **Personnel & Finance Committee Report**
At 7:55 p.m., Dawn Toth made a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to **Wis. Stat. §19.85(1)(b) and (c)** to discuss employee matters including the Public Works Assistant position, Public Works Director performance review, and Year-End Employee Recognition and Holiday Observances. Seconded by Jason Severson.
Roll Call Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.
At 8:03 p.m., Paul Unser made a motion to reconvene into Open Session. Seconded by Dawn Toth.
Roll Call Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.
-Motion: Pam Marson made a motion to approve the Personnel & Finance Committee's recommendations as discussed in closed session, including the Public Works Assistant position and the Public Works Director performance review. Seconded by Mike Burke.
Roll Call Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.
-Motion: Paul Unser made a motion to approve the Year-End Employee Recognition and Holiday Observances as discussed in closed session. Seconded by Neil Boltik.
Roll Call Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

6. **Public Works – Bryan Bechel**
R&R jetted and camera-inspected a section of sewer mains on 9/8, then returned on 9/11 to sleeve two bad spots. Bryan met with Ryan from Automatic Systems to review needed updates at the sewer plant, lift stations, and wells; Automatic Systems is scheduled to perform updates at the plant on 10/20**.** Streets have been swept multiple times each week to keep leaves out of storm drains. Next Level replaced the culvert under Hwy 72 on 9/30; Pierce County intends to pave the road this fall.

Police – Chief Darren Ekholm
Elmwood PD handled 41 calls for service in September and attended first-appearance hearings. The DOJ TIME System audit is complete; next audit is 2028. PCSO responded to 9 calls in September. Chief held five Zoom sessions with Lexipol (Ray King) to update policies to state statute at no additional cost. Assisted local events with no incidents (FD Chicken Feed 9/6, Homecoming parade 9/26) and attended the MDT meeting in Ellsworth (9/10)**.** Provided brief assistance to SVPD (9/19**)** before returning for an emergent call. Met with Automatic Systems (9/22) to inspect wells/lift stations for upgrade proposals; difficulty identifying legacy Lumen (CenturyLink) copper lines noted. Met with Cintas (9/23)**—** defibrillator rental not cost-effective, exploring ways to reduce first-aid supply costs. Worked with Swift Current on remaining drops and phone number porting (PWD shop, Clerk's office,

PD); remaining lines will stay with Lumen until well/lift-station updates are set. Two citations were issued in August.

Clerk/Treasurer – Holly Malaszuk
Assisted with training Miranda, the temporary part-time Deputy Clerk; attended the Workhorse Seminar (Wausau) and WEC Seminar (Rothschild) and will attend a Leadership Seminar in Eau Claire this Thursday. Deputy Clerk Lexi will return on October 20. Completed and submitted all required IRS forms, coordinated multiple recent meetings, and is preparing for a Zoning Board (Variance) meeting on Wednesday, October 15 at 6:00 p.m. Reminders: Winter/"calendar" parking begins November 1, and all past-due bills and invoices must be paid by November 10 or they will be sent to Pierce County to be placed on the property tax roll.

Library – Nick Andrews
Nick reported that he's excited for upcoming programs, including youth gaming activities and adult crafts. He also noted that the library's primary book distributor is going out of business, and he is actively seeking a new vendor to ensure material orders continue without interruption.

7. **Payment of Bills**
   Motion: Paul Unser moved to approve payment of bills as presented. Seconded by Dawn Toth.
   Roll Call Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

8. **Adjournment**
   Motion: Pam Marson moved to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. Seconded by Neil Boltik.
   Roll Call Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted
Holly R. Malaszuk
Clerk/Treasurer