

REGULAR MEETING OF THE VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
STERLING, NEBRASKA

The Pro-temp Chairman and Board of Trustees of the Village of Sterling, Nebraska, met in regular session on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at the village office being a publicly convened meeting the same being open to the public and having been preceded by advanced publicized notice at the following locations: First Bank of Nebraska-Sterling, Sterling Public Library, and the Village Office. Pro-temp Chairman Ralph Wusk called the meeting to order. Trustees answering roll call: Steve Lempka, and Tom Nieveen. Absent: John Keizer. Others present: Zac Vaudrin, Jay Vanis, Steve Weiss, Mike Pethoud, Steve Robeson, Brad Thuernagle, Darius Tenopir, Steve Mercure, John Moss, and Vane Rengstorf.

Pro-temp Chairman Wusk led the meeting with the pledge of allegiance and acknowledged the Open Meetings Act and location on the wall. Nieveen made a motion to approve the consent agenda and Lempka seconded the motion. Vote: yeas: all. Motion carried. Lempka made a motion to approve the March bills and Nieveen seconded the motion. Vote: yeas: all. Motion carried.

These bills were approved for payment: Aqua-Chem, Inc.-supplies \$203.50; Big Red Communications-camera \$1019.62; Black Hills Energy-heating \$834.76; BMG CPA's-payroll fee \$1500.00; Colonial Life-insurance \$46.71; Constellation-heating \$613.52; Edward Jones-employee benefit \$269.74; Eakes Office Solutions-fee \$118.87; FirstBank of Nebraska-loan \$30269.41; First National Bank of Omaha-supplies \$503.80; Hometown Leasing-lease \$62.92; Jet Stop, Inc.-fuel \$256.59; Kerner Ace Hardware-supplies \$11.28; Midwest Laboratories Inc.-fee \$99.33; Municipal Supply, Inc. of Omaha-supplies 278.71; National Assoc. of State Agencies for Surplus Properties-fee \$39.00; Nemaha Valley Observer-fee \$80.88; NPHEL-fee \$262.00; NPPD-electricity \$2719.75; Nebraska Department of Revenue-taxes \$336.26; Payroll \$8592.92; Payroll Taxes \$2648.65; US Bank Equipment Finance-fee \$149.00; Samantha Gordon-insurance \$700.00; Darius Tenopir-insurance \$500.00; Steve Mercure-fee \$100.00; Verizon-supplies \$152.00; Village of Sterling-utilities \$381.42; Windstream-telephone \$383.61; USPS-S&W supplies \$234.00; Waste Connections-S&W fee \$6959.39. Total: \$60,327.64.

Brad Thuernagle was aware of the contract between the Village of Sterling and Big Red Keno that will end in May and would like to explore the option to change to Denton Daily Double. The village and bar owner each receive seven percent of keno proceeds. Brad liked that Denton is a smaller organization, local, and better working experience with all inclusive package skill games, keno, darts, etc. Nieveen would like to know what Big Red has for a percentage of proceeds, but board thought it was all the same under state statutes. Steve Robeson, Village of Adams, was curious if the Village found someone to assist with discharging, Darius was in contact with NERWA to see if they could assist. Adams would possibly do it if the Village added them as an additional insured for thirty days while they did the discharge. Jay Vanis discussed plans for four AirBnB's upstairs in the brick building. Looking at options with possibilities of doing a fitness center upstairs as well. The shop is a full go with the fire marshal recommending storage containers for better fire protection. Plans to build a roof over and side everything. Plans to have a full shop and mobile unit for full services.

Becky Kennedy, librarian, did not have anything to report on at this time.

Darius Tenopir, utility superintendent, finished the backstop, planning to sand and paint the table at the concession stand, burnt the tree pile, snow removal, and flushed hydrants. Will continue spreading millings at the cemetery and in alleys. Also, plan to fix and replace some signs around town. Lempka would like some millings placed along the streets by mailboxes. Darius would like to clean out the shed at the cemetery; the pumps will be posted in the LONM magazine and online and will put skid loader tires up for sealed bids.

Samantha Gordon, clerk/treasurer/zoning administrator, has been in contact with Miller Associates for congressional grants for water infrastructure updates and would need to schedule a special meeting to discuss projects. The board scheduled a special meeting for Wednesday, March 18th at 6 pm to discuss projects for the possible grant. Samantha received and activated new Verizon phones, the SCA is

planning to put on the Circus on Labor Day, received a quote for repairs to the slide at the park in the amount of \$853, zoning request that was denied due to zoning regulations, village wide clean-up coming up in April, Emergency Management tabletop exercise planned for March 26th at the fire hall, and office will be closed for attendance to Clerk's Academy from March 18-20th.

Gordon presented the board with new safety committee policies to review prior to approval at the next regular meeting. Zac Vaudrin received a letter regarding property clean-up and stated that the mower in the yard is in working condition, trailers are parked so they are easily accessible, all vehicles are licensed, and with four adults in the household they each have multiple vehicles. Lempka would like to see the property cleaned up and informed Vaudrin that people cannot live in campers in a residential district. The board advised Vaudrin to read the letter and definition of a nuisance and the codes to work on cleaning up his property by taking advantage of the metal recycling dumpster and town-wide clean up as to not devalue those neighboring properties. Richard Rambo arrived in attendance at 7:33 pm. The board directed Mercure to defer action on Vaudrin's property until next month's meeting. Mercure updated the board that the release of deed of trust should be finalized and properties transferred in the next week. Lempka received an list of expenses received from Jeff Bessey regarding the water main extension project. Grass seed, water filters, water, black dirt, clean up of rocks, use of a skid steer, and labor. Lempka made a motion to reimburse Jeff Bessey for grass seed, black dirt, and water filters in the amount of \$295 and Nieveen seconded the motion. Vote: yeas: all. Motion carried.

The board reviewed list of possible candidates for board member vacancy and Mercure advised that the Chairperson was to submit a name. Samantha will include discussion on the agenda for the special meeting since John will be back in attendance. Samantha will send out a message and hang a sign on the door with Darius's number for immediate assistance while being closed for training. The board reviewed quotes from three companies for removal of trees on village property. Wusk made a motion to approve Greenwade Tree Service's bid in the amount of \$5500 for removal of two trees and Lempka seconded the motion. Vote: yeas: all. Motion carried. The board reviewed quote received from Big Red for locksmith services to the front door of the village office which was hard to understand. A concern about fire marshal requirements came up regarding a crash bar being required in a commercial building so will do some more checking and review at a later meeting. Darius discussed replacing culverts along the North side of E. Locust Street to help detour water to the creek. John Moss said he had shot the elevations previously and there's not enough drop to get the water to go to the West. Lempka will contact Les Agena with the county to see options to fix drainage concerns by Topp's. A complaint was received regarding truck traffic on Lincoln Street and trucks coming down the hill way too fast where school crossing is. The board advised adding truck signage traffic on Lincoln Street to keep trucks on the truck route as much as possible. Gordon opened two sealed bids received for two pitching machines. Nieveen made a motion to accept Doug Schmidts bid for \$50 for the baseball pitching machine and Samantha Gordon's bid for \$50 for the smaller pitching machine and Wusk seconded the motion. Vote: yeas: all. Motion carried. Darius discussed need for a new power washer due to the old one not working anymore and doesn't need a Hotsy or anything too fancy. Wusk made a motion to approve the purchase of a new power washer up to \$400 and Nieveen seconded the motion. Vote: yeas: all. Motion carried. Discussion about replacing the dump truck was tabled as the village would need to build up reserves to do so in the future. Darius will look at the blade on the pickup to see why it's not working or take in for it to be repaired, John Moss stated it might just be bad connections. The board agreed to advertise for summer help at a starting wage of \$15/hour. The board reviewed interested candidates for the summer recreation director. Nieveen made a motion to hire Darius Tenopir and Doug Schmidt for \$1500 as summer recreation directors and Lempka seconded the motion. Vote: yeas: all. Motion carried. Nieveen and Keizer reviewed other communities' vacation and pay schedules. Nieveen made a motion to approve setting pay scales as follows: clerk/treasurer \$15-\$35/hour, utility superintendent \$15-\$35/hour, and librarian \$12-\$20/hour and adding two floating holidays to the current list of holidays in the personnel manual and Lempka seconded the motion. Vote: yeas: all. Motion carried. Discussion about possibly powder coating the bleachers at the park came up and will get pricing to do so.

Lempka made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m. and Nieveen seconded the motion. Vote: yeas: all. Motion carried.

Ralph Wusk, Pro-temp Chairman of the Board
Village Clerk

Samantha Gordon,