

Village of Lodgepole

Regular Board Meeting Minutes

February 4, 2025 at 5:30 pm @ Lodgepole Community Hall

732 Bates Blvd, Lodgepole NE 69149

Notice of this meeting was given in advance by posting at the Village Office, Lodgepole Post Office, the Nancy Fawcett Memorial Library and the Village website.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. Present: Susan Mitchell, Chairman; Eric Dana, Co-Chairman; Trustees Mark Bartling, Christina Neit, Al Runge; Jerry Ostdiek, Village Attorney; Cynthia Carlton, Clerk/Treasurer; Steve Bell, Utilities/Maintenance Superintendent

Chair informed the public of the location of the posted Open Meetings Act.

The Board reserves the right to enter into closed session if deemed necessary for any item on the agenda per Section 84-1410 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes.

Community Comments:

Dana Hill, 363 Bates Blvd, Lodgepole, spoke concerning rental fees for non-profit organizations. Hill requests the fees be waived. By waving the fees this will help foster the relationship between the Village and these entities within the community.

Brenda Parsons, 951 Orchard St, Lodgepole, requests an update of the 2023-2024 reconciling audit be on the agenda until it is complete to give the community the status of the progress being made. Parsons requests the Village start the process to enforce Ordinance 274, Vacant property registration. Requests this be added to the newsletter and start notifying property owners. Parsons is a Board member of the Kimball County Transport Service. Pamphlets have been placed at the Village Office, Lodgepole Post Office, Wildeflour Bakery and Panther Den. This is information on the transportation service available to the community. The KCTS Board meets the fourth Monday of every month in Kimball. Any concerns, questions let Parsons know and she will take it to the Board.

Gwen Devie, 631 Latham St, Lodgepole, gave a brief update of the Town Hall meeting on 2/1/25 for the Community Improvement Board. Beautification, Recreation, Cultural and Economic Development were all discussed at the meeting. Focus areas are the East and West street signs, getting the Pony Express to stop in Lodgepole, marketing for Lodgepole, improvement and renovations to the concession stand, improvements and renovations to the Community Hall, and upgrading the fuel spot at Frenchman Valley and grain clean up.

Cindy Oliverius, 15760 Road 32, Lodgepole, spoke for the Cemetery Board. Oliverius has been working on reclaiming unused plots, and will be applying for a grant to get millings done on the road system within the cemetery. Total needed is \$32,000. The cemetery has raised \$12,500 and will seeking a grant for the remaining balance. Once the grant is received, she will notify the Board to get the project done.

Bruce Tillotson, 1252 Road 145, Lodgepole, spoke on behalf of the Lodgepole Lions Club regarding rental fees possibly being charged for non-profit organizations. The Lions Club has donated a large amount of

services and money to the Village and charging for rental fees would create additional fees for the Lions Club members each month. Tillotson requests that the Village not charge non-profit organizations.

Bartling motioned to approve the agenda. Dana seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Mitchell, Runge. No: none. Motion carried.

Mitchell appoints Janet Fox, Pam Smith, Nicki Messersmith, Glenda Shellhorn and Kelly Jo Koehn to the Nancy Fawcett Memorial Library Board. Runge motioned to appoint the Library Board. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Mitchell, Runge. No: none. Motion carried.

Mitchell appoints Corey Fraass, Beau Cullum, Cassie Mardis, Keith Mitchell, and Jeff Sherman to the Planning and Zoning Commission. Neit motioned to appoint the Planning and Zoning Commission. Dana seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Mitchell, Runge. No: none. Motion carried.

Alisha Juelfs with E3 Energizing Entrepreneurial Ecosystems gave a brief overview of the resources they provide for businesses in the area. E3 helps businesses with anything from connecting with vendors to helping businesses apply for funding and grant writing. They have meetings the second Wednesday of every month at WNCC. Business cards have been given to the Village Clerk for anyone that would like to get Juelfs contact information. Joe McCarn with the Cheyenne County Chamber of Commerce also gave an overview of the Chambers goals and invited community members to Positively Drinks. A get together every Friday morning at Beans & Steams Coffee House in Sidney to bring positivity to Cheyenne County. Multiple Chamber flyers were left with the Clerk if interested in the assistance the Chamber offers.

Carlton received notification from LARM that it is NE State Statute 48-443 to 48-449 that the Village appoint a Safety Committee comprising of one employee and a Board member. This committee would be required to meet several times a year to verify safety regulations are being upheld. Carlton and Runge volunteered to be a part of the Committee. Dana motioned to appoint Alan Runge and Cynthia Carlton to the Village Safety Committee. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Mitchell, Runge. No: none. Motion carried.

Wade Dickinson, Lodgepole Volunteer Fire Department Chief made a presentation on the overview of the Department's services. Dickinson provided the grant application the Fire Department made to the Thomas D. Buckley Trust and the Virginia Smith Charitable Trust. These grants were requested to purchase a 2025 Peterbilt 4X4 chassis. The Department was awarded \$25,000 from the Virginia Smith Charitable Trust and \$55,000 from the Thomas D. Buckley Trust. The request was made that the Village accept the funds received and then administer the funds to the Lodgepole Fire Department to make the chassis purchase. Request was made by Mitchell that any further grant requests come through the Board before the grant is received. Runge motioned to administer funds to the Lodgepole Fire Department. Bartling seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Mitchell, Runge. No: none. Motion carried.

David Trump, 716 Orchard St, requested to purchase Lot 8 of the parcel that borders his property. He does not plan to build on the property. There is some question on exactly where the property line falls. Trump is offering \$1,000 and will pay for a survey if needed. Ostdiek will create a resolution and the topic will be placed on the March agenda.

Discussion on adopting the recodification of the Village ordinance. Ostdiek noted that the Vacant Property ordinance is included in the recodification. Carlton read the second reading of the ordinance into the minutes by title.

ORDINANCE NO. 276

AN ORDINANCE OF THE VILLAGE OF LODGEPOLE, NEBRASKA ADOPTING A CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE VILLAGE OF LODGEPOLE; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ORDINANCE; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION IN BOOK AND PAMPHLET FORM.

Carlton advised there is a request to use the Community Hall for the same day as the Regular Board Meeting in March. Several locations were suggested within the community. Dana motioned to move the March Regular Board Meeting to Monday March 3, 2025. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Mitchell, Runge. No: none. Motion carried.

Discussion on amending the fee schedule for peddlers and vendor's license. No changes were made to the fee; however, a registration form will need to be filled out for liability purposes. Discussion on charging non-profit organizations for use of Village property. Suggestion was made that Lodgepole based non-profit organizations not be charged, out of town non-profits and churches will pay \$50.00, Old Settler's Committee is exempt from paying the peddler's fee and the deposit is still required for anyone using Village property. This will be added to the agenda for the March meeting to pass a new resolution with the updated notations.

Dana suggested putting a notice in the monthly newsletter reminding citizens that if they would like their second trash can be dumped, they will need to come to the Village Office to fill out a form to add the second can to their account. The second can will not be dumped until the form is filled out and the second can is added to the account.

Ostdiek notified the Board that Mark Christensen has accepted the use of Zack Shaw to build the fence between his property and Village property, and has notified Shaw to start the fence. The fence will hopefully be done sometime in March.

Carlton gave an overview of the information received and requested by Mason Culver with the Nebraska State Auditor's Office. Information was shared on the following topics: requirements for entities that are wanting to separate from the Village, legal authority requirements for those entities wanting to move money from a Village account to a new account and requirements for grants requested by any entity under the Village EIN. Additional information was requested by the State regarding concerns received from the community about the previous Clerk/Treasurer. Carlton will get all documents requested to the Auditor as soon as possible.

Bartling gave an update on the status of separating VISIONS from the Village.

Runge motioned that all money received from the grants requested by the Volunteer Fire Department from the Thomas D Buckley Trust and the Virginia Smith Charitable Trust be placed in its own bank account. Bartling seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Mitchell, Runge. No: none. Motion carried.

Bartling motioned to reissue the rental contract for the Barbershop with Abbie McMillen. With a rate increase to \$150.00 a month for a 1-year term. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Mitchell, Runge. No: none. Motion carried.

Dana provided information on a CDL class provided by Kurt Tremain with Wright's Trucking & Harvesting that is cheaper than the WNCC course. Dana motioned to use Kurt Tremain to get Steve Bell's CDL. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Mitchell, Runge. No: none. Motion carried.

Bell gave the Maintenance update. All Cemetery documents and more office supplies were moved from the PAC to the Village Office. The men's bathroom in the Village Office was installed and cleaned. The locks were re-keyed at the Community Hall and can be signed out at the Village Office. The heater in the Trash truck has been fixed, but it is still having hydraulic issues. Services were shut off for several people due to non-payment. The services were restored for all but 2 people after payments received. Water was transferred from the main lagoon to the north and south east lagoons. The flow meter was purchased and has arrived, Bell is learning the new system. Contact was made with Tyler Isom from Paul Reed Construction regarding capping the old water tank. They are looking to get this done in two weeks or the first part of March. Verification was made with Mitchell that all was good from the State so it can be done. The Emergency Response Plan for the water systems was completed and approved by the State. This plan is good for 3 years and copies have been given to the Fire Department, Region 21, HHS and Cheyenne County Sheriff. A copy is on hand at the Village Office as well. Bell collected and processed information on water usage, maintenance and updates and emailed the information to Nebraska NRD. Bell had 2 emergency call outs, one due to a sewer issue that turned into a broken water line and the other due to a water meter being removed from service by an individual. Bell suggested looking into fixing or replacing the garbage truck. With garbage being a revenue source, it is a consistent battle to be sure it is up and running on trash day. Bell is requesting a copy of his performance review done in January for his records. He is also asking for updates on concerns discussed in the review.

Carlton gave the Clerk update. The Notice of Renewal for Retail Liquor License was published per State Statute for the Panther Den. Any written protests need to be submitted to the Village Office by February 10, 2025. The Tobacco License for the Panther Den was registered with the State online. Carlton registered for the NE Municipal Clerk's Institute, paid for the registration and reserved a hotel room. The scholarship Carlton applied for was granted so a portion of the registration fee will be reimbursed. Carlton will be out of the office March 17th through the 21st. A total of 23 delinquent utility billing notices were mailed out. This totaled \$2,069.82. Five water services and four trash services were shut off with one water and one trash remaining off due to non-payment. Fox Insurance provided a breakdown of what is paid in insurance for each piece of property and vehicle. Verification was made with LARM that premium liability will not change due to not using the PAC. Melissa Gorsuch has finished her work in gWorks. Carlton still has to enter October through January for the entries to be complete. Melissa's remote access has been disabled. On-boarding for gWorks Online will start in the first part of February. Information was received on a \$500 grant from LARM for safety equipment, Carlton requested this be added to the March Board meeting so the Village can apply for the grant. The LARM representative will meet with Carlton on February 10, 2025 to go over Village policies/procedures. Once the evaluation is complete the information will be forwarded to the Board. The LARM 2023-2024 Worker's Compensation Payroll Audit was submitted and returned due to errors. This will be updated and resubmitted as soon as possible. Carlton provided information regarding the Floodplain Management requirements. Tax documents have been mailed and submitted to the IRS and State of NE. The Community Hall has been rented three times in February and expected to be rented three times for March. The State requested energy production information and that request was forwarded to NPPD to provide. The list of books to be purchased for the library has been added to the claims list and will be purchased on Wednesday.

Notice has been given that the price the Village pays for Viaero's phone and internet will be going down. Atlas Automation has been notified to move the water system alarm from the PAC to the Village office. They gave information on what is required for the system to work and will be sending a quote on how much it will cost to move the system.

Dana motioned to approve the Board, Village Attorney, Village Clerk, and Village Maintenance Superintendent go into executive session. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Mitchell, Runge. No: none. Motion carried.

The Board entered into Executive Session at 8:00 pm.

Runge motioned for the Board to come out of executive session. Bartling seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Mitchell, Runge. No: none. Motion carried.

The Board closed the Executive Session at 8:23 pm.

Neit motioned to approve the adjustment to the billing for 351 Bates Blvd to match December 2024. Bartling seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Mitchell, Runge. No: none. Motion carried.

Dana motioned to approve the Consent agenda, January Regular Meeting minutes, corrections to the January claims list, and February claims. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Mitchell, Runge. No: none. Motion carried.

Corrections to January Claims list:

NE RURAL WATER, MEMBERSHIP DUES, 250.00; WHEAT BELT, SEWER/WHEELING, 5763.82; NE DEPT OF LABOR, NE Q3 2024 UNEMPLOYMENT TAX, 54.96; LARM, VILLAGE INSURANCE POLICY, 36,696.32; PREMIER AUTO, BUCKET TRUCK, CHECK VOIDED DUE TO OVERPAYMENT.

February Claims list:

AFLAC, EMPLOYEE INS PLAN, 265.46; AMAZON, LIBRARY BOOKS/OFFICE SUPPLIES/MAINT SUPPLIES, 269.25; BLACK HILLS ENERGY, UTILITIES, 558.10; CHEYENNE CO HIGHWAY DEPT, HIGHWAY DEPT SERVICES, 735.00; CITY OF SIDNEY, LANDFILL, 847.20; CNA SURETY, BOND PREMIUM, 260.00; DANA HILL, REIMBURSEMENT FOR SUPPLIES, 17.07; DEARBORN GROUP, FIREFIGHTER INSURANCE, 178.88; DOUGLAS, KELLY, OSTDIEK ET AL, LEGAL FEES, 1023.60; HIGHLINE, INTERNET/PHONE, 176.86; HOMETOWN LEASING, PRINTER LEASE, 515.46; HORN LOCK COMPANY, CHANGE OF LOCKS FOR COMMUNITY HALL, 190.00; JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL, CLOSING PAC/SUPPLIES, 66.69; MELISSA GORSUCH, BOOKKEEPING, 2236.95; MIDWEST PLUMBING & MECHANICAL, REPAIR PAC BOILER, 2149.74; NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS, PERIODICAL, 39.00; NE DEPT OF REVENUE, NE Q4 2024 UNEMPLOYMENT, 18.77; NE DEPT OF REVENUE, PAYROLL WITHHOLDING, 614.06; NE PUBLIC HEALTH, WATER SAMPLES, 216.00; NE PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT, UTILITY BILLING, 1740.40; PANHANDLE CLERKS ASSN, MEMBERSHIP, 20.00; ROBERT KUHNS, SERVICE FEE/CONTRACTOR, 500.00; SIDNEY SUN-TELEGRAPH, LEGAL NOTICES, 429.54; USPS, WATER SAMPLES/STAMPS, 345.45; VIAERO, PHONE, 166.92; WHEAT BELT PUBLIC POWER, WHEELING, 5789.60; PAYROLL, 6613.10.

No Chair comments.

Dana discussed possible action on dog attacks within Village limits. Requested the topic be placed on the March agenda and asked Bell to reach out to the Sheriff's Office for clarification on what can be done.

Next regular board meeting, Monday March 3, 2025, 5:30pm at the Lodgepole Community Hall

Meeting adjourned 8:30 PM

Submitted February 13, 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cynthia Carlton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right from the end of the name.

Cynthia Carlton
Clerk/Treasurer