

Village of Lodgepole

Regular Board Meeting Minutes

January 7, 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: Eric Dana, Co-Chair; Trustees Mark Bartling, Christina Neit, Al Runge; Jerry Ostdiek, Village Attorney; Cynthia Carlton, Clerk/Treasurer; Steve Bell, Utilities/Maintenance Superintendent; Absent: Susan Mitchell, Chair, joined via phone

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.

No community comments.

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

No action taken on appointing a Village Marshall.

Dana, on behalf of Susan Mitchell, appoints Wade Dickinson as Municipal Fire Chief. Bartling seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

No action taken on appointing a Board of Health.

Dana, on behalf of Susan Mitchell, appoints Tom Weber, Cindy Oliverius, Terry Christensen, Laurie Abrams, Kurt Huff and Karen Miller to the Cemetery Board. Bartling seconded. Yes: Dana, Bartling, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

Appointment of Library Board tabled until February meeting.

Appointment of the Planning Commission tabled until additional members can be established.

Dana, on behalf of Susan Mitchell, appoints Gwen Devie, Karen Miller, Glenda Shellhorn, Brenda Parsons, Susan Ommen and Beau Cullum to the Community Improvement Board. Bartling seconded. Yes: Dana, Bartling, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

Dana, on behalf of Susan Mitchell, appoints Adams Bank and Trust, NPAIT, Union Bank and Trust, Edward Jones and LPL Financial as the Village Banks. Runge seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

Dana, on behalf of Susan Mitchell, appoints Sidney Sun-Telegraph as the Village Newspaper. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

Dana, on behalf of Susan Mitchell, appoints LARM and Fox Insurance as the Village Insurance. Bartling seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

Dana, on behalf of Susan Mitchell, appoints Rauner and Associates and RJ Meyer and Associates as the Village Audit Firms. Runge seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

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

Adoption of the recodification of the Village ordinances tabled until February meeting. Zoning codes, vacant property registration act and clarification on Board compensation needed. Carlton read 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.

Action tabled to February meeting for possible amendment of rate schedule regarding peddler and vendor license fees.

No action taken on possibly moving recycling bins.

Dana motioned that the Clerk will send a notice in the monthly Newsletter that anyone wanting a second trash can picked up you will need to contact the Village Clerk to get charged for it. If you don't contact the Clerk only one trash can will be picked up. Bartling seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried. Bell advises that the issue with the out-of-town trash people at this time has resolved itself, but will add it to the agenda if issues arise in the future.

Action tabled to February meeting for possible amendment of rate schedule regarding charging non-profit organizations to rent Village property. Discussion was made to change the locks to the Community Hall for key accountability.

Dana received a bid for the fence to be placed between the Village property and Mark Christensen's property. The bid received from Zack Shaw out of Potter, NE was \$9,361.62 and the bid Mark Christensen gave was \$12,600.00. Action tabled to February meeting until the Village hears back from Mark Christensen.

Bartling suggests getting bids on switching the heating to electric water heating in the PAC. He suggests getting the numbers together regarding energy costs on a monthly basis and having a discussion if it is something the Village can afford moving forward. He advises he knows of a grant that will pay for 75% of the cost to get the heating switched to electric instead of gas. Neit suggests renting the rooms to businesses. Dana would like to see it stay accessible to the community for the elderly walkers, he doesn't want to see it sold to someone who will trash it. Runge advises the building was never added to the budget. He states he thinks the Village will not be able to pay the cost on a monthly basis. Mitchell suggests the community come together to come up with a plan on what to do with the building. Ostdiek suggested a special meeting for the community to come and discuss what they want done with the

building. A special meeting will be scheduled for March 2025 with the future of the PAC as the only thing on the agenda.

Bartling advises that VISIONS will be applying for a 501c3 (tax exempt) tax identification number. Carlton advises that she has reached out to the auditor RJ Meyer and due to the fact that VISIONS is operating under the Village EIN they are subject to the Open Meetings Act and Carlton will need access to the account or the funds will be held until the new tax identification number has been received. Bartling will have Carlton as a signer on the account and things will be separated when the new EIN is received.

Runge motioned signing the Franchise Agreement for NPPD to erect, operate and maintain the electric system on the Village property required per State Statute and the related Ordinance 277. Bartling seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

Ordinance 277 read by Carlton.

ORDINANCE NO. 277

AN ORDINANCE GRANTING TO THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT, A PUBLIC CORPORATION AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISION OF THE STATE OF NEBRASKA, ITS SUCCESSORS AND ASSIGNS, THE NON-EXCLUSIVE RIGHT AND FRANCHISE FOR A PERIOD OF TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS TO ERECT, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN AN ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER SYSTEM IN THE VILLAGE OF LODGEPOLE, NEBRASKA, FOR THE PURPOSE OF FURNISHING ELECTRIC ENERGY TO SAID VILLAGE AND THE INHABITANTS THEREOF; LIMITING THE MAXIMUM CHARGES FOR SUCH ENERGY; PROVIDING CERTAIN REGULATIONS WITH REFERENCE THERETO; AND ALL THINGS INCIDENTAL TO THE PURPOSES THEREOF; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES AND PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN THE CONFLICT THEREWITH; DIRECTING THE FORM OF PUBLICATION OF THIS ORDINANCE AND PRESCRIBING THE TIME WHEN THIS ORDINANCE SHALL BE IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT.

Runge moved that the statutory requirements of reading of the Ordinance by title on three different days be suspended. Bartling seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

Ordinance No. 277 was read by title and Neit moved for the final passage. Bartling seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

No action on authority purchases for Clerk/Treasurer and Maintenance Superintendent. Topic was discussed in prior meeting.

Dana motioned to approve a \$1,000 credit limit with a \$150 a month spending limit for a standard credit card for Cyndi Carlton. Carlton must get Board approval for purchases exceeding \$150.00. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

Runge motioned to send Cyndi Carlton to the NE Municipal Clerk Institute in March 2025. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

Dana motioned to send reimbursement to LIHEAP for energy assistance received by Village citizens. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

Dana motioned to reimburse overpayment made on electricity for citizen per their request. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

No action taken on citizen action request. Citizen did not show up to the meeting.

Dana motioned to reimburse Pleasantview Cemetery Board for purchase of plots. Runge seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

Runge motioned to approved the AFLAC group rate for dental coverage for the Village employees. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

Dana motioned to approve the Nebraska minimum wage rate change from \$12.00 an hour to \$13.50 an hour. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

Bell gave the Maintenance update. The Village office has been moved to the 814 Sheldon Street address. The PAC water was shut off, drained and winterized for the boiler system. The new office has one full bathroom done, and the flooring was complete. The trash truck has 4 new tires on one axel. The trash truck also had a fuel leak that has been temporarily repaired. Bell is looking for parts, but the truck is currently working. Bell and Rob Kuhns are working on the Emergency Response Plan for the water system. Bell has contacted the State Fire Marshall regarding the PAC closing. Their concern was having an ADA compliant bathroom. The building should not be accessible to the public if it does not have the ADA compliant bathroom. Bell has also reached out to the Panhandle Public Health District, they advised that if we are going to give the public access to the building without power, heat, and water the liability will be solely on the Village. Waivers would need to be signed by anyone using it. Their recommendation is to not have it open due to liability issues.

Dana motioned the enact a Winter Action Plan, to authorize Bell to work past the 40 hours a week to do plowing and clean the streets during the winter months. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

Carlton gave the Clerk/Treasurer update. Onboarding for the online gWorks has been pushed back to February with a "go-live" date in March. The training will be between 14 to 18 hours to get up and running. A list of books to purchase was sent from Library totaling \$125.96. Carlton has received notifications regarding Floodplain management and training to become an administrator. Questions on if the Village would like Carlton to get this certification. Suggestion was made to reach out to who sent the letter and get more information. A report pulled from gWorks shows 13 households that have made an electric deposit and are owed the deposit back. Question was raised if the information is accurate and up to date and if information from years ago had been pulled over to gWorks from the old system. Total for these 13 is \$2,295.45 as some of the deposits were between \$80 and \$200. The Village has 3 utility accounts totaling \$2,557.14 that are currently still outstanding. These are from shut offs that were never collected or turned back on. Question was raised on how to handle accounts that are still outstanding and the individuals have moved out of town. Suggestion was made to contact Accelerated Receivables out of Scottsbluff to see if they could help with collections. A total of 27 delinquent notices were sent out for utilities not paid by the 15th totaling \$1,922.89. Total shut-offs – 4 water and 6 trash. The water services have all been paid in full, including fees and turned back on. The trash services are all still shut off as of 01/07/2025. The rental agreement between Abbie McMillen and the Village for the Barbershop has expired and needs to be reinstated. Topic to be placed on February Board meeting agenda to discuss possibly charging for utilities on top of the rent. Carlton questioned if the Village would be open for January 9th – the National Day of Remembrance. The Village will be open.

Dana motioned in pursuant to Section 84-1410 of the reissue of the Revised Statutes known as the Nebraska Public Meetings Law that the Village of Lodgepole Board hold a closed session with the Board, bringing Steve Bell in at a later time, for the purpose of discussing personnel annual review. I further move that this closed session is clearly necessary for the protection of the public interest and for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual and that the individual has not requested a public meeting. Neit seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

The Board entered into Executive Session at 8:10 pm.

The Board closed the Executive Session at 8:55 pm.

No action taken on the annual personnel review.

Runge motioned to approve the December Regular Meeting minutes, December 10, 2024 Special Meeting minutes, December 19, 2024 Special Meeting minutes and the consent agenda. Bartling seconded. Yes: Bartling, Dana, Neit, Runge. No: none. Absent: Mitchell. Motion carried.

AMERICAN LEGAL PUBLISHING, 2025 NE BASIC CODE UPDATES, 695.00; BLACK HILLS ENERGY, UTILITIES, 5065.83; CHEYENNE CO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 2025 MEMBERSHIP, 200.00; CHAPPELL LUMBER, REPAIR TO OLD VILLAGE OFFICE, 104.79; CITY OF SIDNEY, LANDFILL, 692.99; CLINE WILLIAMS, LEGAL SERVICES, 40.50; DEARBORN LIFE, FD LIFE INSURANCE, 182.32; DHHS-ACCOUNTING, REIMBURSEMENT FOR LIHEAP, 1284.35; DOUGLAS KELLY OSTDIEK ET AL, LEGAL FEES, 972.20; E&S AUTO SUPPLY, FUEL FILTER FOR TRASH TRUCK, 34.29; FLOYD'S TRUCK CENTER, SUPPLIES FOR TRASH TRUCK, 23.65; HIGHLINE, PHONE/INTERNET, 229.36; JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL, TRASH TRUCK REPAIR/OLD OFFICE SUPPLIES, 173.35; LARM, VILLAGE INSURANCE POLICY, 40486.00; MIDWEST PLUMBING & MECHANICAL, WINTERIZATION OF PAC, 3314.56; NE DEPT OF LABOR, NE Q3 2024 UNEMPLOYMENT TAX, 54.51; NE PUBLIC HEALTH, WATER SAMPLES, 394.00; NE PUBLIC POWER, PAST DUE SERVICES, 26408.18; NE PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT, COMBINED UTILITIES, 1138.27; NE RURAL WATER, ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP, 200.00; NE STATE FIRE MARSHAL, FEES FOR FLAMMABLE LIQUID STORAGE, 120.00; ONE CALL CONCEPTS, LOCATES, 305.66; PLESANTVIEW CEMETERY, SALE OF 2 PLOTS, 400.00; PREMIER AUTO PARTS, BUCKET TRUCK WATER PUMP, 62.99; RAUNER & ASSOCIATES, PREP OF BUDGET COMPLIATION, 1837.50; ROBERT KUHN, SERVICE FEE/CONTRACTOR, 500.00; ROODS TIRE CENTER, TIRES FOR TRASH TRUCK, 1741.00; SIDNEY SUN-TELEGRAPH, LEGAL NOTICES/PROCEEDINGS, 357.48; SUSAN MITCHELL, REIMBURSEMENT FOR FLOORING/OLD OFFICE, 1430.94; TRIPLE O'S BUILDING SUPPLY, REPAIRS TO OLD OFFICE, 301.50; USA BLUE BOOK, FLOWMETER, 6112.06; UTILITY SERVICE CO, QUARTERLY SERVICE, 3456.00; VIAERO, CELL PHONES, 167.01; WHEAT BELT PUBLIC POWER, SEWER/WHEELING, 6052.29; PAYROLL, 8850.51.

Bell advises the Flowmeter has been purchased with the ARPA funds, and the sewer clean out will begin in the spring.

No Board comments.

Next regular board meeting, Tuesday February 4, 2025, 5:30pm at the Lodgepole Community Hall

Meeting adjourned 9:00 PM

Submitted January 24, 2025

Cynthia Carlton
Clerk/Treasurer