

Village of Winthrop Harbor  
President and Board of Trustees Meeting  
**December 15, 2020**  
Village Hall Council Chambers

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## **ZOOM BOARD MEETING - MINUTES**

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The meeting was called to order by Mayor Bruno at 7:00 PM

The following Elected Officials **Attended Remotely**:

Mayor: Dr. Michael Bruno

Trustees: Buddy Hargett, Robert Marabella, John Levin, Dana McCarthy, Hartmut "Fritz" Weiss, Alanna Whitmore

Also present:

Robert Long, Attorney  
Greg Jackson, Village Administrator  
Julie Rittenhouse, Village Clerk  
Michael Sheedy, IT Director  
Joel Brumlik, Police Chief  
Justin Stried, Fire Chief  
Pat DiPersio, Community Development  
Ed Mohn, Deputy Police Chief

The Invocation was led by Mayor Bruno

### **ABSENT OFFICIALS WISHING TO ATTEND REMOTELY**

All Officials attending remotely

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**1** - A motion was made by Trustee Weiss and seconded by Trustee McCarthy to approve the **November 17, 2020 Virtual Regular Board Meeting Minutes** as presented. Mayor Bruno declared the motion carried on the following roll call vote.

**Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore**  
**Nays: (0)**  
**Absent: (0)**  
**Passed: (0)**

### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

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The Christmas Parade was well attended. Thank you to everyone that coordinated and put it together.

The Mayor and his wife went to see all of the houses that were decorated for the Christmas decorating contest. He suggested that everyone do the same because some of them have done an amazing job. Even some of the houses that didn't enter the contest were amazing.

The proposed Tree Preservation Ordinance has been reviewed by Trustee Hargett and Trustee Whitmore as well as previously, Pat DiPersio and the Village Attorney. The Mayor asked the Village Administrator to draft a staff memorandum summarizing the reviews and recommendations to be discussed at the Village Board Meeting on January 22<sup>nd</sup>.

We have received notice, that we can proceed with the new Public Works Building. The \$614,000.00 Grant that was appropriated, thanks to our strong working relationships with Representative Mason and Senator Bush, has been green lighted. Remember, when I was first elected, there was talk about going out for a loan for this project. I was against placing this on the Winthrop Harbor Tax-payer's backs.

Each time a new allocation came out for the CARES Act Grant for funding, to off-set the COVID related expenses, Greg would rewrite the Grant to capture the maximum amount of dollars possible. I'm happy to tell the community and the Board, we have received our maximum allocation based on the County and Federal formula, of \$306,114.31.

The money that we talked about just tonight, a little over \$920,000.00, is because of our desire to open up our Intergovernmental relationships, regardless of political parties. I will work with anyone who makes Winthrop Harbor a priority and lessens the impact on local taxes.

**ORDINANCE 2020-O-23 An Ordinance Ratifying and Extending Mayoral Declaration of Emergency Relating to Coronavirus**

**2** - A motion was made by Trustee Marabella and Seconded by Trustee Weiss to Set Aside the Rules of the President and Board of Trustees and Waive the First and Second Reading of **ORDINANCE 2020-O-23** and approve as submitted. Mayor Bruno declared the motion carried on the following roll call vote.

**Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore**  
**Nays: (0)**  
**Absent: (0)**  
**Passed: (0)**

**Introduction of County Board Member, Gina Roberts**

Mayor Bruno introduced and congratulated, newly elected County Board Member, Gina Roberts and told her that we look forward to working with her. Ms. Roberts thanked the Mayor and Board for having her and she told them that she looks forward to meeting each and every one of them and working with them.

**VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

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- We received notification from ICOP's, who provides health insurance for the Village, that they were submitting a renewal that ranged between 35%-65% increase for a comparable plan. We aggressively went back and challenged the Broker and ICOP's. After explaining that there were a number of employees that will not be offered insurance due to their part-time status (ea. Fire Department), we ended up with a plan that saves the Village \$5,000.00. Pat and Julie looked at the plans and gave their perspectives.
- Regarding the Food Truck Ordinance, I would like to have discussions with the Mayor and the Board about doing an outreach to our business community, especially those restaurants that would be impacted by this. Then we would be able to draft a mobile food Ordinance sometime in January or February.
- The Tree Ordinance – a report will be provided, at the next Board Meeting, compiling all of the information that we have extracted from the Ordinance and the positions of those persons involved, for discussion.
- There is movement on 14<sup>th</sup> and Monroe with the potential of the construction of a large house. It has gone through review with the Army Corp of Engineers and Storm Water Management. There have been some stipulations that must be complied to. One of the first things is getting rid of the trees that have fallen or been cut down. The property owner has hired an environmental consultant to assist on this project.
- The Mayor directed Tim and Greg to follow up with Groot on their services this year. There was a delay with leaf pick-up. We were constantly on the phone with them. Some of the issues were do to man power with Groot. Just this week a driver had a family emergency and had to leave his post so his route wasn't finished. We have been in contact with Josh and he assures us that he is taking corrective action. On Monday people were sent out right away to finish the route. Josh is putting together numbers on food waste recycling. If a business or resident wants to go through the process of mulching and food waste, there are some ways that can be used, that do not cost the resident or the business, along with some that do cost. This was an initiative started by the Sustainability Committee.
- The Bin for the clothing textiles, that the Board approved, will be dropped off at Public Works this week.

### **CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE**

None Reported

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None Reported

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Request to Proceed with Petition to Annex 9689 W. Franklin Street and 9715 W. Franklin Street, both in Unincorporated Zion, by Directing the Village Attorney to Prepare an Ordinance to Annex the Properties**

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A motion was made by Trustee Hargett and seconded by Trustee Marabella to approve the **Request to Proceed with Petition to Annex 9689 W. Franklin Street and 9715 W. Franklin Street, both in Unincorporated Zion, by Directing the Village Attorney to Prepare an Ordinance to Annex the Properties.**

Trustee Hargett explained the same property owner has an adjacent lot that they would like to include in this annexation. It has also come to be known, that they have an accessory dwelling unit. They had converted a garage into a studio apartment that is rented out. It becomes complicated in that we have to decide if we want to annex in the multi-family property and even if we did want to, properties are annexed in as an R2 Zoning which doesn't allow for multi-family. They could go through a process to convert to an R4 but we currently have a memorandum on multi-family housing.

Attorney Long said this would have to go through the Zoning process because you can't change the underlying zoning itself. You can give variances within the zoning. The R2 zoning, which is the automatic zoning, still doesn't allow more than 1 single family house per lot.

Mayor Bruno was worried about setting precedence for others as well as Trustee Marabella.

Trustee Hargett said that we are responsible for this stretch road but we don't receive any taxes for the maintenance of the road. If we annex this property in we will then receive some revenue for this stretch of road. Having them pay to make the connections for water service may entice others on that street to connect as well. Trustee Hargett's opinion is the annexation agreement includes, either going through the process to re-zone or with the annexation process, allowing for the multi-family as Attorney Long said, or they choose to no longer use their garage as a studio apartment.

Trustee McCarthy said he would feel differently if it were a duplex that we were annexing in, but because it's something that is clearly not designed for that, he feels the way to go is to ask them to conform and do away with the studio apartment before they would be annexed.

Pat DiPersio said, in pictures that he received today, there is a shed on a vacant lot and you can't have an accessory structure on a lot by itself. This is another non-conformity.

**3** - An amended motion was made by Trustee Hargett and seconded by Trustee Marabella to **Direct Pat DiPersio and Attorney Long to Continue Negotiations with the Property Owners.** Mayor Bruno declared the motion carried on the following roll call vote.

**Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore**  
**Nays: (0)**  
**Absent: (0)**  
**Passed: (0)**

**Accounts Payable Warrant**

**4** - A motion was made by Trustee Weiss and seconded by Trustee Marabella to approve **Accounts Payable Warrant W2020-13** in the amount of **\$140,998.43**. Mayor Bruno declared the motion carried on the following roll call vote.

**Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore**  
**Nays: (0)**  
**Absent: (0)**  
**Passed: (0)**

**ORDINANCE 2020-O-24 Annual Tax Levy Ordinance (4.9% increase)**

5 - A motion was made by Trustee Weiss and Seconded by Trustee Marabella to Set Aside the Rules of the President and Board of Trustees and Waive the First and Second Reading of **ORDINANCE 2020-O-24** and approve as submitted. Mayor Bruno declared the motion carried on the following roll call vote.

**Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore**  
**Nays: (0)**  
**Absent: (0)**  
**Passed: (0)**

**Approval of Renewal of Worker's Compensation Insurance (IPRF/Stolarik Insurance) for Calendar year 2021**

6 - A motion was made by Trustee Weiss and seconded by Trustee Marabella to approve **the Renewal of Worker's Compensation Insurance (IPRF/Stolarik Insurance) for Calendar year 2021** as presented. Mayor Bruno declared the motion carried on the following roll call vote.

**Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore**  
**Nays: (0)**  
**Absent: (0)**  
**Passed: (0)**

**Approval of Intergovernmental Agreement Between the Village of Winthrop Harbor and Winthrop Harbor Fire Protection District**

7 - A motion was made by Trustee Levin and seconded by Trustee Weiss to approval of **Intergovernmental Agreement Between the Village of Winthrop Harbor and Winthrop Harbor Fire Protection District** as presented. Mayor Bruno declared the motion carried on the following roll call vote.

**Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore**  
**Nays: (0)**  
**Absent: (0)**  
**Passed: (0)**

**Discussion – Winthrop Harbor Fire Department Staffing**

Greg said that Chief Stried provided them earlier with the options for the Fire Department coverage addressing the gap periods of time during the course of any given shift where we may

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not have paramedics available to man an ambulance. We are an ALS service center. We don't send out ambulances with just Firefighters or Firefighter EMT's. We're not allowed to do that. Chief Stried was working with Metro Services to put together a contract for 24/7 service coverage for paramedics. This is what is before the Board. The reason it is before you, is because it was one of the options to meet the staffing needs. There is no doubt that this Village and their residents and the people who visit this Village and do business in this Village are in need, and deserve, ALS service. The question is, how do we pay for that? Due to demographics, there will be a greater need for the ambulance service. Whatever we do today or in the weeks as it relates to staff and future equipment needs in the Fire Department, will affect how we deliver services tomorrow. Chief Stried has been hesitant about doing outside contracting services for a variety of reasons. Not that they aren't capable of doing the job, he has never said or insinuated that, it's just the method of delivering services and how we, as a municipality, choose to deliver those services. Once you take the step into contractual services, it is often difficult to go back. It's not impossible, but it's difficult. The Mayor and Greg had a discussion on how do we do, what we know needs to be done, and fund it. We need to put a committee together to make a plan on how we can make this work and how to fund it.

Mayor Bruno said that he would like Trustee Levin to Chair that committee, being over the Fire Department, and Trustee Weiss to be on that committee, being over Finance. Greg thought Chief Stried and whoever he feels should be at the table from his staff, be on this committee along with two people from the community. This committee should last no longer than 45 days or less.

Chief Stried said this is the first that he is hearing about this committee. He appreciates it and understands it's their job to come together and figure it out. He just hopes we can expedite it because we don't have a lot of time. We have been at this for three years. A couple of points, the dedicated staff we have keeps our Village together. A handful are from the Village, but most aren't. They are here because they started with us and know we need them. I can only go back to my group so many times and tell them the Board knows this. Some kind of disconnect is going on and I can only tell them so many times, the Board is working on it. I don't expect you to race the contract through. We don't have a whole lot of time. I appreciate your time and efforts.

Trustee Levin said the Fire Department is in his best interest and he will do everything he can to get what the Fire Department deserves and what this Village deserves.

Trustee Weiss said we need to find out where the money is coming from, how we are going to do it and would like to do that in less than 30 days. We need to look at it and make wise decisions. I understand Chief Stried's concerns.

Trustee Whitmore said she wishes there were more we could do and would like to donate her next year's salary to the Fire Department. She hates that Chief Stried has to go back every week and tell them that he doesn't think the Board is hearing them or we might not be understanding. I hope you know that we do fully understand and we know the severity of this. We do hear you.

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Chief Stried told the Board that he doesn't take asking for contract personnel lightly. It's potentially what we can afford. He's not asking for them to rush into it but he just wants them to understand the urgency of emergency coverage 24/7, 365 through our Village.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None Reported

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Trustee Marabella – Public Works

- I voted against spending money on the Public Works Building. Greg has done phenomenal things for this Village. We are getting a Public Works Building at no cost to the Village thanks to Greg.
- The Mayor does a great job.
- Thanked the Trustees for what they do. They do a great job. They do what they do because they love this Village
- Sorry about the leaf pick-up. People got COVID.
- Plowing is coming and our salt barn is full.

Trustee Levin - Fire Department

- Thanked Trustee Whitmore and the Rec. Dept. for a great light parade.

Trustee Weiss – Finance Department

- Thanked Greg for saving \$5,000.00 a year on the health insurance. Thanks to Julie and Pat for offering their opinions.
- Look forward to getting the committee going for the Fire Department

Trustee Hargett – Community Development Department

- Kuddos to Greg and all of the Department Heads for continually working on grants and finding ways to cut.
- Kuddos to the Rec. Dept, Alanna, Scott and everyone involved with planning the parade. I wasn't able to make it but heard positive things about it. Thank you for the live video of it.
- I'm glad that our Rec. Dept. is continuing to find creative ways to keep the community engaged and do some fun things. Thank you for that.
- Last week Lake County opened up allvax portal. There is an approved vaccine for COVID and you can sign up for it by signing onto [allvax.lakecohealth.org](https://allvax.lakecohealth.org)

Trustee McCarthy - Police Department

- Seconded everything that has been said.
- Wished everyone a safe and Merry Christmas. Make sure that you take care of yourselves, take some time for self-care and find some balance with everything going on. Take care of yourselves, take care of each other and continue to think about the staff. We know they are working hard

Trustee Whitmore - Recreation Department

- Thanked Mayor Bruno and Trustee Levin for participating in the light parade. Thank you, Trustee Levin, for playing Santa. It was a great turnout. Thanked WH Fire and Police Departments for leading the parade and the Parks and Rec. Dept. They have been doing such a great job keeping the community engaged.
- Everyone, have a very Merry Christmas and hopefully a good New Year.

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Mayor Bruno

- Thanked the Police and Fire Departments for their monthly reports
- My wife and I wrapped presents for Toys 4 Our Tots. We look forward to it. Very glad that everyone came out to participate in it.
- Wished everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. A happy and healthy New Year, a safe New Year and hopes that 2021 is better than 2020.

**ADJOURNMENT**

8 - A motion was made by Trustee Marabella and seconded by Trustee Weiss to adjourn the meeting. Mayor Bruno declared the meeting adjourned at 8:52p.m. on the following roll call vote.

**Ayes: (6) Hargett, Levin, Marabella, McCarthy, Weiss, Whitmore**  
**Nays: (0)**  
**Absent: (0)**  
**Passed: (0)**

**APPROVED:**

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**DR. MICHAEL BRUNO, MAYOR**

**ATTEST:**

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**JULIE RITTENHOUSE, VILLAGE CLERK**

**Note: This is not a verbatim record.**