

**VILLAGE OF GRAND BEACH  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
JULY 19, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council President Harry Walder called the regular council meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. EST. Present in addition to Walder were Edward Brandes, Peter Doerr, James Bracewell, and Blake O'Halloran.

**ADOPT AGENDA**

Brandes moved, seconded by Doerr to adopt the July 19, 2023 agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

**ADOPT CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Approve Village Council Minutes:
  - i. Regular Council Meeting – June 21, 2023
- b. Pay Bills with Written Additions

Doerr moved, seconded by Brandes to adopt the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

The Council heard comments from the following Village residents:

Ed Trainor – Master plan survey #2 and the Social Club.

Mike Kenny – Grand Beach community and master plan survey #2.

Frank Dolan – Survey process and request to add Grand Beach Preservation correspondence to the agenda.

Sheila McGinnis – Social Club contract.

**PRESENTATIONS/RECOGNITION**

None

**PUBLIC HEARING**

None

**COMMISSION REPORTS**

**REPORT ON NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP MEETING**

Ed Brandes reported on the New Buffalo Township meeting that he and Jim Bracewell attended on July 17, 2023.

He said the meeting included a public hearing on the special assessment that was assessed to the entire township including Grand Beach. He said the public hearing is an annual requirement.

**BUILDING & ZONING:** Walder had nothing to report.

**PARKS & BEACHES:** Doerr suggested that signs be placed at the Whitewood Beach to let people know that there is golf cart parking at the Royal Avenue Beach.

**STREETS & WATER:** Bracewell said there was a problem at a house being constructed on Walnut Avenue. He said there was a letter in the packet regarding a resident's unhappiness with 23 or 24 construction trucks trying to avoid the speed bumps in the Eiffel Towers area.

**POLICE:** Brandes said there will be a joint Police Board meeting with Michiana on July 31. He said the short-term rentals are going well under the direction of Chief Ryan Layman, and there are 52 owners in compliance.

**PRO SHOP & COURSE:** O'Halloran said he hopes that with the rains this summer that the grass will come in where the drainage project was put in. He said they are looking at having someone come out to look at the irrigation system to see if there are ways to make changes for better irrigation. He said he plans to redo all the benches on the course and will contact families who donated benches to memorialize others to see if they would be interested in donating money for more benches. There will also an opportunity for other people to donate for benches.

#### **SERVISCAPE REPORT**

Clay Putnam said weeds around the bunkers by 8 green and behind 9 tee have been treated. He said hey repaired two irrigation leaks, replaced several sprinkler heads and are adding sand to all the bunkers.

#### **PERSONNEL REPORTS**

**SUPERINTENDENT:** In addition to his written report, Superintendent Bob Dabbs said that the new generator has been placed upstairs and should be up and running by Friday.

**POLICE CHIEF:** In addition to his written report, Police Chief Ryan Layman said there were 61 complaints last month. He reported that Family Fest went very well with no problems. He said a few Amazon packages have been taken from porches, so he reminded residents to have someone pick up their packages if they are expecting something and will not be home.

**BUILDING INSPECTOR:** In addition to his written report, Building Inspector Chad Butler said there are 48 open building permits with 46 of them from this year. He said he has done two certificates of occupancy to date with one pending.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **HIRE DEPUTY CLERK**

##### **COMMITTEE TO FIND A REPLACEMENT CLERK-TREASURER**

Walder stated that Deputy Clerk Kathie Butler is moving on to a new job, and that Clerk-Treasurer Mary Robertson will be putting ads out to hire a replacement. He said that he is going to form a search committee to replace Robertson since her retirement date is December 1. He asked that residents who are willing to help and have experience in human resources contact him.

Doerr moved, seconded by O'Halloran to authorize Clerk-Treasurer Mary Robertson to place ads for replacement of the Deputy Clerk and to pay an hourly rate of \$22 to \$25 per hour depending on experience. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

##### **ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES AND ENERGY (EGLE)- REVETMENT PROJECT SPECIAL EXCEPTION REQUEST – 52001 LAKE PARK DRIVE**

Walder stated that the Village received a notice from EGLE regarding the need for a special exception on a project that Oselka Constructors will be doing on Lake Park Drive. He said the Council has 60 days to comment to EGLE on the special exceptions. There were no comments on the project from the Council members.

##### **DISCUSSION REGARDING ALLOWING GOLF CARTS IN THE GRAND BEACH NATURE PRESERVE**

There was discussion regarding the use of golf carts in the Grand Beach Nature Preserve, and that they have been prohibited since there were complaints that carts were going off the trails and damaging the plants and flowers.

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Since the Village was applying for a grant to purchase the property, the Council chose to prohibit carts.

Walder told the Council members he took a ride out there with Superintendent Bob Dabbs and the overgrowth of plants has become very thick, making it difficult to get off the path in many areas. He said if the Council decides to allow golf carts again, that they could put some type of blockade with string and signs in the areas where it would be possible to get off the trails. He asked Council members to think evaluate it, and it will be on the agenda in August.

### **DISCUSS MEETING HELD WITH SOCIAL CLUB MEMBERS REGARDING NEXT YEAR'S CONTRACT**

Ed Brandes said that the Council renewed the 2023 Social Club contract as a sign of good faith. He said as new members of the Council, they wanted to look at the contract for 2024. He and Walder met with Social Club President Molly Galbo and leadership of the Social Club. He said they know how important the Social Club is to the community. Brandes said there is nothing negative about, but the rates, contract and insurance requirements have been the same since 2008. Walder said at the meeting, they talked about the calendar and use of the hall outside of the calendar, talked about golf and opening up some of the Social Club events so others could attend, and then they might decide to join the Social Club. He said that Mike Kenny said the Club could pay \$3,000 to \$3,500 to the Village. Walder said discussions will continue with the Social Club.

### **CHANGE TO BUILDING PERMIT FEES**

Brandes moved, seconded by O'Halloran to change the building permit fees from 1% of the first \$650,000 cost of construction with 1/2% for anything above that to a flat 1% of the cost of construction. Motion carried unanimously 5-0. The Council previously approved a minimum building permit fee of \$200.

### **APPROVE MASTER PLAN SURVEY #2**

Master Plan Task Force Chair Diane Cody gave a presentation regarding the master plan survey #2. Council members discussed how the current master plan was created, and questions that were to be included on survey #2 which will be sent out to residents soon. O'Halloran agreed with a resident who said the survey should be delayed for two weeks. Bracewell said that in December and January, he stated that he thought the Council should bring in a professional planner to create the master plan.

Doerr moved, seconded by Brandes to approve the survey as drafted with changes discussed by the Council as follows:

- Add more to the initial paragraph about ways to fund the projects.
- Remove the last paragraph, but include painting the outside and insulating the inside of the maintenance building, repairing exterior trim and windows, and painting the trim of the Village Hall, repair, and replacement of the golf course irrigation.
- Change question #13 to include language about the Social Club calendar.
- Change #19 to show the cost for the sand traps of \$45,000.

Motion carried 3-2 with Brandes, Doerr and Walder voting aye and Bracewell and O'Halloran voting nay.

### **MERS ACTUARY VALUATION REPORT – DECEMBER 31, 2022**

Bracewell moved, seconded by Doerr to continue employer contributions of 6.72% of wages to the MERS pension plan effective November 1, 2024. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

### **REMOVAL OF DAMAGED TREE ON ROYAL AVENUE**

O'Halloran moved, seconded by Brandes to approve an expenditure of \$2,700 to remove a damaged tree on Royal Avenue near the playground. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

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**PROPOSALS - VILLAGE HALL BALCONY CONCRETE REPAIRS**

Doerr moved, seconded by O'Halloran to accept a proposal in the amount of \$106,700 from Browning Chapman LLC for balcony concrete repairs to the Village Hall using \$45,000 in funds set aside for the repair, \$25,000 from funds set aside in Capital Projects for tables and chairs, and the remaining \$36,700 from fund balance in the General Fund, with work to begin at the end of September. Motion carried unanimously 5-0. The Village also received a proposal from Smith's Waterproofing in the amount of \$109,721.

**PROPOSAL FOR BEACH VIEWING PLATFORM AT PINE AVENUE**

Walder said the Village received a proposal to build a viewing platform at Pine Avenue from the same contractor who built the platform on Ely. The proposal is \$33,288 and the platform will go out over the bluff, with the handrails being the only thing visible from the road. Walder asked Council members to look at the area before the August meeting when it will be on the agenda again.

**PURCHASE DOG BAG DISPENSER STATIONS**

There was no action taken on the purchase of the dog bag dispenser stations.

**DIRECT TV ANNUAL VIDEO REPORT**

Walder said that the Village received the Direct TV annual video report which required no action.

**COORDINATE WITH NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY TO MOVE GRAND BEACH HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS, PICTURES, AND OTHER MEMORABILIA TO LIBRARY**

Walder told the Council that the Clerk's office has a lot of historical pictures, postcards and publications and the Clerk and Deputy Clerk would like to consider moving them to the public library. He said the library recently received a grant and will work on their history room and might even hire someone to help in the history area. Clerk Robertson said that if the materials were moved to the library, they would be available anytime the library is open which includes Saturdays and more people could enjoy them. Walder asked Council members to consider this. This item will be added to the August agenda.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The Council heard comments from the following Village residents:

- Larry Acker – Requested a special meeting to discuss safety at the railroad crossing for the Marquette Greenway.
- Meg Piper – Master Plan survey #2 and pier.
- Frank Dolan – Master Plan survey #2 and asked Council to amend agenda to include additional correspondence.
- Mike Kenny – Master Plan survey #2.
- Tim McCarthy – Spoke about Village of Michiana's vision statement and the importance of the beaches and roads.
- Kieran McHugh – Master Plan.
- Georjean Nickell – Grand Beach and Social Club.
- Laurie Roche – Master Plan.
- Ed Trainor – Property taxes.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**EGLE – REMOVAL OF SANDBAGS REQUIRED ALONG LAKEFRONT**

Walder said that lakefront properties that installed sandbags will hear from EGLE and will have to remove the sandbags.

**GRAND BEACH PRESERVATION COUNCIL (2 LETTERS) – MARQUETTE GREENWAY EASEMENT**

Walder said the Council received a letter in June and another in July from the Grand Beach Preservation Council. He said

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there is an additional letter and memo that will be added to the August agenda under correspondence.

**LOCAL REVENUE SHARING BOARD SPECIFIC COSTS**

Walder said the Village does not have any specific costs to turn in.

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – RESPONSE TO LETTER FROM HARRY WALDER REGARDING SEMI-TRUCKS ON US HIGHWAY 12**

Walder received a response from MDOT regarding semi-trucks on Highway 12 and said they will try and step up their patrols to see if trucks are trying to avoid the scales.

**NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP – PUBLIC HEARINGS REGARDING MARIHUANA BUSINESSES ON US HIGHWAY 12**

Walder said New Buffalo Township is holding public hearings regarding marihuana retail businesses along Highway 12.

**SUSAN SONDERBY – SPEED BUMPS**

Walder said the letter is regarding speed bumps and trucks trying to avoid them by taking alternate routes.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Brandes moved, seconded by O’Halloran to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m. EST.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary J. Robertson  
Clerk-Treasurer