

Village of West Salem
Regular Meeting
December 19, 2023

Regular meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Village President Scott Schumacher. Trustees present: Anderson, Curtis, Hennessey, Lautz, Leicht, and Twining. Also present: Public Works Director Loren Schwier, Police Chief Kyle Holzhausen, Village Attorney Bryant Klos, Village Clerk/Treasurer Ashley Bohl, and Village Administrator Teresa DeLong.

Minutes

Motion by Trustee Twining, seconded by Trustee Anderson to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2023, regular meeting as written. Roll call vote: Unanimous aye. Motion approved.

Claims

Claims were presented for payment totaling \$84,359.85.

Motion by Trustee Leicht, seconded by Trustee Curtis to approve the payment of all claims as listed. Roll call vote: Unanimous aye.

Police Canine Program

Police Chief Kyle Holzhausen presented a proposed West Salem Police Canine Program. This initiative was first discussed when Charles Ashbeck was police chief. However, the program was not pursued at that time due to workloads. Businesses and residents have requested Chief Holzhausen consider forming a canine program as an additional tool for law enforcement. Dogs used in law enforcement are trained to either be “single purpose” or “dual purpose” K9s. Single purpose dogs are used primarily for either patrol duties or detection duties or for search and rescue tracking missions. Dual purpose or multi-tasking dogs are trained to combine narcotics detection with search-and-rescue missions, for example. Funding a canine program is based totally on donations, fundraising, and grants, and no funds are normally included in a municipal operating plan. Other than the Village of Bangor, West Salem is the only municipality in the region that does not have a police K9 program. Chief Holzhausen stated funds needed to begin a police canine program range around \$106,000, which includes purchase, training, equipment, and squad car modifications. Once the program is operating, expenses then include continued training and certification, food, and veterinary bills. Chief Holzhausen is requesting approval from the Village Board to begin the process to create a police canine program.

Motion by Trustee Hennessey, seconded by Trustee Twining to support the police canine program with the understanding that the program will be funded by donations and grants. Roll call vote: Unanimous aye. Motion approved.

Appointment of Election Officials

Motion by Trustee Anderson, seconded by Trustee Curtis to approve the appointment of Election Officials as presented for the two-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2025, as presented. Roll call vote: Twining – Abstain; remainder of Board – Aye. Motion approved.

Finance and Personnel Committee

Trustee Leicht reported on the December 12, 2023, Finance and Personnel Committee meeting. The Committee met in closed session pursuant to Wis. Stat. Sec. 19.85(1)(c) to consider employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation data of a public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility for employee evaluations and compensation.

Motion by Trustee Leicht, seconded by Trustee Lautz to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2023, Finance and Personnel Committee meeting as presented. Roll call vote: Unanimous aye. Motion approved.

Street Committee

Trustee Hennessey reported on the December 13, 2023, Street Committee meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to receive an update from Loren Schwier on the STP-Urban 80/20 grant project for reconstruction of South Leonard Street, discussion on Metropolitan Planning Organization approval to transfer grant funding, and a possible recommendation to the Village Board. Loren Schwier explained three grants were submitted for STP-Urban Project grants wherein federal funding pays 80 percent of the costs, and the municipality is responsible for the remaining 20 percent plus expenses not covered by the federal funding project constraints. The grants are only awarded to classified collector roads, and the Village was awarded grants for North Mark Street, City Loop, and South Leonard Street. The South Leonard Street grant application did include a request as required to fund the upgrade of the railroad crossing at Leonard and Elm Streets in the approximate amount of \$340,000. However, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation did not add in this cost in its calculations. Because the railroad crossing was not included in the grant funding approval, those costs would now fall on the Village. In addition, Cedar Corporation did not include the storm sewer costs approximating \$100,000 in the grant application. The cost to upgrade the railroad is higher than the 20 percent Village share to reconstruct South Leonard Street. Add to this shortfall the \$100,000 not included for storm sewer replacement, the project is no longer affordable for the Village. Mr. Schwier requested the Metropolitan Planning Organization consider transferring the grant funding to East Hamlin Street between North Leonard and North Mark Street, and the request was approved last month. Mr. Schwier presented four options for the Committee to consider:

1. Move forward with the original South Leonard Street reconstruction project for a total cost of \$1,099,000 (including storm sewer and railroad crossing) less the granting funding of \$308,000 for a total cost to the Village of \$791,000.
2. Move forward with the original South Leonard Street reconstruction project without consideration of the grant funding and without the requirement to upgrade the railroad crossing for a total cost to the Village of \$759,000.
3. Transfer the grant funding of \$308,000 to the 1,267 feet of East Hamlin Street between North Leonard and North Mark Streets, including utility replacements, for a total cost of \$1,040,000 less the \$308,000 for a total cost to the Village of \$732,000.
4. Decline the grant and reapply in the future for both Leonard and Hamlin Streets wherein if South Leonard Street was pursued, the railroad crossing and storm sewer costs would be included in the grant application.

The Committee recommended that the grant money be transferred to a Hamlin Street project and then reapply for South Leonard Street which would include both the storm sewer and the railroad crossing costs.

Motion by Trustee Hennessey, seconded by Trustee Leicht to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2023, Street Committee meeting as presented. Roll call vote: Unanimous aye. Motion approved.

Finance and Personnel Committee

Trustee Leicht reported on the December 18, 2023, Finance and Personnel Committee meeting. The Committee met in closed session pursuant to Wis. Stat. Sec. 19.85(1)(c) to consider employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation data of a public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility for police department employee matters.

Motion by Trustee Leicht, seconded by Trustee Anderson to approve the minutes of the December 18, 2023, Finance and Personnel Committee meeting as presented. Roll call vote: Unanimous aye. Motion approved.

Public Safety Building Planning Ad Hoc Committee

President Schumacher reported on the progress of this Committee over the last two weeks. The Committee has toured three existing facilities, and it toured a site in the Village on December 19, 2023.

Motion by President Schumacher, seconded by Trustee Lautz to approve President Schumacher's report on the Public Safety Building Planning Ad Hoc Committee. Roll call vote: Unanimous aye. Motion approved.

Motion by Trustee Leicht, seconded by Trustee Twining to convene in closed session at 7:37 p.m. pursuant to Wis. Stat. Sec. 19.85(1)(e) for the purpose of deliberating or negotiating the purchase of public properties, investment of public funds, and transfers of public properties, to-wit: real estate development agreement. Roll call vote: Unanimous aye. Motion approved.

Motion by Trustee Leicht, seconded by Trustee Hennessey to reconvene in open session at 7:59 p.m. Motion approved by voice vote.

Motion by Trustee Lautz, seconded by Trustee Anderson to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Approved by voice vote.

Teresa L. DeLong, Village Administrator