

President Wetherbee called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

**Roll Call:**

Council Members Present: President Wetherbee and Trustees: Gremel, McCann, Harper, Cook, Gale

Absent Members: Trustee Ager zoomed in to the meeting.

Staff Present: Clerk- Joni Scott, Community Liaison- Cindy Edmondson, Treasurer- Kallie Craker, DPW Superintendent- Chris Holton

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

Trustee Cook **Moved, Supported by** Trustee Gale to approve the December 9, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Motion Carried.

Trustee Cook **Moved, Supported by** Trustee Gremel to approve the January 20, 2022 meeting minutes as amended. Discussion: Trustee Gale noted that the Harbor Master contract was approved without a annual salary, which is still to be determined. Motion Carried.

**Approval of Agenda (amendments/additions):**

President Wetherbee removed the discussion of Amending the Plat by Trustee Harper due to a possible conflict. President Wetherbee provided Trustee Harper with correspondence from the villages legal counsel regarding the conflict.

**Correspondence:**

**Patricia Nofzt-** annual report on the Visitor's Center and request to continue funding the printing of brochures for 2022. Clerk Scott noted that the funds for the Visitor's Center were identified in the budget and would be approved with the adoption of the draft budget.

**EGLE, Robyn Schmidt-** Violation notice regarding a new home build located at 10797 N. Shore Drive.

**Emily Modrall-** Update on the Grand Traverse Anishinaabe History Project.

**Public Comment:**

**Mike Stoffel-** questioned when the Consumers Energy lights would be turned back on. President Wetherbee explained that they should be turned on any time, and that his recent communications with Doug Deyoung offered adjustable lights with a dimmer that the village will have control of. Wetherbee anticipates the dimmable lights to be installed in June of this year.

**William Harper-** commented with his concerns regarding the costs of the plat amendment. Harper stated that he felt it was a waste of money, and suggested not continuing with the process to save money. President Wetherbee explained that stopping the process would cost money to reverse the work in process.

**Peace Pole Proposal:**

Denise Sica would like to honor her father, by placing a peace pole as a memorial in the Marina Park. Sica explained that a peace pole had 6 sides and stated "May Peace Prevail" in 6 different languages. The Village Council agreed by consensus to the memorial and will approve the location of the pole at a later date.

**Annual Renewal of Village Insurance:**

Paul Olson from Municipal Underwriters of Michigan provided the village with the 2022 summary of coverages. The quoted premium came in at \$27,978 which is up 8% over last years premium. The increase is due to a number of factors including market conditions, social inflation, substantially increasing reinsurance costs and increased loss costs. Olson noted that they now offer coverage for Public Officials involved in a non-monetary suit. Olson described the coverage for Planning Commissions/Zoning Administrators where the village may find suit

brought on them during an enforcement of zoning laws. The cost to the village would be around \$300 with \$25,050 worth of coverage. A member of the Public questioned if the Village had insurance to cover if the dam at the Mill Pond broke. Paul Olson responded that the dam breaking would not be covered and that he wasn't aware of any insurance available to the village for that type of coverage. The Finance Committee will review the coverage and make a recommendation to the Council.

### **2022-23 Budget Hearing:**

President Wetherbee opened up the Public Hearing for comments on the Budget and millage rate at 7:28 pm.

**Fred Steffens-** commented that he had talked with several members of the Finance and Employee Relations Committee regarding the COLA (Cost of living adjustment) scheduled at 5.9% this year for employees of the village. Steffens advocated for a summary of salaries, stating that the budget was deceiving due to the fact that employees salaries were spread throughout the budget.

**Mike Stoffel-** asked what the COLA was for the year. Clerk Scott responded that it was 5.9% this year and that the Finance Committee was looking at 5% and 5.9% which is a difference of \$1,387.46.

President Wetherbee Closed the Public Hearing at 7:42 pm, and asked Clerk Scott to review the budget with the Council. Clerk Scott reviewed the draft budget page by page with the Village Council, answering several questions from members of the council.

President Wetherbee opened the meeting for Public Comments or questions from the public.

**Fred Steffens- questioned** the need for new equipment, stating that the loader and plow truck should last for another 20 years.

**Karl Wizinsky-** questioned were the Capital Improvement budget with 6–7-year projections and planning was in the budget. Clerk Scott explained that the Planning Commission was working on a CIP (Capital Improvement Projects) that will go as an addendum to the budget. However, there was no money to create a 6–7-year projection of plans.

### **Reports:**

A. **Liaison-** Community Liaison Cindy Edmondson reported that Emily Modrall, the Project Leader for the Anishinaabe History, Sign Project would like the Village Councils continued support as she applies for a second grant to cover the design and fabrication costs to complete the signs. The Village agreed by consensus to continued support of the project. Edmondson noted that the committee would be coming back at a later date to request placement of the signs within the village.

Edmondson provided the annual Village Council meeting dates for approval.

B. **Clerk** – Clerk Scott provided a financial report for the months of December and January 2021-2022 in agreement with the Treasurer. Clerk Scott asked the Village Council to consider approving the \$4,800 for painting the interior of the Golf Course building. Scott noted that the Parks and Trails budget had funds available in the current budget that would end February 28<sup>th</sup>.

Trustee Cook **Moved, Supported by** Trustee Gremel to approve the \$4,800 not to exceed quote to paint the interior of the Golf Course Building from Michael Ward. **Roll Call Vote:** Yeas (6) Nays (0) Absent: (1) Trustee Ager. **Motion Carried.**

C. **Treasurer** – Treasurer Kallie Craker provided a revenue report in agreement with the Clerk for the month of December and January.

D. **DPW-** DPW Superintendent Chris Holton provided a written report on the DPW activities for the month of January, stating that they had had 5 frozen waterlines in the village.

E. **Employee Relations** – None

- F. **Finance-** Finance Chair Jane Gale provided minutes from January 26, 2022 meeting. Gale reported that the Finance Committee had spent most of their meeting working on the draft budget.
- G. **Infrastructure-** None
- H. **Waterfront-** Waterfront Chair Tom Gremel provided minutes from the January 18, 2022 committee meeting.
- I. **Planning Commission:** minutes from the January 19, 2022 Planning Commission meeting were provided. Gale noted that the Planning Commission Chair and Secretary had both resigned and that the Board had appointed Nichole Arbury as the interim Chair.
- J. **Zoning Administrator:** Scott provided a report of her activities for the month of December and January. Scott also provided the following annual data in her report; 15- Land Use Permits, 2-Commercial Land Use Permits, 2-Variance Requests, 1- Site Plan Review, 3-Sign Permits, 4 Driveway Permits and 8- Sewer permits issued in the village during 2021.
- K. **Parks and Trails:** None

**Discussion Items:**

Handicap parking adjacent to post office:

President Wetherbee invited Tom Weber to join in on the conversation regarding the need for a handicap parking space at the Post Office. Tom Weber explained the need for a handicap parking space near the ramp at the Post Office. Street Administrator Chris Holton was willing to take a look at adding the handicap space. However, Holton had concerns with the costs involved to move the pavers, and the demographics of the homes and driveways on the northside of Nagonaba. The Infrastructure Committee will review the request.

Next Steps to address the Fourth Street drainage:

President Wetherbee explained that he is willing to write up another RFP (request for proposal) to explore construction and feasibility of permitting a drainage system on 4<sup>th</sup> Street. President Wetherbee stated that he will draft the RFP and share the publication with the property owners on 4<sup>th</sup> Street before publishing.

**Action Items:**

**Approve Council Meeting Schedule:**

Trustee Cook **Moved, Supported by** Trustee Gale to adopt the 2022-23 meeting schedule provided. **Motion Carried.**

**Approve Budget amendments for 2021-22:**

Trustee Gale **Moved, Supported by** Trustee McCann to approve the 2021-22 budget amendments as outlined by the Clerk. **Roll Call Vote:** Yeas (6) Nays (0) Absent (1) Ager **Motion Carried.**

**Adopt the Resolution to approve the 2022-23 Budget and Millage Rate:**

Trustee Gale **Moved, Supported by** Trustee McCann to adopt the resolution approving the budget and millage rate. Discussion: The Council had a lengthy discussion about what the rate should be for Cost-of-living Adjustments for the employees of the village. Trustee Ager felt very strongly that the adjustment should be 5.9% which was what the current SSI scheduled increase. President Wetherbee provided a formula for calculating raises for employees on graduated schedule. **Trustee McCann removed his support of the motion, Trustee Gale removed her motion. The motion was removed to allow the Council to have more discussion about the COLA for the employees of the Village.**

Trustee Cook commented that he felt that the 5.9% COLA was fair for all employees across the board. The Board continued their talk about using a step program for issuing raises. Trustee Ager again insisted on a 5.9% increase for the village staff, stating that that would be the cost of living increase and that anything below that amount would be considered a reduction in pay for the village employees.

Trustee Cook Moved, Supported by Trustee McCann to approve a 5.9% cost-of-living amount to be applied to the budget, with the amounts to be determined per individual using President Wetherbee's graduated formula. **Roll Call Vote:** Yeas (6) Nays (0) Absent (1) Ager **Motion Carried.**

Trustee Gale **Moved, Supported by** Trustee Gremel to adopt the Resolution approving the Budget and Millage rate with a 5.9% cost-of-living amount in the budget. **Discussion:** Trustee Harper stated that he would be voting "No" due to the continued funding of the Plat amendments. **Roll Call Vote:** Yeas (5) Nays (1) Trustee Harper Absent (1) Ager **Motion Carried.**

### **Payment of Bills:**

Trustee Cook **Moved, Supported by** Trustee Gale to approve payment of the bills for the month of December when funds become available in the amount of \$56,980.83  
**Roll Call Vote:** Yeas (6) Nays (0) Absent (1) **Motion Carried**

Trustee Gale **Moved, Supported by** Trustee Cook to approve payment of the bills for the month of January when funds become available in the amount of \$69,490.03  
**Roll Call Vote:** Yeas (6) Nays (0) Absent (1) **Motion Carried**

### **Public Comments:**

**Fred Steffens-** commented that he was very disappointed with the village Council, and that his taxes just keep going up.

**Karl Wizinsky-** questioned when the RFP for 4<sup>th</sup> Street would go out. Wizinsky also commented about the lack of insurance coverage for the Mill Pond Dam.

**Mike Stoffel-** made comments about the importance of preserving the Mill Pond.

### **Council Comments:**

Trustee Gale commented that she had spoken to Fred Steffens and agreed that having a summary of salaries would be beneficial when preparing the budget and raises.

### **Adjournment:**

Trustee Cook Moved, Supported by Trustee Gremel to adjourn the meeting.  
**Roll Call Vote:** Yeas (6) Nays (0) Absent (1) **Motion Carried**

The meeting was moved to adjourn at 9:24 pm  
Several Citizens attended via zoom.

**Joni I. Scott, Village of Northport  
Clerk**