

**Village of Elberta Michigan  
Regular Meeting  
Thursday, October 20, 2011**

The regular meeting of the Elberta Village Council was held at the Community Building, Thursday, October 20, 2011.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited at the beginning of the meeting.

**Present:** R.Manville, Bower, Jenks, L.Manville, Holmes, Thorsen, Soper, and Stapleton.

**Absent:** none

**Guests:** Emily Votruba, Carolee Ness, Ken Bonney, Steve & Lou Laske, Art Melendez, Jennifer Wilkens, Jon Drury, Lee Blahnik, Connie Manke, Marcia Stobie and .

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Holmes supported by Jenks to approve the minutes from the September 15, 2011, regular meeting. Yeas - 7.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Motion by Jenks supported by L.Manville to approve the proposed agenda. Yeas - 7.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Marcia Stobie said that a new County Administrator as been selected. She said his name is Chris Olson and he is from Bear Lake. Stobie said that the former Equalization Director, Tom Longanbach, has changed his mind and is returning to his job in Equalization.

Lee Blahnik, a resident on Furnace Avenue/M-168, asked the Council to please do something about the excessive speed on M-168. R.Manville said that the Village is aware of the problem but until MDOT turns the road over to the Village there's nothing we can do. Jon Drury, also a resident in that area, also expressed his concerns. Several different suggestions were made for possible solutions to the problem. Stapleton said that he would like to sit down with Blahnik and Drury and see if they could come up with a solution.

**Correspondence:**

A copy of a letter sent to 10 dumpster owners requesting that they enclose their dumpsters by May 15, 2012. R.Manville said there had been several complaints about exposed dumpsters. He said enclosing dumpsters was addressed in the Village's ZO.

A copy of the proposal from Williams & Bay Portable Restrooms was included in the packets. There will be a comparison in the Spring between Williams and the former Vendor to see which way to go for the upcoming season.

**APPROVAL OF BILLS:**

L.Manville said that an August invoice for \$553.88 for the Solstice Festival would be included with the bills for September.

The receipt report showed a total of \$33,326.36. Motion by L.Manville supported by Holmes to approve the bills for September in the amount of \$57,070.44 in accounting, \$553.88 in Solstice, \$1,161.39 in Parks & Rec and \$11,089.61 in payroll for a total of \$69,875.32. Yeas - 7.

Department heads were heard from.

Ken Bonney asked if the LSS was going to remain open for the winter. The last event scheduled is for November 26<sup>th</sup>. Bonney said that he will pull the new board walk up in the middle of November. He said that the Council had been given copies and bids for signs in all of the parks. Additional proposals will be sought. Bonney said that there were wood chips available for Village residents at the DPW staging yard. He also said that Village residents could dump their leaves at the end of First Street. Holmes commended Bonney for the good job that he was doing. He said that he had really did a good job at the beach area. R.Manville also commended Bonney for the great job that he had done on the DPW staging area.

Bonney said that Bower had written for a grant from Consumers Energy for some new trees to replace some of the ones recently cut down in the Village. The Village will receive \$1,000 for 10 trees and the trees (red maples) have been ordered from Milarchs'. He said they need to be planted by November 13th.

**Water/Sewer/BLUA:** Jenks said that the audit had been completed for BLUA. She thanked the Village for not complaining about BLUA raising the rates. She said that Frankfort had been very unhappy with the new rates. Holmes said that another operator would soon be starting at BLUA.

**P&R:** L.Manville said she had attended the September P&R meeting. She said they are working on a budget and goals for coming year. L.Manville asked about specific guidelines for P&R. She said that revisions to the by-laws will be made in the future. L.Manville said that it is planned that all of the playground equipment from Anderson Park be replaced. She said that the propellers at the Mini Pond had been repainted by Jen Wilkens. L.Manville said that new officers were elected and memberships renewed. She said the new officers would take over January 12, 2012. (President - Melendez, Vice President - Confer and Secretary - Wilkens).

**Beach:** R.Manville asked about all of the algae in the water at the beach. He said it was a big problem. Thorsen said he will do some investigating with some of his sources.

**Presidents Report:** R.Manville said that he had attended the ribbon cutting ceremony at the new South Elberta Dunes Natural Area. He thanked all those involved in the acquisition of the property. R.Manville said that he had been asked to form a Management Plan Committee for the property. He volunteered himself and asked that anyone interested contact him after the meeting.

R.Manville said that the Village had received letters from property owners adjacent to the proposed “dog park” at Anderson Park. The letters were all negative concerning the proposed park. R.Manville suggested that other options can be looked into. One option would be behind the Community Building.

**Budget Committee:** L.Manville discussed the employee’s health plan. She said that there recently was a new law enacted that will start January 1, 2012, concerning health benefits in the public sector. L.Manville said that according to MML there were three options: a hard cap that limits the coverage for a single employee to \$5000 per year; an 80/20 - the employer pays 80% and the employee pays 20%; and the Council can vote to opt out completely. She said that non-compliance will result in cutting off State revenues. L.Manville asked Bower about the HRA (reimbursement plan) currently in use. Bower said that for the past several years the employees had voluntarily gone with a higher deductible to save the Village money. She said there had been a big savings. L.Manville asked who paid the reimbursements. Bower said that the Village did and had not had many reimbursements except when Laura Manville was very ill this year. R.Manville said that the Village is currently in the middle of their health year and the renewal doesn’t come up until September of 2012. He said that options and plans can be discussed in August. L.Manville would like to discuss the health care at the budget planning. R.Manville said that would be fine.

**Municipal Buildings:** K.Bonney said the doors for the LSS will be delivered on Friday.

**AGENDA:**

1.D/A Tall Grass and Weed Ordinance. The Council and many audience members discussed at length the pros and cons of the proposed ordinance. K.Holmes said that he was for the ordinance. Soper felt that an ordinance wasn’t needed. Stapleton suggested that an ordinance that wasn’t as specific but vaguer would be a better choice. The Council decided to table the lawn ordinance until the November meeting and have a public hearing preceding the regular meeting.

2.D/A Meeting Date Changes - December and January. R.Manville asked the Council to consider changing the meeting dates for December and January. He explained that both he and Stapleton are involved in the Highschool basketball program. R.Manville said the two meeting dates were conflicting with the game dates. Motion by L.Manville supported by Jenks to change the dates to the Mondays preceding the Thursday dates - Monday, December 12 and Monday, January 16. Yeas - 7.

**Public Comment.**

Several audience members thanked the Council for considering the “dog park”.

Motion to adjourn was accepted.

Sharyn Bower, Village Clerk