

**VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING
7:00 P.M., MARCH 1, 2021**

After calling the meeting to order, President Kaufman led the Pledge of Allegiance. The Clerk called the roll, with the following members present: Blunier, Leitch, Leman, Menold, Newman, Parrott – 6.

PUBLIC HEARING – None.

PRESENTATIONS AND SPECIAL REPORTS – President Kaufman gave a statement with an update on the Natural Gas pricing situation. He explained how the pipeline serving Morton has implemented operational flow orders and hourly restrictions due to the extreme weather. During this event, traders pushed prices to levels never seen before including Panhandle Eastern Pipeline, the one that serves Morton. These prices were at levels extremely higher than ever seen before. During the event, the Village spent over \$4.5 million for the month of February alone – under normal circumstances the Village spends approximately \$4.3 million for the entire winter. Fortunately, the Village is a non-profit public utility with \$13.8 million in the gas fund which comes from saved money from the citizens over the years that gets reinvested into the gas department and the community. The Village hopes to come up with a plan to offset these excess costs to the citizens – the bill will be received later this week and the full impact will be known at that time. The Board then intends to come back next week with a plan to offset financial impact to the Morton customers. President Kaufman thanked several state elected officials for their attention to this matter and expressed the Village’s support for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission’s efforts to determine where the market manipulation occurred that led to these extreme prices. The Village plans to fully pursue any recovery costs for the \$3.5 million that would be leaving the Village in the absence of any investigation findings or judgements. He thanked the businesses and citizens for their conservation efforts and noted that this likely saved \$2-3 million and would’ve resulted in a \$7-8 million total bill.

President Kaufman then announced that ALDI is planning on building a store on the corner of N. Morton and Courtland Ave and welcomed them to town. He noted that the staff and ALDI have been coordinating on this and that while ALDI plans to start building soon, they do still have some due diligence to do on their end. He noted that Morton is 100% debt-free, has the lowest sales and property taxes in the area, and the best infrastructure as well.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Leigh Ann Brown with the Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Council thanked the Village for their work and updates on the gas issue and gave some updates on upcoming events. Meet the Candidates information will be released beginning March 16 and 17. The 2021 Pumpkin Festival will be held September 15-18. Community Clean-Up Day will be held on April 22 which coincides with Earth Day.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes.
 - 1. Regular Meeting – February 15, 2021
- B. Approval of Bills

Trustee Newman moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion was seconded by Trustee Parrott and approved with the following roll call vote:

Yes: Blunier, Leitch, Leman, Menold, Newman, Parrott – 6.
No: None.
Absent: None.

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR

Administrator Smick announced that the Village launched the Code Red emergency notification system this week, and asked that if any citizens did not receive a preliminary message and are interested in getting enrolled, they can enroll by visiting the Village’s website and clicking on the Code Red section or can call Village Hall for assistance as well.

VILLAGE TRUSTEES

BLUNIER – Nothing to report.

LEITCH – Nothing to report.

LEMAN – Nothing to report.

MENOLD – Nothing to report.


NEWMAN – Trustee Newman thanked the staff and President Kaufman for all of their hard efforts during the natural gas pricing issue.

PARROTT – Nothing to report.


ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board, Trustee Menold moved to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Trustee Blunier and followed by a unanimous voice vote.

ATTEST:



VILLAGE CLERK



PRESIDENT

