

**VILLAGE OF LAKEWOOD**  
**MINUTES OF THE VILLAGE BOARD MEETING**  
**APRIL 13, 2021**

The Village Board Meeting was called to order by President Stephan at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. Present were Trustees Alexander, Augustine, Berman, Eddy, Odom, and Ulrich. Also present via Zoom, were Chief Administrative Officer Jeannine Smith; Deputy Clerk Karen Crowe; Village Attorney Michael Smoron; and many members of the public.

President Stephan remarked that Tricia Babischkin asked why the Village budget and Lake Patrol budget were being voted on separately. Actually, the Lake Patrol budget was approved separately two years ago when the new patrol boat was purchased. This is a courtesy to Crystal Lake so they can add the Lake Patrol to the proposed budget when voting on their budget.

President Stephan also mentioned a potential 50 home development on Bard Road near Turnberry with a potential \$900,000 in tap-on fees.

President Stephan mentioned that this was a pretty harsh campaign with bullying character assassination. There were repeated attempts to blow someone else's candle out, this does not make yours shine any brighter.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Michelle Hartwig commented regarding President Stephan and her daughter. Ms. Hartwig lives next door to President Stephan. Former Police Chief Todd Richardson told her that there was a complaint that someone was tearing up RedTail Golf Course on a mini-bike. There were repeated threats to attack a family member with a baseball bat because that is how it would be handled in Chicago. This happened nearly a year ago. She was never notified of this complaint. There needs to be a full investigation on this. She is disgusted that we were never notified of this incident. Someone was sticking up for President Stephan's actions. First off, that is not what happened. Someone was playing in her backyard with a new moped. This is being spun by a Lakewood official that our family deserves to be beaten by a baseball bat.

President Stephan remarked that this has never happened. The call that was put into the Police Department was not from me. The call was put in from someone who lives on the golf course on the third hole. I wasn't even home at the time. Todd Richardson was put on the Brady List for his actions within the Village.

Ms. Hartwig commented that she knows that this happened, that is President Stephan's character. He has threatened to shoot their dog with a gun. He has run into her yard shouting he daughter is gay. She knows this to be true. And it is unbelievable that the Village is brushing this under the table. She doesn't want to say anything else to President Stephan. She doesn't believe him.

**Village Board Meeting Minutes**  
**April 13, 2021**  
**Page Two of Five**

President Stephan mentioned that there were incidents regarding loud music. This happened four years ago. He hasn't talked to Mrs. Hartwig's daughter since that time.

April Runge commented that she really didn't have anything to say and just wanted to make sure that residents that were muted and had the ample time to speak their mind. She appreciates all Village residents. She has no questions.

Tricia Babischkin wanted to discuss the Budget Workshop. In the past, the Budget Workshop was interactive and the public was open to comment. Trustee Elect were allowed to participate. The Village will live with this budget for the next year. It would be polite and the right way to allow an open conversation for comments and questions. I have sent questions to the CAO in advance and only some of these questions were answered. In 2019 the Lake Patrol Budget was not addressed alone. I see an error regarding health insurance in the General Fund, will this be corrected. The carry over number can't be tied to a single financial paperwork at all, should it be matching the cash and cash equivalents from the audits? Because it doesn't and it greatly changes the expenditure to a balances percentage. I have a question about the Haligus Road Project. Is the grant a reimbursement grant? Or are we going to be granted the funds prior to the start of work?. I've got an honest question because it's a reimbursement grant, which means we have to front the money and what's not in the budget is where the money is going to get fronted from. That's an important question. That's a fiduciary duty of all Trustees.

Tricia Babischkin commented she has asked questions. It's obvious that they won't be entertained. It's important that we have discussions within the Village and part of the budgeting process should be a conversation that is open to the public.

A resident stated that there are public questions that should be publicly acknowledged. The fact that people want answers to legitimate questions. It's how you handle yourself in such a way that voted you out of office, and now you're upset. And that is punishing the rest of the public who would like to hear the answers to their questions.

Tricia Babischkin added one more comment. Todd Richardson was not placed on the Brady list. So what Mr. Stephan said was untrue. Please clear the air and get the record correct. Now, I will no longer take any more time during public comments because I think Jason McMahon has a public comment that he would like to share.

Jason McMahon stated the complaint about Todd Richardson was rejected by the State's Attorney and he was not placed on the Brady List. The Budget Agenda stated the public can observe and comment. Attorney Smoron should have stepped up to protect the public and keep

**Village Board Meeting Minutes**  
**April 13, 2021**  
**Page Three of Five**

the meeting open the way it was supposed to be. The board continues to show why 80% of Lakewood voters rejected them with the largest municipal turnout in McHenry County. At the last meeting Trustee Berman, without any evidence, accused three former employees of pocketing TIF funds. While massive amounts of information proves this is simply not true. CEO Smith violated the Public Records Act in illegally deleting my entire Trustee email box. My email box contains evidence for this investigation that would have helped exonerate the accused. Will President Stephen be investigated? He voted on the dissolution of the TIF, along with the dispersal of funds to residents. This is contained in public minutes, or will the Board again attempt to alter history and change those minutes to fit their narrative? Will Attorney Smoron and ZRFM be investigated? They wrote the ordinances documents and oversaw the unwinding of the TIF guiding the Village board and Village staff. Will the County Treasurer be investigated? She calculated the refunds. This is complete insanity on Trustee Berman's part if he believes there was a criminal act. He should provide evidence or shut his mouth. If he believes there was an error, he should put his efforts into correcting the error. Since we're discussing state statute, where are the regular meeting minutes required by OMA public body shall approve minutes of its open meetings within 30 days or at the second subsequent regular meeting. The last set of meeting minutes were approved on March 23. For the February 23, 2021 meeting. March 9, 2021 minutes are due to be approved today. Where are they? Is this an issue with your illegal Deputy Clerk not being able to sign them without an actual Clerk? Maybe try worrying about your violations, clean up your house before you start digging for the past. 80% of voters rebuked your report behavior yet you're all here continuing to weaponized what's left of your authority. Good riddance. You're all a huge disappointment to this Village.

Michael Babischkin asked what Trustee Ulrich meant when he said people are brave over the internet. You have bullied and harassed residents about being tough over the internet. How many times have you cried about being threatened. You talk about hiding behind authority or walls. You need to stop bullying the residents and start answering questions.

Janice Hansen inquired about the lack of minutes on the agenda. I realize they are not finished, but I was never behind in having the minutes finished before the next meeting.

Deputy Clerk Crowe stated that software was purchased recently and this will make thing go a lot faster.

A resident stated that he is confused. You said people are really brave over the internet, but you are still holding the meetings virtually, instead of actually doing it in person when all the other towns around us are doing in person

**Village Board Meeting Minutes**  
**April 13, 2021**  
**Page Four of Five**

Shelby Younge thanked the Village of Lakewood for coming out and voting. She thrilled and happy because we know the right now we are in a better place. The Village has spoken. She thinks it is amazing and is proud of the Village you couldn't do a better job to show us that we made the absolute right decision.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** The following were considered and enacted on a single motion by Trustee Alexander, seconded by Trustee Eddie:

**APPROVAL OF BILL LISTS:** Accounts Payable Invoices Dated April 14, 2021 in the Amount of \$128,612.08 and Accounts Payable PrePaid Invoices Dated March, 2021 in the Amount of \$30,887.92

Voting Aye: Trustees Alexander, Augustine, Berman, Eddy, and Ulrich. Voting Nay: Trustee Odom. Motion declared carried.

President Stephan acknowledged a letter of appreciation for Officer Sean McGrath.

**RECOMMENDATION TO DENY A VARIANCE FOR 324 WARWICK LANE (PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION TO DENY PETITION OF MARCH 15, 2021):** Brian Murphy, petitioner for the variance, commented that after attending the Planning and Zoning Hearing they reduced the roof pitch, the basement to get the home less intrusive to the neighbors and become more in compliance with the neighborhood. The petitioner will adjust the plans and go back to the Planning and Zoning Commission at that time.

Trustee Berman, seconded by Trustee Ulrich, moved to deny a variance for 324 Warwick Lane. Voting Aye: Trustees Alexander, Augustine, Berman, Eddy, Odom, and Ulrich. Voting Nay: None. Motion declared carried.

**RECOMMENDATION TO DENY VARIANCE FOR 2120 SOUTH SHORE DRIVE (PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION TO DENY PETITION MARCH 29, 2021):** Petitioner is going to take the recommendations from the Planning and Zoning Commission and resubmit variance request at that time.

Trustee Ulrich, seconded by Eddy, moved to deny a variance for 2120 South Shore Drive. Voting Aye: Trustees Alexander, Augustine, Berman, Eddy, Odom, and Ulrich. Voting Nay: None. Motion declared carried.

**APPROVAL OF FY 21 BUDGET AMENDMENT AS PRESENTED:** This amendment is going to be deferred to the next meeting to make adjustments and additions.

**Village Board Meeting Minutes**  
**April 13, 2021**  
**Page Five of Five**

**APPROVAL OF FY 22 LAKE PATROL FUND BUDGET AS PRESENTED:** This draft Lake Patrol Fund Budget for FY 21/22 is to give the City Crystal Lake the opportunity to review proposed decal fees at their next Board Meeting. It was the general consensus of the Village Board to give this draft budget to the City of Crystal Lake as a courtesy.

**AUTHORIZATION OF AN INVESTIGATION OF TIF FUNDS:** Trustee Berman commented that this topic is very political and emotional. He believes that the Village will be doing its due diligence with an event that happened and appears to have violated the law. An Ordinance was passed which directed how the TIF was to be dissolved and how the funds were to be paid back. It explicitly states in that ordinance that excess funds were to be paid back to the McHenry County Tax Collector to be dispersed to the tax districts. Nowhere in our own Villages Ordinance, did it say that we could give that money back to the residents of the Village. It appears that the law was violated both on a state level and we violated our own Ordinance. We need to look into this and figure out what happened, if for no other reason than to prevent something like this from ever happening again.

Trustee Alexander who lives in Woodland Hills questioned why the final lift was done to Woodland Hills Drive before 85% of the subdivision was finished. Any defects will be passed to the Village instead of the builder. Things need to be addressed to move forward in the future.

Trustee Alexander, seconded by Trustee Augustine, moved to authorize an investigation of TIF Funds. Voting Aye: Trustees Alexander, Augustine, Berman, Eddy, and Ulrich. Voting Nay: Trustee Odom. Motion declared carried.

**REPORTS:** Trustee Berman commented on future development within the Village. Fifty extra homes will generate impact fees, tax revenue, and sewer and water bills. If this plays out, this will benefit the entire Village.

President Stephan remarked that this Board inherited a \$12 million debt from the water filtration plant, which at the time the Village needed. For the first ten years, the village only paid interest on this debt. The Village took advantage of low interest on the debt. The bond debt should be paid off in 14 years at the same yearly payment. Also, the Village has maintained its AAA Bond Rating.

With nothing more to address, Trustee Ulrich, seconded by Trustee Augustine, moved to adjourn the meeting. Voice Vote: All Ayes. Motion declared carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Karen Crowe  
Deputy Clerk