

# Village of Pentwater

65 S Hancock St., PO Box 622 Pentwater, Michigan 49449  
(231) 869-8301 Website: [www.pentwatervillage.org](http://www.pentwatervillage.org)

## Regular Meeting of Village Council October 09, 2023 Park Place 310 North Rush Street

### I. CALL TO ORDER

President Jeff Hodges called the regular meeting of the Pentwater Village Council to order at 6:00 P.M. from Park Place Meeting Center at 310 North Rush Street.

### II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### III. ROLL CALL

Present: Dave Bluhm, Jared Griffis, Dan Nugent, Kathy O'Connor, Don Palmer and Jeff Hodges.  
Absent: None.

Also, present: Village Manager Chris Brown, Clerk/Treasurer Rande Listerman, Police Chief Laude Hartrum & Zoning Administrator/Rec Director Kate Anderson & Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Renee VanNortwick.

### IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS – On the agenda

*Heather Douglas, 818 1<sup>st</sup> Street* – The City Feasibility Study recommended the Appendix 1c. Pentwater Village Council may contract with a consulting firm to validate Financials and Pro's & Con's. As I understand it this was also a recommendation from the City Feasibility Study Committee. PR and Outreach is the process of promoting or pitching info to people. Consulting is the business of giving expert advice or providing knowledge and/or guidance. Consultants are independent of the businesses they work for. As a Village taxpayer I prefer the finances to go towards a non-bias research consultant, such as the Citizens Research Council. Instead of PR and Outreach. Thank you.

### V. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

President Hodges requested an approval of the agenda. *Motion* by Griffis supported by O'Connor to approve the agenda with one addition under XIII. New Business, Item I. Antler Bar use of Public Property.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: 6. No: 0. Absent: 0. Motion approved 6 - 0.

### VI. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes: Regular Council Meeting on September 11, 2023.
- B. Disbursements Village: Accounts Payable - \$979,213.73; Payroll - \$114,111.32.
- C. Disbursements from Township: Fire Department - \$5,783.17.
- D. Commission & Board Reports: Planning Commission, and DDA.
- E. Requests for Village Property use:  
None.

*Motion* by Palmer, supported by O'Connor to approve the consent agenda items as

presented.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: Bluhm, Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer, and Hodges.

No: 0. Absent: 0. Consent agenda approved 6 - 0.

## **VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

A. Comments from the President.

Our hearts go out to Israel. Ee should be very concerned about what is going on in our country.

Our thoughts and prayers are with our American Citizens missing over there too.

## **VIII. CORRESPONDENCE**

*All correspondence directed to the Village Clerk is received and filed and emailed on to the Village Council.*

A. The following citizens sent correspondence to the Village Clerk for the Village Council.

None.

## **IX. VILLAGE DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

*Reports are in the meeting packet and posted on [www.pentwatervillage.org](http://www.pentwatervillage.org).*

A. Village Manager - Report submitted in writing.

B. Clerk/Treasurer - Report submitted in writing.

*Motion* by Palmer, supported by Bluhm to receive the September 2023 financials as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: Bluhm, Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer and Hodges.

No: 0. ABSENT: 0. Motion approved 6 - 0.

C. Police Chief – Report submitted in writing.

D. Fire Chief – Report submitted in writing.

E. Zoning Administrator – Report submitted in writing.

F. Rec Director – Report submitted in writing.

G. Park Place – Report submitted in writing.

## **X. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. Building & Grounds – No meeting, no report.

B. Finances – No meeting, no report.

C. Ordinances – No meeting, no report.

D. Personnel – Minutes submitted in writing.

E. Planning/Economic Development – Minutes submitted in writing.

F. Service – Minutes submitted in writing.

## **XI. PUBLIC HEARING**

None.

## **XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. Request For Proposal - Outreach and Communication Director.

Discussion was held regarding a hybrid option for the Outreach and Communication Consultant. Discussion was also held regarding the City Feasibility Study Committee, page 29, Appendix 1c. Pentwater Village Council may contract with consulting firm to validate Financials and Pro's & Con's. The Planning and Economic Development Committee will meet with Village Manager Chris Brown to create an RFP and bring a recommendation back to the Village Council.

B. Appointment to the Village Council.

As most people are aware I have known for several months that one of our council trustees was considering resigning. Last month, on the day of the Council meeting, I received the letter of resignation in the morning. It was presented at the meeting to the Council, so it did not give the board much time. During the months she was contemplating her resignation I tried to keep her involved because I believe she has a lot to offer. She is passionate about Pentwater. Because I had three months to think about this and Michelle also made a recommendation on her replacement. I followed up on the recommendation and received an answer that this person was interested in serving. I do not just appoint anyone. My position as President is to recommend to the Village Council and the Council as a whole approves the recommendation. I take my recommendations seriously. I don't pick people that think like I do or will do what I want them to do. No one is beholden to me. My job as the President is to recommend the best people to serve the Village. I believe I pick individuals that are independent thinkers, intelligent, have experience, a love for Pentwater and a willingness to serve and be involved in the community. I have done that and will continue to do that. So, I am not prepared to make a recommendation today. I guess based on the comments I have heard I am supposed to pick the perfect person that 800 people agree on.

The appointment to the Village Council is postponed until the November Council meeting.

## **XIII. NEW BUSINESS**

A. 2022-2023 Annual Audit Review.

Ian Reeves from Gabridge & Company presented the 2022-2023 Annual Audit Review to the Village Council. The Auditor's opinion letter gave the Village of Pentwater an "Unmodified audit" which is the highest opinion a Village can receive. At the end of the fiscal year the general fund had a fund balance \$1,323,881 or approximately 95.2% of the total general fund yearly expenditures. The total revenue increase for all Village funds was \$222,816.

*Motion* by Griffis, supported by Palmer to accept the 2022-2023 Audit review from Gabridge & Company.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: Bluhm, Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer, and Hodges.  
No: 0. Absent: 0. Motion approved 6 - 0

B. 2023 Michigan Municipal Treasurers Association Service Award.  
President Jeff Hodges shared with the Council and the public that Rande Listerman the Village Clerk/Treasurer received the "2023 Michigan Municipal Treasurers Association Board of Directors Service Award" at the Annual MMTA Conference. He read the inscription on the plaque which honored Rande for being the first President that served two terms on the MMTA Board. Also honored Rande for sharing all her experience and knowledge with other MMTA members and being the "go-to" resource for Village-related questions.

C. Pentwater Sportsfishing Association Donation.  
*Motion* by Palmer, supported by Nugent to acknowledge the Pentwater Sports Fishing Association support and contribution of \$1,000 towards the Fish Cleaning Station.

Voice Vote: Yes: Bluhm, Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer, and Hodges.  
No: 0. Absent: 0. Motion approved 6 - 0.

D. Sidewalk Capital Improvement Plan.  
Discussion was held about a Capital Improvement Plan for sidewalk replacement. The Service Committee will work with the Village Manager Chris Brown on a plan for the next budget cycle in 2024-2025.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: Bluhm, Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer, and Hodges.  
No: 0. Absent: 0. Motion approved 6 - 0.

E. Permission to engage our Financial and Bond Consultants in regard to the Drinking Water Source Revolving Fund Grant.

*Motion* by Palmer, supported by Griffis to give permission to engage our Financial and Bond Consultants regarding the Water Well Source Project.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: Bluhm, Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer, and Hodges.  
No: 0. Absent: 0. Motion approved 6 - 0.

F. Transfer of Funds after 2022-2023 Final Audit.  
*Motion* by Palmer, supported by Griffis to approve the transfer of the following funds after the 2022-2023 Audit: ARPA in the amount of \$94,024.43 plus, interest to the MI Class General account, to close out the Township Sewer transfer \$108,532.43, plus, interest to the Village Sewer fund

Roll Call Vote: Yes: Bluhm, Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer, and Hodges.  
No: 0. Absent: 0. Motion approved 6 - 0.

G. Planning Commission, DDA and Zoning Board of Appeals Appointments.  
*Motion* by Griffis, supported by Bluhm to approve the appointment of Bruce Koorndyk To the Planning Commission with a term ending September 2026.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: Bluhm, Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer, and Hodges.  
No: 0. Absent: 0. Motion approved 6 - 0.

*Motion* by Palmer, supported by Nugent to approve the appointment of Jonathan Witt, Michael Haack and James Henley to the DDA for a term ending December 2027.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: Bluhm, Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer, and Hodges.  
No: 0. Absent: 0. Motion approved 6 - 0.

*Motion* by Nugent, supported by O'Connor to approve the appointment of Lisa McKinney to the Zoning Board of Appeals with a term ending November 2026.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: Bluhm, Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer, and Hodges.  
No: 0. Absent: 0. Motion approved 6 - 0.

H. Resolution No. 2023-10-20 Purchase Agreement – 330 South Hancock Street.  
*Motion* by Palmer, supported by O'Connor to approve Resolution No. 2023-10-20 Purchase Agreement – 330 South Hancock Street.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: Bluhm, Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer, and Hodges.  
No: 0. Absent: 0. Motion approved 6 - 0.

I. Antler Bar – Use of Public Land

*Motion* by Palmer, supported by Nugent to postpone the decision of the use of public land by the Antler Bar until the next Council Meeting on November 13, 2023.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: Bluhm, Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer.  
No: 0. Absent: 0. Abstain: Jeff Hodges. Motion approved 5 – 0 - 1.

#### **XIV. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

*Amy LaBarge, 605 6<sup>th</sup> Street* – I would like to mention that on January 29, 2023, meeting the Council approved allowing the public to speak on a zoom call I have noticed in recent meetings the Zoom screen is not on the tv, and it was just turned off now. The people that are on Zoom are muted so they do not have an opportunity to speak during Public Comment.

*Rande Listerman, Clerk/Treasurer* – The Zoom call is available. We do not place the Zoom call on the television screen. Renee is monitoring and chatting with those on Zoom throughout the Council meeting on her laptop. If they have a public comment during that time, they are instructed to use the raise your hand symbol or chat and Renee will let the President know then they are unmuted to speak. Over the last several Council meetings no one has been requested to make a public comment.

*Jean Russel, 5545 Wayne Road, Pentwater Twp.* – I know you have gone ahead and sold 330 South Hancock. If that were not to work out. Remember there are citizens in Pentwater that would be happy to purchase the building.

*Paul Degregorio, 270 Sands Street* – With the proposed building height of 47 feet along Hancock Street I suppose if anyone decided to build they would want condos up above. Can our sewer system handle a lot of extra housing?

*Dan Hooker, 588 6<sup>th</sup> Street* – I appreciate the job everyone is doing on the board. I just want to remind you as the Village grows planning will become very important. I was born here. My folks owned businesses here. There has been a lot of focus on Hancock Street, but it seems like the streets beyond Hancock Street have been neglected. As our village gets older, I noticed folks walking in the streets. I would like to see some foresight and planning on how the sidewalks will come about. I believe that is the best idea. Make them a little wider. Let's add more character to the village than Main Street. Second point I want to make you folks were elected and you took it upon yourselves to make decisions, sometimes they are not easy. I know there are two different reports about becoming a city. One you authorized and another was done by the Township. I think you have the information you need. If you don't I think what you got on your hands is a hard sell. So, it will be up to you whether you want to go forward anyway. I question why this became an issue. I don't know if a petition was circulated asking the citizens if they want to become a city. Right now, I think the information you have is the information you need in order to present this. Let folks know this is a long laborious journey and I wish you the best.

*Mark Trierweiler, 6378 Iroquois Road, Pentwater Twp.* – I have three comments. First you indicated you always make recommendations to the Council based on the best qualified candidate. Yet through the use or abuse of the ad hoc committee that is exactly what you did in the case of the Short-Term Rental Committee where the majority of the committee are Short-Term renters. Since I have never heard anyone say we don't have enough Short-Term rentals. And since Pentwater has one of the highest Short-Term Rentals in western Michigan it negatively affects all aspects of life for people that come to Pentwater or people that consider Pentwater to be their hometown like me. I would like to request that you retrack that statement. My second comment has to do with the survey I conducted of the leadership team at the Pentwater Township. I asked them three questions. 1. How important is the relationships with the people of Pentwater Township? 100% said it was very important. 2. How has the relationships changed since you became President? 100% said worse or much worse. 3. How has the relationship changed since Chris Brown became City Manager? 100% said worse or much worse. I just wondered about fostering bad relationships with the most important stake holder group for the Village is representing the interest of the people that elected you. My last comment has to do with the hiring of an Outreach and Communication Coordinator. I agree with Kathy's comment about what expertise the Village needs regarding the city proposal. As a former PR President for a 70-billion-dollar company I would say if you have to sell the city proposal to voters I would give you the same advice I give my clients "If you have to sell an idea to voters maybe you should reconsider whether that is a good proposal."

*Glean Beavis, 703 South Oaks Street* – I was not going to speak at all. I would like to make a comment with respect to Mr. Trierweiler comment and the discussion about 100% of the people being surveyed and responding a certain way. There is no number on how many people responded and I can tell you for sure that not all Township people who were given that survey responded to that survey. I just want to make it very clear that is not speaking for the entire Township when those remarks were made.

*Ron Beeber, 605 6<sup>th</sup> Street* – The two cost issues are the sewer problems whatever they are and the repair of Longbridge and what that cost might be the recent Township minutes said that a temporary fix might be \$20,000 but what will the permanent fix for Longbridge be and if you are a Village taxpayer paying into the Township what would it do that I am already paying for three docks in the Village, the Marina, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and 4<sup>th</sup> Street docks. I don't know if I need to pay for the Longbridge dock to the Township. I am paying for sewers, We talked about sewers beside scrutinizing whether Rande and her team can handle elections and send out tax disbursements. I think what else that should be looked at is what are the other possible emerging issues that expose all the village taxpayers to the unknown extra costs that might not be in their \$600,000 budget this year but 2, 3, 4 years from now could be a big number. That is why Township taxpayers who live outside the village are really worried about the 44% of the money they get to pay the operating cost every year will disappear, and it puts more of a burden on the budget. I expect they are alarmed by that. If I had lived in a neighborhood in the Township that had a sewer problem that I would be on the hook for then I would definitely be worried about 35 to 44% of the money supporting the Township budget disappearing. So, everyone is involved in this for their own selfish interests. The Village taxpayer does not want to pay for things that we don't think we should pay for. People are trying to protect their jobs. Other people are looking at the costly issues. I asked when you look for someone to verify the numbers make sure they review the last 12 months and the next 12 months of the township minutes to factor the costs into the study.

*Heather Douglas, Township Treasurer, 818 1<sup>st</sup> Street* – I would like to reply to several of Ron Beeber comments. First, of all, no one in the Village or the Township would have to be charged for anybody's sewer except for the people using the sewer system. That is how it would work. If there were problems with sewer which there are not right now. We would charge the people using the sewer system and no one else. We have not discussed raising taxes for the Longbridge dock repair as well. I just want to make that clear. That is not something that anyone is talking about. Thank you.

#### **XV. COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

*Trustee Jared Griffis* – Apologized for not being able to attend the Service Committee meeting which left Don as the lone ranger.

#### **XVI. CLOSED SESSION**

None.

#### **XVII. ADJOURNMENT**

President Jeff Hodges adjourned the meeting 8:09 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

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Rande Listerman, MiCPT, CPFA, CPFIM, MiPMC  
Clerk/Treasurer

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Date