Minutes

August 5, 2024

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STATE OF ILLINOIS)

COUNTY OF JACKSON)

VILLAGE OF DESOTO)

Minutes

Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

August 5, 2024

President Eric Schuler called the first regular monthly meeting of the De Soto Village Board of Trustees to order at 7:00 PM. Paula Parks was present to record the minutes.

Present: Brian Gleason Fern Martin

Eric Schuler Jennifer Morgan

Cristy Desormeaux Rachel Alstat

Absent: Tony Rushing

Motion made by Cristy Desormeaux, seconded by Fern Martin, to dispense with the reading of the minutes and to approve them. Motion carried.

Motion made by Brian Gleason, seconded by Jennifer Morgan, to approve the July expense report. Motion carried.

Motion made by Cristy Desormeaux, seconded by Rachel Alstat, to pay the list of bills. Upon roll call vote: Brian Gleason – Yes; Fern Martin – Yes; Jennifer Morgan – Yes; Cristy Desormeaux – Yes; Rachel Alstat – Yes. Motion Carried.

Sue Jennings was present to contest the May/June water bill she had received on her mother’s house stating that they had used 13,460 gallons of water. No one was living in the house, and no one has lived in the house in the past 10 years. They did have an estate sale for a day and a half and had washed a few items. Mrs. Jennings stated that there was no way they could have used that much water in the month. Mrs. Jennings had paid the minimum bill every month over the past 10 years. In this period of time, they had power washed the house three times and washed a few dishes or other items. During those months, the meter reading had been zero usage. They shut the water off in the house when they were not using it. Mrs. Jennings did not dispute the water usage, but she believed that the meter had not been read properly over the past 10 years and had finally caught up when properly read. Mrs. Jennings felt that they had already paid for the water usage since it should have been assessed in the months the water was actually used.

Motion made by Jennifer Morgan, seconded by Rachel Alstat, to consider Sue Jennings’ water bill at 307 E. Douglas St. as a billing error, to excuse whatever reconnect or late fees she had been charged, and to charge the minimum bill for that month as there have been no issues with payment in the past 10 years. Upon roll call vote: Brian Gleason – Yes; Fern Martin – Yes; Jennifer Morgan – Yes; Cristy Desormeaux – Yes; Rachel Alstat – Yes. Motion Carried.

Heather Fred was present to discuss problems with not receiving the water bill before the bill is due. She said she does not have time to call the village hall, and she cannot access her water bill any other way. She understood that it is a postal service issue. She asked if the Village could provide a secondary way to access water bill information.

President Schuler explained that the Village has looked into other billing options, and it would take a massive upgrade with the system the Village currently has. It is very expensive, and he is not sure the Village has the funds to move forward with the new system.

There were several other residents present to discuss the same problem. President Schuler pointed out that there is not a quick fix, and the Village is looking into other options for getting online access to the water bills. In the meantime, water customers will have to call the village hall between the hours of 8:00 AM and 3:00 PM to get the amount on their water bill. The bills are always due on the 15th of the month. A message will be sent on the All Call via text reminding customers when the water bills are due. One resident asked about waiving late fees when customers don’t get their bills before the due date until the problem is solved.

A Water Committee meeting was scheduled for August 9 at 5:00 PM to look into options for online access to water bills and to discuss late fees.

There were some residents present to discuss the electric supplier opt-out option with Homefield Energy. The purpose of the electric aggregation program is to try to get a lower electricity rate than Ameren’s rate. At this point, Ameren’s rate is lower than the Homefield Energy rate. An opt-out option was mailed to all customers on the Homefield rate. The Village has nothing to do with the opt-out choice and can only give the phone number to call Homefield to opt out. Customers can still opt out even if they did not choose to opt out when the notice came out. President Schuler explained that this is the first time in the ten plus years the Village has been part of the program that Ameren’s rate has been lower than the alternate supplier. Residents can opt out at any time.

Motion made by Jennifer Morgan, seconded by Cristy Desormeaux, to renew the annual agreement with Ronald Bandy to use his property for parking at the city park. Upon roll call vote: Brian Gleason – Yes; Fern Martin – Yes; Jennifer Morgan – Yes; Cristy Desormeaux – Yes; Rachel Alstat – Yes. Motion Carried.

Motion made by Cristy Desormeaux, seconded by Jennifer Morgan, to pass Resolution 2024-3 to accept the bid from Samron Midwest Contracting in the amount of $55,555.55 to repair the sidewalk at the school on E. Washington St. and upgrade some curbs for handicapped acceptability of which $17,450.00 cannot be paid with Motor Fuel Tax Funds. Upon roll call vote: Brian Gleason – Yes; Fern Martin – Yes; Jennifer Morgan – Yes; Cristy Desormeaux – Yes; Rachel Alstat – Yes. Motion Carried.

The school has agreed to pay $5,600 toward the cost of repairing and replacing the sidewalk by the school. The remaining cost of $11,850.00 will be paid from ARPA funds and Street funds.

Motion made by Fern Martin, seconded by Rachel Alstat, to approve the financial audit prepared by Rice Sullivan for the fiscal year beginning May 1, 2023 and ending April 30, 2024. Upon roll call vote: Brian Gleason – Yes; Fern Martin – Yes; Jennifer Morgan – Yes; Cristy Desormeaux – Yes; Rachel Alstat – Yes. Motion Carried.

The contract with Republic Services, Inc. for trash pickup expires September 30, 2024. Republic Services had submitted their proposed renewal contract. Trustee Morgan pointed out that the new contract would be mostly the same as before except for the rates. The General Committee will meet August 19 at 6:00 PM. to discuss the contract.

Jennifer Morgan moved to go into executive session at 8:55 PM, pursuant to *5ILCS 120/2(c)(3)*, to discuss a trustee position, and, pursuant to *5ILCS 120/2(c)(1)*, to discuss personnel. Upon roll call vote: Brian Gleason – Yes; Fern Martin – Yes; Jennifer Morgan – Yes; Cristy Desormeaux – Yes; Rachel Alstat – Yes. Motion Carried.

Motion made by Rachel Alstat, seconded to Jennifer Morgan, moved to come out of executive session at 9:14 PM. Upon roll call: Brian Gleason – Yes; Fern Martin – Yes; Jennifer Morgan – Yes; Cristy Desormeaux – Yes; Rachel Alstat – Yes. Motion Carried.

No action was taken.

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The next village board meeting will be held Monday, August 19, 2024, at 7:00 PM at the village hall.

Motion made by Cristy Desormeaux, seconded by Jennifer Morgan, to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 P.M. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula Parks

Village Clerk

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