

**Village of Camargo
Board Meeting Minutes
REGULAR SESSION
Monday, April 08, 2024**

The Village Board of the Village of Camargo met in Regular Session on Monday, April 08, 2024 at the Camargo Village Hall. The meeting was called to order by President Bart Dann at 6:00 pm. Roll call found the following trustees present: Nancy George, Jim Lansford, Jim Hardway (arrived at 6:10), Laura Miller (arrived at 6:21), and Gary Gilpin. Village Superintendent Kyle Raymer was also in attendance.

Public Comment:

Mr. Kenneth Crossman was present at President's Dann's request. Village Attorney Andrew Bequette reached out to Bart stating that he is leaving the private sector of law. He recommended Mr. Crossman, and stated that he came highly recommended. President Dann contacted Mr. Crossman, and asked him to attend the meeting. Mr. Crossman stated he would be happy to represent the Village of Camargo. He currently represents several villages, eleven townships, and thirty drainage districts. His office is located in Arthur. He explained that he is a one-man band, so to speak. He does not have a secretary or any sort of office staff. Therefore, he charges a flat-rate fee for the year. Based on the amount of work conducted this year, he will adjust next year's rates to cover the work needed. This year he will charge a rate of \$1500. He does not charge for phone calls and emails.

Kenny Cordes: Mr. Cordes was present, but had no business to conduct.

Gage Bailey: Mr. Bailey was present to inquire about a FOIA request he said he submitted regarding the complaints that have been made about him. Clerk Dann spoke up and stated she has never received a FOIA request from him, and if she had, she would have responded within five days - like the law states. Mr. Bailey retracted his statement and said he verbally requested said complaints from Mr. Dann at a previous board meeting. Mr. Dann and Board all explained to Mr. Bailey that any business conducted in a board meeting is recorded and all minutes are posted to the Village website. He can access those at any time.

Greg Miller: Mr. Miller spoke up, and he stated that he is present for his own business (see agenda); however, he employs Mr. Bailey. He would be happy to help facilitate an even ground between Gage and the Village.

Gage stated that he can't get one project done before receiving a violation notice about another project or receiving calls/messages from Bart about the neighborhood complaining. Gage then accused Bart of blackmailing him.

President Dann told Gage to hold it right there, that was not the case, and he was not being honest. He had a witness to the entire situation, pictural evidence of Mr. Bailey's wrong-doings,

and a witness to the conversation that was had between Bart and Gage. At that point, Bart asked Village Superintendent Kyle Raymer to please explain to the Board what happened.

Kyle stated that he was checking meters and noticed that the meter lid on Mr. Bailey's meter did not belong to him. He began looking around and noticed that the lid from Mr. Humphrey's meter was missing. Upon further inspection, he noticed that the meter ring at Mr. Bailey's was crushed. He took photos of the broken meter ring and the missing lid from Humphrey's meter. He then called Bart who met up with him and they both called Mr. Bailey. Via that phone conversation, Mr. Bailey admitted that he accidentally crushed the meter ring, and the meter lid fell into the pit. Instead of pulling his lid out, he "borrowed" Mr. Humphrey's. He did not cover the open hole at Mr. Humphrey's meter pit, he did not call Mr. Humphrey and advise or ask him about using the lid, and he did not call the Village and inform anyone of the crushed ring or the missing lid.

Bart called the Sheriff's Office and they verified that this is indeed theft (stealing the neighbor's meter lid) and criminal damage to property (crushing the ring and notifying no one about it). He called the attorney who stated Bart had every right to offer a deal to Mr. Bailey to possibly not press charges if he would comply with village ordinances and pay for the crushed ring. Kyle pulled the lid out of his pit and returned the other one to Mr. Humphrey's residence.

Gage stated he didn't do that and Bart was lying. Bart responded to Bailey and told him he was flat-out lying. John Humphrey's meter was missing, it was on his meter, and he spoke with Mr. Humphrey who knew nothing about it. Not to mention he left the meter pit open - uncovered, and a small child or animal could've fallen into that pit and gotten hurt very badly. Mr. Bailey responded by saying he didn't feel like pulling his meter lid out of the hole at that time. So he decided to borrow Humphrey's until the new meter ring came in. He stated he ordered one, and it is being shipped.

Jim Hardway told Mr. Bailey that we are constantly getting complaints about him. Ordinance violations are given and he waits until the last minute to take care of them, and then another one is issued, because he can't seem to follow the rules. The entire time Mr. Hardway is speaking, Mr. Bailey is constantly being rude and interrupting him. Mr. Hardway told him the Board is getting tired of this cycle.

Gage stated that he has to stop working on one project in order to start the next one.

Laura Miller suggested he doesn't start any more projects until these are completed.

Jim Lansford tried to explain to Mr. Bailey that each ordinance has a time frame. He waits until the last minute to complete it, and Mr. Bailey just does NOT want to comply.

Greg Miller stated that the only person that wins in litigation is the attorney. He believes that it would be more productive to give Mr. Bailey a timeline and a little leeway and give him a new

deadline to get things done. It was stated that he has had several years to get things done, and this is a constant battle with him.

Gage asked what needed to be done to avoid going to court?

Jim Lansford asked Mr. Miller if we give him (Mr. Bailey) another extension to avoid court hearings, would you (Mr. Miller) then support the Board's decision to a court appearance if he doesn't comply? (There was no answer to this question.)

Bart told Mr. Bailey that some of his vehicles currently don't have license plates on them. Even after everything we went through with the Sheriff's Office. His one car doesn't have a cover on it. Mr. Bailey tried to tell the Board that the silver Camaro was sold to a neighbor (Mr. Bloomfield- who was NOT present at the meeting). Bart advised the Board that this was another lie, because he spoke with Mr. Bloomfield, and in fact, he did NOT purchase this vehicle.

Laura Katterhenry (Mr. Bailey's sister) came in at 6:29.

Mr. Cordes started to ask a question, but was interrupted and never got the chance to finish.

Mr. Bailey again asked what the issues were with his property. Bart explained to him again and he spoke with him about the issues, and he started to fix things. Then he brought in a trailer with no axels and a camper. Although Bart would like to note that the camper is NOT in violation of ordinances. It is the appearance that he doesn't care about the current violations, and then he is bringing more stuff to his property. If he would clean up the current issues, the camper would be a non-issue. And then there was a giant pile of random wood on the front lawn. Mr. Bailey stated the wood was gone, and the axles have been placed under the trailer.

Bart went on to explain that he spoke with Ashley (Mr. Bailey's wife who was NOT present at the meeting). He explained to her that it has been two years that we have had issues. Bart told the neighbors that the firewood was NOT a violation, and he could keep it. He also told them that several of their issues were civil matters, and the Village was not stepping in the middle of that. Most of Mr. Bailey's issues were because he reacts out of spite. He is not the only person that receives violations and complaints, but he IS the only person that pushes back and argues. He told Mr. Bailey that he would give him time to get things done; he wants him to stop fighting with the neighbors, because that will accomplish nothing.

Gage said his things are organized. Laura Katterhenry stated that the silver car will be moved within 48 hours.

Bart stated again that he defended him with the camper.

Nancy George stated that no sooner are ordinances cleaned up that others are violated. Other people's violations are taken care of. It is our job to keep those in check.

Laura Katterhenry stated that she can testify that in the four years she lived with Gage, there were no issues. She wants to know why there are issues now?

Mr. Lansford stated he is taking on too many projects. He needs to accomplish the work he has now before beginning new ones.

Mr. Cordes said he lives across the street from Bart and Salisa Dann and Shirley Badman. In the twenty-two years he has been following politics, he would like to thank the Board for dealing with Mr. Bailey. The majority of Boards will only allow a certain amount of time to speak, and there are no responses given back. They listen, and you're done. There is no conversation. He also stated that in regards to ordinances, he has a stock car. He built it, and he understands Gage's perspective in regards to being busy and trying to get things done. He has a question about so many violations can be given without any court appearances.

Clerk Salisa Dann asked if she could explain the process. She stated that she created the form the Village is currently using and the Board approved, because there was nothing previously used. The Village wanted something that would outline the ordinances being violated, explain the step process and fines that could be issued, and the potential outcomes if there was compliance / non-compliance. The intent was to issue the violation in hopes that it goes no further, and the property owners complied. However, this isn't always the case. There was no thought given to the amount of ordinances one could receive in a specific time frame. The Board's intentions were to reduce the amount of attorney and court fees and save those tax dollars.

Jim Hardway stated that we tried to implement this process to attempt to keep the attorney fees at a minimum.

Laura Miller asked Mr. Bailey if he could please move things in order to store them somewhere else? Can he take them to his parent's place or his in-laws?

Bart reiterated that the current issue is simply non-compliance. It doesn't matter who it is or what the violation is. Anything in violation will be dealt with.

Nancy stated that we are currently at an impasse. She told Mr. Bailey that he will continue to get ordinance violations until he complies.

Gage stated again that he would like a list of said complaints. Bart responded that as soon as the meeting was over, and the minutes were approved, he would drop a copy of the minutes off at his house this evening. The March minutes have everything listed that his neighbors were complaining about.

Consent Agenda:

Nancy George made a motion to accept the consent agenda with one minor change to the minutes. Gary Gilpin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Closed Session:

Laura Miller made a motion to move to closed session at 6:56 pm. Nancy George seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Laura Miller a motion to move out of closed session at 7:26 pm, and Jim Hardway seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

- A. **Disconnect Notice:** Salisa worked with Kyle and Bart in creating a disconnect notice that will be attached to the door of any water customers without payment prior to shut-off day (the 25th of each month). Laura stated she would like to see in the wording section of the notification that the reconnect fees are \$25. Salisa said she would make those changes and get copies to Kyle.
- B. **Discussion and Possible Approval of Bees Trees (Greg Miller) Marking Trees:** Greg Miller explained that he is an ISA Certified Arborist. He works for the Village of Homer and Potomac just to name a couple. He explains that he identifies hazards, creates annual reports, and potential issues can be pointed out and fixed before it becomes emergent. He charges \$75 / hour - a nominal fee that could save thousands of dollars later. He would like to put a plan in place that would remove more dangerous trees each year. A 5 year plan that explains what needs to be done now vs what needs to be done next year vs what can wait two - three years. "I can bring more value than the cost." Jim Lansford asked if the Board should open this proposal to other local businesses for the same price? Mr. Miller stated that he charges \$200 / hr at a pruning rate. He also stated some local businesses have trucks to some labor, he is certified and insured to climb. Bart stated that in order to be fair, the Board will pay Mr. Miller for his work. However, we appreciate his offer to donate his time to prune a specific tree at Opal Thompson Park. Nancy stated she would like to follow protocol and get bids for the plan that was suggested. She stated the Board is okay with him doing the pruning work at the park.
- C. **Discussion and Possible Approval of New City Attorney:** Jim Hardway made a motion to hire Mr. Crossman to be the new Village Attorney at the \$1500 retainer he charges. Laura seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.
- D. **Discussion of Camper Ordinances:** There is already a camper ordinance in our Zoning Ordinances.
- E. **Discussion of Parking Ordinances:** It was suggested that the Village try No Parking signs on the streets that are having issues. The entire town shouldn't have to be penalized for one person(s) behavior. This issue has been tabled.

- F. **Discussion of Solar Panel Usage for Village Properties:** As Bart brought up the next topic of discussion, Nancy jumped in and stated she was strongly against it. She asked if we would get a quick return? How about insurance coverages? What if there was hail damage? Technology changes so frequently, how would we ever keep up? It is not necessary in her opinion. Bart stated that there is a state credit of \$4300 within the first 18 months. There is a credit of 30% from the federal government, but we have to find how to apply for it. Our bill would go down to \$10 / month immediately. We would break even in 7 years. We can NOT use solar power at the watershed. It pulls too much power. Gary stated he looked this company up on the Better Business Bureau website, and they had several bad reviews. He also read that homeowners insurance can double or triple. Bart stated he would check into the insurance coverage, costs, maintenance, etc.
- G. **Discussion of Part-Time Help:** Kyle stated he would like to see the Village hire 2 part-time employees (keeping Cathy on). He would like to try this for one year and see how things work. Laura made a motion to hire two part-time employees on an as-needed basis, applicants must meet minimum job requirements, and starting pay will be \$20 / hour or based on experience. Gary seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Old Business: N/A

Village Superintendent's Report:

Kyle reported that he received the CCR report. Gary asked if the water we receive from Villa Grove is any better regarding the amount of chlorine we were getting. Kyle stated that it is improving.

Village President's Report: N/A

Jim Lansford stated he had several questions regarding the current ordinances. There are several ordinances that no longer apply to our Village. For example, we have an ordinance that is four pages long about CATV in 1984. We need to eliminate that article altogether. Bart asked if Jim Lansford and Gary would both be willing to meet in the next week or so to discuss this process. They agreed.

With no further business to come before the Board, President Bart Dann called for adjournment at 8:10 pm.

Salisa Dann
Village Clerk