

**VILLAGE OF COPEMISH**  
**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Dec. 10, 2024**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:** by President Mike Longo at 7:01 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** 7:01 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Mike (P) Misty (P-Clerk) Jan (P) Earl (P) Mary (P) Open Trustee position (A) Open Treasurer position (A)

**VISITORS:** Clark Scarbrough, Tony George, Dave Myers, Debra Longo, Heidi Mead, Pat Cote?, Robert Cole?.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** \***Heidi Mead** – Executive Director of a newly established 501c3 organization/food pantry. This group will work closely with United Way and other County food pantries. They plan to start on Jan. 17, 2025, and would like permission to use the Village truck garage. Future events would occur the last Friday of the month, being self-serve. They will not ask for any personal information. It is open to everyone. Exact times have not been determined yet. Motion to allow Heidi's food pantry organization the use of the Village truck garage made by Mary, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jan, AIF. Tony George agreed to help keep it supplied/organized. Heidi is looking for more volunteers. Letters of support were included from Al Frye and Cleon Township. \***Dave Myers - (1).** Joe Carpenter, the newly elected Cleon Township Supervisor recently suffered a massive heart attack and had open heart surgery. He is doing OK, stable. Todd Humphry will run the meetings until Joe is recovered. **(2).** SMARTrails update: The proposed new bridge over Bear Creek (on the railroad grade north of Heily Lake) has finally been approved by the DNR and all other State agencies. Construction bids will be going out this Spring with completion scheduled for this year. Next priority will be the upgrade of this trail between Kaleva and Thompsonville, and the trail between Thompsonville and Copemish. **(3).** Proposed Township Park project update: Second grant proposal with the Grand Traverse Revenue Sharing Board has been submitted. Won't hear the results until after the new year. If this isn't granted, Jan and I will fund the \$12,100 feasibility study/ ECLA application permit.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

- **MINUTES FROM LAST COUNCIL MEETING (Oct. 8):** No questions or comments.
- **PAYMENT OF THE BILLS:** Mike mentioned Milarch Tree Co. did a good job and their \$2,500 bid was \$1,000 lower than Mark Thompson's Tree Service. Tony is using the wood to heat the Maintenance shop. Also, Misty included the Rural Development numbers (\$11,396.25) on this month's expense report.

- **TREASURER'S REPORT:** Misty read off the transactions & balances of all five funds.
- Motion by Mary, 2nd by Jan to approve the consent agenda. AIF.

**STREET ADMIN. REPORT (Open position):** Lacking a street administrator, Mike asked Tony how the streets are looking. Tony indicated they look great except some need road repairs and the ongoing drain issue. Radar signs are all working.

**PLANNING COMMISSION AND ZONING REPORT (Clark):** Dec. 2 meeting (See minutes).

**\*Proposed Amended Short-Term Rental Ordinance:** Ben Poppa attended the last meeting and outlined what his recommended inspection program would look like including his fees (See Committee Minutes). Ben suggested to flush out and identify all renters, we give them their first inspection for free. Clark expressed concern there may still be renters unwilling to identify themselves. Should be ready at the next meeting for approval. **\*Proposed Village Shipping/Cargo/Storage Container Ordinance:** Ready for Council approval. **\*Fischer Propane:** Service tank is in place. No plans yet to build storage building or offices. **\*Vacant positions:** Planning Commission has up to three open positions plus a possible alternate.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** Mike thanked the outgoing administration for their accomplishments, especially Misty and Tony for all their hard work. Mike would like to have separate budget meetings after he consults Misty for specific dates. Mike also published a letter addressed to all Village residents, introducing himself, presenting his vision, and asking for input and help filling open positions.

**OLD BUSINESS:** **\*Dead limbs:** Discussed under payment of the bills. **\*Dam removal, beavers:** Tony feels they are slowing down a lot. Tony may visit them this winter and burn down their houses (2). **\*Hall septic/Drain field, possible replacement:** Misty did some research. The State permit is \$350 to do a test sample to find out what's going on. Mike indicated the cost for a completely new system is under/close to \$10,000. Tony indicated the concrete tank is full of growth. Once we know the status/scope, then we can get bids. Motion to get the permit made by Mary, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jan, AIF. **\*Safety and security in the Village:** Mike indicated he talked with Brian Gutowski, and he is willing to stand behind helping us enforce our ordinances as long as they are correct and up-to-date. Brian plans to attend our next meeting. Recent vandalism and theft at the American Legion were brought up and the need for everyone to get police reports when these things occur to help make law enforcement aware, to hopefully increase their presence. Also, Debra Longo and Dave Myers volunteered to research getting grant money to hire a Village constable. **\*Former sales of Village property:** Mary presented information obtained from the County that the sales were never put on the ballot as the law requires. Mary also brought up the issue of M&R Product's possible encroaching (Setback – 7 or 10 feet, air conditioning) on Village Park property, and the planting of small trees and the berm. Mike wants to hear from the Council if this is worth pursuing. Jan mentioned possible statute-of-limitations. Earl brought up the sale and establishment of several businesses (Grocery and hardware stores, fire dept, others) back in the 1960s. Was that done correctly? Nobody knows.

Earl also asked if anyone knows what the original conditions/stipulations were when this property was given to the Village. Also, Mary asked if there's a survey report for the M&R sale? Mike agreed we need a survey. It was suggested to use OX-hunt first to get a close idea of the property line. Mike agreed to have Misty send all the information to our attorney. We need to get his opinion and our options. **\*Blight Process:** Mike would like to see copies of all the infraction letters. Misty has them, from Clark. Mike will follow-up with the status of the old church. Mike feels the steeple needs to come down, but the rest should be salvageable. There's a couple of nice chairs inside, trespassers? Mike also expressed concern about the vehicles parked in front of the church at the auto repair shop, obstructing the sidewalk. The Planning Commission is thinking of asking the shop use the area behind (west) the shop, and address any other issues, blight or otherwise. Mary will try to get a letter from the church owner indicating he is allowing the repair shop to park vehicles on his property.

**NEW BUSINESS: \*Appointment of open positions:** Misty will research which positions are two year and four year. Misty indicated she has heard from a couple of interested people (Ali – farmer's market). Misty can also put an ad in the paper.

**FINAL COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS:** Mary brought up Misty's hours. Mary is concerned Misty has not been available at all the times posted, seven hours. She is being paid for 15 hours/week. Misty said her recent surgery/recovery time did not allow her to be in the office. The other hours are for doing Village business without public interruptions.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** Earl, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mary, AIF. Meeting adjourned at 8:34pm.

Respectfully submitted by Misty O'Shea, Village of Copemish Clerk, with recorded support from Dave Myers.