

La Rue Village Council Meeting April 12, 2023

The La Rue Village Council met in regular session on April 12, 2023 in the Village Council Room. Present were Mayor Dustin Ford, Clerk Mary Price, Tyler Howell, and Council Members: David Stallsmith, John Boyd, and Connie Kendall.

Guests present: Sheriff Bayles, Judy Cobb, Dan Downs, and Diane Evans (BPA Representative).

Opening: Mayor Ford opened the meeting with a pledge to the American flag.

Minutes: The minutes of the last regular meeting were read and approved with a motion by Connie Kendall and a second by John Boyd, motion passed.

The financial report was presented and a motion was made David Stallsmith to approve the bills with a second by Connie Kendall motion passed.

Mayor – X

BPA – Diane Evans summarized the information that was covered with John Boyd at the last BPA meeting when the sewer financials were analyzed. The main reason the sewer has been able to maintain financially was due in large part to the refinancing of the loan that allowed for some money to be saved since a period went by where no payment was made. Extensive documentation was reviewed with all the numbers for revenue, expenses, and future financials. Basically, if Council does not approve anything when the loan is paid on 2040 the sewer fund will be in the negative. Diane Evans expressed that she's feels it is extremely critical to maintain \$125,000 - \$150,000 balance in the account. Not raising the rate over the last 10 years is going to catch up with the sewer account and without the refinancing the sewer fund would have already been in the negative. Council discussed how much the sewer rate would need to be increased to help maintain the sewer fund to keep up with the expenses. A recommendation was made that a 10% increase would be sufficient at this time. An ordinance will be available at the next meeting to raise the base rate from \$25.00 to \$27.50 and the base rate from \$5.25 to \$6.00.

Diane Evans presented that she spoke with Aqua regarding the water sale and they are still waiting on PUCO to complete their review process and approval should come in the next few months.

Diane Evans reported that Access Engineering prepared the general plan for the water plant project and the Board was just notified that the general plan did not pass the EPA's approval. This is a major issue if the deal with Aqua does not go through because the general plan was critical if the Board had to proceed with fixing the water plant themselves. It is a disappointment that Access Engineering did not complete the general plan accurately and it was denied by the EPA.

Maintenance – Tyler Howell reported that the park has been opened up, mowing has begun, pot hole patching, and brush cleanup. The ditch area near Kenny Price's property needs some stone installed.

Kenny Price's property is going up for auction and that would be a good time for the Village to see if the new owner would want the vacant lots the Village owns next to it.

Tyler Howell reported that he wanted Council to know that he accepted the mowing position with the township for the season.

Park – Tyler Howell wanted to know if council wanted to continue maintaining the park which typically costs around \$2,500 with general park maintenance. \$500 on gravel has been expensed so far. Council agreed to continue maintaining the park this year with dyeing the pond, grass seeding, and maintaining the walking patch.

Sheriff – X

Zoning – X

Tree Commission – X

Budget – X

Street and Alley –

Fire & Safety – X

Buildings & Grounds – X

Regional Planning – X

Old Business:

Dan Downs was present to represent Judy Cobb as her insurance agent to discuss the status of the burnt building. The insurance company reported that they hired a structural engineer and the pizza shop is attached to the bar on the south wall. The main reason for Mr. Downs to attend this evening was to get on the same page with getting this matter resolved. Mr. Downs suggested the Village look into getting ownership of the Hendricks portion of the Village. Mayor Ford said he would contact Regional Planning about the steps to take with obtaining the Hendricks building. Mr. Downs was given Jeff Oates phone number so he is going to contact him to see if he is planning on doing anything with the property. Council reported that they tried to get Landbank to move a project to this burnt property but they denied the request.

A motion was made by Connie Kendall to approve the sale of lot #220010012400 to Greg Fields for a cost of \$500 plus and fees associated with the sale and a second by David Stallsmith, motion passed.

New Business:

Sheriff Bayles was present to talk with Council regarding the Sheriff's contract and he said the Village can sign a new one with an increased pay rate for the deputies or stay at the old rate of \$30.00. Connie Kendall expressed her concern with not receiving anything while the deputies are here because last year we only received \$275 from tickets that were written. At this point Council agreed to leave the rate the same at \$30 and nothing was decided regarding the number of hours. On another note the inmate work program has started for the season so if there's anything the Village would like just let them know. Kevin Davidson is the contact for the work program.

Diane Evans brought up that she is very concerned with the dogs in town that are loose when she goes on walks so the Sheriff is contacting the dog warden.

Mayor Ford suggested Council put some money into a CD to make some interest on their extra money in the general fund. Currently Huntington Bank is offering 5%. Council tabled the discussion at this point.

Bailey Higgins recommended that the Council pass the following 3 ordinances to comply with all regulations with regards to spend the APRA funds.

Resolution 2023-4 was read to spend \$18,000 ARPA funds on the pump station. A motion was made to suspend the rules by Connie Kendall with a second by John Boyd, motion passed. A motion was made by Connie Kendall to approve the ordinance as written with a second by John Boyd, motion passed.

Resolution 2023-5 was read to take the Standard Allowance for the ARPA money. A motion was made to suspend the rules by John Boyd with a second by Connie Kendall, motion passed. A motion was made by Connie Kendall to approve the ordinance as written with a second by John Boyd, motion passed.

Resolution 2023-6 was read to take a \$50,000.00 Micro-Purchase Threshold for the ARPA money. A motion was made to suspend the rules by David Stallsmith with a second by John Boyd, motion passed. A motion was made by David Stallsmith to approve the ordinance as written with a second by John Boyd, motion passed.

Tyler Howell reported that he will be gone from 4/26 – 5/1 and Rodney Lowe will be maintaining the plant.

A motion to adjourn by John Boyd and a second by Connie Kendall motion passed. Next meeting will be May 1, 2023 at 7:00pm.

Mayor

Fiscal Officer