

Village of Pentwater

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VILLAGE COUNCIL – SPECIAL MEETING FEBRUARY 24, 2025, at 6:00 P.M. PARK PLACE MEETING CENTER

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Jared Griffis, Dan Nugent, Kathy O'Connor, Don Palmer, Karl Schrupf and Mary Marshall.

Absent: Dave Bluhm.

Also present are Village Manager Rachel Witherspoon, Clerk/Treasurer Rande Listerman and Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Michelle Bieri.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS – On the agenda

Ted Cuchna, 529 Clymer St. – When this plant was presented to the Village I argued against it rather strongly, even to the point of setting up a neighborhood Citizens Committee to try to fight the case not to have the discharge of the plant go into the creek that runs through the middle of the town, and to avoid the high cost of the operation of this plant, I have recently FOIA'd the village, on The operational volume that the plant is handling. Some days, it drops, apparently down to about 10%. I wonder if the gentleman from Infrastructures there can address the fact that this plant can be ramped down in some manner or method that would allow a lower operation cost or use the lagoons to shut the plant operation off for specific periods. Material and maintenance on the plant, and it's pretty expensive to operate. When the Village flatly decided on the plant in 2012, I believe three people were allowed to ask the engineer questions before it went to final design. My questions to the Engineer at that time were focused on the operational cost, including electricity, chemical maintenance, and particularly the operation or management of the plant. Well, my advice to you is, if you do sign a contract or extend this contract, I hope you put a very clear escape clause in there, so if you do find an operator that can manage it for the village, you will be able to step out from that contract without any penalty or cost to it.

Dave Bluhm, 16 S. Ruthledge – Dave Bloom, via Zoom, raises concerns about the lack of detailed narrative costs in the contract with IAI and the need to better understand the Sewer Plant portion of the budget. He would also like the Council to consider adding \$40,000 towards a Spring of 2025 Dredge of the Channel. Dave also suggests it is time to sell the water taxi.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

President Marshall requested an approval of the agenda.

Motion by Griffis, supported by Palmer to approve the agenda as presented.

Voice Vote:

Yes: 6 Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer, Schrumpf, and Marshall.
No: 0. Absent: Bluhm. Motion Carried 6 – 0.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Infrastructure Alternatives Contract.

Discussion was held regarding the IAI Contract. The consensus of the Council was to have more information provided by IAI and village staff in the form of a side-by-side spreadsheet comparing the current costs vs. the proposed contract, including what is covered in the 20-hour per week contract vs. additional 20 hours that was billed separately.

Motion by Schrumpf, supported by Palmer, to approve the contract with Infrastructure Alternatives for the operation and maintenance of the Clean Water Plant in the amount of \$170,938.08, as presented with the stipulation that the comparative information is available before execution.

Yes: 1. Marshall. No: Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer, Schrumpf, and Marshall.
Absent: Bluhm. Motion failed 1 – 5.

A discussion was held, and the Service Committee will meet on March 8th at 8 A.M. to review the additional comparative information from the Village Staff. They will present their findings at the March 10th Council meeting. Infrastructure Alternatives Inc. Contract will go on the March Council meeting Agenda Under Unfinished Business.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. Workshop with the Council on the Draft of the 2025-2026 Budget.

Village Manager Ms. Witherspoon and Clerk/Treasurer Listerman shared the draft of the VOP 2025-2026 Budget in writing and the Public Hearing PowerPoint with the Council.

A discussion was held regarding the details of 2025-2026 budget, highlighting a \$64,000 deficit in the Sewer fund and the current fund balance in the General fund. The council agreed on the importance of maintaining financial transparency and stability. The council continued discussing the 2025/2026 budget, highlighting key points such as a \$46,000 annual grant for a school resource officer, which ends in the fall of 2025. Trustee Dave Bluhm shared in Public Comment earlier the need for a \$40,000 allocation for dredging the channel, hoping for additional township funding and private donations. The cost of the Strategic Plan was noted as necessary but not yet budgeted.

Motion by Nugent, supported by Griffis to approve the addition in the General Fund of \$40,000 for a contribution towards the Channel Dredge in the Spring of 2025.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chris Conroy, 560 S. Hancock St., Unit 21- reminded the Council that in the Master Plan is a Plan to have a Design study for the waterfront. She would like to see the engineering costs added to the 2025- 2026 Budget. Chris is glad to see the council is budgeting for the ADA

doors.

Ted Cuchna, 529 Clymer, has been a mechanical Engineer for 50 years and wants to remind everyone that the Clean Water Plant is complicated and sophisticated and will need repair and maintenance in the future. Plan on the costs to keep the plant running smoothly, which is continuing to rise. Also, make sure if we find an operator for the CWP that we can end the contract with IAI.

9. COUNCIL COMMENTS

President Mary Marshall acknowledged the passing of Chuck Smith, a long-time Pentwater Township Supervisor and community servant. Mary also thanked Rachel and Rande for their work on the budget.

Dan Nugent agreed that transparency is number one for the Council.

10. MANAGER'S COMMENTS

Manager Witherspoon will send more information to the Council regarding the new staff member who starts on Monday. Of course, please do not hesitate to contact her directly if you have any questions or concerns.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Nugent, supported by Palmer to adjourn the meeting.
President Marshall adjourned the meeting at 7:43 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rande Listerman
Clerk/Treasurer

Date