

VILLAGE OF BERRIEN SPRINGS REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Village of Berrien Springs Regular Council Meeting held on Monday, October 06, 2025.
President Sheila Snyder called the council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: President Sheila Snyder, President Pro-Tem Jack Davis; Trustees: Zach Fedoruk, Lonna Johnson, Christopher Perez, Kristin von Maur, Mark VandeVere, Clerk Rachael Kuzda, and Attorney DeFrancesco.

Absent: None.

Also Present: *The Journal Era*, *The Herald Palladium*, and several audience members.

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

***Moved** by Kristin von Maur seconded by Lonna Johnson to approve the agenda as presented. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Approve the minutes of the Public Hearing held on September 15, 2025, and the Regular Council Meeting held on September 15, 2025.

***Moved** by Kristin von Maur seconded by Mark VandeVere to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing held on September 15, 2025, and the Regular Council Meeting held on September 15, 2025, as presented. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Central County Senior Center October 2025 newsletter received.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE AND PERSONNEL – Chair: President Sheila Snyder

***The next Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.**

***Council received a copy of the Treasurer's Report dated September 24, 2025.**

Pay the bills.

***Moved** by Jack Davis seconded by Mark VandeVere to pay the bills in the amount of \$480,085.07. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

Approve the Notice of Payment Due from USDA RD for Water Bond 91-08 in the amount of \$34,361.25 and Sewer Bond #92-06 in the amount of \$23,827.50 for a total due of \$58,188.75 (2012 Infrastructure Projects).

***Moved** by Zach Fedoruk seconded by Kristin von Maur to approve the Notice of Payment Due from USDA RD for Water Bond 91-08 in the amount of \$34,361.25 and Sewer Bond #92-06 in the amount of \$23,827.50 for a total due of \$58,188.75 (2012 Infrastructure Projects). Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

Approve Berrien County Water/Sewage Improvements No. 29 Invoice for interest due in the amount of \$12,306.76.

***Moved** by Jack Davis seconded by Zach Fedoruk to approve Berrien County Water/Sewage Improvements No. 29 Invoice for interest due in the amount of \$12,306.76. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

Approve paying Treasurer Barbara Clem for the collection of the 2025 Village Property Taxes.

***Moved** by Zach Fedoruk seconded by Kristin von Maur to approve paying Treasurer Barbara Clem for the collection of the 2025 Village Property Taxes in the amount of \$13,412.09. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

Approve the renewal of our Cyber Liability Policy. We have two options we can choose from this year: Option #1 matches exactly what we have now (a \$2,500 deductible) for a total of \$1,941.75 or Option #2 that has a zero deductible for a total of \$2,454.25 (an additional \$512.50).

***Moved** by President Sheila Snyder seconded by Kristin von Maur to approve the renewal of our Cyber Liability Insurance Option #1, that matches exactly what we have now (\$2,500 deductible) a total cost of \$1,941.75. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

Approve Pajay's Application for Payment No. 3 for the North Mechanic Street Project as recommended by Wightman & Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$234,606.20.

***Moved** by Mark VandeVere seconded by Lonna Johnson to approve Pajay's Application for Payment No. 3 for the North Mechanic Street Project as recommended by Wightman & Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$234,606.20. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

PUBLIC PROPERTIES AND ORDINANCE – Chair: Kristin von Maur

***The next Public Properties and Ordinance Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.**

Establish a project budget amount for the Grove Park new playground. This amount will guide staff in preparing and submitting grant applications and in planning for project funding.

***Moved** by Zach Fedoruk seconded by Lonna Johnson to approve establishing a project budget amount for the Grove Park new playground in the amount of \$800,000.00. Roll call vote: Kristin von Maur/Nay; Lonna Johnson/Aye; Christopher Perez/Nay; Jack Davis/Nay; Mark VandeVere/Nay; Zach Fedoruk/Aye; President Sheila Snyder/Nay. Motion failed.

***Moved** by Kristin von Maur seconded by Mark VandeVere to approve establishing a project budget amount for the Grove Park new playground in the amount of \$600,000.00. Roll call vote: Christopher Perez/Aye; Zach Fedoruk/Aye; Jack Davis/Aye; Lonna Johnson/Aye; Mark VandeVere/Aye; Kristin von Maur/Aye; President Sheila Snyder/Aye. Motion carried.

Approve amending the 2025-2026 budget to add a line item titled "New Playground" number 101-695-971.000 under Wolf Paire and budgeting for that line item the above established amount.

***Moved** by Zach Fedoruk seconded by Mark VandeVere to approve amending the 2025-2026 budget to add a line item titled "New Playground" number 101-695-971.000 under Wolf Paire and budgeting for that line item the above established amount of \$600,000.00. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

Approve authorizing the pursuit of grant applications based on the selected funding level.

***Moved** by Kristin von Maur seconded by Christopher Perez to approve authorizing the pursuit of grant applications based on the selected funding level. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

Form a Playground Project Committee to support planning, fundraising, and community engagement.

***Moved** by Zach Fedoruk seconded by Jack Davis to approve a Playground Project Committee to support planning, fundraising, and community engagement. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

Zoning Ordinance Amendment.

***Moved** by Kristin von Maur seconded by Jack Davis to approve the Zoning Ordinance Amendment “Under Appendix B, Entitled “Zoning”, Article XI Of The Village Code Entitled “C-2 Central Business District”, An Ordinance To Revise And Restate Section 11.01 Entitled, “Intent” And To Remove “Assembly Halls Of Schools, Churches, And Other Organizations” And, “Group Homes, Including Nursing, Child And Adult Foster Care Facilities Not Elsewhere Regulated” And, “Village/Township, School And Other Governmental Buildings” And “Bed & Breakfast Operations, Lodges, Fraternal, Labor And Social Organizations”, As Uses Permitted By Right Under Section 11.02, Entitled, “Uses Permitted By Right” Subsection A; And To Add New Subsections H., I., J., And K. Under Appendix B Entitled “Zoning”, Article XI Of The Village Code Entitled “C-2 Central Business District” Section 11.03 Entitled “Uses Permitted By Special Use Permit”. Roll call vote: Jack Davis/Aye; Zach Fedoruk/Aye; Lonna Johnson/Aye; Christopher Perez/Aye; Kristin von Maur/Aye; Mark VandeVere/Aye; President Sheila Snyder/Aye. Motion carried.

FIRE –Village President Pro-Tem Jack Davis and Trustee Lonna Johnson are the Village Representatives.

*Lonna Johnson gave a synopsis of the Fire Board Meeting held on Wednesday, September 24, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

*Council received minutes from the Regular Meeting on August 22, 2025, and August 25, 2025.

PUBLIC UTILITIES – Chair: Mark VandeVere

*The next Public Utilities Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

SHAMROCK PARK COMMITTEE – Chair: Jack Davis

*The next Shamrock Park Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

LIBRARY BOARD – Lonna Johnson

*The next Library Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 23, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.

MEDIC 1 – Clerk Rachael Kuzda

*Council received minutes from the Regular Medic 1 Board Meeting on August 28, 2025, and August 2025 Medic 1 Operations Summary.

*The next Regular Medic 1 Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 30, 2025, at 8:30 a.m.

RECREATION AUTHORITY – Jack Davis

*Trustee Jack Davis gave a synopsis.

POLICE COMMITTEE – Village President Sheila Snyder is the Village Representative

*The last Police Committee Meeting of 2025 is scheduled for Thursday, October 30, 2025, at 3:30 p.m.

HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE: Chair: President Sheila Snyder

*Update: The Preliminary Historic District Study Report has been delivered as required and is available for public inspection at the Village Hall and on our website.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR COMMITTEE: Chair: President Sheila Snyder

*The next Community Coordinator/Social Media Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

AD HOC COMMITTEE: FERAL/STRAY CATS: Chair: Lonna Johnson

*Chair Lonna Johnson gave a synopsis of the Ad Hoc Feral/Stray Cats Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, September 30, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Approve the proposed utility bill format and past due notice format.

***Moved** by Mark VandeVere seconded by Zach Fedoruk to approve example #1 for utility bill format and example #2 for past due notice format as recommended by the Public Works Superintendent and Deputy/Utility Billing Clerk. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

Approve to allow Berrien County Printing Department to print, fold, and stuff utility bills.

***Moved** by Mark VandeVere seconded by Zach Fedoruk to approve allowing Berrien County Printing Department to print, fold, and stuff utility bills in the amount of \$274.75 (per quarter). Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

Approve switching from Payment Service Network to BS&A Payments and spending a one-time fee of \$350.00 on a Stripe S700 Terminal (credit card reader).

***Moved** by Zach Fedoruk seconded by Kristin von Maur to approve switching from Payment Service Network to BS&A Payments and spending a one-time fee of \$350.00 on a Stripe S700 Terminal (credit card reader). Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS:

Dale Hartman of 201 S. Cass expressed anger and frustration regarding code enforcement and claimed the Code Enforcement Officer is trespassing on his property and targeting him.

Alyssa Baxter of 409 S. Cass Street addressed the council regarding clarification on a letter sent to residents regarding parking on the tree lawn. She has reached out the Zoning Administrator regarding parking at her property and is waiting on a response from him.

Cheryl Hosford of 100 W. Ferry addressed the council asking for clarification on what was intended from removing "Assembly Halls of Schools, Churches, and Other Organizations" from the new ordinance amendment. Trustee Kristin von Maur stated current businesses are grandfathered in and the purpose of the ordinance amendment is to stick to the intent of the ordinance. Ms. Hosford also asked about non-profits and the upstairs. Trustee Kristin von Maur said non-profits are very broad but again we want to get to the intent of the ordinance, and this ordinance doesn't change anything for the second/upstairs floor.

Heidi Steinhagen-Snowden of 105 N. Main asked how to get copies of meetings when unable to attend and she was informed the approved minutes of meetings are uploaded and posted on the Village website.

ADJOURNMENT:

***Moved** by Kristin von Maur seconded by Mark VandeVere to adjourn at 7:12 p.m. Ayes, 7; Nays, 0. Motion carried.

Rachael Kuzda, MiPMC
Village Clerk

Sheila Snyder
Village President