

**VILLAGE OF CASSOPOLIS
WORKSHOP MEETING
September 28, 2020**

President Johnson called the Workshop Meeting of the Cassopolis Village Council to order at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call:

Council Members Present: Luckey, Parsons, Johnson, Williams, Danzy-Yeager and Wagner

Council Members Absent: Conner

Pledge of Allegiance was given in unison.

Approval of Agenda: Wagner motioned, seconded by Parsons to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion Carried.

Discussion Items:

- A. **Audit Contract Renewal with State of Michigan:** The State of Michigan will be contracted to complete our audit again this year, but we are waiting to receive the contract. The new contract will cover a period of 3 years instead of approving the renewal every year. We like the work Derek has done for us and the assistance he provides at no extra charge. The price each year is comparable to what other companies charge, however next year will be more expensive due to the need for a single audit.
- B. **Fire Station Property:** Someone is interested in purchasing the fire station and there would need to be a resolution stating that the building is no longer needed for public use. We would need a survey completed to split the parcel. The Village would keep the back portion of land and combine the building with the lot next door that used to be the old Village Hall. We will keep the parking lot and it will stay municipal parking, per our agreement with the County. This property can still be listed as one of our highlighted sites with RRC and obtain some grant funding for marketing and advertising.
- C. **Market Van Buren (See Attachment 1):** This company has been hired by the Cass County EDC, which is funded by Cass County. Market Van Buren will help the economic development in the County over the next 6 months. They are also here to help businesses with opportunities that are available to them. If things go well they may be hired as a full time company potentially paid for by each municipality in the County.
- D. **BC/BS Renewal (See Attachment 2):** The renewal for the 2021 year includes a 4% increase, which is pretty standard. This company has been doing a good job and we continue to have a good insurance plan, which Council has stressed for the employees. Union contracts lock in the benefits and any overall changes to the insurance plan would have to be made years in advance. These benefits help with employee retention and employees understand how beneficial it is.
- E. **Flip Houses (See Attachment 3):** The Village purchased two homes from the County that were in foreclosure and the plan is to rehab these homes, sell them and get them back on the tax roll. Mark VanDusen from Cressy & Everett provided comparables, and multiple contractors provided estimates on the cost for clean out and rehab. The Village cannot make a profit on the sale of these homes so the goal is to sell the properties to the Main Street Committee and any profit made by them would be used to help the downtown businesses. Discussion ensued about the estimates and the potential, or lack thereof, for a profit. Some members did not think it was a good idea for the Village to complete this type of project. The goal is to be able to provide affordable housing that is on the tax roll and not end

up with an empty lot the DPW has to mow that provides no income or benefit to the community. Council will be presented with detailed estimates at the next meeting.

- F. Halloween (see Attachment 4): This is what we would like to distribute for Halloween, informing residents that they can participate if they choose. The Village is only suggesting the hours and recommending they follow all health department guidelines. The information will be distributed on all of our paper and social media platforms.

Manager’s Update

Village Manager Sarratore informed Council that she has a copy of site plans for the new construction at the Industrial Park. The Police Chief, Fire Chief, DPW Superintendent, and Building Inspector needs to sign off on them. The estimated investment to construct is \$6 million with them breaking ground in November. The Village Manager also gave an update on the status of the ongoing projects.

Miscellaneous Concerns

Johnson informed Superintendent Anderson about the sidewalk on S. O’Keefe that is too high.

Wagner spoke on putting a stop sign on S. O’keefe and Reed because people are not yielding. Superintendent Anderson stated it is an MDOT road and they control the signs, but he will ask them about making a change.

Williams asked if there was any movement with South Side Park. Village Manager Sarratore said she met with Community Mills and they will take it to their council. The Village Manager’s recommendation is to use the money for the other parks. There was additional discussion about the potential to move the equipment from South Side Park to another location on that side of town.

Announcements: None.

Adjournment:

President Johnson declared the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m. by unanimous agreement.

Respectfully submitted: _____
Tonia Betty, Village Clerk

Reviewed by: _____
David L. Johnson, Village President