

**VILLAGE OF BARODA**  
**Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Baroda Municipal Building**  
**December 6, 2021**  
**6:30 p.m.**

Members Present: Michael Price, Leonard Krone, Kathryn Strefling, Jodi Mattner, Toni Gaul, Jamie Hurst, and Clerk Denton

Members Absent: None

Guests Present: Greta Hurst, Dennis Krotzer, Christina Price, and Chelsie Nitz

Council Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. by President Pro-Tem Price

I. Reports

A. Village Engineer-

B. Economic Development

C. Committees-

1. Park- Check Christmas lights out, and finish up all decorations for Christmas

2. Finance-Treasurer Hurst reported the village received half of the Coronavirus Relief Fund and added the village will wait for state stipulations on how it can be spent.

3. Clerks Info- The Village received a letter from Lake Township stating the water and sewer rates will be raised by 5 percent to the village. Lake Township recommends the Village looks at raising our rates for water and sewer 5 percent to match their raise. Trustee Strefling made a motion to ok raise, and Trustee Mattner second All ayes motion carries. Clerk Denton will investigate the proper procedure to raise the current rates.

D. Planning Commission- The council is short members and needs applicants for the council to conduct proper meetings. Trustee Krone was appointed by President Pro Tem Price to become a member of the Planning Commission, a motion was made by Trustee Strefling, and supported by Trustee Mattner. A roll call vote was held with all members yes, motion carries. President Pro Tem Price also appointed Trustee Mattner as a councilmember to the Planning Commission, and a motion was made by Trustee Strefling, supported by President Pro Tem Price. A roll call vote was held with all members yes, motion carries.

II. New Business –

A. Berrien County interested in Menser Drive – The Berrien County Road Commission would like to purchase the last lot of Menser drive. The County

would like to build a new “State of the Art” new building for all their needs. The Village will have the property reappraised and look at posting the sale for any public entity to bid for the land also. There was much discussion on the county purchasing the lot and long-term pros n cons with the village infrastructure sewer and water systems. Trustee Strefling filed a motion to get the land appraised and surveyed. Trustee Krone second the idea, the council then did a rollcall vote with all members yes motion carries.

- B. Beauty Pageant Plaque/Donation – The Village of Baroda donates to the Miss Baroda Pageant; the Village donates money for the Pageant to purchase a plaque to present at their annual Blossom time event. Trustee Mattner made a motion to donate up to \$300.00 to the Pageant. Trustee Strefling second, there was a roll call vote all ayes motion carries.
- C. Re-Leaf Baroda – This is a committee Trustee Gaul would like to start up to help plant trees, start to beautify the village, and help our planet green back up. Trustee Gaul stated she has talked to many people who would love to help form a committee to decide where to plant, and what trees grow where for the proper sizing of growth. There was discussion of plans and projects with trees and proper right away for planting close to the roads. Trustee Gaul can do a committee separate of the village and do what she can without a vote from the village, the council wished her luck.
- D. Santa – The Santa for the Village Christmas was a huge success and did a wonderful job on short notice. The Village council discussed paying Santa what was asked and with discussion the fee was approved. Trustee Strefling made a motion to pay Santa \$150 for the event, Trustee Gaul second. A roll call vote with 4 ayes and 1 nay the motion carries.
- E. Whightman Bridge inspection- The Church Street and Lemon Creek Street bridges need inspected for Load ratings once a year. Wightman sent an appraisal for the work, and a reasoning of why this is being done. There was some discussion on why and if another bid should be thought about, the council thinks its best to keep Wightman for now. A motion made by Trustee Krone and was second by Trustee Mattner after a roll call vote all ayes motion carries.
- F. Forensic Audit- The Hungerford Nichols Audit sent the Village their Independent Accountants Fraud Examination Report. The Report was reviewed by each council member prior to any discussion on the topic moving forward. The report explains the procedure Hungrford went through to investigate the concerns of the Village. There was discussion of what the report contained, and what the Village might gain by spending more money on the audit. After Treasurer Hurst reported nothing missing in the funds, and the budget has been looked over enough, the office staff feel the audit is not worth any more time and money. After a short discussion

Trustee Strefling filed a motion to close the forensic audit, and Trustee Mattner second. The council had a roll call vote all ayes, motion carries.

- G. Maintenance workers Benefits/Holiday Pay- The office needed clarity on Holiday Pay and Benefits to the new workers. Full time employees that work after 60 days with review can claim the holiday pay the day before a holiday is worked and hours are kept full time. Benefits for the employees are available for full time maintenance that average more than 30 hours a week, the guys need to keep a running average thru the year to make certain the hours are followed. A discussion followed to change to 32 hours at Insurance level for full time benefits, A motion filed by Trustee Gaul and second by Trustee Mattner to raise the hours of work to 32 a week for the benefits, all ayes motion carries.

There also was a discussion on Christmas bonus for the four employees of the village. After much discussion Trustee Krone made a motion for \$200.00 after taxes will be the Christmas bonus and supported by Trustee Strefling all ayes motion carries.

### III. Consent Agenda

- A. Council Minutes – November 1<sup>st</sup> Minutes approved after Price correction on not
- B. Treasurer’s Report -Wightman Response- Treasury Hurst stated since her inquiry into Wightman, there has been feedback about projects done and projects going forward.
- C. Paying of Bills and Transfers - \$47,623.79
- D. Correspondence-  
Trustee Gaul made a motion to approve the consent agenda, and Trustee Strefling second all ayes motion carries.

### IV. Council Comments.

- A. President Comments- President Pro Tem Price brought up Mel Tollis application to be on the council. The discussion of how and when an interview process can happen with Mel, and any other applicant. The discussion was to bring any more applicants to next meeting for an interview in front of the council.

B. Council Member’s Comments – Trustee Krone presented an idea about where the trees have been removed on main street. The maintenance workers can reuse the steel grates that protected the trees to look like individual Metal Sculptures. Trustee Strefling asked about talking to the Baroda Legion to help the Village with banners for veterans to hang on the light poles thru town, and thank all volunteers for helping with Christmas in the village. Trustee Mattner asked about the sign Clerk Denton explained it is in the works waiting on email from the county on design and size. Trustee Gaul stated Fire Chief Gaul received a letter from Doug

DeBest about retiring, his last day will be December 27<sup>th</sup>. Trustee Gaul recommended a plaque, and the village will do the same idea we did for Larry Nye retirement.

V. Audience Comments – Great Hurst asked about the Village Facebook, and the Village website and will we be posting on there about the audit. Clerk Denton explained how the office is moving forward on both sides of the internet postings. Greta explained she was at the meeting to represent BABA as a monetary partner to work with both the Village and Township, to try and better Baroda for everyone. Christina Price asked about the dirt pile in the last lot the Village owns on Menser dr. Ruggles Cemetery needs dirt for fill if the Village sells the property, please keep the Township in mind to donate the dirt.

Respectfully submitted by:

Mike Denton (Village Clerk)