

# VILLAGE VOICE

March 2023

Volume 19, Issue 03

## Draft Minutes of the Plan Commission March 6, 2023

**Item 1. Call to Order:** The Village of Merrimac Plan Commission Meeting was called to order in Village Hall by Chairperson Jim Malmberg at 4:00PM. Commission Members Ann Hoffman, Bob Garrison, and Bob Pfaff were present with Tom Gallus absent. Also in attendance were Administrator Jennie Klecker and members of the public as listed on the sign-in sheet. Chairperson Malmberg examined the affidavit of posting and confirmed that advance public notice of the meeting conformed to statutory requirements.

**Item 2. Public Input:** None

**Item 3. Walter Kunicki Certified Survey Map Review: Parcels 151-0159-21000 & 151-0159-10000:** Tom Grayban of Grothman and Associates Land Surveyors presented the proposed Certified Survey Map to the Plan Commission on behalf of his client, Walter Kunicki. Mr. Kunicki would like to re-draw the lot line between his two adjoining properties on River Street. Commission Member Hoffman expressed concern that the house on Lot 2 showed a distance of 8.3ft. from the lot line, while the required side yard setback is 10ft. Mr. Grayban explained that the line had been there since at least 2008. Pfaff/Hoffman motioned to recommend approval of the CSM, however, if no documented record of variance can be located, the line must be moved to provide a 10 ft. setback. All Ayes, **Motion Carried.**

**Item 4. Adopt Standard Meeting Minute Format for Notes During Task Force Meetings:** The Commission discussed the need to adopt a standard meeting minute format to be used during the newly created task force meetings. Administrator Klecker provided a proposed meeting minute and

agenda planner template for review. Pfaff/Hoffman motioned to approve the proposed formats. All Ayes, **Motion Carried.**

**Item 5. Comprehensive Plan Update:** 5.a. Plan Document Outline; Commission Member Pfaff shared his work on creating a Comprehensive Plan Document Outline. Work will continue on the Plan Document over the coming months with the help of the task forces 5.b. Task Force Updates; Commission Member Pfaff reported that the environmental task force now has 6 members and held two meetings so far. They are working on creating a mission statement, identifying key goals, and a name for the group. Commission Member Garrison reported that he has found two interested volunteers, but is still seeking more members for the public lake access group. Commission Member Hoffman has at least one member for the Merrimac Identity group and is seeking volunteers to help participate in the First Impressions program scheduled for early May.

The Plan Commission also spent time discussing policy criteria for Plan Commission Member meeting attendance.

**Item 6. Adjourn:** At 5:29pm Garrison/Pfaff motioned to adjourn. All Ayes. **Motion Carried**

## Draft Minutes of the Village Board Meeting March 14, 2023

**Item 1. Call to Order:** The Village of Merrimac Board of Trustees Meeting was called to order in Village Hall by Village President Phil Budde at 5:00PM. Village Trustees Andrew Gallus, Jim Malmberg, George Naxera, and Kirk Olson were present. Also in attendance were Administrator Jennie Klecker, Director of Public Works Justin Schultz, Village Assistant Margaret Budde and members of

the public as listed on the sign-in sheet. President Budde examined the affidavit of posting and confirmed that advance public notice of the meeting conformed to statutory requirements.

**Item 2. Public Input:** Merrimac Festival Coordinator, Nicole Hartman, gave the board an update on the 2023 Festival. Most of last year's team is back on board for 2023 and will be holding their first meeting in April. She reported that Mad-City Ski Team is excited to return and that she has already begun looking for a local band to play.

**Item 3. Consent Agenda:** Malmberg/Naxera motioned to approve items 3.a., 3.b., 3.c., 3.d. of the Consent Agenda as posted. Upon Roll Call Vote, All Ayes. **Motion Carried.**

**Item 4. Approval of Village Bills:** Naxera/Gallus motioned to approve payment of outstanding monthly bills as listed on items 4.i.-4.iv. of the Agenda. Upon Roll Call Vote, All Ayes. **Motion Carried.**

**Item 5. Kunicki Certified Survey Map – Consider Approval:** Naxera/Olson motioned to approved Walter Kunicki's Certified Survey Map for his properties at 336 and 440 River Street. All Ayes, **Motion Carried.**

**Item 6. WWTP Permit Renewal Letter – Consider Approval to Submit to DNR:** Gallus/Malmberg motioned to authorize staff to submit WWTP Permit Renewal Application with proposed cover letter. All Ayes, **Motion Carried.** Gallus/Naxera motioned to acknowledge the critical importance for the staff to maintain good communication with DNR, to avoid a WWTP compliance schedule or enforcement action, which would be costly for the Village. All Ayes, **Motion Carried.**

**Item 7. Report of the Administrator:** 7.a. Status Update and Consideration of Action

**Website:** [merrimacwi.gov](http://merrimacwi.gov)

**Email:** [merrimac@merrimacwi.gov](mailto:merrimac@merrimacwi.gov) **Village Hall:** 608-493-2122  
**REGULAR OFFICE HOURS: Monday—Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

RE: Buffardi Rip Rap Project; Administrator Klecker informed the Board the Village received a letter from an attorney representing Chris Buffardi regarding the Village's decision at the 2/14/23 Board meeting to cite the Buffardis' for violating zoning ordinance. She contacted the Village attorney to discuss the letter, which included a substantial public records request, and seek legal guidance on the matter. On Friday, March 10, President Budde, Trustee Malmberg and Administrator Klecker had a meeting to discuss the letter and legal advice received. All three agreed there may have been confusion and misinterpretation regarding the original project scope approved by the Board during the October 11, 2022 Board Meeting. They also determined that the Village lacks the resources to pursue this matter any further and thought the best course of action for the Village would be to rescind the notice of ordinance violation against the Buffardis', with the condition that they cease all legal action against the Village, including the public records request. Naxera/Olson motioned to rescind the notice of ordinance violation and determine that the Buffardi Rip Rap Project complies with Wisconsin DNR requirements and Village ordinances, with the condition that they cease all legal action including the public records request. Upon Roll Call Vote, Malmberg, Olson and Naxera voted Aye, Gallus voted Nay, with Budde abstaining. **Motion Carried.** 7.b. Deputy Clerk Hiring Committee Update; The Village received 25 applications for the Deputy Clerk Position over the last few weeks. The hiring committee has narrowed the candidates down to 6, with interviews beginning March 15 and hopes to have the position filled by April 3. 7.c. Authorization to Initiate Simplified Rate Case with the PSC; Naxera/Olson motioned authorize Administrator Klecker to initiate a Simplified Rate Case with the PSC for a standard water rate increase of 4.5%. Upon Roll Call Vote, All Ayes, **Motion Carried.** 7.d. Board of Review Training; Administrator Klecker asked for a Board Member to volunteer to take the required annual Board of Review Training. The Board decided to wait until after the election to pick a volunteer.

**Item 8. Report of the Director of Public Works:** Gallus/Malmberg motioned to

approve the purchase of a solenoid and HMI for the Huber Fine Screen from Energenec in the amount of \$3,354, to be paid for by ARPA Equipment Replacement funds. Upon Roll call Vote, All Ayes. **Motion Carried.** DPW Schultz informed the board that the ATV/UTV Route signs have been installed at various locations throughout the Village. Now that the signs are in place, it is officially legal to drive ATV/UTV's on all Village streets. DPW Shultz has received an offer from an interested party to purchase old 1970's generator owned by the Village. He's looking to get it running first in hopes of selling for a better price and will update the Board next month.

**Item 9. Report of the Village Assistant:** 9.a. Upcoming Well No. 1 Loan/Grant Authorization; Village Assistant Budde informed the Board that approval of Well No. 1 SDWLP Loan and Grant Authorization will be voted on at the April 11 Board Meeting. 9.b. Engaging an Accounting Firm; Gallus/Olson motioned to authorize staff to seek accounting services with Breunig CPA, LLC from Sauk City at the rate of \$125 per hour. Upon Roll Call Vote, All Ayes. **Motion Carried.**

**Item 11. Adjourn:** At 5:37pm Malmberg/Olson motioned to adjourn. All Ayes. **Motion Carried.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennie Klecker  
Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer

Next Village Board Meeting  
**April 11, 2023**  
5:00 PM @ Village Hall

**AA Meetings**  
Wednesday Evenings 7:00  
@ Merrimac Village Hall. Questions?  
Contact Chuck @ 608-795-0050

Brush Pick-up Dates  
**April 12, May 10 & 24**  
4 feet wide by 4 feet high, up to 8  
feet long with brush stacked parallel  
to and near the road

## **SPRING ELECTION** **Tuesday, April 4, 2023**



**Polls Open**  
**7:00am – 8:00pm**

Merrimac Village Hall  
100 Cook Street

Registered candidates on the  
ballot for two Village Trustee  
Positions include:

**Kirk Olson**  
**Margaret Budde**  
**Nathan Taylor**

One registered candidate on the  
ballot for Village President:

**Andrew Gallus**

Questions? Call 608-493-2122

### **The Plan Commission is** **Looking for Volunteers!**

The Plan Commission is looking for  
Volunteers for several exciting new  
committees!

\* **Want to make a positive impact in  
your local environment?** Contact  
Bob Pfaff @ 608-963-3602 for more  
information.

\* **Are you interested in crafting a  
vision for Merrimac's future by  
exploring our community's unique  
identity?** Call Ann Hoffman @ 493-  
9444 or email hofftak@gmail.com to  
find out more.

\* **Would you like to see public lake  
access in the Village of Merrimac?**  
Send Bob Garrison an email  
bobg7070@icloud.com and bring  
your ideas to the table.

Get involved locally and "Be the  
change you wish to see in the world!"

## Save the Date!



**The Merrimac Community Festival will be held at Memorial Park on SAT. AUGUST 5, 2023**

***Psst...You should volunteer this year – It's A LOT of fun!***

Whether you can help for a few hours, the whole day or are interested in taking on a bigger role, we need volunteers at all commitment levels.

Join us for a Festival kick-off meeting at Merrimac Village Hall @ **5:00pm on April 5<sup>th</sup>** to find out how you can help!

Scrap metal recycling will resume in April. Please place items in the dumpster located in the Village Hall parking lot.  
No TV's Please!  
METAL ONLY!

Village Hall will be closed on April 7<sup>th</sup> in observation of Good Friday



## Introducing...

### "Green Merrimac"

*OUR MISSION: Green Merrimac is a dedicated team of community volunteers implementing changes for the Merrimac area that help protect our environment through education and active citizen participation.*



Come join our first event!

**EARTH DAY  
HIGHWAY CLEANUP**  
**April 22, 2023 – 9:00am to Noon**

Meet at the Merrimac Ball Park.  
Safety vests, gloves, & bags supplied.  
Any Questions? Call Village Hall @ 608-493-2122

### **Considering a Building Project?**

#### Don't Forget the Permit!

Most construction projects in the Village require a building permit. If you are thinking of a renovation project, a new deck or pool, driveway, or an addition, *please contact our building inspector before you start!* If you begin a construction project without a permit, you may be charged a \$150.00 Red Tag Fee.

Don't risk it, just call.



Contact our Building Inspector, David Bieno at 608-617-9869 or email [dbieno@generalengineering.net](mailto:dbieno@generalengineering.net)



### **2023 Dog & Cat License Reminder**

Village Ordinances require all dogs & cats over the age of 5 months be licensed each by **April 1<sup>st</sup>** year. Licenses may be purchased at Village Hall or by mail (include a self-addressed stamped envelope). Please provide a proof of rabies vaccination certificate along with the appropriate fee:

	DOGS	CATS
Neutered or Spayed	\$7.00	\$4.00
Unaltered	\$12.00	\$8.00

### **Property Maintenance**

We suggest all Village residents stand back and assess the overall condition of your property. Please take appropriate actions to spruce up your property so our Village looks great to your neighbors and everyone who visits this summer!

**This includes vehicles on the property that appear to be abandoned & constitute a public nuisance.**

Recycling Pickup Dates This Month  
**April 3 & 17**



**The Village of Merrimac is working hard to reduce the amount of salt we all use in our water softeners.** That's because the "Chlorides" in salt can harm the groundwater, lakes, and rivers. It's astonishing to believe that we 527 residents use *120 pounds of salt per day, and it all goes to our wastewater treatment plant.* Over the past 10 months, we've sent out mailers and have been able to help many households to adjust their water softeners to the correct settings. It seems to be working, because our Chlorides are down by about 15%. Nicely done, Merrimac!

**The correct setting for softeners in the Village is 18 Grains.** Even though there are many different kinds of softeners, there are just three most common kinds, and adjusting the settings on most softeners is pretty easy.

If you've got an **Electronically Controlled** softener like this one at the right, "you're in like Flynn," because they can be reset with just a few button presses. Consult your owner's manual, since some have slightly different sequences of buttons to push to reset the Grains to 18.



The **Fleck 5600 Econominder** at left was the standard starting in the 1980s, until the advent of electronic softeners, so chances are pretty good you've got one of these little gems in your basement (perhaps covered in dust!). It meters all the water that goes through it and only regenerates the resin beads when a set amount of water has passed through it. To set the Grains of Hardness:

1. Find the **People Dial**, which shows two little people, followed by 123. Find the digit indicating the number of people living in your home. Let's say you're a family of 3.

2. Where the "3" appears on the **People Dial**, look at the corresponding number on the innermost dial, which is the **Hardness Dial**.
3. On the softener dials at the right, **3 people** lines up with **20-21 grains**. For the Village of Merrimac, this softener would be set too high. (On the other hand, it's just right for a family of 5, since the "5" lines up with the tick mark for **18 Grains**).
4. To adjust...With one thumb on the outermost black gear (by the "CAPACITY" arrow), hold with moderate pressure.
5. With the other hand, pull out the **People Dial** slightly, and turn, until the # of **People** in your home lines up with **18**.
6. No need to add a factor of safety here, even if your family uses a lot of water. There's a safety factor in the 18 Grains.



This **Fleck 12-Day Timed Softener** at the right is the "bad boy" of the bunch, and if you've got one, you're probably using way too much salt. The water softeners above keep track of *how much water has passed through the softener*, and will only soften when necessary. *This* little rascal regenerates after a set number of *days*. Even if the homeowner is away from home, the softener will regenerate. Yikes! Even worse, many timed softeners are set by the installer to regenerate every 3 days. For the large majority of Merrimac households, regenerating every 6 or 12 days would be more than sufficient. So, if you've got one of these, you might be using 4x more salt than you need. Quadruple yikes!

To understand the timed softener setting, take a look at the innermost wheel of the dial. See the numbers? Each corresponds to one day in the 12-day cycle. If the metal pin is pushed outward, regeneration will happen on that day; if the day's pin is pushed toward the center of the dial, no regeneration will occur.



**If you have a Timed softener, email [MerrimacAssistant@gmail.com](mailto:MerrimacAssistant@gmail.com) or call Village Hall. We can help you determine the best setting for you, based on your usage and configuration of your plumbing.**