

DRAFT

Minutes VILLAGE OF HONOR

Regular Council Meeting

10922 Platte Street Honor, MI 49640

July 14, 2025

Meeting Called to order by President Theobald at 6:02pm.

Pledge of Allegiance Recited

Roll Call: Council- Denoyer, Theobald, Hepner, Wendel, Fuller PRESENT

Staff: Reed, Roth, Brow, Leone, Naulty PRESENT

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Theobald, second by Denoyer to approve June 9, 2025 regular council meeting minutes as presented. 5/5 Ayes **MOTION PASSED.**

Board Comments on Agenda:

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Denoyer, second by Wendel to approve agenda as presented. 5/5 Ayes **MOTION PASSED.**

Public Comments:

Brooke Sowa- Brooke purchased JoMo's Ice Cream shop in the Village about a year ago and changed the name to Mudgies but just received their first sewer bill addressed to Mudgies. Brooke asked the Village to forgive late fees as they were not aware of the sewer bill. It was established that the title company that handled the transaction did not contact the Village at the time of sale so the Treasurer was not made aware of the changes at the time of sale. The Treasurer found this change upon the most recent billing cycle and sent the current charges for the address under the new name.

Special Guests/Presentations-

Matt from Michigan Rural Water Association

Matt provided a presentation on how MRWA assisted the Village with a rate study to calculate the current sewer rates. He showed the council an Excel worksheet/program that calculates facts and figures provided by the Village in regards to costs associated with sewer loans, maintenance, repair and replacements.

Planning Commission: Rosemary Naulty

Rosemary has approved 5 Land Use Permits and received one formal complaint about blight from Dennis Rodzik. She stated she will begin the process by sending letters requesting the resident to clean up the property.

Rosemary provided some information for the council on more ZBA training she thinks would be beneficial to protect the Village.

County Commissioner- Tim Markey

The Board of Commissioners agreed to a settlement with David Wenkel of \$585,000 for an accident where a Benzie County Deputy was at fault.

BS&A presented to the BOC about their Cloud product they will be moving to in the near future. They will encourage their customers to migrate to that product vs. their .net product. The cost of the cloud version is about 3x the .net version.

Benzie County is currently exploring the idea of a regional animal shelter with Grand Traverse and Leelanau county.

The BOC has begun working on the 25/26 budget.

The dispatch center is running a deficit this year and will need to rely on general funds to make the difference. It is mainly funded by cell phone surcharges.

There is a final approved plan for the erosion problem at Betsie lighthouse.

FIRE- Currently up to 192 runs ytd in Homestead Township, 5 calls in the Village of Honor in the month of June. The fire department hired a new employee firefighter/EMT who purchased a home in the Village of Honor recently.

Financial Reports- Brow

Third quarter billing for sewer has been sent out. There has been a little push back about the increase but many residents accept the explanation provided that all costs are rising and the sewer costs are not exempt.

Christy provided information about CDs maturing in the near future for the council to make decisions on what to do with that money. One CD maturing in September is nearly \$52,000, a second one maturing in December is nearly \$54,000.

As of July 1st the Village of Honor has officially been accepted to the Fire Escrow Program so in the case of a fire in the Village, funds will be withheld for clean up.

Financial Correspondence - None

Bank Reconciliations - May and June were presented to the council. The General account reconciliation was not presented as Christy is having trouble reconciling \$0.10 for that account. She will continue to search and present the June General fund reconciliation at next month's meeting.

Waste Hauler Report- Waste Hauler numbers look a little low but there was a \$10,000 check that came the morning of meeting day (7/14) that has not been deposited yet. Christy and DPW agree that the numbers tend to catch up by the end of summer and we are still on pace for \$115-125,000 for the year.

Budget Amendments - None

Motion to approve financial report and bank reconciliations as presented by Theobald, second by Hepner. **Roll Call: Ayes:Hepner, Denoyer, Theobald, Fuller, Wendel. Nays:None. Motion Passed.**

Submission of Bills/Checks: \$23,393.75

Consumers amt \$3,833.13

Zoning Admin amt \$910.00

Please add \$_____ (not entered yet)

Trustee Fuller questioned the time intervals billed by the zoning administrator for certain items on the invoice. The Zoning Administrator had already left the meeting and was not available to answer questions. It was requested that the council review the Zoning Administrator contract.

Motion to approve submission of bills as presented by Denoyer, second by Wendel. **Roll Call:Ayes:Fuller, Wendel, Hepner, Theobald, Denoyer. Nays:None. Motion Passed.**

List of approved vendors- Deputy Clerk presented a list of recurring monthly utilities and bills asking for permission to pay upon receipt to avoid late fees and overlap due to billing cycles and monthly meeting approval timing. The invoices will still show on the monthly report presented to council. Deputy Clerk also presented the Record Patriot bill asking if the council still wanted physical paper copies delivered weekly or would online access suffice.

Motion to approve payment of listed Village bills upon receipt as presented and discontinue paper copies of Record Patriot by Theobald, second by Hepner. **Roll Call:Ayes: Wendel, Fuller, Denoyer, Theobald, Hepner. Nays:None. Motion Passed.**

Correspondence:

Incoming:

Mr. Saffron's email was read aloud. The council discussed his concerns regarding the Zoning Ordinance not being legal. Although the zoning ordinance was rewritten before any of the current council members terms, the Deputy Clerk researched village records and found that the Ordinance was brought before a previous council, voted on and passed. It was publicized and enacted according to records. The Council agreed that the presented Village records suffice as proof it is legal.

The council discussed Mr. Saffron's concern about a land use permit for an ADU at 10327 Main St and agreed it was permitted correctly.

The council also addressed Mr. Saffron's concern about the CoHo Festival and all agreed that the Village does not have any authority to change the name of the festival.

Outgoing: None

Old Business-

1. Paperless billing- It has been established that the application used to administer sewer bills is capable of paperless billing for residents who would prefer to receive their bill electronically. The treasurer would create a form for residents to sign up and submit their email address. The form can be placed on the website, as well as notify residents via the post card that is currently used to bill that this option is now available. There are many free ways to notify residents that this option is now available.

Motion to approve paperless billing by Theobald, second by Wendel. **Roll Call: Ayes: Fuller, Denoyer, Wendel, Hepner, Theobald. Nays: None. Motion Passed.**

2. Credit card payment processing- The treasurer has researched many companies to accept credit card payments for tax and sewer payments. They all charge fees for processing the payment, some of them charge the fee to the Village and some charge the fee to the customer. The Treasurer

suggested using PayGov.US as they charge the fee (3%) to the customer for the convenience of being able to pay online.

Motion to use [PayGov.US](https://paygov.us) by Theobald, second by Wendel. **Roll Call: Ayes: Denoyer, Wendel, Fuller, Hepner, Theobald. Nays: None. Motion Passed.**

3. Appoint Clerk Resolution # 109-25

After two weeks of advertisement in the Record Patriot there have been no applications for the Clerk position. The current Deputy Clerk is capable and prepared to be appointed to Clerk.

Motion to adopt Resolution 109-25 to Appoint Jessica Roth to Clerk by Theobald, second by Fuller. **Roll Call: Ayes: Wendel, Theobald, Fuller, Hepner, Denoyer . Nays: None. Motion Passed.**

4. Sewer rates- It was asked of the council to lower sewer rates by Dennis Rodzik at last month's meeting. The council reviewed Dennis's proposal and Michigan Rural Water's presentation of the sewer rates. The council discussed both perspectives but ultimately decided against lowering rates at this time.
5. MiClass-move funds to invest- The treasurer provided the council information about CDs that are maturing soon suggesting those funds be moved to MiClass. The council pointed out there are funds in the General account to invest as well.

Motion to invest \$50,000 of General funds in MiClass by Theobald, second by Wendel. **Roll Call: Ayes: Denoyer, Wendel, Theobald, Fuller, Hepner. Nays: None. Motion Passed.**

New Business:

1. Clerk/Treasurer Wage & Compensation Resolution # 110-25

The council discussed the statutory duties required by the Clerk and the additional needs of the Village that support an increase in salary. Supporting documents were provided by the Deputy Clerk showing the average salary of Clerks in a Village setting in the state of Michigan average roughly \$48,000 with benefits. Furthermore the capabilities and experience of the newly appointed Clerk were considered. Trustee Fuller asked if there are funds available to raise this salary and if a budget amendment would be necessary. President Theobald ensured there are funds available and indicated that a budget amendment would be necessary. Insurance benefits on this resolution stated up to \$500/month however the council suggested to be uniform with the other individuals already on the group insurance plan to change this resolution to Village

responsibility of 90% and employee pay 10%. The council also asked that the resolution not read "part time" and only appointed as status.

Motion to approve Resolution #110-25 as amended by Theobald, second by Fuller. **Roll Call: Ayes: Fuller, Theobald, Hepner, Wendel. Nays: Denoyer. Motion Passed.**

2. Gravely replacement purchase

The Gravely lawn mower is in serious need of replacement. DPW presented a replacement option to the council last month for review. A VenTrac demo unit was provided by the company. The council was able to see it in action and review its capabilities. The council discussed that \$20-25,000 was budgeted for this replacement. The VenTrac machine is considerably more expensive but also has many more capabilities than just mowing. This unit is capable of snow blowing sidewalks among other chores required by DPW and would greatly save time and money overall. Trustee Fuller asked about the lifespan and maintenance of this unit. It was explained that the maintenance wouldn't be more than the current Gravely unit and its life expectancy would be estimated at 15-20 years.

Motion to approve purchase of the VenTrac mower to replace the Gravely by Fuller, second by Wendel. **Roll Call: Ayes: Wendel, Theobald, Fuller, Hepner. Nays: Denoyer. Motion Passed.**

3. Purchase cameras for park & playground

The council discussed the need for surveillance of the park due to recent unsavory behavior. They discussed internet capabilities and any need for upgrade. The IT & Internet provider is already currently trying to schedule an upgrade to the internet at the park to assist with alarms on Riverside Dr sewer pumps anyway. Council agreed the purchase would be contingent on internet capabilities.

Motion to approve up to \$1200 for the purchase of cameras for the park & playground by Theobald, second by Hepner. **Roll Call: Ayes: Fuller, Wendel, Theobald, Hepner, Denoyer. Nays: None. Motion Passed.**

4. Purchase new computers for admin office

The Village budgeted \$5,000 for new computers this year. The DPW computer hard drive recently crashed and they are working without a computer to check reports and record vital information. Quotes for new computers were provided. These quotes would replace the admin office computers and the current admin office computer would be provided to DPW. The budget provides funds for 3 new computers. Proposing the purchase of only 2 new computers at this time for a rough total of \$1,500.

Motion to approve up to \$2,000 for 2 new computers by Wendel, second by Theobald. **Roll Call: Ayes: Denoyer, Hepner, Fuller, Theobald, Wendel. Nays: None. Motion Passed.**

5. Playground-footing for net climber

Footings for the net climber will require 17 cubic yards of cement. Quotes were provided but one company, SRM was willing to donate 10 yards if the Village will pay for 7 yards in exchange for a photo opportunity for advertisement.

Motion to approve up to \$3,000 for cement for footings on net climber by Theobald, second by Denoyer. **Roll Call: Ayes: Wendel Fuller, Denoyer, Hepner, Theobald. Nays: None. Motion Passed.**

Reports:

1. Maintenance- Leone

Sewer: I have pumped our storage lagoons down to 6.9'. We just completed our first harvest of the irrigation field (7/9). Andrew from Hangover Hops LLC will be spraying, discing and reseeding this upcoming week. I had Ginger from MRWA out to conduct an updated energy study, and I should have a final draft for next month's review. On 6/5 I had The Pumping Service out to pump the structures at the lagoons, as well as lift station wet wells. During this I discovered a float switch anchor chain was broken at the US31 station. I repaired it, and with Jesse's okay I ordered a replacement Chain from USA Blue Book.

I had 3 **Alarms** for the month of June:

6/17 1:39AM Loss of connection at Riverside lift station, equipment was reset and connection was restored.

6/18 10:00PM Loss of connection at Riverside lift station, after resetting equipment, and calling Chris from Eclipse he found that spectrum's service coming in was erratic. The connection was restored.

6/28 7:25AM Screen Fault at Wastewater Facility, screen was reset and has been operating great since.

Equipment: The Ventrac demo was an eye opener and went great! The machine seems to be built to stand the test of time. It was simple to operate, and quite astonishing at how capable it is compared to a zero turn or riding mower. Its ability to work on steep slopes eliminated the need to weed whip the storage lagoons, and it did the job in nearly half of the time. The broom operated beyond what I expected. This should allow us to keep street cleaning in the house, as well as be able to keep up on sidewalks better. I assume the snowblower attachment would work as good as the other implements, which would make quick work of sidewalks if the board wanted to address that task. After all of the research I did on this machine it still outperformed my expectations. It was astonishing how much easier it made my job. I am extremely confident in the machine, and its implements, to get the job done efficiently and effectively.

General: Nothing new to report.

Park: Maley Park quarterly water samples came back negative for Total Coliform and Bacteria. With help from Jesse, we have completed the fence at the Playground lot, and hope to begin installing equipment next week!

2. Street Administrator- Leone

STREETS: We installed our new radar speed signs on Deadstream and US31, and they have been working great. I am very pleased at the amount of data they collect, and their ability to create reports. I will have more on this next month. I have relocated the older speed sign to South Street, and plan to move it around as needed.

SIDEWALKS: Nothing new to report.

STREETLIGHTS: Nothing new to report.

DITCHES: I have begun brush hogging ditches and should finish this week.

GENERAL: We have started to fix major pot holes throughout town, and will be addressing the remaining in the upcoming weeks.

3. Ordinance Officer- NONE

4. **Park Committee- Roth, Hepner** - The Farmers Market is doing really well and has been very busy! The porta potties had some graffiti that DPW cleaned up.

5. **Playground Committee- Denoyer** The grading of gravel looks great.

6. **Sewer Committee- Theobald, Wendel, Leone**

7. **Dark Skies- Theobald, Dennis Rodzik, Denoyer-** There are several street lights that could be turned off. Dennis provided a map of all the lights that are currently on. Dennis marked lights they are suggesting to turn off with green tape. Asking the council to review map and marked light posts to talk about next month.

General Discussion: Bank Account Change. Council decided to do nothing about the bank account hack at Honor Bank. No fraudulent charges have been observed. The treasurer will continue to monitor.

DPW Cell phone bill follow up from last month's meeting. The discrepancy in monthly price was that the first month's bill was a partial bill due to the start date of the plan. The allowance was set according to that.

Next month's meeting packet will be partially displayed on the TV instead of paper packets to save money and time.

Public Input

Announcements

Adjournment: 8:48pm

Motion by Theobald, Second by Wendel. Ayes:5 Nays:0