

# Village of Albers

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*"Providing security and services to improve the quality of life for our residents."*

PRESIDENT, Steve Schomaker

TRUSTEES: Scott Athmer

Cliff Behrmann

Kevin Kenow

Mike McDermid

Kent Schwierjohn

Jeff Timmermann

## MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE VILLAGE OF ALBERS PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES HELD ON March 10, 2025

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: President Steve Schomaker called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m.

ROLL CALL: Trustees Athmer, Behrmann, Kenow, McDermid, Schwierjohn and Timmermann were present at roll call.

APPROVAL OF REGULAR SESSION MINUTES MEETING – February 10, 2025: The Board reviewed the minutes from Regular Session Meeting on February 10, 2025.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY McDermid to approve the minutes as presented. Schwierjohn seconded the motion. Vote was 6 – yeas, 0 – nays; motion carried.

APPROVAL OF EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES MEETING – January 13, 2025: The Board reviewed the minutes from Executive Session Meeting on January 13, 2025.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY McDermid to approve the minutes as presented. Kenow seconded the motion. Vote was 6 – yeas, 0 – nays; motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: The agenda was reviewed.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Kenow to approve the agenda as presented. McDermid seconded the motion. Vote was 6 - yeas, 0 - nays; motion carried.

OTHER VILLAGE OFFICIALS: Attorney Terry Bruckert, Clerk Morris, Chief Vielweber, Zoning Administrator Brendel, Water & Sewer Superintendent Horstmann and Streets & Lighting Superintendent Deimeke were in attendance. Treasurer Hubert was absent, her absence was excused.

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE: Jim (Jock) Toennies, Park Board President, was in attendance to address the Board concerning park activities. Gary & Kelsie Kharibian, Ed & JoAnn Netemeyer, Jim & Sue Norrenberns, Karen Schroeder and Cindy Wiegmann were in attendance to address the Board concerning sewer pond issues. Josiah Boyer, Joel Greathouse, Jarrod Haley and Abigail Wilson, Central High School students, were in attendance to observe per a civics class requirement. Nick Kay and Dave Wellen were in attendance to observe.

*Stephen Schomaker - Village President*

*Trustees - Scott Athmer, Cliff Behrmann, Kevin Kenow, Mike McDermid, Kent Schwierjohn and Jeff Timmermann*

*Brenda Morris - Village Clerk*

*Brian Vielweber - Police Chief*

*Cindy Hubert - Village Treasurer*

*Blake Deimeke - Streets & Lighting Superintendent*

*Jeannie Brendel - Zoning Administrator*

*Chris Horstmann - Water & Sewer Superintendent*



Gary Kharibian, resident, was invited to address the Board concerning sewer pond issues. He read the following statement:

“Good evening, members of the board. Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. I’m here representing not just myself, but the many residents who are deeply affected by the ongoing sewer issues in our town. We appreciate the efforts that have been made over the past three years, but I’m sure you’ll all agree that the situation is far from resolved, and the ongoing smell is making it increasingly difficult for residents to continue living with this problem.

#### Key Talking Points:

1. Acknowledge Past Efforts: We understand that the town has tried various biological, water-level, and sludge removal fixes, and we appreciate those efforts. However, after three years, the problem persists, and it’s clear that these solutions have not worked as intended. We’re aware that these things take time, but we have been extremely patient.
2. Impact on Residents: The smell is not just an inconvenience; it’s affecting the health and well-being of our community. It disrupts daily life, discourages outdoor activities, and has even led to some residents moving or considering moving out of town. People are frustrated, and morale is low.
3. Request for a Hard Deadline: While we’ve been patient, we can no longer continue waiting without a clear solution. We believe it’s time for the town to set a firm deadline to resolve the issue or move on to an alternative and proven solution.
4. Alternative Solutions: We’re not here just to complain—we’re here to ask for real change. If the town has reached a point where the current infrastructure cannot be fixed adequately, we need to seriously consider alternatives, whether that be a complete system overhaul or relocating the infrastructure altogether.
5. Call to Increase Transparency and Communication: It’s important that the town communicates openly with residents about the steps being taken and the timelines involved. We would like regular updates on progress and the specifics of any new plans or proposals to be considered.

#### Questions for the Board:

1. Can the board commit to a more definitive and realistic timeline? If so, what are the specific goals and benchmarks that need to be met to ensure this issue is resolved once and for all?
2. If the current methods of fixing the problem continue to fail, what are the next steps? Are we considering a more comprehensive overhaul or a potential relocation of the sewer system?
3. How will the board ensure that the community is kept informed about the progress being made? Will there be regular updates, and how can residents best engage with the decision-making process?

Again, I want to thank the board for the opportunity to speak. The situation has gone on far too long, and it’s time for us to have a concrete plan in place. We’re all working towards the same goal—a town that is clean, healthy, and pleasant to live in. Thanks again and we look forward to answers and dialogue around the questions that were proposed.”

President Schomaker thanked Mr. Kharibian for his statement and assured everyone in attendance that resolving this concern is a priority for the Village of Albers. Kenow outlined specific testing and correction measures that have been taken and answered concerns from those in attendance. He repeated President Schomaker’s statement that resolving the sewer pond issues and will keep residents updated.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

IMPROVEMENTS & PARK - Scott Athmer Chairman: Athmer had nothing to report.

Athmer invited Jim (Jock) Toennies, Park Board President, to update the Board concerning park operations and events. Mr. Toennies updated the Board that youth league t-ball season will begin soon and water service being turned on this week. He also noted that softball tournaments are scheduled for May and June, also disc golf baskets are being added to expand the course. Mr. Toennies also reported plans for reconfiguring the small diamond are being considered, creating two full-size diamonds. LED lights at the park are scheduled to be installed soon, with labor for the project being donated. President Schomaker and the Board thanked Mr. Toennies for the update and for his hard work at the park.

POLICE AND DISASTER RESPONSE - Cliff Behrmann Chairman: Behrmann asked Chief Vielweber to report on behalf of the Police Department.

Chief Vielweber updated the Board that tasers for the police department have been received and will be operational soon.

Police Chief's Report - Chief Brian Vielweber: Chief Vielweber presented the Police Chief Report.

WATER & SEWER AND TECHNOLOGY - Kevin Kenow Chairman: Kenow reported that Clearwave Communications is scheduling installation in the Village of Albers.

Kenow updated the Board of a recent water line repair on property adjacent to State Route 161 was recently repaired. Issues requiring the repair are in the area of and directly attributable to mine subsidence. Invoices and losses from the repair will be submitted to ExxonMobil for reimbursement.

Kenow presented a proposal for a water main relocation near Billhartz Road and Winter Road with a projected cost of \$75,000.00. The relocation is being considered to avoid further damage to waterlines from mine subsidence with the cost of the relocation being submitted to ExxonMobil for payment for the project.

Kenow updated the Board that the approved computer firewalls at Village Hall will be scheduled to be installed in the near future.

Kenow asked the Board to consider a proposal from IntegriTel updating the official Village web domain and email addresses at a cost of \$308.00/month. The Board discussed the proposal. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Kenow to approve the agreement with IntegriTel updating the official Village web domain and email addresses at a cost of \$308.00/month. McDermid seconded the motion. Vote was 6 - yeas, 0 - nays; motion carried.

Kenow updated the Board that the fire hydrant backflow meter to monitor water used from hydrants has been received. The required ordinance and policy outlining meter usage is being drafted with review by the Board at upcoming meetings.

Water & Sewer Superintendent Report: Superintendent Horstmann reported water tower monitoring is operational with all necessary sensors replaced.

Superintendent Horstmann updated the Board that he is coordinating with Midco Diving & Marine

Services to schedule the water tower inspection.

Superintendent Horstmann reported -14.04% water loss for February with a -6.43% loss year to date.

Superintendent Horstmann noted that he will begin scheduling hydrant replacements as requested by Clin-Clair Fire Department (CCFD).

Superintendent Horstmann the Board that the Rosewood and south lift stations are operational and reporting run hours but levels report and gallons/minute are not currently being monitored. Kenow stated that the lift stations will be discussed at the upcoming Committee Meeting.

Superintendent Horstmann noted that the pressure relief valve has been received to be used if/when water is transferred from Sommerfield-Lebanon-Mascoutah Water District to Carlyle-Southwest Water District.

FINANCE - Mike McDermid Chairman: McDermid reminded the Board that the Municipal Aggregation Agreement with Homefield Energy has been signed and was effective December 01, 2024, at a rate of 8.954 ¢/kWh, which is expected to be lower than AmerenIL rates. He noted the current AmerenIL electrical rate is currently lower than the agreed Village municipal aggregation rate with Constellation New Energy, reminding all residents that the rates may change weekly and the Village is currently under contract with Constellation New Energy. McDermid referred to a letter sent to residents concerning the rates update reminding all residents to remain vigilant when managing their household account. A letter detailing electrical supply information was sent to all residents and McDermid asked everyone to contact Village Hall with any questions.

McDermid asked Attorney Bruckert to report on the ongoing asbestos lawsuit involving the Village. Attorney Bruckert updated the Board that there have been no updates on the lawsuit.

McDermid updated the Board on the Lookingglass Ambulance District, noting the independent ambulance district will include Albers, Damiansville, New Baden and Lookingglass Township. Meetings by the district are ongoing and progressing with a newly established independent board.

McDermid asked the Board to review the proposed Appropriations ordinance to be approved at April meeting and contact him with any updates.

McDermid asked President Schomaker to address the Board concerning the proposed updates to the Clin-Clair Fire Department (CCFD) electronic sign. President Schomaker asked the Board to consider paying \$5,000.00 as the Village's share of costs for the purchase of a new electronic sign. The Villages of Albers and Damiansville are each being asked to contribute \$5,000.00 each as the sign directly benefits residents of both communities. The new sign will be more readable with other operational improvements will cost approximately \$30,000.00-\$35,000.00. The Board discussed the expense. A MOTION WAS MADE BY McDermid to pay \$5,000.00 for the Village of Albers share of the purchase of a new sign at CCFD. Kenow seconded the motion. Vote was 6 - yeas; 0 - nays; motion carried.

McDermid presented the updated Village of Albers Code, asking the Board to approve codification of the current edition and authorize the Clerk's certification. A MOTION WAS MADE BY McDermid to codify the updated Village of Albers Code and authorize the Clerk's certification. Behrmann seconded the motion. Vote was 6 - yeas; 0 - nays; motion carried.

McDermid asked the Board to approve Ordinance #612-03102025, updating the Finance Committee to the Finance and Personnel Committee. The Board discussed the update.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY McDermid to approve Ordinance #612-03102025, updating the Finance Committee to the Finance and Personnel Committee. Kenow seconded the motion. Vote was 6 - yeas; 0 - nays; motion carried.

McDermid asked the Board to approve Ordinance #611-03102025, implementing a municipal grocery retailers' tax for the Village of Albers. Attorney Bruckert informed the Board that the tax was previously assessed by the State of Illinois, but is now collection of the tax is the responsibility of individual municipalities.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY McDermid to approve Ordinance #611-03102025, adding the municipal grocery retailers' tax. Schwierjohn seconded the motion. Vote was 6 - yeas; 0 - nays; motion carried. McDermid directed Clerk Morris to file the ordinance with the Clinton County Clerk's office.

McDermid stated that employee pay review will be discussed in Executive Session.

McDermid presented invoices to be paid, the Board reviewed the invoices.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY McDermid to pay invoices totaling \$115,325.06. Kenow seconded the motion. Vote was 6 - yeas; 0 - nays; motion carried.

Treasurer's Report - Cindy Hubert Treasurer: Treasurer Hubert was absent; her absence was excused. McDermid presented the Treasurer's Report in Treasurer Hubert's absence.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY McDermid to accept the Treasurer's Report. Kenow seconded the motion. Vote was 6 - yeas; 0 - nays; motion carried.

ZONING Kent Schwierjohn Chairman: Schwierjohn updated the Board that the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) Grant has been submitted on behalf of the Village of Albers with awards being announced in February or March.

Schwierjohn presented Ordinance #613-03102025 for final review and vote. The ordinance updates specific guidelines for installing solar panels in the Village of Albers.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Schwierjohn to accept Ordinance #613-03102025, amending solar panel districts. McDermid seconded the motion. Vote was 6 - yeas; 0 - nays; motion carried.

Schwierjohn directed Clerk Morris to file the ordinance with the Clinton County Clerk's office.

Schwierjohn presented the draft ordinance amending zoning fees for Board consideration and stated the topic will be discussed at the upcoming Committee Meeting.

Zoning Administrator's Report - Jeannie Brendel Administrator: Administrator Brendel was absent, her absence was excused.

STREETS & LIGHTING – Jeff Timmermann Chairman: Timmermann updated the Board that the Clinton County Highway Department is scheduled to resurface County Road #8 this summer.

Timmermann updated the Board that the sidewalk extension on North Commercial Street is currently on hold and funding for the project is expected to be funded through grants.

Timmermann asked the Board to consider the purchase of a John Deere mower totaling \$12,300.00 from Reichmann Brothers, LLC. The Board discussed the purchase.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Schwierjohn to purchase a John Deere mower not to exceed \$12,300.00

from Reichmann Brothers, LLC. Kenow seconded the motion. Vote was 6 - yeas; 0 - nays; motion carried.

Timmermann updated the Board that Superintendent Deimeke will be mowing the park this season with McDermid mowing the ball diamonds. He thanked both for their service and dedication maintaining the park.

Streets and Lighting Superintendent's Report Blake Deimeke: Superintendent Deimeke reported repairs to the backhoe and general equipment maintenance is being scheduled.

NEW BUSINESS: President Schomaker announced the Culpepper & Merriweather Circus is coming to Albers Tuesday, April 22, 2025. The circus is being sponsored by the Albers Police Department benefiting community outreach.

President Schomaker noted the upcoming Albers-Damiansville Spring Yard Sales are scheduled for Saturday, May 10, 2025.

President Schomaker updated the Board that Dollar General representatives have contacted him with interest in building a new store in the Village of Albers. He asked that anyone with ideas for an appropriate site to contact him.

OLD BUSINESS: No Old Business was presented.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: McDermid asked the Board to enter Executive Session to discuss employee pay review.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY McDermid to enter Executive Session at 8:08p.m. per Open Meetings Act 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) to discuss employee pay review. Timmermann seconded the motion. Vote was 6 - yeas; 0 - nays; motion carried.

President Schomaker, Attorney Bruckert, Trustees Athmer, Behrmann, Kenow, McDermid, Schwierjohn and Timmermann entered Executive Session; all other officials and guests exited the meeting.

Executive Session was held.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY McDermid to exit Executive Session at 8:52p.m. Schwierjohn seconded the motion. Vote was 6 - yeas; 0 - nays; motion carried.

Executive Session ended. The public and all officials were invited to return to the meeting.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Kenow to exit Executive Session at 7:56p.m. Schwierjohn seconded the motion. Vote was 6 - yeas; 0 - nays; motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: A MOTION WAS MADE BY Schwierjohn to adjourn the meeting. Timmermann seconded the motion. Vote was 6 - yeas; 0 - nays; motion carried.

*Mike McDermid, Trustee – Executive Session Minutes*  
*Brenda Morris, Village Clerk*