

Village of Germantown Hills
Special Village Board Meeting Minutes

September 11, 2017 6:00 p.m.

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance-** Mike Hinrichsen, Village President, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Village President/Trustees	Roll Call	1	2	3	4	5
Mike Hinrichsen – President	Present					
Julia Miller	Absent	Y				
Amy Pace	Absent	Y				
Brian Wysocki	Present	Y				
Jim O’Laughlin	Present	Y				
Marty Clinch	Present	Y				
Todd Rice	Present	Y				

Also Present:

Rich Brecklin, Superintendent of Public Works

Chuck Urban, Village Attorney

Bret Wernsman, Village Employee

Zach Hecht, Village Employee

There were sixteen residents in attendance.

Everyone stood and said the Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence was observed for those that have served our country both here and abroad.

The Board had no objection to Amy Pace and Julia Miller attending by electronic means as they were both gone for work purposes.

2. **Discussion on the grinder pump systems. The Village will share information related to the use and care of the system.**
3. **Discussion with residents to share their perspectives on the new grinder pump policy for the Village.**

Mike Hinrichsen reviewed the format for the meeting.

Brian Wysocki read the new grinder pump policy that the board approved along with the Ordinance that adopts the fee schedule for abuse. Brian noted the date for implementation of the new policy for after hour grinder pump calls was delayed until October 1st.

Rich Brecklin explained the components of the grinder pump system and how they work. Mike Hinrichsen stated some of the phone calls from residents made it clear to him there were some misunderstandings about the grinder pump system.

Rich explained it is necessary for the control box to be clear and visible. Rich discussed some of the common problems with the cutter and floats and talked about the control box and how it works. He noted they don't have support at night to be able to get help so that is a part of the reason for the change of not doing repairs at night. Rich discussed some of the problems they run into in pulling the pumps out of 6' and 10' tanks. If there is a power outage residents should stop using water as the tank doesn't hold much water.

Mike Hinrichsen talked about the ways the residents can mitigate the risks. He received phone calls from 4-5 different residents and the key issue of course is that they don't want sewer in their basement. The Village owns the pumps and manages them at no cost. There are some things residents can do to help mitigate the risk of having any issues. They are:

- control what is put into the sewer system
- keep the control box clear and visible
- have an audible alarm installed

Mike understood the concern of having to wait several hours for someone to come and repair the system. This is an inconvenience to residents but it would be no matter if you have a gravity line or grinder pump.

Brian Wysocki indicated that the safety of the employees is a big part of the conversation that played into the policy being implemented.

A resident asked if there is a maintenance scheduled. Rich Brecklin explained the preventative maintenance schedule but noted it is a new p.m. system so it would not include maintenance done years ago. Rich noted they can't do p.m.'s in the winter because you have to be able to run water and the schedule varies depended upon time.

Dave Cole stated there was a commitment by the Village to maintain all of the system which includes the grinder pumps.

Rich Brecklin noted a possibility of having an electrical contractor do the work but the cost could be \$120/hour and \$150/hour on weekends and holidays.

Rich indicated another way to mitigate the risk would be to purchase a water alarm that will set off an alarm in the event of water backing up out of the floor drain. These can be purchased at Nena Ace and there are other systems on line that have the capability to be managed through a smart phone.

Mike Hinrichsen stated in the event of a power failure to not use water. Residents should also make sure they have the extra sewer rider coverage on the insurance policy and in the event of a backup to make sure and have the name of a company you can call for a potential cleanup.

Mike noted the board has looked at the risks and safety to send someone out in the middle of the night. There is a need to get people to manage the systems and understand the things they need to do. All of the comments and discussion has brought about good points for the

board to think about. Mike noted the need to now look at the Village PM management schedule and make a decision that is good for everyone.

A resident asked about the possibility of hiring more employees to do the maintenance. Rich noted we can look at that possibility but work is limited depending on weather.

Rich Brecklin talked about the life expectancy of the pumps. The Village used to rebuild the pumps but now we replace them due to the cost.

A resident stated it appears no one wants to give up the 24/7 service but questioned if people would be willing to pay for it.

Kris Severinsen noted he has had a pipe come apart twice and worries about those type of emergencies and being able to get a hold of someone. Rich noted there has been a pipe that has come unglued but they have never had a check valve fail.

Rich explained other communities that have grinder pump systems. The topography was the issue as to why White Oak Lake is on grinder pumps. Rich noted there are other grinder pumps in the community that the Village does not maintain.

A resident asked if there is a grinder pump schedule with a plan to replace the pumps? Rich stated there is a grinder pump schedule but not on replacement.

Mike Hinrichsen indicated the need to find a solution that works for everyone. The sewer committee can review the list of issues to see if there is a better option. Brian Wysocki noted there is a process and a preventative maintenance schedule in place.

A resident asked about finding out Village meeting information. Ann Sasso noted the information is on the website and agendas are posted 48 hours prior at the Village hall and on the website.

Mike Hinrichsen noted there has been a lot of good questions. He noted 24/7 service may not be available but we can talk about options. The Village needs to manage their resources and possibly close the hours gap on calls as an option.

Brian Wysocki explained the need to look at the cost of labor and the safety issue that is involved.

Kris Severinsen asked about the process of checking the messages when there's an alarm as a catastrophic emergency would be different then a minor alarm. Dave Cole asked that maybe there be two different call numbers depending on the severity.

Mike Hinrichsen noted there could be two different types of emergencies. A clear and present danger vs. a minor alarm. The Village will need to consider the next best steps. Mike thanked everyone and appreciated their time.

Julia Miller stated she was offended that people might think the Village is just waiting around for the things to break. She noted it is difficult to hear this when she feels it is our responsibility to know what equipment is in our homes and how things work. Unfortunately, this board inherited this system and is trying to figure out what is best.

Marty Clinch noted he felt the meeting was productive and the board has some things to do. He felt there is room for improvement on the p.m.'s but we need to be cognizant of the budget.

Bret Wernsman noted the pumps don't fail. He stated he has replaced two in 20 years. It's the mechanical parts that fail.

Mike Hinrichsen recommended the sewer committee think about the best solution. Todd Rice thinks the fees should be higher and the need to look again at the policy.

Scott DeSplinter indicated the biggest issue is the employees don't have any support at night if something goes bad.

Mike stated the sewer committee needs to make some recommended suggestions to the board. The policy implementation will be deferred until November 1st. The sewer committee will meet on October 2nd at 5:00 p.m.

4. Adjournment

A motion was made by Marty Clinch to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. The motion was seconded by Brian Wysocki. **Motion passed #1.**

Ann Sasso, Village Clerk