

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF ARGENTA**  
**#16-01-04 R01**  
**MONDAY JANUARY 4, 2016 AT 6:00 P.M.**  
**VILLAGE HALL, 330 N WARREN STREET, ARGENTA, ILLINOIS**

**Call to Order:** Mayor Luedke called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Roll Call:** Mayor Luedke and Trustees Crowder, Harris, Pagel, and Barker were present. Trustee Bowman was absent. Also in attendance were Michael Hawkins from Macon County Sheriff's Office, Street Superintendent Ken Smith, and Clerk Sherry Koszesza. There were no residents in attendance.

**There was a Pledge of Allegiance.**

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

- ✓ Board Meeting Minutes
- ✓ Disbursements
- ✓ Bank Reconciliations
- Trustee Barker moved and Trustee Pagel seconded to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Upon a call of the roll, the vote was:

Crowder =	Yes
Harris =	Yes
Pagel =	Yes
Barker =	Yes
Bowman =	Absent

Motion carried.

**Public Comment:**

**Recognition of Visitors:**

**Department Reports**

1. **Law Enforcement Report:** December was quiet. Deputy Major has been patrolling for engine braking. There were some complaints about parking during a basketball tournament. There was a narcotics arrest. Trustee Barker asked if there had been any luck with the engine braking. Trustee Crowder thought that Deputy Major had talked to the number one offender.
2. **Village Staff Reports:** Street Superintendent Ken Smith said that Oldweiler Ct. flooded with all the rain. He said that it wasn't as bad as years ago when Casey's flooded. He said that the water was flowing the best it could. He said that there was a LOT of leaves in the catch basins. He cleaned them all out with the VAC truck. Trustee Barker asked if we had gotten any prices on making our VAC truck work for that. Ken said that the truck isn't equipped for that. Trustee Barker said that we need to look into getting a truck to get rid of the leaves. Ken said that Oreana doesn't have as much of a problem but they burn 6 days a week. Trustee Barker said we need to do something. She said that if we don't get a leaf vacuum then we need to open up the burning day. Trustee Harris agreed. Ken said that if we get a leaf vacuum it will take a lot of time to do it right. Trustee Pagel asked if we could contract it out. Ken would like to do that. Ken said that if we had more burn days then maybe the smoke from burning would be less because not everyone would be burning on the same days. Trustee Barker agreed. Trustee Crowder asked if we could just open up the burning for a specific time period in the fall. Ken said that the ordinance says that fires must be out by sunset. Maybe we could change that also. Trustee Pagel asked what months it would be. Trustee Harris said

that we would have to open it in the spring also. Ken suggested maybe August to April. We will discuss this at the next meeting. Trustee Crowder asked if we need to get some prices to compare with the leaf burning. Ken said that he would like to not advertise that someone would be vacuuming the leaves until it happens. Ken will get some prices. Trustee Harris asked about the culverts under the driveways. Who is responsible for jetting the leaves out of them? Ken said that the Village is but he concentrates on the larger ones first. Trustee Barker asked how much we use Gary Smart and suggested that we have him more on a part-time basis. Ken said that the more help he has, the faster he gets jobs done. Trustee Crowder asked if Gary wanted to work more hours. Trustee Barker said that maybe we could look into getting someone else. Trustee Crowder said that everything is going good with Gary. Ken and Gary work well together. Shannon also helps with snow.

**3. Mayor's Report:** Nothing to report.

**4. Attorney's Report:** Nothing to report.

**Old Business:**

**New Business:** Discuss Municipal Utility Tax. Mayor Luedke said that Ameren has all of the Village information that they need to compute the Utility Tax. She has checked with other Villages and it is about a 50/50 split on Villages that have the tax. She said that there are some months that our overhead is more than our income. She said that our tax base is small. We cannot raise the water rates. The Sanitary District has chosen to raise their rate every year. We raise the tax levy by 5% but it is going to the restricted funds. We have about \$10,000.00 that we owe on the police car. It will be paid off this year. We have the \$36,000.00 per year water tower payment. We have to pay on that for another 10 years. She said that the figures the Board has are for the maximum tax rate. She said that most houses will fall into the lowest rate. In 2011 Ameren said that we would have raised \$54,000.00 annually if we do the maximum rate. Trustee Barker agrees that we can't raise the water bills. She doesn't think that people would notice it. Trustee Pagel said that he doesn't agree with putting a tax on the utility. He said that the Village doesn't have anything to do with the power and he doesn't agree with putting a tax on it. He said that we should look into other ways to raise or save money. Mayor Luedke said that she doesn't like to do this but she doesn't know where else to look for money. Mayor Luedke told the Board to look at this and ask neighbors about it. She would like the attorney to look at the agreement if the Board would like to do this. Trustee Harris said that this would be on top of the new rate hike that Ameren just passed. Trustee Pagel asked if businesses and the school would be the same rate. Trustee Crowder said that he thinks the water tower payment would justify this. Some people don't know about payments like that. Mayor Luedke said that the water plant is very old and will need upgraded someday. Ken said that most of our infrastructure is old. Trustee Barker said that maybe we could put something out to see what the residents think. Mayor Luedke said that even Decatur water rates are as high as ours. Trustee Harris said that even if we save money for a water plant that future Boards could use the money for something else. We will discuss this at the next meeting. On the 18<sup>th</sup> we will set a meeting in February to do appropriations. Mayor Luedke and Trustee Barker thought that it works better this way.

**Closed Session:**

**Open Session:**

**Adjournment**

➤ Trustee Barker moved, and Trustee Harris seconded, to adjourn at 6:37 p.m.

Upon a call of the roll, the vote was:

Crowder =	Yes
Harris =	Yes
Pagel =	Yes

Barker = Yes  
Bowman = Absent  
Motion carried.

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Minutes taken by Clerk Sherry Koszesza