

Village Council Meeting Minutes– March 11, 2025 Absent: View at www.villageofconcord.com or pickup hard copy at Village Office

The Village Council of Concord met on March 11, 2025 at 7:00 pm in the Village Commons Meeting Room.

Council Members Present: Jeremiah Bush, T. Thurman, K. George, M. Lovitt, J. Jackson and A. Meeks.

Council Members Absent: J. Compton.

Public Present: Deputy L. Jacobson, Clerk A. Thomas, DPW Director J. Blossom, Kathy Weaver, Sheriff Schuette, Becky Cobb, Ken Wyatt, Jill Rose-Redman, Steve Redman, Teresa Carr-Jackson, David Saenz, Jennifer Shirk, and Becky Raut

For their review, Council Members were e-mailed or given: Revenue & Expense Report thru 2/28/2025; Bills to be Paid in Amount of \$49,087.88; Concord Area Police Blotter February 2025; February Village Voice; 2-11-2025 Village Council Meeting Proposed Minutes; 3-11-2025 Council Meeting Agenda.

Motioned by A. Meeks, seconded by J. Bush to accept the minutes from the 2/11/2025 meeting. Motion approved by all.

Public Comments:

Ken Wyatt asked about welfare checks for suspicious homes who have mail buildup. Deputy Jacobson confirmed welfare checks are common and to call police if there is concern.

Becky Raut talked about her creation of Discover Main St Concord with the intention to highlight local businesses in Concord. She also mentioned Rivertown Revitalization created by Jamie Pratt. B. Raut is hoping to bring a conference of investors to Concord in September who help small businesses establish themselves.

Township Supervisor David Saenz confirms that Jennifer Shirk and Jamie Pratt have been added to the Township's planning commission, with Jennifer on the board of review.

Kathy Weaver shared concerns about speeding on Hanover St where it turns into Sears Rd. Sheriff Schuette confirmed that the department can put out electronic miles per hour signs to prevent speeding in that area and increase road patrols. The board had previously purchased two signs to prevent speeding in Concord that broke immediately and were sent back for refund. The village had originally conferenced with Spring Arbor Township whose speeding signs have had to be repaired after having issues. At this time the village will be receiving the assistance of the Sheriff's Traffic division for assistance preventing speeding.

Gary Schuette, Sheriff of the Jackson Police Department, discussed the plan for a 60% cost increase in the Concord Township/Village Law Enforcement Services Contract. The cost to be increased over 5-years due to inflation within the resources of the Police Department such as cost of vehicles, need for insurance, additions to healthcare and retirement per officer. J. Bush confirms this would be roughly \$20,000 yearly increase for 5 years. B. Raut requested to know how the yearly increase will be spent, which the Sheriff could not provide at the time without speaking to his accounting department. He referred her to the contract for more information. B. Raut wanted to know where the village's extra money was coming from to increase the law enforcement contract. J. Bush stated he budgeted for an increase, but not quite this much, and additional funds from the fund balance may need to be added to the budget this year. Next year, Bush stated we would budget accordingly now that we know the amount. G. Schuette stated that Jackson County Sheriffs have some of the lowest contract costs within the surrounding areas. This contract will likely be passed at the April 8th village council meeting after further discussion with the township.

Motioned by A. Meeks, seconded by J. Bush to pay bills in the amount of \$49,087.88, All were in favor. Motion approved.

Deputy Jacobson did not have any highlights to discuss regarding the February Blotter. A feather in Deputy Jacobson's cap for the rescue of town mascot Carl the Duck who has been depressed since the death of his first wife.

J. Blossom discussed the village's upstairs rental apartment renovation is coming along nicely, anticipated to be finished 1st of May. The well on Michigan St. has been stalled due to shearing off their drill head 170 feet in the ground. A new head has arrived, and drilling will be restarting around April 1st. Raker-Roberta's Trial Gardens will be creating the hanging baskets decorating Concord this spring and summer.

J. Bush, D. Saenz, B. Raut, J. Pratt had a meeting regarding the businesses downtown. During the meeting the potential to purchase the old bank on Main St was discussed. Bush looked into the purchase and brought to the council and public a presentation of the pros and cons of the purchase with the idea to make the back space in the bank building into the new Community Center (CC) and the front space into the new village offices. The floor was opened to all for a pro and con discussion.

Some cons mentioned were: cost of bank purchase at \$300,000+, lack of external ADA access, renovation of the back of the building's flooring, added commercial kitchen needed, ADA bathrooms, the need for additional bathrooms, bank is roughly 1,000 sq ft smaller than the current CC, marketing the bank as a wedding venue/a higher rental rate would push out community members who utilize the current CC throughout April—October every weekend, resulting in lack of opportunity for our community, additionally there is uncertainty that new businesses would rent current village office space which could result in the village owning 3 properties with 2 completely vacant or potentially unable to sell due to need for upgrades, the Concord Classic would then be split across town again with the Euchre tournament taking place at the bank.

Some pros were: Selling the current Community Center to a daycare would be ideal for the community to have reliable child care close to home, taking the bank over as new CC would bring more people and business downtown, the bank is recently renovated resulting in a more modernized office spaces for the village, and would add 12 parking spots downtown which the community has been asking for. Suggestions to utilize the potential money toward updating the current village office and community center with new electrical, updating kitchenette in CC, paving the new parking lot by the post office, and adding lighting to that lot, and potential purchase of vacant lots and buildings that could be made into parking lots were also suggested.

Council Comments:

T. Thurman asked when the Christmas tree photo pop-up from December would be cleaned up, as it is an eyesore to the town. A number of fake trees are laying on the ground with ornaments attached.

Deputy Jacobson provided an update on the almost-bistro on Main St that has been missing windows for months. The glass is being beveled to fit the panes after many weeks of waiting. The village has extended the deadline to April 1st, 4 months since the windows were broken.

Meeks mentioned the need for a council member to sit on the fireboard. T. Thurman was selected. The fire department has need for a credit card for the occasional refuel on runs. This rarely occurs, but currently the fire fighters are filling the tanks out of their own pockets. The village agreed they should have a credit card and it was decided the department would have to come before the Fire Board to explain why the card was used after each use, receipt included. It is expected to be used for emergency situations only.

J. Bush discussed the River Street Beautification project which will include the Girl Scouts, Concord Youth, and friendly Concord gardeners to plant wildflowers near the trail and along the brush. The metal and junk littering that area was cleaned up last year by J. Shirk, with the brush being further cleaned up by the DPW this year.