

SPECIAL VILLAGE BOARD MEETING
Thursday, July 8, 2021
Virtual Meeting by Computer & Phone, 6:30 P.M.



PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a meeting of the Brown Deer Village Board will be held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The public can access this meeting of the Village Board by phone or by computer. The phone number is: **1-301-715-8592**. The Zoom Meeting code is: **838-7638-2166** and the **Passcode is: 4800**. Please remember to mute your microphone to reduce background noise. The following items of business will be discussed and possibly acted upon:

- I.** Roll Call
- II.** **Persons Desiring to be Heard** – Please submit your full name, address, and your comment by 4:30 p.m. July 8, 2021 to manager@browndeerwi.org
- III.** Recess into Closed Session Pursuant to Wis. Stat. §19.85(1)(b) for the Following Reasons:
 - (b) Discussion and possible action on continuing employment status of Village Manager.
This matter may be considered in closed session or will be discussed in open session if requested by the Village Manager pursuant to Wis. Stat. §19.85(1)(b).
- IV.** Reconvene into Open Session and possible action on Village Manager employment.
- V.** Adjournment

s/ **Miranda Etzel, Interim Village Clerk**
Dated: July 1, 2021

PERSONS REQUIRING SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ATTENDANCE AT THE MEETING SHOULD CONTACT THE VILLAGE CLERK AT LEAST ONE BUSINESS DAY PRIOR TO THE MEETING.

Miranda Etzel

From: gspringman@wi.rr.com
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 12:36
To: Miranda Etzel
Subject: FW: July 8 Virtual Board Meeting

Hello Miranda,

Here is a copy of what I said at the July 8 meeting.

If you need anything else let me know.

Good luck in the next chapter of your amazing story.

Gary

From: gspringman@wi.rr.com
To: "manager@browndeerwi.org", "gspringman@wi.rr.com"
Cc:
Sent: Wednesday July 7 2021 8:43:06PM
Subject: July 8 Virtual Board Meeting

Per the requirements listed on the agenda for the Special Village Board Meeting of July 8, 2021. This meeting is scheduled for 6:30 PM. This meeting is to be held virtually.

Full Name: Gary Robert Springman
Address: 9185 N. 60th Street Brown Deer, Wi. 53223

My comments are as follows and since Wanda Montgomery and Rob Cherry who called this meeting prefer to hold a virtual meeting and not an open, in-person meeting, which they could have asked for I request that my email be read in its' entirety.

The stated reason for this special meeting is to discuss and have a possible action on the continuing employment of the Village manager, Michael Hall.

I was serving as a trustee for the Village of Brown Deer when Michael Hall was hired as the Village Manager. Current Trustee Jeff Baker is the only member of this Village Board who can make the same claim. In the 8 + plus years I served with Michael Hall I found him to be totally professional in all aspects of the performance of his duties. He is knowledgeable. He is accessible to elected officials and village residents. When he tells you something he is providing you with the best information possible. He is well thought of as a leader in the North Shore Community. He and his staff are all very well respected in their fields. Our village departments have won many awards. Since Michael's time in the village we have redeveloped and continue to redevelop the Original Village. We have a new modern library that has moved to the Original Village. We have the Armed Forces renting a part of the library to help defray some of our costs. We have a new modern and efficient DPW yard.

Since I only left the village board on April 20, 2021 I can not conceive of any pattern of behavior on his part that would require a special village board meeting to discuss his continued employment. What I can speculate on is that after

having served with both Wanda and Rob and taken part in many village board meetings, sadly in the case of Rob virtual meetings only, with the both of them they are letting their own personal agendas and dislike of the village manager drive this special meeting.

When an individual is elected as a village trustee or village president they take an oath of office, in which they pledge to carry out the duties of their office and in doing so they are to stay away from performing any actions that will harm the residents or the village itself.

In the case of Wanda Montgomery and Rob Cherry, I wonder what they have to hide and why they prefer to have a virtual meeting and not an in person meeting so the entire community will know what charges they are basing their accusations on. By going into a closed session the community will never be told as to the reason for any possible action by the village board against the village manager

What ramifications both now and in the future will occur because of the actions of the village board? I hope for the positive, but in my heart of hearts I am afraid that personal agendas will take priority over the best interests of the village and its' residents.

Gary Springman

Courtney Wedward
4508 W. Calumet Road
Brown Deer, WI 53223

I am very disappointed by the continued lack of proper leadership that is displayed by President Montgomery. The village board is an oversight committee. It should strive to work with the full-time employees of the village. Anyone new to the village board should spend time learning the inner processes and listen to the needs of the village, not come in and try to change everything.

The current village president has very little experience with how to run our village and is in no position to fire anyone whose job she does not comprehend. Wanting to rid Brown Deer of anyone that is not hand-picked by any president is a gross over stretch of power. My time with the village exposed me to a very hard-working village manager who is respected by his department heads. Manager Hall was always kind, courteous, and easy to work with. He shared information and was available to discuss any questions and concerns without fail. Additionally, Manager Hall is well educated and highly respected in the North Shore. Losing him will be a great detriment to Brown Deer.

A meeting of this significance should be held when it is easy for our community to attend in-person. More information needs to be shared regarding a matter of such importance: so much for transparency. The current village president does not promote unity; but instead, President Montgomery is ripping Brown Deer apart with her lack of respect for anyone that does not agree with her or fall in line with her agenda. When I first joined the village board it was comprised of individuals who did not always agree but worked together for the common good of Brown Deer. Sadly, this is no longer the case.

Four Points:

1. The Village Manager has three primary constituents:
 - a. The Village Board
 - b. The village staff
 - c. The community and its citizens

His job is to balance the needs and wants of all three. Sometimes this necessitates saying “no” to people, including board members, because what is requested is prohibited by statute, not in accordance with established policy, or just plain wrong. Saying “no” occasionally doesn’t mean the manager is not doing his job; it usually means just the opposite.

2. If there exist problems between the manager and the board, the correct procedure is to meet (closed session) to discuss, air differences, and set an action plan to ameliorate the differences. The action plan may require action by both the manager and board members (individual or as a whole), and is usually time-bound (i.e., 90 or 120 days). Unless the board and manager have already done this, it seems any action on employment status would seem premature and without any semblance of due process. Absent criminal behavior or egregious malfeasance, removing a public official in the midst of a good-faith contract term seems highly suspect. Let’s not get our village into the mess that the Milwaukee Police and Fire Commission is in right now with Chief Morales. That body basically fired Chief Morales without due process and now involved in a costly lawsuit.
3. The very nature of the meeting: “Discussion and possible action on continuing employment status of Village Manager.” would seem to indicate that there has been some discussion by certain board members of possible actions or outcomes. If four or more board members have been involved in those discussions (even one on one in person, by phone, or email) absent a public meeting notice, that constitutes a “Walking Quorum” prohibited by Wisconsin Open Records Law and punishable by fine to board members involved. Also any action taken as a result of a walking quorum may be overturned by a court.

4. Finally, despite a pledge of openness and transparency, the Village President and a trustee, who has put his house on the market and will take a position in Pittsburgh later this month, called for tonight's "special" meeting in what appears to be a very abrupt manner. The village board does not normally meet the week of July 4th, and the next meeting (July 19th) will be conducted in person, not via Zoom. I fail to see how this evening's hastily announced agenda item, and remotely-conducted special meeting, falls under the guise of "openness and transparency".

In sum, I urge board members to choose their words, behavior and actions wisely this evening.