

VILLAGE OF ELLSWORTH SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

March 14, 2024 6:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Village Hall, 130 N. Chestnut St. Lower level board room (East rear entrance)

Members Present: President Beissel, Trustees Borner, Bench, Hines, Neeley, Anderson, and Schutz.

Staff Present: Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer Brad Roy

Many members of the public in attendance in-person and virtually

MINUTES:

1. Meeting called to order by President Beissel at 6:00 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited.

President Beissel made a statement regarding the agenda item, the public hearing on that item has been closed and that there will be limited public input tonight. The intent is to hear from the DNR and to hear about the Village Denmark digester tours. Trustee Bench stated that he believes there should be another public hearing; Schutz and Hines agreed.

2. Public comment on non-agenda items. Lisa Olson spoke about the Design Ellsworth Plan. Richard Hines spoke about the Creamery odor and having equal support for the East End. Sean Hall commented on the Creamery odor. Larry Langer commented on the Creamery noise and noise from truck jake brakes.

3. Discuss/take action on a request for a Special Use Permit from Ellsworth Bioenergy, agent, for property owned by the Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery, a Utility (Anaerobic Digester) on Parcel Number 121-01152-0500 located in the SW ¼ of the NE ¼, Section 20, T26N, R17W, Village of Ellsworth, Pierce County, WI.

MSC Schutz/Hines to table the agenda item until attorney Loberg is present. Bench states he is against the motion, Borner agrees. **Hines and Schutz vote in favor, all others oppose, Motion Fails.**

Jill Schoen and Nate Willis (DNR), presented DNR permits and regulations for the proposed Digester. Schoen states that the DNR regulates discharges to the environment: air, waste streams, spills, wastewater, stormwater and erosion control, and return of product. The Board questioned about odor, industrial waste, air emissions, EPA odor regulations, and enforcement. DNR responded that there are not odor regulations, nutrient management plans, sampling requirements and limits, air permit modeling and maintenance/record keeping. The audience questioned about inspections, odor, site consideration, PFAS, permit denials, possible moratorium, property values, potential danger/fire risks, and Environmental Impact Study. DNR responded that the goal is to

not deny, but to work with applicant to make a proposal compliant with regulations and that they are not aware of a digester fire in Wisconsin or of any citations.

A/C-T Roy presented the report of the Village tour of Bigadan facilities in Denmark by Roy and Trustees Borner and Hines. Three facilities were toured. The travel expenses were outlined and traffic, odor and general operations were observed. The group also spoke with neighboring property owners. The conclusion was that odor was not an issue and there were no major issues identified. Events of odor will occur, most likely during startup. The nearby residents confirmed that odor is not an issue. Audience questioned the accuracy of the tours and neighbor interviews, possible conflicts of interest, site location, residents leaving the community, infrastructure, a possible referendum, the Village website, and Fire Department concerns and capabilities. **MSC Borner/Bench to defer action.** Schutz stated the next meeting should be at a different locations. **Unanimous.**

4. **Adjourn. MSC Schutz/Bench to adjourn.** No further discussion. **Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted by Brad Roy, Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer