

Town of Ellendale
Regular Meeting of Ellendale Town Council
May 6, 2026
Ellendale Fire Hall – 302 Main Street
Minutes – Records on Apple iPad

CALL TO ORDER: President Noto began the meeting @ 7pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Recited, and a Moment of Silence was observed.

ROLL CALL: Taken by Council Secretary Adams and the following council members were present:

Sam Noto – President
Tony Ottomano – Vice President
Lindsay Adams – Secretary
Bob Billbrough – Treasurer
Aaron Moore – Council Member

Staff Members Present:

Kayla Adkins – Town Manager
Chief Bruce Von Goerres – Chief of Police
Colleen Hahn – Town Clerk
Jamie Sharp – Town Solicitor

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Approved

Motion to move New Business III (Draft Town Budget) to after the Executive Session since Town Counselor does not need to be there: Member Moore 1st, Vice President Ottomano 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: Approved

Motion to approve Previous Meeting Minutes: Treasurer Billbrough 1st and Vice President Ottomano 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0

Motion to approve Workshop Meeting Minutes: Vice President Ottomano 1st, Treasurer Billbrough 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0

TREASURERS REPORT: Reviewed by Treasurer Billbrough
No comments to address.

POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT: Reviewed by Police Chief Von Goerres
No comments to address.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT: Reviewed by Town Manager Adkins
Provided update on closing of North Old State Road off Rt. 16 for drainage work starting 5/11/26.
No comments to address.

VISITOR RECOGNITION: Visitors were present; however, no comments were made.

OLD BUSINESS:

- i. **Discussion and possible action on the Downtown Development District – President Noto**
 - i. After speaking with D. Morris from this program, I learned that this program is not really for small towns like Ellendale. We also cannot meet the June 15th deadline. The program will most likely not open up again for another 3 to 4 years. This program does support undeveloped land.
 - ii. The town of Ellendale will continue to pursue smaller grants to support projects within our Town.

**Motion not to pursue Downtown Development District program at this time:
Member Moore 1st, Treasurer Billbrough 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0**

- ii. **Discussion and possible action on the Town Manager Contract**
 - i. Discussed regular hours vs. overtime hours.
 - ii. Update contract to reflect regular hours of 40 per week, anything over would be time and a half in pay for overtime.

**Motion for the Town President to amend contract/agreement any hours after 40 will be paid at time and a half and under 40 hours is regular wage: Member Moore 1st, Treasurer Billbrough 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0**

NEW BUSINESS:

- i. **Discussion and possible action on the BW Electric quote - Reviewed by Town Manager Adkins**

**Motion to approve the BW Electric quote: Treasurer Billbrough 1st, Vice President Ottomano 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0**

- ii. **Discussion and possible action on the installation of speed bump or stop sign at Gladys St and S. Lee Ave**

**Motion for new speed bump to be located at Gladys Street between Old State Road & Lee Avenue: Member Moore 1st, Vice President Ottomano 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0**

- iii. **Discussion and possible action on Draft FY27 Town Budget - *Moved under Executive Session below***

- iv. **Discussion and possible action on the Town Tree Maintenance**

- i. Jamie cuts back trees but we have some that are slowly dying. Some trees on Main Street are dead and need to be removed professionally.
- ii. For the new cameras some trees are too high or dead and need to be taken care of professionally or by the homeowner.
- iii. Do we want to replace trees?

**Motion to obtain quotes for tree removal and replant with native species:
Member Moore 1st, Vice President Ottomano 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0**

- v. **Discussion and possible action on the Town Logo magnets for Maintenance Truck**

- i. Two (2) truck door magnets were ordered for \$80.00 with the Town logo.
- ii. No motion needed.

- vi. **Discussion and possible action on the purchase of a Knox Box for Town Hall**

- i. Discussed what would be put into the Knox Box: Town Hall and Chief of Police door keys, server closet and garage keys.

**Motion to purchase KnoxBox and load with required keys: Member Moore 1st, Vice President Ottomano 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0**

- vii. **Discussion and possible action on the removal of IRC § R313 exemption for two-family dwellings (duplexes) and townhouses**

- i. Sussex County performs inspections. Sussex County does not require automatic fire sprinkler systems in townhomes.
- ii. Recommending that we require automatic fire sprinkler systems in multi-family homes. If move forward with this could make it effective January 1, 2027.
- iii. Obtain letter from the Fire Sprinkler Coalition.
- iv. Need to come back with documented ordinance.

**Motion to table until June: Member Moore 1st, Treasurer Billbrough 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0**

- viii. **Discussion and possible action on the ORPT grants**

- i. Member Moore looking into Master Planning for parks with ORPT grants that have been used in the past. Reached out to UD Biden Center but they do not do master planning for parks, but they do have contacts they could recommend. Would like to work on land we have for parks. ORPT grants are 50% match. Grant requests are due in May, which we cannot meet this year.

Motion for Member Moore to investigate master outdoor recreation/parks and trail program for possible application in the 2027 grant cycle and report back to Council when he has information: Vice President Ottomano 1st, Secretary Adams 2nd

Vote 4 Yes and 1 No (Treasurer Billbrough)

Passed 4 to 1

CORRESPONDENCE: None to review.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

**Motion to go into Executive Session: Member Moore 1st, Treasurer Billbrough 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0**

**Motion to Resume Open Session: Member Moore 1st, Treasurer Billbrough 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0**

Motion to have Town Manager Adkins engage realtor about Property A and possible acquisition of said property and to remove Property B from discussion. Town Manager will report back to the Town Council with findings:

Member Moore 1st, Vice President Ottomano 2nd

All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0

Attorney Jamie Sharp left the town Council Meeting after the Executive Session.

NEW BUSINESS - Continued

- iii. **Discussion and possible action on Draft FY27 Town Budget – Reviewed by Town Manager Adkins**
 - iv. Reviewed figures from Fiscal Year January - December 2025. Used to increase or decrease line items as needed for new budget.
 - v. Increases in income for permits, licenses, occupancy certifications, impact fees, etc. due to increase in building.
 - vi. Increases in property tax revenue due to the increase in building and update of the assessment.
 - vii. We have been diligent in sending out reminders, stopping people to obtain business licenses as well as obtaining certification of occupancies.
 - viii. Rentals for the park pavilion have increased as well as the usage of the park.
 - ix. No income from grants as we have not secured any funding currently.

- x. Total revenue for 2027 is less than actuals from 2025 but none of the grant money is included in the 2026/2027 columns. It's technically when we received the grant money.
- xi. Other regular funding we receive yearly such as municipal street aid, I believe it will be the same. Conversation is taking place for the revenue sharing grant the police department gets yearly so that could increase.
- xii. There has been an increase in expenditures. Upgrades took place in the office for storage purposes.
- xiii. Engineering fees will decrease due to how inspections are being handled in Forest Landing.
- xiv. Police Department funding to accommodate new recruits. We have increased the wages for the police department to account for an additional officer for a total of 3 full-time and 1 part-time officers. Increase in Equipment (ammo, guns, etc. and training and Academy).
- xv. Under Maintenance shift some monies believe that the fuel costs may need to be higher due to 2 maintenance vehicles. Possibly Park or Property Maintenance can be decreased/moved to Fuel if grants are funded.
- xvi. Check with ShyAnn as to the total funding for Electricity. Maybe that can be reduced to \$4K due to history.
- xvii. War Memorial increased due to next phase upgrades such as new plants.
- xviii. Increase Fuel (+1,500K), decrease Electric (-\$2K). Move remaining \$500 to Other.
- xix. Payroll Expenses – Employee benefits will be \$60K due to new employees (additional police officer, 3% increase in benefit fees).
- xx. Impact fees for Fire Department need to be part of budget.
- xxi. Member Moore thought 3% of property taxes were to go to the Fire Department as per the Town Charter but this is not correct. This is not documented in the Town Charter. If this is actually needed, then property taxes may increase.
- xxii. Working on adjusting the Fee Schedule to make sure we are covering legal fees as well as engineering fees. Copy will be available next week with updated budget.
- xxiii. Newsletter budget – Cost is \$2K+- for Coast to Coast do the Newsletter. Increase advertising costs or increase advertisers.

**Motion to make changes to increase “Fuel” by \$1,500K, decrease “Electric” by \$2K and move remaining \$500 to “Other”, add Impact fee for Fire Department, increase “Newsletter” to \$1,200K and present budget again to Town Council. Member Moore 1st, Vice President 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0**

ADJOURNMENT: 9:31pm