

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the
Village of Jerome Board

CALL TO ORDER: The President and the Board of Trustees held a regular meeting on Thursday, April 2, 2026, at the Jerome Civic Center, 2901 Leonard Street, Jerome, Illinois. The meeting was called to order at 6:31 pm by President Lopez, followed by Roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: The following were present:
Mike Lopez, Village President
Joe Cannella, Trustee of Public Works
Katrina Christofilakos, Trustee of Public Property
Kathy DeHart, Trustee Public Health arrived at 6:40 pm
Leigh Irons, Trustee of Public Safety
Ralph Irons, Trustee of Water Department
Dale Lael, Trustee of Building & Zoning

Also Present:

Jason Brokaw, Attorney, Giffin, Winning, Cohen & Bodewes, PC
Emily Snow, Village Treasurer
Lisa Cave, Village Clerk
Steve Roth, Executive Assistant

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: President Lopez asked whether the Board had reviewed the March 19, 2026, Meeting Minutes and if they found need for any changes, corrections, or amendments. President Lopez asked the March 19, 2026, minutes would stand approved as presented.

Motion to approve the March 19, 2026, Meeting Minutes as presented by:
Trustee Leigh Irons and 2nd by Trustee Cannella
Upon roll call vote, all voted AYE; Trustee Christofilakos voted present
MOTION PASSES.

President Lopez asked whether the Board had reviewed the January 22, 2026, Executive Meeting Minutes and if they found need for any changes, corrections, or amendments. President Lopez asked the January 22, 2026, minutes would stand approved as presented.

Motion to approve the Executive January 22, 2026, Meeting Minutes as presented by: Trustee Leigh Irons and 2nd by Trustee Lael
Upon roll call vote, all voted AYE;
MOTION PASSES.

President Lopez asked whether the Board had reviewed the February 5, 2026, Executive Meeting Minutes and if they found need for any changes, corrections, or amendments. President Lopez asked the February 5, 2026, minutes would stand approved as presented.

Motion to approve the February 5, 2026, Meeting Minutes as presented by:
Trustee Leigh Irons and 2nd by Trustee Lael
Upon roll call vote, all voted AYE;
MOTION PASSES.

APPROVAL TO PAY BILLS: President Lopez asked whether the board had reviewed Warrant List 26-23 dated April 2, 2026, totaling \$26,466.80. Treasurer Snow stated the Village has a credit from Menards and the total will be \$26,207.63. Treasurer Snow stated the breakdown of the amount of \$20,345.46 will be paid from the General Revenue Fund, \$3,656.50 will be paid out of the Cannabis Fund and \$2,205.47 will be paid from the Water Account. President Lopez asked for a motion to approve Warrant List 26-23 as presented.

Motion to Approve the Warrant List 26-23 totaling \$26,466.80 as presented
by: Trustee Leigh Irons and 2nd by Trustee Ralph Irons
Upon roll call vote, all voted AYE;
MOTION PASSES.

President Lopez stated that he approved the office staff and Public Works will be leaving at 11:00 am on April 3, 2026.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: President Lopez opened the Visitors Acknowledgement portion of the meeting at 6:36 pm. President Lopez state each member would receive 5 minutes to address the Board.

Clerk Cave stated no public comments had been received.

Sonia Williams, resident on Iles sent a letter to the Trustees and asked if the letter would be read aloud. Attorney Brokaw stated no unless the resident requested it be read, they would not read it into the minutes. Sonia stated that she will read it.

As a homeowner and member of the Jerome community, please consider this email a FORMAL COMPLAINT against Dale Lael, Village of Jerome Trustee. On TWO separate occasions within a 4-day span of time last week, Dale Lael trespassed onto my property and commenced with belligerent, aggressive behavior. Yes, you read that correctly. Mr. Lael's behavior was at the VERY least unprofessional but was, frankly, rife with aggression, bullying and intimidation, to the point that we had to call the police. It is important to point out that I had never met Dale Lael prior to last Thursday 3.26.2026. Incident #1: Approximately 4:15pm in the afternoon my brother entered my home office and informed me of the following, "There's an agitated man in the driveway taking pictures of the house and claiming that he is with the Village of Jerome and I have to stop whatever I am working on, immediately. I told him that I would get the homeowner." Upon exiting my home, I was greeted in my driveway by Dale Lael who had his cell phone in hand, was taking pictures of my property and began waving his arms at the 3-season room of my home and proclaiming, in a loud voice that we had engaged in illegal house repairs and could go no further. I asked him who he was, and he gave me his name, demanded to know who "that guy is doing the work"

and informing me that "if he's a contractor, he has to register with the Village of Jerome and YOU have to apply for permits. ALL OF THIS WORK NEEDS TO BE UP TO CODE, LADY!" I tried to calmly explain what was happening with the window replacements, the wasp nests that were being removed from the insulation in the walls, but before I could finish, Dale raised his voice again and cut me off mid-sentence, becoming increasingly agitated and animated. He began leveling accusations at me insisting that I was lying about what work was being done and proceeded to march around the side of my house to the back yard, taking pictures, threatening me and asserting that no more work would be done on the premises until further notice. It was a jarring experience to say the very least. I was reeling from his behavior, but the shock and confusion did not end when we returned back to the front and were walking towards the end of my driveway. Instead of excusing himself and leaving the premises, Dale proceeded to stop and survey the drainage ditch on the East side of my house. The next subject he decided to "rant" about was the drainage ditch exclaiming how "it has always been a problem, is still a problem and I guess that's on the Village for doing such a shoddy job of water drainage here. Yep, I guess that is on the Village," he said, and then went on to say that he couldn't "understand how they could allow houses to be built on the back side of that fence behind your yard.." In all candor, at this point in the one-sided conversation, I was worn out with the situation and just wanted him to leave as soon as possible. It was only at this point in the "visit" that Dale pulled a business card out of his pocket and handed it to me. Incident #2: Approximately 5:45pm on Sunday 3.29.2026, Dale Lael returned to my home and again confronted my family, demanding to know who they were and why they were continuing to work on the project when he had explicitly informed them to STOP working on it a few days prior. My brother informed him, per my instructions, to leave immediately because he was trespassing.

Megan Weckmann, resident on Maple, addressed the Board that she is concerned for her neighbor, Connie. Connie has allowed her son to move into her home. He has brought a camping trailer that stinks of chemicals. Connie's son has threatened her stating he would punch her in the face, always screaming at her, cussing at her even stating that he was going to kill her if he doesn't receive the money he requested. Megan stated she is scared for Connie and her autistic son who is 12 that hears every word that is screamed out next door. Megan stated she feels this guy is going to hurt her neighbor and he needs to go.

The portion of the meeting closed at 6:50 pm.

REPORTS:

Trustee DeHart stated that the Easter Egg Hunt will be on March 29, 2026, from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm. Trustee DeHart stated they could still use some donations of candy and volunteers for that day. Trustee DeHart wanted to thank the Jerome Methodist Church for stuffing the eggs. Trustee DeHart is contacting residents from complaints, on leaves, junk vehicles in driveways on Vernon Ave. Trustee Cannella stated he was on West Grand Court and spoke with the property owners that that is their yard and not the responsibility of Jerome.

Trustee Cannella stated that the Street Sweeper is out and about, and they have begun cleaning up from the winter storms by adding grass seed and straw to various right of ways.

Trustee Christofilakos was absent.

Trustee Lael had nothing to report.

Trustee Leigh Irons stated with the warmer weather please make sure residents lock their doors to the cars, houses and any outbuilding.

Trustee Ralph Irons stated that Public Works has been clearing drains.

Treasurer Snow had nothing to report.

Clerk Cave had nothing to report.

Attorney Brokaw had nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS: President Lopez asked if there were any questions on Ordinance 26-08 Approving the Tax Increment Redevelopment Plan and Project for the Jerome TIF. President Lopez stated that the ordinances regarding the TIF will be on the agenda in April. Attorney Brokaw stated there is no action tonight and will be presented to the Board soon.

President Lopez asked if there were any questions on Ordinance 26-09 Designating the Jerome TIF. President Lopez asked to table until the next meeting.

President Lopez asked if there were any questions on Ordinance 26-10 Adopting Tax Increment Financing for the Jerome TIF. President Lopez asked to table until the next meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Trustee Leigh Irons to go into Executive Session to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of a specific employee or legal counsel of the public body (5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(1)); minutes of meetings lawfully closed under the Open Meetings Act for purposes of approval by the Body (5ILCS 120/2(c)(21); Trustee Ralph Irons seconded the motion.

The Board went into Executive Session at 6:54 pm.

The Board returned from Executive Session at 7:15 pm.

NEW BUSINESS: President Lopez asked for discussion and approval of Authorizing Village President to Secure Loan Proposal from a Financial Institute Related Village Complex Improvements. Steve Roth stated

that after budget meetings the idea had come to him that the Board could use some of the reserve funds and possibly get a loan for the remainder of the expenses for the Updates to the Village Complex. Steve stated he is only asking for Trustees who have relationships with lenders to explore options of a potential loan and bring that back to the Village Board to review. Discussion took place on various grants and possible revenue that had been promised has not been received. Steve stated that the total amount would be around \$500,000.00, \$100,000.00 of reserved funds being used, and \$400,000.00 of the loan for a 10-year term.

Motion to Approve Authorizing Village President to Secure Loan Proposal from a Financial Institute Related Village Complex Improvements, as presented by: Trustee Ralph Irons and 2nd by Trustee Christofilakos
Upon roll call vote, all voted AYE;
MOTION PASSES.

ADJOURNMENT: With no further business, President Lopez asked for a motion to close the meeting at 7:31 pm. Motion was made by Trustee Christofilakos and 2nd by Trustee Leigh Irons.

PREPARED BY: Lisa Cave, Clerk

DATE APPROVED: April 16, 2026

Village Clerk

Date