

Village of Somers
Proceedings from the Regular Board Meeting May 12, 2026

President Stoner called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

President Stoner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: President Stoner, Trustees Karl Ostby, Ben Harbach, Joe Smith and Trustee Aupperle. Trustee Fredrick appeared virtually and Trustee Nelson was excused. Also present: Administrator Jim Hurley, Clerk/Treasurer Wendy Burnette, Assistant Administrator Kevin Poirier and Chief Andersen.

Consent and Approval of Minutes of Regular meetings on April 28, Vouchers dated April 30 and May 7, & April ACH Payments, March Investment Statements

Trustee Smith moved to approve Minutes of Regular meetings on April 28, Vouchers dated April 30 and May 7, & April ACH Payments, March Investment Statements

Seconded by Trustee Ostby

Motion carried. 6-0 vote

Correspondence: None

President and Trustee Comments

Trustee Ostby stated two items for consideration. First, he requested revisiting the idea of holding one Board meeting per month instead of two, suggesting it be considered as a summer-long trial period, and asked that the topic be placed on the next work session agenda.

Second, regarding the Maplecrest project, he expressed appreciation for Trustee Nelson (who was not present), noting that she was successful in securing an increase in the proposed square footage for duplex units from what had originally been proposed. He characterized this change as a positive and constructive improvement to the project.

President Stoner reported on prior discussion regarding the gravel road on 7th Place. He stated that Public Works was asked to calculate the cost to pave the road, and the estimate was approximately \$21,673.32 per homeowner. He noted that there are four homeowners on the road and indicated they would be responsible for the cost if they choose to proceed with paving.

He further stated that he had spoken at length with Jon Cameron from “Ehlers” (the Villages financial advisor), who reportedly expressed concerns about proceeding with the Safer grant. He stated they advised that it was not a good financial decision and suggested that accepting it could create significant long-term financial strain, referencing the Village will be broke by 2029. He also stated that their advice was to decline the grant and “give it back.”

Citizen Comments

Administrator Hurley read aloud the rules that were to be followed during public comments.

J. Michael McTeruan, 6633 Green Bay Road

Mr. McTeruan addressed the Board regarding the proposed land-in-trust acquisition application submitted by the Menominee Tribe to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). He stated that, to his knowledge, the Village of Somers did not receive notice of the environmental assessment, comment periods, or Section 20 consultation notices that were reportedly provided to surrounding municipalities. He encouraged the Village to submit comments to the BIA regarding the proposal.

Mr. McTernan expressed concerns regarding the traffic impact analysis associated with the proposed casino development near the Interstate 94 and Highway 50 corridor. He questioned assumptions that a majority of traffic would avoid the Highway 50 interchange and instead utilize alternate routes. He stated that existing traffic congestion in the area is already significant and that additional casino traffic could worsen conditions.

He also raised concerns related to stormwater management and flooding within the Des Plaines River watershed area, noting that the proposed site is heavily developed with pavement and rooftops. He stated that he believed additional analysis and planning regarding drainage and environmental impacts should be conducted.

Mr. McTernan further commented that the proposed development was incompatible with the surrounding residential and rural character of the area, citing ongoing and planned housing developments nearby. He expressed concern regarding potential impacts on Village services, including police and fire protection, as well as other community impacts. He also noted that, if the land were taken into trust, the property would not be subject to local property taxation.

Ted Terletzky, 9015 12th Street

Mr. Terletzky addressed the Board with concerns related to the MasterCraft (Bella Terra subdivision) development on Highway E. He stated that he was reviewing the project's approval history following earlier Planning Commission proceedings and a letter submitted on January 29 by Nancy Washburn on behalf of MasterCraft to county staff.

In the letter, it was indicated that the Bella Terra concept plan had been moved forward by the Plan Commission on December 8, 2025. He stated he reviewed the December 8 agenda, supporting packet materials, and meeting minutes and did not find any reference to MasterCraft or the Bella Terra project. Based on this, he questioned how the letter could reference that specific meeting and action.

He raised concerns about whether the reference could indicate a potential procedural issue, including the possibility of an Open Meetings Law violation if discussions or direction occurred

outside of a properly noticed public meeting. He also raised alternative explanations, including possible miscommunication, inaccurate referencing of dates, or whether the letter may contain an error.

He requested that the Board investigate the matter, review any relevant public records or communications, and determine how the referenced Planning Commission action was represented in correspondence. He further emphasized the importance of transparency and stated that clarification was necessary to address public perception and maintain confidence in the process.

Guy Santelli, 1910 8th Place

Mr. Santelli addressed the Board regarding agenda items 9 and 10.

On item 10, the Safer Act grant, he stated support for the Board's motion to approve it but expressed concern about long-term financial impacts, noting a desire to avoid future fiscal strain. He suggested that alternative funding approaches could be considered, including potentially returning to a referendum in the future after additional staffing cost data is available from the Fire Chief. He also suggested that new ordinances could be implemented to help recoup costs associated with ongoing development and subdivision activity.

On item 9, he expressed opposition and concern regarding continued residential development density, referencing plans that include approximately 287 single-family homes and multiple duplex units. He questioned the appropriateness of lot sizes and setbacks, particularly regarding duplexes on narrow lots, and expressed concern that proposed setbacks may result in limited separation between structures. He compared the density to other developments and stated his belief that the design contributes to overcrowding.

He further raised concerns about public safety impacts, particularly fire risk and emergency response challenges associated with closely spaced housing. He argued that increased residential development places additional strain on fire and police services and questioned whether current planning standards adequately account for those impacts.

Motion to award bid received for the 2026 Roadway Improvements Program (ValleyView Subdivision) to Payne & Dolan in the amount of \$571,571.00

Trustee Aupperle moved to approve bid for 2026 Roadway Improvements Program (ValleyView Subdivision) to Payne & Dolan in the amount of \$571,571.00

Seconded by Trustee Harbach

Trustee Harbach asked if there was a reason behind the duplicate number 571 and 571. Superintendent Sullivan said no it was just the number they came back with.

President Stoner asked what the budget amount was. Superintendent stated it was \$779,000. Trustee Ostby stated that he would like to hold off on approving the funding sources at this time.

Motion carried. 6-0 vote

Motion to approve proposed amendment to the 2026 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) funds for the purchase of new pumps and delay the “super flush” project

Trustee Aupperle moved to approve amendment to the 2026 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) funds for the purchase of new pumps and delay the “super flush” project

Seconded by Trustee Harbach

Trustee Harbach asked about the cause of increased infiltration at the lift station and why extra assistance, including a vacuum truck, was needed.

Utility Manager Josh Fugate explained that infiltration is likely coming from underground pipe issues such as failed joints or seals, though sump pump connections were also considered and ruled out during a 2025 inspection in the Eaglewood area. He said the most reliable way to identify the issue would be to televise the sewer lines.

He noted that unusually heavy rainfall in April (about 8–9 inches) greatly increased inflow and worsened the problem. He added that the system struggled under these conditions but would likely have handled the flow better with proposed pump upgrades in place. Because of the overload, staff had to use a vacuum truck to help manage the system.

Motion carried 6-0 vote

Motion to approve Development Agreement subject to approval of final plans by the Village Engineer, conditions outline in the Zoning memo dated Jan. 5, 2026, final Declarations, and the final plat by the Village Board

Trustee Ostby moved to approve Development Agreement subject to approval of final plans by the Village Engineer, conditions outline in the Zoning memo dated Jan. 5, 2026, final Declarations, and the final plat by the Village Board.

Administrator Hurley stated that the agenda packet had been amended. He noted that he had been out of the office on Thursday and Friday and had limited time to work on the item, but had been coordinating with Ken Frank.

He reported that in the most recent amended packet, changes were made to the minimum square footage requirements for duplex units to ensure compliance with R-5 zoning standards. He stated that the single-story duplex requirement is now 1,000 square feet of finished area. For two-story duplex units, the first floor minimum is 800 square feet with a total minimum of 1,500 square feet. He concluded that both standards now meet zoning code requirements.

Seconded by Trustee Aupperle

Motion carried. 6-0 vote

Motion to accept the FEMA SAFER Grant for 8 additional Firefighter / EMS positions and amend the 2026 Budget accordingly

Trustee Aupperle moved to accept the FEMA SAFER Grant for 8 additional Firefighter / EMS positions and amend the 2026 Budget accordingly

Seconded by Trustee Ostby

President Stoner stated that he had recently met with the Village's financial advisors for over an hour regarding the Safer Grant and the proposal to add eight firefighters. He reported that, based on financial projections provided by the advisors, the Village would experience a significant deficit by the end of 2029 if the staffing increase is implemented.

He stated that, in the advisors' opinion, the Safer Grant should be returned and that the only viable long-term option to address funding needs would be another referendum, noting that a previous referendum had been rejected by voters. He expressed concern that the Village is heading toward a serious financial shortfall and indicated that additional financial information would be forthcoming in future meetings.

Trustee Harbach thanked the Fire Chief and the Fire Department for their efforts in pursuing the SAFER Grant, noting that such grants are difficult to obtain and expressing appreciation for their work.

He stated that when cost information was initially presented, the Board considered placing the issue to referendum so residents could decide. He noted that a referendum was held, the costs and tax impacts were presented to the public, and the measure was ultimately rejected by a 60–40 vote.

He stated that, as an elected official, he feels obligated to follow the will of the voters and therefore cannot support the SAFER Grant at this time. He reiterated respect for the department's needs and efforts but concluded that he would align his position with the outcome of the referendum and the residents' decision. He also said the Village took this referendum seriously as we spent over \$100,000 to make sure the citizens were informed.

Trustee Ostby stated that during Ehlers' prior presentation, he believed the dollar amount of the SAFER Grant was underestimated, noting that approximately one year of funding may not have been fully included in the analysis. He stated that, in his view, this may have overstated the long-term financial impact, and he was not aware that the figures had been corrected.

He acknowledged, however, that after the grant period ends—particularly after two years—the Village would not be able to sustain the cost of eight additional firefighters based on the current tax base.

He stated that possible next steps could include pursuing a retention grant as a follow-up funding option and, if necessary, holding another referendum to seek voter approval for continued

staffing levels. He also noted that if such efforts are not successful, staff reductions may need to be considered.

Trustee Fredrick stated that he appreciates the citizen comments received on the SAFER Grant discussion and emphasized that elected officials must listen to and consider the voice of residents when making decisions. He noted that the Board's responsibility is to make decisions that support and improve the lives of citizens.

He stated that, while difficult decisions will be required, the Village cannot continue with the current status quo regarding fire department staffing and operations. He expressed concern about the department functioning as a "training ground," noting that paid-on-call firefighters often leave after being trained, which he views as a recurring challenge.

He also referenced ongoing residential development and increasing service demands, stating that additional housing growth and potential large-scale developments, such as a casino with mutual aid responsibilities, will further increase pressure on emergency services. He stated that current staffing levels are already strained and that additional support is needed for fire personnel.

He acknowledged the results of the referendum (60–40) but stated that he believes there is still a responsibility to ensure adequate public safety coverage despite that outcome. He concluded that, for these reasons, he will continue to support the SAFER Grant proposal.

Trustee Aupperle Yes, Trustee Ostby Yes, Trustee Harback No, Trustee Smith Yes, Trustee Fredrick Yes, President Stoner No. Motion carried. 4-2 Vote

Motion to approve the Site Plan Review and Exterior Fenestration, Richard J Investments LLC, 2402 16th Pl., Kenosha, WI 53140 (Owner); Doug Anderson, subject to a Developer's Agreement with the Village of Somers

Trustee Harbach moved to approve Site Plan Review and Exterior Fenestration, Richard J Investments LLC, 2402 16th Pl., Kenosha, WI 53140 (Owner); Doug Anderson, Parcel 82-4-222-093-0461. For information purposes, this is at the end of 87th Avenue, near Shoreland Lutheran High School.

President Stoner stated that he wanted to note that the motion should also include approval contingent upon whether a DNR stormwater permit is required. He stated that the Village had contacted the DNR for clarification, as there was currently some uncertainty regarding permit requirements.

Trustee Harbach then referenced comments from the planner contained on page 99 of the packet, specifically emphasizing the importance of adhering to lot lines and the areas surrounding the buildings in accordance with the surveyor's maps. He stated that the planner had underlined the issue, indicated its significance, and stressed that the builder and developer need to be especially mindful of complying with those requirements. He added that the matter had also been discussed during the work session with the developer.

Trustee Aupperle asked why this developer didn't need to put in sewer and water. Administrator Hurley stated that he reviewed the ordinance regarding mandatory utility hookups and noted that connections are only required if deemed "feasible" by the utility. He explained that this does not automatically require all new construction to connect to municipal water service.

He stated that he could not comment on how the 12th Street water main issue had been handled in the past but noted that the former Village attorney had written a memo on the matter and that he had deferred to Chief Anderson regarding previous discussions.

He explained that the question of feasibility is open to interpretation and stated that extending water service to the proposed seven units would require a substantial infrastructure extension. He added that he was not aware of any ordinance requirement mandating that extension.

He concluded by stating that if the Village Board wishes to require the connection, he could consult with the Village engineer to determine what the process would involve.

Seconded by Trustee Smith

Motion carried. 6-0 vote

Motion to approve mailing signed letter to US Senator Ron Johnson's Regional Director Paul Truess in support of legislation granting Somers and other municipalities a unique ZIP Code.

Trustee Harbach moved to approve mailing signed letter to US Senator Ron Johnson's Regional Director Paul Truess in support of legislation granting Somers and other municipalities a unique ZIP Code

Trustee Harbach mentioned he wrote up a letter, and it was put on the Village's letterhead if anyone cares to sign it.

Seconded by Trustee Fredrick

Motion carried. 6-0 vote

Action on Operator's Licenses: Carla Molinaro, Tien Hoang Minh Vo, Tierra Power, Hailie Carter, Samarah Carter, Lisa Bowling, Jeremy Iversen, Barbara Algiers, and Audrey Kessler

Trustee Fredrick moved to approve Operator's Licenses: Carla Molinaro, Tien Hoang Minh Vo, Tierra Power, Hailie Carter, Samarah Carter, Lisa Bowling, Jeremy Iversen, Barbara Algiers, and Audrey Kessler

Seconded by Trustee Harbach

Motion carried. 6-0 vote

Motion to Adjourn

Trustee Harbach moved to adjourn at 6:12pm

Seconded by Trustee Aupperle

Motion carried. 6-0 vote

These minutes are a draft and have not been approved by the Village Board. Wendy Burnette
Clerk/Treasurer