

**Village of Holmen
Special Board Meeting
Holmen Village Hall – Board Room
November 12, 2015
6:30 pm**

President Proctor called the Special Holmen Village Board meeting to order at 6:30 pm on November 12, 2015, at the Holmen Village Hall.

Board members present: Nancy Proctor, Bill Ebner, Steve Johnston, Doug Jorstad, Rich Anderson, Dawn Kulcinski and Chuck Olson. Also present were Administrator Heinig, Police Chief McHugh, Park & Recreation Director Brogan, Public Works Director Olson, Clerk/Treasurer Hornberg, Lt. Shane Collins, Attorney Weber, Nick Slusser, Andrea Clark, Michael Walch, Dale Thorsbakken, Kara Larson, Leslie Ross, Deborah Bartel, Brian & Christy Wopat, Carol Knapmiller, Patrick Barlow, Dick Barbour, Rick Beyer, Kevin Fry, Sue Stranc, Christine Tippetts and Pat McKnight.

Kulcinski/Doug Jorstad motioned to open the public hearing at 6:31 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Nick Slusser spoke on behalf of his students at Holmen High School and project L.I.V.E. Slusser stated that Holmen has a great need for a new library, and that sacrifices may have to be made to make that happen. He commented that his students were unable to use the current Holmen facilities due to lack of privacy, limited resources, lack of computers, no study rooms and poor handicap accessibility. He remarked that raising money towards this facility is possible if we work together. Slusser feels that the community's leaders have a responsibility to the residents to educate as well as to encourage human interaction along with cooperative learning, and he hopes that the library will be approved this evening. Slusser stated that his group had recently fundraised one thousand dollars and would like to be the first to make a donation to the library fund.

Andrea Clark and Michael Walch, former students of Slusser's, commented on the benefits a new library would have to the entire community, and mentioned trouble they have experienced maneuvering wheelchairs in the current library.

Kristine Wopat, a teacher at Evergreen Elementary, spoke in support of the new library. She commented on the excitement her students have about a new library facility in Holmen. She noted that the most important thing students of all income levels need is ease of access to reading materials. Wopat referred to a recent news article where a Village Board member had said "why should I pay for a library when I never use it"; she continued thereafter to say that mentality was despicable. Wopat feels the Board and the residents should take into consideration the entire community rather than their personal needs and make an investment for the whole community.

Dale Thorsbakken spoke about the importance of a library for not only the youth but also the senior citizen community. He encouraged the Board to support the library project tonight.

Debra Bartel spoke of the inherent value of libraries, similar to clean air and clean water. She noted that currently many residents leave Holmen to visit other area libraries, which means Holmen residents are spending their money in other communities. Bartel stated that now is not the time for a referendum; we need to forge ahead with the project.

Sue Stranc, Librarian, commented that the current Holmen facilities did not allow them to offer meeting, study or program rooms. She noted how important a library was for education and recreation needs.

Patrick Barlow commented on his appreciation to the Village Board for their many recent accomplishments with economic development in the community. He noted that the area currently has a great park & recreation department, wonderful school systems and a new library is something that needs to happen for long lasting benefits to the community. Barlow asked that the Board keep their vision of forward growth in mind for tonight's vote.

Kara Larson remarked that libraries are more than bookshelves; they offer social interaction, neurological development and beneficial programs. She stated that a great library is a sign of a thriving community.

Chuck Olson/Doug Jorstad motioned to close the public hearing at 6:55 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Chuck Olson/Steve Johnston motioned to approve Resolution #17-2015 – Adoption of the 2016 Village Budget. Trustee Ebner stated that while he appreciated and agreed with many comments this evening, he still feels strongly that the library issue, which is included in the 2016 budget, should be taken to a referendum. Ebner feels there is a financial concern for many taxpayers and the tax consequences of the project; he feels all residents should get a chance to choose. Trustee Johnston remarked that the greatest step in solving a problem is recognizing that there is a problem. Johnston feels that with the condition of the current library, as well as Holmen's tremendous growth, that if we don't act now as a community and Board, then we will become a community without a library at all. Johnston noted that in spite of the failing conditions of the current library, the door swings are still quite high; he commented that we have a need that has been ignored for thirty years, and now is the time to pass the budget and build a library.

The motion carried with Olson, Proctor, Johnston, Jorstad in favor; Ebner, Anderson and Kulcinski opposed.

Bill Ebner/Chuck Olson motioned to adjourn at 6:59 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Angela A. Hornberg
Village Clerk/Treasurer