

ICWHA Annual Meeting Minutes

Indian Creek Homeowners and Water Association - Annual Meeting 2025

Monday, March 3, 2025. 7 p.m. Towanda Community Center

President - Barb Leathers

VP/Secretary - Barbara Ulbrich (Interim)

Treasurer - Dave Schulthes

Water Chair - Jim Larson

Grounds Chair - Fred Walk (Interim)

Newsletter - Ron Metz/Kathy Dumler

I. Welcome and Introduction - Barb Leathers. New and old residents alike were welcomed.

II. Minutes of 2024 Annual Meeting - Read by Barbara Ulbrich. Motion made to adopt, it was seconded and approved.

III. Standing Reports

A. Insurance Report - Barb Leathers, President. Barb shared that the Association carries both property and liability insurance. Several items are covered under the policy including the water tower, the building, our equipment including the tractor among other things. We increased coverage on the chemical building.

Barb indicated all board members are volunteers. The Water chair post is up for election this year. Fred Walk and Barbara Ulbrich are serving in an interim capacity. If someone would like to serve, please let one of the Board members know.

Barb also discussed the proposed minor change to harmonize the bylaws with the covenants; we will vote on this and other things at the end of the meeting.

B. Finance Report. Dave Schulthes, Treasurer.

Dave provided a recap of financial results for 2024 and year to date through February 2025.

2024 Financial Review

- The Water Fund ended 2024 with \$139,500 down from \$157,000 the prior year. Large expenses were for final work on the grounds around the tower and work on the well pipe and pump.
- The Homeowners Fund (Grounds/Annual Assessment) ended 2024 with \$1,800.

2025 Financial Review through February

- As of the end of February, 2025, the Water Fund had \$154,000.
- The Homeowners Fund balance (Grounds/Annual Assessment) at the end of February was \$591.

The Homeowner's Fund has broken even the last two years and recommended an increase in the Homeowners Fund assessment to be voted on later in the meeting.

C. Water Report - Jim Larson, Chair

Water System Projects:

Jim discussed the water system projects which were completed during the past two years – construction of the chemical building, the refurbishing of the water tower including structural repairs, improvements to the water tower parking area and driveway and replacement of the well pump and drop pipe. We have also upgraded the electrical system in the water tower and added a backup generator hookup. There is a backup generator hookup at the well head.

The chemical building and water tower projects should have useful lives of 20-25 years. The well pump is anticipated to last 10-15 years. We tested the

well capacity when the pump was replaced and confirmed we still have a strong water source.

Jim discussed plans to replace the main water pipes and valves inside the water tower. This equipment is over 40 years old and had a significant leak a couple of years ago. This work is under contract and is estimated to cost \$11 thousand. We plan to have this completed by early spring.

Corn Belt Electric has indicated their willingness to replace the power line to the well head. This line currently runs from near the water tower, through the woods and under the creek to the well head. Plans are to relocate this line from near the bridge, along the gravel road to the well head. We have not been provided with information when this might be scheduled.

The remaining significant capital project for the water system under consideration is drilling a backup well. In June 2020, the Illinois EPA issued a “Critical Review Determination” on our water system because we lacked a backup water source. This action was taken on other water suppliers in similar situations. There is no enforcement action at this time, however, this issue comes up whenever the Illinois EPA performs a review of our water system. In 2020 our engineering firm estimated the cost of a backup well to be about \$185 thousand. Jim discussed a possible timeline for this project and financing options. The Board would like to have the funds necessary to do this project in 3-5 years. Implementing a special assessment to build sufficient funds was discussed. A \$1,000 assessment per residence spread over 2 to 4 years was used as an example. No decision was reached at this meeting. A question was raised if the \$1,000 assessment was the total amount or the proposed amount per year; Jim replied it was the total amount (e.g. if spread over 4 years, then \$250 per year).

Special thanks to Dave Schulthes for the financial reporting and planning that played a key role in our being able to complete these projects. Also a big “thank you” to Brett Lueschen, our water operator and fellow Indian Creek resident, for the key role he played in getting these projects completed and establishing strong relationships with our vendors as well as the great job he does maintaining our water system including quickly responding to emergency situations.

Illinois EPA Five Year Survey Report:

Every five years the Illinois EPA performs a survey/audit of our water system. The following “findings” were reported and have all been addressed.

- Add a casing vent to the wellhead.
- Wire a backup generator connection to the water tower and chemical building (the wellhead already had a connection).
- Install a liquid spill barrier in the chemical building.
- Make minor changes to our water testing and reporting procedures.

Source Water Protection Plan (SWPP):

ICHWA was required to complete a SWPP at the direction of the EPA in 2024. Previously only larger water suppliers were required to complete this report. A copy has been posted to the “Water” section of the Indian Creek website.

Included as an attachment to the SWPP is a report prepared by the Illinois EPA “ –SWPP Fact Sheet”. This report documents information compiled by the Illinois EPA about our water system. We have submitted some updates to this report, but have not received a revised copy.

The purpose of the report is to require water providers to document potential sources of water contamination impacting their water sources and implement mitigation plans. The Illinois EPA has not identified any potential water contamination issues impacting our water source. The regulation has significant reporting requirements including a description of our water source, copies of past water testing results and commitments to monitor our water system.

The Illinois EPA will issue a formal review of our report, however, we have heard they have a very large backlog of reports to review. We have not received any comments from the Illinois EPA at this time.

Importance of calling JULIE:

- Call JULIE before digging (1-800-892-0123) to have utility lines marked
- Immediately report to an ICHWA Board member and the utilities' location service company (USIC @ 1-800-778-9140) if any utilities are damaged.

Maps of the subdivision water supply system are posted in the "Water" section of the Indian Creek website under "Water System Maps Including Water Shutoff Locations". Water distribution lines (plastic pipes) are shown and each lot's water shutoff valve is indicated by an "S" on the maps.

D. Grounds Report - Fred Walk, Interim Grounds Chair

Fred gave an overview of the condition of the Indian Creek common grounds. We have 54.3 acres of common ground, with 1.5-2 miles of maintained trails.

The ash borers killed many ash trees over the past few years. Many were cut down that were in danger of falling over the bridge road. We also lost many very large hackberry trees that had to be cut up and removed from the trails. Fred noted that we have tree service vendors that deliver mulch/chips that are spread along the trail and in muddy areas. The mulch/chip pile is located beyond the open soccer field area along with firewood that is available to residents for their use.

As a reminder, the burn pile was relocated. The pile is burned down once or twice per year. It's only for small branches and not for construction type material. Do **NOT** bring leaves, grasses, dead plantings and shrub clippings to the pile. Do not bring items to the pile when the ground is wet and soft as this causes ruts and your vehicle getting stuck in the mud.

The Indian Creek Tree Planting Initiative has been very successful. We've now planted over 350 saplings - oaks, sycamore, redbud, coffee trees, pecan, hickory. The initiative was started during the spring of 2022 and we have a survival rate of well over 50%! When we put out a call for folks to donate to

this initiative, we collected \$3,920. It's been used to pay for saplings, fencing, rebar, posts, etc. We still have \$1238 to continue to plant more trees.

The Audubon Society regularly conducts bird counts in our subdivision. The Audubon members are amazed at our common ground habitat and the diversity of birds they find.

Tractor maintenance and repair – Over the past year we have made major repairs on the tractor. Following are some of the repairs that were done by replacing the following items: the entire wiring system (harness), alternator, fuel injector and lines, hydraulic hoses, hydraulic cylinder, and hydraulic pump shaft . A big thanks to Keith Whittum, Jim Kellenberger, Rod Hinderliter and Fred Walk for all their time, efforts and expertise. Outsourcing this work to professional mechanics would have cost homeowners at least \$4,000. The tractor should be available for use by the end of March.

Mowing costs \$3800 per year. Our vendor is Advantage Lawn and Landscaping. They mow at least 20 times per season - the open field, lanes, water tower, area and ditches. We receive a 5% discount by paying for the season up front.

The grounds portion of the insurance premium has increased, along with other costs to maintain the grounds. Fred shared that we need a \$5 per quarter increase to cover this; i.e. from \$40 to \$45 dollars.

Greg Beneze then shared that he has been the coordinator for trash pickup along the 2 mile stretch of county road 1900 (McLean County Road 29) bordering Indian Creek for several years. He is now seeking a replacement. The pickup is held 2-4 times per year; between April 1 and November 1. It's ideal if 8 people volunteer per pickup session. Volunteers are required to sign a liability waiver required by McLean County prior to participating. If interested, please let Greg know.

E. Newsletter Report - Kathy Dumler and Ron Metz

Ron reported that we renewed our website hosting. Each renewal phase is \$600 for 3 years. We are considering switching from Microsoft Outlook; there are issues with sending mass emails. There would be no cost issues if we switched, for example, to Gmail. Ron will research this matter.

IV. Action Items

Approval of 2024 Minutes: motion made, seconded, and carried in a unanimous vote of the residents attending.

Election of Board Members: Jim Larson was nominated for another 3-year term; motion was made, seconded, and carried in a unanimous vote of the residents attending.

Bylaws change: motion made to amend “Fees” section: *Any unpaid balance of 90 days will be subject to ~~9%~~8% interest penalty and a lien may be filed against the property if necessary.* Motion was seconded and carried in a unanimous vote.

Grounds portion of Assessment: Per the covenants, the grounds portion of the Assessment may be voted on by the Board at the Annual Meeting; it was moved to increase from \$40 to \$45 per quarter, seconded, and passed unanimously.

V. Adjournment – a motion to adjourn was presented, seconded and unanimously approved.