

Village of Mazon Board Minutes

November 10, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm on November 10, 2025.

Present were: Jeff Marques, Melanie Murphy, Kirk Houchin, Pam Pastick, Kris Webster, Roland Tondini, Larry Pastick, John Frederick, Chris Dearth, Tim Hejny

Absent: Rachel Carrell, Jared Kowalewski, Diane Punke

Guest: Clark Cameron, Jake Vota

The minutes for October 27, 2025, were presented for approval. **K. Webster made a motion to approve October 27, 2025, minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by P. Pastick. Roll was taken. K. Houchin-Yes, P. Pastick-Yes, K. Webster-Yes, R. Tondini-Yes. Motion carried.**

The bill list for November 10, 2025, was presented for approval. **R. Tondini made a motion to approve the bill list for November 10, 2025, as presented. The motion was seconded by K. Houchin. Roll was taken. K. Houchin-Yes, P. Pastick-Yes, K. Webster-Yes, R. Tondini-Yes. Motion carried.**

Treasurer:

The October 2025 Treasurer's Report was presented for review.

Secretary:

M. Murphy reported that they made a couple small changes to the levy this year. She stated that they will be levying a lower amount for IMRF and reallocating that money to a couple areas where the funding is needed. These other levy lines are street lighting, police protection, and audit. The overall total of projected levy amount does not change.

The Halloween Hotdog Giveaway event went well this year. We served about 200 hot dogs to residents. She thanked board members and employees for volunteering to help with this event.

M. Murphy stated that she met with Aindrea Hogan and one of her co-workers this morning at the GEDC for some much-needed guidance for the Sesquicentennial Celebration. They had great ideas and were very excited about the event. They helped me set some starter goals for the committee and said they will continue to help with donation and fundraising assistance for the event.

Public Comment:

Nothing at this time.

President:

J. Marques stated that M. Murphy created an operating guideline for the Sesquicentennial Committee. He thanked her for putting it together.

J. Marques also informed the board that Mission Bible Church is hosting a Holiday Meal Giveaway at Saratoga School in Morris on November 20th. He stated that they will hand out meals to cars. Each meal feeds 8.

He added that if anyone knows anyone that could use help with Thanksgiving meal this year, please spread the word. He also stated that M. Murphy shared the information for the people at the food pantry.

J. Marques stated that he would like to see the Zoning Committee meet and review fees and charges, make updates and changes to our codes, including water and sewer, and some other things such as requirements for tracer wire. He added that we need to make these changes so that C. Dearth can go ahead and create new ordinance. He stated that its not something you guys are going to get done in one meeting. You're going to need to do some homework. Most of the information should be on American Legal Publishing, if not Melanie can help you find the information.

Committee Reports:

Nothing at this time.

Old Business:

Nothing at this time.

New Business:

Clark Cameron, who is with Illinois Rural Water Association, was at the meeting to give a rate study presentation to the board. Clark stated that John Frederick and Melanie Murphy assisted him in the rate study. He added that any information he requested, they were able to get it to him right away. He presented a written summary but stated that he was going to go over the actual data/rate study. He proceeded to explain the data. He told the board how much water was produced, sold, and how much water was unaccounted for. There were several large leaks towards the end of the fiscal year that public works struggled to locate. About 50% of the water pumped was unaccounted for. This is due to an old system that is starting to deteriorate. He informed the board that in the future if we struggle with locating leaks, that Illinois Rural Water Association will come out and help locate the leak at no charge. He stated that in Fiscal Year 25 the water fund had a shortfall of \$59,824.46. He explained that by using that same data with the current rates from Fiscal Year 26 we would have still had a shortfall of \$48,319.91. He then made two rate change recommendations. The first is the bare minimum recommendation and would have the least impact on residents, especially those with fixed incomes, like senior citizens. He suggested lowering the gallons in the base rate from 2,000 gallons to 1,000 gallons. With this change alone, the village would have an annual gain of \$39,867.93. This would put the village in the positive with the least amount of impact on residents. He added, but to get the village where the state thinks you need to be, his second recommendation is to lower the base gallons to 1,000 and also raise all consumption rates 50 cents. This would give the village an annual gain of \$47,454.11. He informed them that with the second recommendation, it would put the village in the range needed if they want/need to apply for loan with the EPA revolving fund or USDA. He added that with this rate study, it will save the village a lot of money when they apply for a loan because we will not need to have an engineer do a financial analysis. The EPA revolving loan fund accepts this rate study as your financial analysis as long as you follow the recommendations. This will save you \$12,000-\$15,000 up front if you apply for a loan. Something else C. Clark pointed out to the board, is the in the village's audit, there is no separation for water and sewer funds. He stated that he knows that internally we have them separate but if the village applies for loans from EPA, the first thing they will do is pull up the audit. They will then not be able to see which fund is the fund losing money because in the audit, they are combined. He asked if anyone had any questions.

J. Marques asked C. Clark, as a resident of Mazon, how are you going to justify my bill going up when the village lost 50% of the water produced. Why do residents have to pay for what the village did not take care of.

C. Cameron stated that that is a justifiable question. He stated that you tell the residents that there were several major leaks which have now been found and repaired.

J. Marques stated that the rate study should be based on the 20 million gallons sold and not the 40 million that was pumped since half of that was lost.

C. Cameron stated that his rate study is based on the 20 million gallons sold.

J. Marques asked if the \$7.25 production cost per 1,000 gallons is based on the 41 million gallons produced.

C. Clark answered yes.

J. Marques stated that he doesn't like this study because of that fact. He added that Clark did not do a bad job. J. Marques said that if someone uses 3,000 gallons, their water bill will go from \$32.19 to \$46.64. J. Marques then said he should retire. He stated that the village does need to increase fees, but they are getting ready to have to add a surcharge for the new water plant to be built. He also stated that this should have been done years ago, before any of us were here.

C. Cameron agreed.

J. Marques stated that the water plant was built in 1942, and everyone has kicked that can down the road for so long that now it is a crumpled-up mass, and you can't even tell it's a can anymore. We are looking at spending 8.5 million dollars, now we're talking about raising the rates, and we're getting ready to add a surcharge of possibly \$10-\$15. As a citizen, J. Marques stated that he can't get behind it.

C. Cameron stated the biggest drawback the village has, as far as rates go in you only have 440 customers. If you had 1,400 customers, the pain would be less.

J. Marques stated that he needs to justify this in his head before he can put it out in the street.

C. Cameron stated the best justification I can give you is the existing rates page, in the lower right corner in RED ink. He added that that suggests you're not doing something right. He stated that the village has to rectify that in some shape or form.

J. Frederick stated that M. Murphy has a printout of water revenue and expenses from FY21-present, the village has not been in the positive at all during those years.

M. Murphy stated the following: in FY21 we had a net loss of \$21,840.23, FY22 net loss of \$34,998.25, FY23 net loss of \$31,919.14, FY24 net loss of \$83,650.64, FY25 net loss of \$59,824.46, and FY26-to-date we already have a net loss of \$46,000.17.

C. Cameron stated that this is not all this council's fault, but you are the ones that have to clean up the mess. You have to be the bad guy, and I understand that is not a popular role. That is the reason he comes to meetings like this to do the full presentation, hoping that some residents will be here and hear the facts and explanation. He added that he tries to let the public know, this is on you guys, this isn't on me. It's a long history of things not getting done. Not keeping up with replacing system as it ages combined with not keeping up with the rising costs of doing business. He stated the bottom line is your water and sewer are both businesses and they have to be ran as businesses. A town this size cannot sustain the losses that you're experiencing.

M. Murphy stated that no one wants to be the bad guy and raise rates but do the village residents want to be provided with water by the Village of Mazon, because in 6 months, we will no longer be able to provide it for them.

C. Cameron stated that he has been watching towns Mazon's size be swallowed up by companies like American Water. Once that happens, you lose control of everything. You lose control of the quality of water, and I guarantee you will lose control of your rates. The rates will triple or quadruple. He stated that he doesn't know what the bills for water run here on average but his bill for water in Hillsboro for 2,200 gallons was over \$120.00. I'm not happy about that, but I need water and that is the cost. If you want a water plant and new water mains, you have to pay for it. He added that he knows it's not comfortable and not fun having to sit here and make these decisions but that is the price of sitting on the board at this table. If you want to hold another meeting and invite the public and you think people will come, I would be glad to come back and give this presentation again and answer any questions and complaints people have. It's a hard decision but you have to do something. He stated that if the board wants to meet and come up with alternative ideas, I will be happy to run the numbers for you. Bottom line, you have to do something.

K. Webster stated that she wants to hold herself accountable. She stated that she knows this is a hard thing to face, which is why it hasn't been done in the past.

J. Marques stated same with the water plant, no one wanted to do it even though it doesn't meet standards. He added that if we aren't willing to do it then we might as well sell the town because the EPA will own us anyway.

C. Cameron stated that is the next step, the EPA will mandate you to do something.

K. Webster stated that residents constantly complain about the discolored water but in order to update things, it's going to cost a lot of money. Unfortunately, like any business, the cost will be passed on to the consumers. In the past, us board members have not done this. We were worried about upsetting people, and we let it get to this point.

K. Houchin asked what the unaccounted-for water was from.

J. Frederick stated that it is hydrant flushing, water tower maintenance, fire department use, and the several major leaks we've had.

K. Houchin asked if other towns experience the same water loss.

C. Cameron stated that it can vary from town to town. I know one community that charges their fire department \$22.00 a month per hydrant.

K. Houchin asked if other communities are at 50% water loss like we are.

C. Cameron stated unfortunately yes. I had one community that was at a 68% loss, and it was going into an old coal mine shaft.

K. Houchin said so in situations like that the residents are paying for the water they use but are also paying for a portion of the town's water loss.

C. Cameron said yes. That is why it is important to keep that loss as low as possible. But again, with your aging system, that isn't always possible. Your system is 80 years old. He stated the village is up to date on your meters, which is a big deal. A lot of communities' experience loss with old meters and that is also how you make your money. Mazon's are up to date so that is great. But again, with Mazon's system, you can't replace 80-year-old water mains with no money. He added that the costs keep rising. The price of fire hydrants is now \$5,500.00. Meters went from \$200.00 up to \$350.00 for 5/8 meters. Unfortunately, none of these prices are going to go back down.

J. Frederick presented a breakdown of some key items that we use/purchase of how much prices have increased since 2021. Chemicals more than tripled in cost.

C. Cameron asked the board if they had any more questions that he could answer.

J. Marques stated no.

C. Cameron stated that he just wanted to come and paint a clear picture for Mazon at what you're facing.

The board thanked Clark Cameron for coming to present his findings and recommendations.

Clark Cameron then exited the meeting.

J. Marques stated that the water/sewer committee needs to meet and go over these numbers and decide what we're going to do or what direction we're going to go.

K. Webster stated that she forgot to ask him after he gave his recommendations about when we should make these changes.

M. Murphy stated that these changes need to be made now. She again informed the board that we are currently at a \$50,000.00 loss so far, this fiscal year. There are still 6 months left this fiscal year. We are losing 5k-6k a month in our water fund. She added that currently the water fund has \$32,129.65.

K. Houchin stated that if the timing is right, we could add the rate increase and the surcharge at the same time.

J. Marques stated that's what makes it hard to do, a rate increase and the surcharge for the new water plant. He added not that they don't need to be done, it does. He then asked C. Dearth if we can make this change to the rate right now with our automatic increase in place.

C. Dearth stated yes, you can do a rate increase any time.

K. Webster stated that she will get with the committee about a good time to meet.

K. Webster made a motion to sign a 3-year agreement with Cummins for Generator Maintenance in the amount of \$8,628.33. The motion was seconded by R. Tondini. Roll was taken. K. Houchin-Yes, P. Pastick-Yes, K. Webster-Yes, R. Tondini-Yes. Motion carried.

J. Frederick informed the board that the main cylinder on the dump truck has a significant hydraulic leak and cannot be fixed and needs replaced. The estimated cost of replacing it is going to be \$2,900.00.

M. Murphy presented a summary of the utility account for 615 Jewett St. This account had a major leak for a couple months and is asking for forgiveness on the high balance that is due. M. Murphy recommended a one-time adjustment to the account by removing October's penalty charges, red tag fee, and adjusting the water portion of the November bill, which is \$296.40, to the average water charge on the account which is \$71.82. This would bring their balance from \$829.83 to \$500.78. The board discussed this option and agreed to a payment plan of the remaining balance with the account holder. Account holder, J. Vota stated that he would be able to make a payment before end of November and another payment on December 5th. The remaining balance would be paid off before December 15th. J. Marques told J. Vota if the account is not paid in full by December 15, 2025 the service would be shut off. J. Vota agreed. **K. Webster made a motion to approve the recommended adjustment and payment plan. The motion was seconded by P. Pastick. Roll was taken. K. Houchin-Yes, P. Pastick-Yes, K. Webster-Yes, R. Tondini-Yes. Motion carried.**

Director of Public Works:

J. Frederick reported that they received the starter for the aerator in the NW corner of pond 1. It has been installed and back in service. He stated that they have completed shutting off the unused services on Center St and just have Main St, Primrose, and 1 on Jonquil that we are aware of.

J. Frederick stated that they patched the parking spot that was dug up on Depot. They put straw bales around the wells to insulate for winter.

He stated that water samples have been completed for the month and that he is waiting to hear back on some questions from the EPA on the school and daycare lead and copper samples. After he receives those answers, he will get those done.

Chief of Police:

L. Pastick reported to the board. E-Ticket training begins on November 18, 2025. He attended the ILETSB New Chiefs of Police Orientation 2025 on 11/4/25-11/7/25. He also reported that we received \$406.00 in traffic fines from Grundy County Clerk's Office.

Zoning:

Nothing at this time.

Engineer:

Nothing at this time.

Attorney:

Nothing at this time.

K. Webster made a motion to adjourn at 7:02 pm. P. Pastick seconded the motion. Roll was taken. K. Houchin-Yes, P. Pastick-Yes, K. Webster-Yes, R. Tondini-Yes. Motion carried.