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VILLAGE OF PEPIN BOARD MEETING

Village of Pepin Municipal Building

Monday, September 14th, 2026, at 7:00pm

MINUTES-

1. **Call Meeting to Order** – Randy called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. **Roll Call** – Randy Kallstrom, Pat Sandstrom, John Hurtley, Vicki Kosok, Mike Michaud, Kelsey Gilmore (zoom) & Shannon Van Allen were all present. Others present were Julie Fayerweather, Tracy Rundquist, Jon Seifert, Jeff Heit, & Thomas Pawlak.
3. **Public Comments-** Dan Fedie disputed claims in a letter to the editor about the Pepin Marina. He said borrowing should not be treated as revenue; slip demand reflects historically low prices and current service, not location alone; and net profit is more meaningful than gross revenue. He also questioned claims about competitive bidding and marina-generated revenue because some income comes from off-site property. Fedie cautioned that a proposal for Village ownership and management beginning January 1, 2028, would allow little preparation time, noted that most marina equipment and assets belong to the current owner/operator, and argued that a Village takeover would not be beneficial with about 20 years remaining on the lease.
4. **Clerk's Report-** Approval of 08.17.2026 meeting minutes. A **motion** was made by Pat to approve August 17, 2026, Village Board meeting minutes. **Second** by John. All ayes, motion carried.
5. **Treasurer's Report-** Approval of Treasurer's Report. A **motion** was made by Pat to approve the treasurer's report. **Second** by Vicki. All ayes, motion carried.

6. **Planning Commission-** The Board reviewed a conditional use permit request for Craig Anderson Ruskin at 201 Boyd Street for an additional accessory building. The Planning Commission recommended approval. Discussion addressed the existing detached structures and the requirement to return through the land-use process if a larger replacement structure is proposed.
Motion was made by Pat to approve the conditional use permit for an additional shed at 201 Boyd Street for Craig Anderson Ruskin, with the understanding that a larger future shed would require review through the applicable land-use process.
Seconded by John. All ayes, motion carried.
7. **Police Report-** The Police Department reported 61 calls for service during the prior month, primarily traffic stops. Approximately eight mailboxes on Lake Street have been damaged, generally on Saturday nights between 9:00 p.m. and early morning. Officers were conducting overnight patrols. Reports of late-night door knocking and property disturbances were also discussed.
8. **Ambulance Report-** The Ambulance Report was included in the meeting packet. No one was available for comment.
9. **Fire Department-** Chief Muenkel reported both boats and the tender are in service. He also reported successful participation in Laura Days events and the pancake breakfast, with the strongest attendance since COVID-19. A school fire-safety day and the annual chili feed are planned for October.
10. **Zoning Administrator-** The Zoning Administrator reported limited activity during August and discussed a fence on a corner lot near County N and Sixth or Seventh Street. An update was also provided on the Verizon tower project, which remains planned before winter; site photographs were scheduled, and advance notice is expected before construction.
11. **2026/2027 Fuel Bids-** Discussion/Action on bids received for the 2026/2027 heating season. - The Board reviewed propane bids, tank fees, expected usage, and prior service experience. The estimated cost difference between vendors was discussed.
Motion was made by Pat to continue with Quality Propane at \$1.209 per gallon for the heating-season bid. **Seconded** by Vicki. All ayes, motion carried.
12. **Ordinance Committee-** Approval of a commercial Property Owner Waiver and Release form for Mobile or Temporary Restaurants on Commercially zoned property within the village. - The Board reviewed a proposed commercial-property-owner waiver and release form for mobile restaurants and food trucks. Discussion focused on responsibility for verifying state licensing and insurance and providing documentation to the Village. The current ordinance appears to regulate the vendor but does not clearly impose duties or penalties on the commercial property owner.

The Board decided to return the matter to the Ordinance Committee to review the ordinance, clarify property-owner responsibilities, establish an enforceable process, and revise the proposed form as needed. No final action was taken.

13. **TIF Funds**- Discussion/Action on using TID 7 funds to purchase property on First St. near the railroad crossing. - The Board discussed purchasing the south westernmost lot on the northeast corner of First Street and Prairie Street near the Pickle Factory. Acquisition would support a future transportation project and could improve vehicle and pedestrian safety. TID 7 had sufficient funds, with more than \$79,000 reported before the August tax settlement.

Motion was made by Mike to proceed with purchase of the lot for \$20,000 plus closing costs, using TID 7 funds. Motion **seconded** by Pat. All ayes, motion carried.

14. **Public Comments** - Marina owner Dennis Benish said revised lease talks had repeatedly neared agreement but stalled, apparently over the lease term. He said the marina offered payments above comparable river leases, citing a similar municipal harbor lease of about \$19,000 annually; denied withholding or misrepresenting information; and emphasized the marina's value to the community. Citing financial and regulatory challenges in Winona and Trempealeau, he urged the Village to resume negotiations after a planned August meeting did not occur.

Dan Fedie said the lease remains current and fair because it was based on competitive river-community rates and adjusts annually with the Consumer Price Index. He urged to correct claims of excessive profits, noting the operator's debt, payroll, and off-site property costs likely limit take-home income.

Kevin Sandwick praised the marina and its management, calling it a major reason he moved to Pepin. He questioned whether the roughly \$1,200–\$1,400 monthly lease reflects the waterfront property's current value and urged inflation-based increases in future contracts. His comparison to larger annual customer-rate increases was disputed.

Dan Fedie urged the Village to assess the marina and campground beyond direct revenue, noting that reserves are needed for maintenance, replacement equipment, and uninsured ice or flood damage. He supported a longer marina lease to sustain investment and asked the Village to consider these businesses' broader economic and community value.

The Board thanked Laura Days volunteers and donors.

Dan Fedie requested a letter acknowledging Bill Kettles's \$17,500 boat donation to the Fire Department and stating that no goods or services were exchanged.

15. **Set Next meeting Date.** The October regular meeting will be held on Tuesday the 13th at 7:00pm because of the Monday holiday.
Set Wage Negotiation and Budget Meeting- This meeting was set for Monday Oct. 26th at 7:00 PM.
16. **Adjourn-** Shannon made a motion to adjourn. Second by Pat. All ayes, the meeting was adjourned.

Julie Fayerweather-Clerk