

Village of Beulah
7228 Commercial Street, PO Box 326
Beulah, MI 49617
231-882-4451

The Village of Beulah met in a special meeting on Tuesday, April 4, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. was called to order by President Jeri VanDePerre.

Present: Trustees Browning, Downs, Heniser, Hook, and VanDePerre

Excused: Trustee Loll

Staff Present: Treasurer Lumm, Office Mgr Sudney, Superintendent Cypert, Brodie Long

Public Present: Robert & Candi Riddell; Elizabeth Gullo; Jane Freeland-Gerschick; Amy Nowicki; Barb O'Leary; Julie & Fred Beerwart; Kelene Fraiser; Vicki Carpenter; Kyle Rosa, Benzie County Sheriff; Bonnie W. Smith; Paul Mallon; Marty Makowski, Benzie County Sheriff Deputy; Connie Marshall; John P. Marshall; Constance Learnihan; Martha Papineau.

Public Comment: None

Topic: Policy for Village Displays of Flags and Banners

President VanDePerre read her post to Overheard in Benzie as to why she removed the Flags. She takes full responsibility to honor First Responders.

Turned over to Kerrie Zeits, Village Attorney

She stated that this created a constitutional issue:

1. Traditional Public Forum – where the status is the street corner, the sidewalks and public parks where the public traditionally go.
2. Designated public forum – forum that is not a traditional forum, the government has generally made them available to the public for full expression – i.e. public comment at a meeting.
3. Non-Public Forum – is a forum but not generally available to the public and the access is given by the government on a selected based on the compatibility of the speech with the forum's purpose.

What forum is created with flags or no forum at all. All three types of forums were discussed by council. Pros and Cons of each.

Need to be clear about if they want public forum or non-public. This is to avoid violation in the future. You could list specific flags for special events and state other flags for Village events as approved by council.

Sheriff Rosa explained the meaning of the Black/Blue and Black/Red Flags.

3:45 p.m. Public Comment Open

John Marshall, 5731 Crystal Drive, spoke about family history and for the flying of the flags.

Bonnie Smith, stated marvelous discussion and representation; encourage to publish the intent of Village flags so people will understand.

Julie Beerwart, 5885 Crystal Drive, stated she appreciates the board doing something; also appreciate negative or options; government speech way to go to temporarily; visitors coming in to see the area as negative.

Paul Mallon, 957 Sugarbush Lane, read a letter from his wife Karen Mallon and agrees with the village board that you stand your ground and what you stand for.

Candi Riddell, Crystal Moon, spoke about hometown officers in Missouri shot giving a ticket to someone who then shot both officers – upset about the flags coming down and her & Kelly are the only business owners who show up for this meeting.

Amy Nowicki, 9446 W Sleepy Valley Dr, Empire, cautions the board about reacting to three complaints; stated her customers (Lucky Dog) come here to get away from things.

4:03 p.m. Public Comment Closed

President VanDePerre adjourned the meeting at 4:03 p.m.

Minutes by:

Pam Sudney

Office Manager