



# Village of Blissfield

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## **An Open Letter to Village Voters Appointed Village Clerk and Treasurer Ordinances**

October 23, 2018

On November 6, two Village issues will appear on the ballot. They ask voters whether ordinances that would allow the Village Council to appoint the Village Clerk and Treasurer should go into effect. The Village Council adopted these ordinances in April 2018. However, local citizens successfully submitted a petition to put the ordinances on the ballot. So, Village voters will have an opportunity to decide whether the ordinances will take effect.

The Village Clerk and Treasurer are currently elected positions. These ordinances would allow the Village Council to appoint the Village Clerk and Treasurer, effective November 20, 2020. The Village Council took these actions for these reasons:

- The current Clerk and Treasurer have both stated that, if elected this year, they do not plan to seek re-election in November 2020.
- As such, anyone could be elected to those positions in November 2020. There are no qualifications, experience, or skill requirements in the Village's charter to be elected to these positions. In fact, while our charter dictates responsibilities that require minimal hours in a workweek, it doesn't make sufficient allowance for all the tasks and work that need to be done in order to fulfill these responsibilities.
- The jobs that these positions perform for the Village, however, do require qualifications, experience, and skill. The Treasurer position requires skills in municipal accounting and finance, utility billing, tax collections, and investment management, while the Clerk position requires skills in municipal records management, public records and meetings laws, payroll/human resources, and account payable systems.
- With an appointed Clerk and Treasurer, the Village Council can develop appropriate job descriptions and hiring procedures, to ensure that qualified individuals hold these positions.
- Having qualified people as Village Clerk and Treasurer will help see that Village finances continue to be accounted for as efficiently and accurately as possible, and that public meeting and records laws are appropriately followed.
- There is no longer any real reason to have these positions elected by Village voters. The Clerk and Treasurer are positions that have grown to require certain skills and qualifications, just like any other Village staff position. As such, they should be treated as staff positions, with formal job descriptions, and a hiring process that requires Village Council approval.
- An appointed Clerk and Treasurer are the best way to insure qualified people are in those positions, and to allow long-term efficient Village government.

Please vote on November 6. Every vote counts!

Blissfield Village Council