

Dear Residents,

The Village of Alvo hopes this letter finds its community members well. The Village of Alvo is writing to provide an update on the progress made following a challenging extended period of time marked by the mismanagement and unethical actions of previous Board of Trustees members and village employees.

With there being many new residents in recent years not everyone may be aware, the Alvo community has faced significant difficulties due to multiple instances of embezzlement, misappropriation of funds, and prior clerk/treasurers not meeting the necessary responsibilities and expectations of their role.

Many of Alvo's struggles were first realized in 2017, when it was identified that the Village of Alvo clerk/treasurer at the time, Ginger Neuhart, had received \$105,000 in overpayments through embezzlement, forgery, and theft by deception. Due to the Nebraska Statue of limitations, prosecutors could only charge Ginger Neuhart with the most recent embezzlement committed over a 36-month span. Tragically, Giner Neuhart passed away on March 27, 2018, days after pleading guilty. Consequently, the Village of Alvo was unable to fully recovered the \$39,000 found to be overpaid during this period or to file any civil case to recover the additional \$68,000 of the \$107,000 identified, leaving lingering concerns about potential overpayments that had not been identified from years prior.

Before the Village of Alvo could recover from the impact of Ginger Neuhart's scandal, it faced another challenge involving a lawsuit from Mogan/Krass/Krings against the Village of Alvo for the meeting held on October 22, 2018 and the actions of Robin LaPage, Ben Glantz, and Taylor Glantz to dismiss and suspend individuals from Alvo Rescue. The judge sided in favor of Morgan/Krass/Krings and once again left the Village of Alvo in financial turmoil.

To further exacerbate the already challenging situations facing the Village of Alvo during this time, it was discovered that additional instances of theft by deception, abuse of public records, and official misconduct had occurred. In an audit for the 2018 fiscal year, Nebraska State Auditor Charlie Janssen discovered that Ben Glantz, the Village of Alvo Volunteer Fire Department's Fire Chief, had misused Fire Department funds for personal use. Thankfully, the Village of Alvo was able to recover the funds and returned them to their original account after Ben Glantz was charged criminally and ordered to pay restitution.

While addressing the issues related to Ben Glantz, the Village of Alvo encountered yet another situation. In 2021, the Board of Trustees at that time voted not to uphold a recall ordered by the Cass County Election Office after sufficient signatures were collected to hold a recall for two Board of Trustee members. Due to the Board of Trustees' initial decision not to proceed with the recall, the Village of Alvo found itself in a lawsuit. The Village of Alvo was court-ordered to conduct the recall and pay all parties associated court costs. As a result of the completed recall, Robin LaPage was unseated by a more than 2-to-1 vote with reasoning for recalling being the misappropriation of the Village of Alvo's Highway Allocated Funds. The other member was voted to retained their seat and currently remains as a member on the board.

Amidst all these issues, the Village of Alvo experienced a high turnover rate in the clerk/treasurer position. Since 2017, the Village has had over five different clerk/treasurers, including one individual who was rehired and then left again. In early 2024, the Village of Alvo appointed its current clerk and feels very confident in their ability in meeting the responsibilities and expectations of their role(s). The most recent clerk/treasurer Raider Rhotenacher left the Village of Alvo's accounts, finances, taxes, records, and municipal office/building in a state of considerable disarray. It was due to this as well as Raider Rhotenacher's unwillingness to fulfill the responsibilities and expectations of his role that led to his termination.

Over the past few years the current Board of Trustees, have dedicated themselves to addressing the issues the Villages of Alvo faces and restoring camaraderie within its community. Through the implementation of improved financial controls, transparent governance practices, and the diligent efforts of its current members, the Village of Alvo has made substantial strides in its recovery.

The Village of Alvo is pleased to report that it is now on a positive trajectory, with its financial health and operational integrity significantly improved. The current Board of Trustees is dedicated to fostering transparency and accountability within the Village of Alvo. This commitment is evident in their efforts to identify and address infrastructure challenges, provide official training for both the Board of Trustees and the clerk/treasurer, pursue grants to enhance the community, establish a comprehensive review process for payments, and maintain accurate records of official proceedings. Additionally, their proactive approach to planning and organizing community events has played a significant role in the Village of Alvo's severely damaged reputation as well as rebuilding the residents' and publics' confidence. The Board of Trustees continue to prioritize responsible management of village operations to ensure that issues that happened in the past do not recur.

The support of the Village of Alvo's community members has been invaluable during this period of recovery. Together, the Village of Alvo and its residents has created a foundation for sustainable growth and prosperity. The Board of Trustees are excited about the future and the opportunities that lie ahead as a resilient and thriving community is built once again.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement.