

## Trustees to be issued iPads to access digital documents

Written by MARK JAEGER

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### **Officials say eliminating paper meeting agendas will save money and staff time**

The Saukville Village Board decided last week to embrace the digital age, approving a plan to switch to paperless meeting packets.

The move means the village president, trustees, administrator and deputy clerk will be issued iPads to access all documents related to issues pending before the Village Board.

A wifi network will be established in Village Hall, giving officials access to the digital documents wherever they meet.

The administrator and village president's devices will also have wireless capabilities, to give them access to documents anywhere there is a cellular signal.

The village has long been sending meeting agendas via e-mail, but the paperless system takes that process even further. Each tablet will be loaded with the software needed to access pdf documents, including a low-cost app called iAnnotate which allows notes and underlining.

Village Administrator Dawn Wagner and Village President Barb Dickmann have been researching the options since the concept was raised during budget deliberations.

That research included a visit to the Village of Bayside, which has implemented a paperless system.

Wagner said the move would save the village a considerable amount of money in reduced paper use and time not needed to collate copied documents prior to meetings.

The board approval of the plan placed a \$7,500 cap on the cost of the paperless system. Wagner and Dickmann said they were confident the cost would be well under that limit.

Keyboards and durable cases will be purchased for each iPad.

Much more elaborate systems are available, including storing all village documents in a cloud-based server, but Wagner said the \$500-a-month charge for such a system would not be cost effective.

"We are hoping to get this implemented as soon as possible," Wagner said, suggesting the devices would be available sometime this spring.

"It is all about making things easier for you," she told trustees.

In the board vote, only Trustee Dan Sauer voted against the paperless plan.

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“What if we don’t want one these devices. I’m old-fashioned and I don’t want one. I’ve managed to keep them out of my personal life,” Sauer said. “It seems like a rather excessive cost to me.”

Trustees who don’t want to use the iPads can continue to receive paper packets, or have them e-mailed, Wagner said.

As the topic was debated, Wagner warned trustees that the digital tablets are property of the village.

“They should not be for personal use and they will be subject to the open records law, so whatever you download to them will be open for the public to see,” she said.

That warning also applies to e-mails sent and received from the tablets.