

August 28, 2026

TO: President Gustafson & Members of the Village Board of Trustees

FROM: Scot Wrighton, Interim Village Administrator

RE: Committee-of-the-Whole Item #2: Code Enforcement Options

The Village Board has asked staff to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of continuing to provide village code enforcement services through an outsourced vendor, or to bring this municipal service back into Village Hall and restore the arrangement whereby a village employee performs code enforcement services. Attached is my analysis of the comparative costs of outsourced vs. in-house management of code enforcement. This comparison makes several assumptions: 1) that the Village will continue to dedicate approximately 20 manhours each week to code enforcement regardless of whether it remains outsourced or is restructured as an in-house department; 2) that if a change to in-house management is directed by the Board, it would start on January 1, 2027; 3) that the Village can recruit and retain a person at the pay rate on which this analysis is based; and 4) that the Village would have to replicate all of the same support tools for an in-house code enforcement arrangement that are part of the outsourced contract, e.g., software, IT equipment, cell phone, vehicle expenses, printing and mailing of notices, etc., in a manner roughly equivalent to the support embedded in the current outsourced services.

Municipal Code Enforcement, LLC (MCE) began providing outsourced code enforcement services for the Village of Roscoe in July 2025. MCE provides different levels of this service to 33 municipal governments in Illinois and Wisconsin. The village's contract with MCE is an all-inclusive one, meaning that the entire cost of the service is included in the hourly rate charged to the village every month. MCE has worked with the village to keep the monthly rate fairly level, and they have agreed to further discount their hourly fee in the future if their staff are allowed access to the village's new administrative vehicle while on patrol in Roscoe. Based on the current MCE contract, the billing history from the first 6 months of 2026, and recent negotiations with MCE, I estimate that the cost for continuing the outsourced arrangement with MCE in calendar year 2027 to be about \$56,000. This estimate can be compared to an analysis of the cost to perform code enforcement in-house (see attached detail), which is about \$12,000 higher.

Apart from financial comparisons, evaluating the pros and cons of outsourcing versus in-house management of code enforcement should also include an assessment of the quality and continuity of the service provided. Generally speaking, most property owners are not happy about receiving notices of violation from the Village, or being summoned into an administrative hearing for failure to abate nuisances. Complaints tend to be a part of any code enforcement operation. But I have found almost no substantive or unreconciled complaints about the *process* of code enforcement in Roscoe under the current outsourced arrangement. That said, I have found that there is still some room for improvement; for example, modifications could be made in the wording of violation notices deployed by MCE, and there could be revisions in subtle

nuances of follow-up interactions with residents. But in my talks with MCE, they have expressed a willingness to make any of the minor changes I have discussed with them. In addition to finding nothing inherently wrong with the services provided by MCE, I found their monthly reporting documents to be comprehensive and informative. They provide more than enough data to evaluate the progress of the Village's code enforcement program, and how and where the Village could make targeted programming changes to enhance the service. A copy of a recent MCE monthly report is attached, as is a copy of the current MCE contract.

In addition to cost comparisons and an assessment of service quality, another factor to consider is what I call the "headache factor." Where outsourcing is appropriate for financial, accountability and programmatic reasons, it also transfers an intangible and hard-to-quantify amount of administrative "headache" away from the local government. Outsourcing means the Village does not have to deal with the risks of employee turnover (which has been a problem with this position in Roscoe), deal with software glitches, or restock supplies. If one or both of the MCE employees assigned to Roscoe leave the company, then MCE is required by contract to seamlessly assign another qualified and trained person to continue the coverage. It is difficult to assign a quantifiable value to the continuity this provides.

The Village of Roscoe has experimented with different strategies for providing code enforcement services in the past. In 2022 the Village assigned a person to serve half-time as a police patrol officer *and simultaneously* half-time as a code enforcement officer. The Village budgeted \$83,737 for this arrangement. After this employee resigned later in 2022, code enforcement was restructured to a full-time position, with a budgeted allocation of \$113,744. By early 2024, this budget allocation was \$117,247. In the Summer of 2024, the Village elected to return to part-time code enforcement, allocating \$59,000 annually for the services, but the person assigned to the post resigned in 2025.

Based on all of the categories of evaluation, it is recommended that the Village Board continue outsourcing its code enforcement services with MCE in 2027.