



Let the games begin: Bethalto board approves video gaming

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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BETHALTO - During the Tuesday meeting of the **Bethalto Village Council**, trustees voted in favor of allowing video gaming machines at local drinking establishments.

The motion, which received an "aye" vote from every trustee except **Dan McCrae**, will allow establishments in Bethalto holding a Class A or Class B liquor license, allowing serving and consumption of alcoholic beverages on the premises, to have as many as five gaming machines. The village will have control of those machines through the liquor commission laws. No one assembled at the crowded meeting spoke for or against the motion.

"I posted about it on social media," **Bethalto Mayor Alan Winslow** said. "No one really said too much about it. Two people spoke in favor of it, and two spoke against it."

When the village attempted to pass an updated building code, a handful of builders and developers spoke in opposition to it. **Tom Anderson**, an area builder, said he and his fellow builders were worried the village's new codes would price them out of building future projects.

"These gentlemen are nervous, because they don't know where you're going with this," Anderson said, addressing the council as well as several builders and land developers in attendance.

Anderson told the council an updated and revised building code was required, saying parts of the existing code were "a little weak." He said some of the updates, such as fireproof joists, would cost builders additional thousands of dollars through the new code.



Bethalto Building and Zoning Administrator Tim Brown said he had been working with Anderson and his fellow builders for weeks regarding the new code, which has been in the works for nearly three years. Anderson told Winslow he and Brown could work together to improve the code in a span of 60-90 days.

"Tim has been nothing but patient and kind to us through it all," Anderson said. "We could work with him and iron this out in 60-90 days."

Winslow said he would like to see the project expedited, and Anderson agreed it could be done within 60 days. The board then voted unanimously to table the motion.

Land developer **Rob Schmidt** said the code could be revised through the **Home Builders Association of Madison County**, who he said provided him with a guidebook to building codes after a simple phone call. He, like Anderson, warned against too many additional coding laws due to the increased cost of building. He said for every \$1,000 added to the cost of a building, as many as 298,000 Americans would be priced out of buying it.