

Beach Park tightens underage drinking laws

By Ginny Skweres
Zion-Benton News Staff

Beach Park trustees unanimously amended the village's liquor code in order to hold hosts responsible if they allow minors to drink alcohol or use drugs. The village now can fine violators up to \$750.

"This is a tool for municipalities to use against under-age drinking," Trustee Regina Miller said. It applies to any event where there is under-age drinking or using illicit drugs, even prescription medication meant for another person. It applies to locations away from a residence such as parks or hotels.

"It holds anyone responsible, not just parents," Trustee Miller said. This means it would apply to older cousins, friends or anyone older than 21.

This change, which is being adopted across Lake County, was a response to a 2006 underage drinking party in Deerfield that led to the deaths of two minors, Miller said.

The fine is no less than \$250 for the first offense; no less than \$500 for a second offense; and no less than \$750 for a third or additional offense.

"This assures that Beach Park is not a safe place for underage drinking or doing drugs," Miller said.

However, by calling the police, adults or under-age hosts, can be absolved of responsibility. This is important for young people to know since having a few friends over when parents are not present can deteriorate to a drinking party if uninvited guests arrive with alcohol.

"All we want is for people to do the right thing," Trustee Beach Park trustees unanimously amended the village's liquor code in order to hold hosts responsible if they allow minors to drink alcohol or use drugs. The village now can fine violators up to \$750.

"This is a tool for municipalities to use against under-age drinking," Trustee Regina Miller said. It applies to any event where there is under-age drinking or using illicit drugs, even prescription medication meant for another person. It applies to locations away from a residence such as parks or hotels. John Hucker said. Zion and Winthrop Harbor have also enacted similar restrictions.

In other business Village Clerk Laurie Cvengros announced that election packets are available at Village Hall for anyone interested in running for one of the three trustee positions that expire next year.