

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 12, 2023**

PRESIDING: Mayor Peter Wilson

PRESENT: Darcy ,Donnalley, Hiner, Thomas & Beech

ABSENT: Temple and Cox

The regular meeting on December 12, 2023, was called to order at 6:30 with Mayor Peter Wilson presiding.

Pastor Shuman opened the meeting with prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES REGULAR MEETING NOVEMBER 28, 2023

Thomas made the motion to approve the minutes from the 11/28/23 regular meeting.

Darcy 2nd

All Ayes

Motion Passed

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Darcy made the motion to approve the bills in the amount of \$53,767.02

Thomas 2nd

All Ayes

Motion Passed

The \$37,330.95 in fire bills was explained \$33,528.73 was the final payment on the Dodge 5500 Ram.

GUEST (S)

Pastor Shuman wanted to publicly thank Mary Ann Grier of the Morning Journal for the article on the Father's Heart drive for gift cards, Ms. Shuman stated the article was fantastic. In addition to those who donated after the last meeting. There was a need for 48 cards for the 24 teens in the Columbiana County Foster Care program. To date there have been 144 cards collected and she has more to pick up. The extra cards have been distributed throughout the area counties where needed. Ms. Shuman shared a story which she said without the article would never have happened, she was contacted by a man in Columbiana who grew up in the foster care system, he had seen the article and wanted to donate for the drive. His donation was \$1,200.00.

Mayor Wilson read a prepared statement thanking Council for the hard work put in over the year noting several accomplishments from the financial position of the village, new vehicles, building maintenance programs for the street and fire department, body cameras, K9 Otis, the pool opening on time, electric aggregation, S Market (Grant) St, and Pritchard Ave bridges, the NE Pressure project and sewer line work by the BPA.

OLD BUSINESS:

RE: PROPOSED DOLLAR GENERAL SR 154

Scott Royer Zarembo Group, the developer for Dollar General, was present at the meeting to discuss access to the property through the right of way and utilities available. Through the discussion it was determined there is still some confusion on this right of way, the village has no documentation believing it is a road right of way that is ODOT with ODOT saying it is the villages. There is also concern on the main sewer line on the property. The village water line is located on the north side of SR 154 it is believed Buckeye Water has a line on the south side of SR 154 where the property is located. Solicitor Beech suggested this request be tabled until a future meeting. This will allow for time to research these concerns with all interested parties including the Columbiana County Engineers office.

Hiner made the motion to table this request until a future meeting.

Donnalley 2nd

All Ayes
Motion Passed

RE: STATE CAPITAL BUDGET PROGRAM UPDATE

Mayor Wilson stated he attended the Republican Party luncheon where State Representative Robb-Blasdel was present. He had a small discussion with her regarding the state capital budget request program, she indicated all projects will be submitted to her office where the decision will be made as to what projects move forward to the next round. All projects should key on parks recreation and trails, the chosen projects will be taken to the Senate in April. Mayor Wilson said this is the same program where the village had received monies for the fire department. Council President Thomas ask if there was any clarification on if these requests would require a match with the mayor saying at the last meeting this funding should not be the sole source of funding. There really had been no concrete clarification on this. Ms. Thomas is concerned with the village overextending itself with all the other projects which have been committed to, including both bridges, continued maintenance on the buildings, installation of playground equipment. She feels it is hard to apply for a project and commit to funding when these have not been completed even with the carry over balances being projected there could be unknown expenses on the projects mentioned in addition to the village man power hours which may be needed on a few. She would have no issue if we could apply saying there is no match available. There was also discussion on the Community Improvement program. The mayor said he liked Council woman Thomas' idea of sensory park and thought this would be a nice application or even the street equipment needed. The discussion centered around the time the street department would have to install the equipment with the other projects. Council woman Hiner and Council man Darcy expressed the same concerns as Ms. Thomas. Council woman Donnalley stated she would like to see improvements made at Willow Grove however is concerned with the possibility of vandalism due to location. She also understands not wanting to over extend the street department with projects.

Hiner made the motion to apply for 2 pieces of street equipment for the full price of the quote for equipment and necessary attachments stating the village has no match available for the equipment or attachments.

Donnalley 2nd

All Ayes
Motion Passed

RE: PRITCHARD AVENUE BRIDGE ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

Mayor Wilson reported ODOT suggest the environmental study be started in the upcoming year, the right of way work has already begun. The estimated cost of the environmental is \$30,000.00 which is the village full responsibility, the hope is this comes in less however if mussels are found in the creek the price could be higher. Mr. Wilson requested permission to seek pricing and interest.

Hiner made the motion to approve the request to seek interested firms and pricing for the environmental study.

Darcy 2nd

All Ayes
Motion Passed

RE: POLICE BODY CAMERA POLICY

Council woman Hiner reported the personnel committee met 2 weeks ago to discuss the Police body camera policy, after reviewing and discussion the committee agreed they see no changes that need be made. Mayor Wilson interjected that he had called the FOP earlier in the day asking what they suggested, he was told by the FOP that they leave these types of decisions up to each municipality. All of council agreed there were no changes that needed to be made to the Police body camera policy at this time.

RE: S MARKET (GRANT) ST BRIDGE UPDATE

Mayor Wilson reported construction is set to begin in June 2024. ODOT has mapped out some trees on the newly acquired ROW that may need to be removed. Mr. Wilson stated ODOT will cover the cost if any removal is needed.

Chief Hall questioned what access the fire department will have if there is a call on Grant St and out Steubenville Pike Rd, the bridge could be totally closed for 1-3 days while the water line is moved, the rest of the construction will have one lane open at all times. Chief Hall requested that he be kept informed of lane closure and changes during the project for emergency calls.

NEW BUSINESS

RE: ORDINANCE NO. 2175-2023 – THE 2024 ANNUAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE AS AN EMERGENCY

Council woman Hiner explained the finance committee met and went over the annual appropriations for 2024 in depth during their meeting and suggest the ordinance be passed as an emergency.

Hiner made the motion to suspend the rules and regulations for passing an ordinance.

Thomas 2nd

All Ayes with a roll call vote

Motion Passed

Hiner made the motion to pass Ordinance No. 2175-2023 as an emergency.

Donnalley 2nd

All Ayes with a roll call vote

Motion Passed

RE: 2024 HEALTH INSURANCE CHANGES

Council woman Hiner reported the finance committee reviewed the health insurance renewal with the suggested changes to be made to offering dependent and spouse coverage. The current policy is the village pays 100% of the premium for the HSA plan, if an employee has added children or enrolled in the PPO plan the employee is responsible for 100% of the difference from the employee only coverage of the HSA plan. The committee is suggesting that all employees hired prior to January 1, 2024 still have 100% of the HSA employee only premium paid by the village, if an employee has added children or enrolled in the PPO plan the village will cover 100% of the HSA employee only coverage and 75% of the additional cost, the employee will be responsible for the remaining 25%. Any employee who is hired after January 1, 2024 enrolled in the HSA or PPO plan and have added any dependent including spouse will be responsible for 25% of the total monthly premium. The village will only accept spouses on the plans with documentation that the spouse has no other insurance available to them. The finance committee believes that with the increase in wages over the last couple of years and now the change to the health insurance the last piece of the puzzle has been completed. The committee believes this will help retain current and future employees.

Hiner made the motion to accept the proposed health insurance changes as presented from the finance committee.

Thomas 2nd

All Ayes

Motion Passed

RE: CHRISTMAST EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION

Council President Thomas reported that council will be providing a lunch for all employees of the village at no cost to the village. A luncheon will be held on Wednesday Dec 20th during lunch at village hall, there will be another that evening at the fire department during their meeting and for other employees who were unable to make the lunch at village hall, than a meal will be taken to the police department that evening for the employees who are working the cover and midnight shifts. Council members will get together to decide the menu and what each are bringing. Ms. Thomas called to several different stores including Save A Lot here in town regarding either a ham or turkey for each employee, the village will pay for this. Save A Lot was unable to commit to the amount needed Giant Eagle in Salem is now corporate, so they do not do vouchers as in the past. Giant Eagle turkeys on an average are \$1.89/lb., the Giant Eagle spiral ham is \$0.88/lb.

Donnalley made the motion to have the dinner at council members expense and order the hams needed from Giant Eagle.

Hiner 2nd

All Ayes
Motion Passed

All employees will be notified of the lunch and times.

RE: NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL DESIGNATION

Mayor Wilson informed those present that the North Country Trail which runs through the village has been designated unit status by the National Parks Service.

FISCAL OFFICER'S REPORT

The following reports were submitted to council in their packets: the November bank reconciliation, the November month end fund summary and the most current December month end fund summary. All vouchers were presented prior to the meeting for review and signatures. Ms. Wonner ask that all spending be cut off for year end on December 19th unless and emergency. Ms. Wonner reported some topics of interest from the Ohio Municipal League Board meeting she attended last Friday from the legislative updates. Ms. Wonner requested a transfer from the General Fund to the DARE fund for the village portion of the DARE grant in the amount of \$5,000.00.

Thomas made the motion to approve the transfer as requested.

Donnalley 2nd

All Ayes
Motion Passed

STREET DEPARTMENT REPORT

The street department report was distributed to council in their packets. Leaf collection has been completed and all leaves have been disposed. The new bucket truck is still in service.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chief Hall reported the department had a nice turnout for the open house with 75-80 pictures being done with Santa and Mrs. Clause. The department has toys to be given to Serenity Way for distribution. M&M Painting will be in this week to paint the walls. He reminded all those present on live Christmas Tree and smoke detector safety. Chief Hall wished everyone a safe and joyous Holiday Season.

BPA REPORT

Bill Hoover, BPA Chairman reported the NE Pressure supply line install has been moving slowly there has been some glitches in obtaining the last 5 or 6 easements needed. The BPA during their meeting approved sending a letter of suspension as per the contract for the work on the supply line install for 90 days. He is hopeful the easement can be obtained in that time limit.

ZONING DEPARTMENT

The most current zoning applications were submitted to council in their packets. Mr. Barkley reported he will coordinate with Mr. Royer on the easements in question with the county.

MISCELLANEOUS

Council woman Hiner questioned if any permits or notices were obtained for the window coverings for the Garretson Building next door to village hall? There was a lengthy discussion on whether this is zoning and if the AHRB board should have been notified. Ms. Hiner said she is not against what is in there it is just she wants to make sure that everyone is held to the same standards and expectations of what is needed and what is not. She has had several calls regarding the coverings and if it is the same as signage, citing the issue with the Lincoln Social Hall on W Lincoln Way earlier in the year. Mr. Barkley stated there is nothing in zoning on window covering and the AHRB would not have had to approve since nothing with the façade. The windows are covered with wood which is painted with various images. He continued that this is no different if someone had a broken window and covered with wood, Council President Thomas questioned if all businesses would be treated the same if they had the same type of covering and for how long. Mr. Barkley said there is no time limit as to how long the windows can be covered in this manner as long as construction and repair are happening on the building in question. Mayor Wilson indicated the Lisbon Landmark Foundation is trying to secure funding to continue improvements to the Garretson Building. Council woman Hiner and Thomas both indicated they want to make sure that the village is not setting a precedent based on who it is and that everyone is treated the same, both have received calls on the coverings on the windows.

Mayor Wilson mentioned that all the Snowmen have been placed on the meters to check them out.

Council President Thomas thanked all of council and employees for the 8 years she has served in the way they have worked together for what is best for the village even if not always agreeing. She thanked Mayor Wilson for making it interesting. Several in attendance thanked Ms. Thomas for her dedication to the village saying it has been a pleasure to work with her.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Thomas made the motion to adjourn into executive session for the employment of a public official.

Hiner 2nd

All Ayes with a roll call vote

Motion Passed

The regular meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Village Solicitor Beech and Police Chief Abraham were invited into the executive session.

Thomas made the motion to reconvene from executive session.

Hiner 2nd

All Ayes with a roll call vote

Motion Passed

The regular meeting reconvened at 8:05 pm with no action being taken.

With nothing further to come before council, Mayor Wilson adjourned the December 12, 2023, meeting at 8:05 pm.

Mayor Peter Wilson

ATTEST:

Tracey Wonner, Fiscal Officer