

Regular Session of Village Council

April 13, 2021

Call to Order

The Regular Session of Council was called to order by Mayor York Bryant. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Roll Call was completed by Solicitor John Kaspar. The following members were present via Zoom or in person.

Jim Frederick – P

Rebecca Isaacs-Niemesh – P

Mike McKeehan – P

Jessica Smothers – A

Ben Steiner – P

Paul Zorn – P

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Council reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion by Councilwoman Isaacs-Niemesh to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2021 Regular Session; second by Councilman Frederick. All yeas by roll call. Motion carried.

Shawn Campbell from Jones-Warner Consultants was listed on the agenda but was not present. Administrator Caroline Whitacre had spoken with him and advised Council that he was monitoring the American Rescue Plan resources coming to the Village.

Reports / Legislation from Village Officials

Monthly Village Fiscal Revenue Status by Fund Summary, Bank Reconciliation and Disbursements, Mayor's Court Report and Bank Reconciliation were provided.

Mayor Bryant advised that the Village-wide Yard Sale will be held on Saturday, May 1. He also talked about driving golf carts on Village streets. A tag can be put on a golf cart for safety and they are allowed to drive on streets <35 mph. The Ohio BMV issues tags and our police can also issue a tag. Owners must carry insurance and there is an age restriction of 16 years to drive a golf cart.

Village Administrator Caroline Whitacre advised that the application for restoring the Railroad Bridge had been funded. It was submitted by the Memorable Morrow Board (Tracy Shump, chair) as a State of Ohio capital appropriation and was awarded in the amount of \$400,000. It was noted that assistance in getting the award was provided by the Chamber of Commerce and state legislators Scott Lipps and Steve Wilson. Since the property belongs to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), they will be administering the funds. The Administrator provided a graph showing income tax revenue to the Village for the past 6 years. The tax revenue has grown steadily since 2014, starting at \$279,000 and ending with \$507,000 in 2020. The Administrator also highlighted the current bank balance in the handout provided for the meeting. An update was provided for the two digital signs which are being built by Clary Signs of Lebanon. The signs, one for City Hall and one for the west entrance to the Village, are completed and Clary is simply waiting on the steel posts to arrive. The Administrator advised Council that the Village of Morrow will be receiving approximately \$260,000 from the American Rescue Plan recently passed by Congress, with funds awarded directly to villages and municipalities. Councilman McKeehan advised that it would be a good idea to get public input on how those funds should be spent. Administrator Whitacre introduced the topic of providing payment for our auxiliary police officers and turned the floor over to Officer Robert Hawk. Morrow is the only village in Warren County that does not currently pay its auxiliary officers. We have three very experienced individuals now and propose to pay them \$16.00 per hour (without benefits or retirement), which is comparable to what surrounding villages pay. With a typical demand of two 8-hour shifts per month, the total cost to the Village would be \$9,216 per year. The proposal was discussed by Council. A motion was made by Councilwoman Isaacs-Niemesh to suspend the rules for three readings which was seconded by Councilman Frederick. All yeas by roll

call. A motion was made by Councilman Frederick to pay our auxiliary police officers for their work including two 8-hour shifts per month up to an amount of \$9,216 per year. The motion was seconded by Councilman McKeehan. All yea by roll call.

Councilman Zorn presented a gift box from the City of Montgomery in honor of the Tree Board celebration, which will not be held this year due to Covid-19. Mayor Bryant opened the box, which was filled with tree-related gifts. He will put the items in a community auction basket. Councilman Zorn also brought up holding an Arbor Day celebration in Bishop Park following the next Council meeting. He also asked whether there is an ordinance on the books about picking up after dogs. It was felt that this kind of stipulation could be added to the new zoning code. He also stated that Janet Poe has placed a plaque by a tree in Phegley Park. The question was asked how did the plaque get there and did anyone know about it? Councilman Zorn advised that there will be a Memorial Day Service in the Village and Brent Centers, Mayor of Franklin, will be giving a keynote talk. Zorn expressed some concern about whether the paint on the railroad bridge could contain lead. Councilman McKeehan advised that the bridge paint could be sealed or can be sandblasted with full containment.

Councilman Frederick brought up soliciting for donations for the bridge by Council members. Solicitor Kaspar weighed in about the need to protect appearances by having a 3rd party make the ask. The donations must be subject to oversight with strict record-keeping.

Councilmembers Steiner, Isaacs-Niemesh and McKeehan did not have any items to bring up.

Public Forum

Andrea Joffe stated the Woodlands is closing out the old HOA and opening a new HOA. There are 464 lots sold thus far in the Woodlands.

Mandy Beamer announced that the Car Show will be held on Saturday, May 29 at the Morrow Arts Center. She indicated that last year, the one bathroom in the Arts Center was not sufficient. She would like to have portalets, and two should be fine. Mike McKeehan, Yorkie Bryant and Jim Frederick offered to split the cost of the portalets. Robert Hawk offered to handle the traffic flow.

Bev Massey announced that Linda Macko's grandson has leukemia and there are T shirts being sold to raise money for his medical treatment.

It was noted that a speed limit sign is needed around the intersection of Blackhawk Road and Alpine Heights Drive at the entrance to the Woodlands.

Motion by Isaacs-Niemesh to adjourn to Executive Session; second by McKeehan. All yea.

Motion by Isaacs-Niemesh to return to Regular Session; second by Councilman Steiner. All yea.

Adjournment

Motion by Isaacs-Niemesh to adjourn; second by Frederick. All yea by roll call.

Tina Powell, Fiscal Officer

York Bryant, Mayor