

# Village of Hiram

## Finance/Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

April 30, 2024

**Call to Order:** Mayor Anne Haynam called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**Committee Members Present:** Anne Haynam, Mayor  
Beth Greenwood, Councilperson  
David Smith, Councilman  
Justin Bisutti, Councilman  
Susan Skrovan-DeYoung, Fiscal Officer

**Committee Members Absent:** Chris Szell, Chairman arrived at 7:30 pm

**Hiram Officials Present:** Brian Gregory, Police Chief  
Bill Byers, Fire Chief  
Steven Schuller, Village Administrator

**Others:** Jennifer Kangas Berendt; Village Solicitor, Deborah Wordell and Chris Perme; Chair of Economic Development.

**Minutes:** The Mayor asked to approve the proposed 3/26/2024 meeting minutes as presented by general consent, no objections made, minutes are approved.

**Agenda:** The Mayor asked to approve the proposed agenda as presented by general consent, no objections made, agenda approved.

**Guests/Public:** None.

### **Department Updates:**

**Police Department:** Police Chief Brian Gregory had provided his report to members prior to the meeting. Regarding making application to the Hiram Community Trust; Brian thanked Ed Frato-Sweeney for his reminders in the past of the grant deadlines. Legislation will be before Council.

Brian provided an update to the software glitches within the speed camera program. The one boot he purchased came in on Friday.

**Village Adm/Utilities:** VA Steve Schuller had provided his report to members prior to the meeting. He did have one new item to bring up for discussion; Steve had contacted Klaben Ford to see what a replacement vehicle would cost for the police. Klaben Ford informed Steve that when they placed a large order for another municipality; they ordered one too many vehicles so they have an extra vehicle. The cost is \$47,000; we may be able to get it for \$45,000. This is not a hybrid. Brian said it would take \$8,000-10,000 to outfit the vehicle. Steve wondered whether Finance may wish to utilize the remainder of the ARPA funds to help purchase this vehicle. Finance members discussed the options for the funds and for operations of the police dept. At this time, members would rather hold onto ARPA funds for use on police payroll, if needed.

**Fire Department:** Fire Chief Bill Byers reported on the estimated cost to replace the tornado siren with another used piece of equipment. Cost of equipment with installation is at \$10,358.43. Members discussed their options for the siren warning system and other systems. The Mayor felt the tornado siren was antiquated and that we should promote more sign-ups with the RAVE system.

**Mayor:** Mayor Anne Haynam had no report.

**Fiscal Officer/Admin:** Susan Skrovan-DeYoung was not able to provide her report to members beforehand; she passed them out to everyone and went over a few key items. She did ask that when Finance approves the bill's list, that they move to include the Public Entities Pool of Ohio invoice.

**Bills List:** Bills list was reviewed. A motion to pay the bills including the PEP Ohio bill was made by Mr. Smith with a second from Mrs. Greenwood. Motion passed unanimously.

**New Business:**

**a. Deborah Wordell:** Deb provided Finance members with reports that she has been compiling and gave an update. Her report touched on items such as;

- Leave balances are considered debt and paid out at retirement at their current rate of pay.
- The General Fund has been a reduction of 80% over the last 10 years.
- Best way is to reduce expenses.
- Reduce line items within the budget that are not needed.
- Forecasting.
- Looking at contracts; Hiram Township and/or Hiram College.
- Dispatch costs.
- Any item outside of industry standard.
- Employee pay is low, but the leave benefits are high. 16 hours of personal time is not offered in other places. Paid lunches, 1-hour is unusual.
- Look at utility costs.
- Check your RITA reports for outstanding income taxes; the report should provide it.
- Get a report of your outstanding property taxes.
- Breakdown your debt; how much comes out of your General Fund.

Beth Greenwood talked again about reducing the number of Council members to five. The Mayor added that our Zoning Inspector retired; the job moved to our Village Administrator.

Deborah said the financial office should limit the hours the window is open. Once online payments are set up, this should reduce the interruptions.

**b. 2 Mill EMS Levy needs renewal in 2024:** Jennifer asked Susan to forward the ballot language and prior legislation to her. Chief Bill Byers said their Fire Levy is at 3 mills and continuing. Bill would like to consider a replacement levy for the EMS. Other agreed.

**A motion to put the EMS levy on as a replacement 2 mill was made by Mr. Smith with a second from Mrs. Greenwood. Motion passed unanimously.**

**c. Village Monies and MB vs StarOhio:** The Mayor reported on the actions of the Investment Committee who met earlier this evening. Inactive funds are 1.2 million, active funds are \$600,000. Middlefield Bank will guarantee 5.40% for six more months. We will remain with MB for at least the next six months.

**d. Engine Brakes SR82:** This topic has been brought up in the past. Some members were in favor of it. We should be able to exempt emergency vehicles. We should have some legislation that we can revisit.

**e. Voice to Text Options:** Chris Szell would like to leave this on the agenda. Justin Bisutti said Microsoft Teams has something available to do this; we may have to install the software.

**Unfinished Business:**

**i. Comparison of #s between contract services out vs Simon being certified:** Village Administrator Steve Schuller explained how our water/sewer employee Simon Bednarski has received his water license certification. We are currently paying Clearwater Operations for their licensing. Steve would rather pay Simon that money and cut Clearwater out of the picture. We need to keep Simon; since his certification, at least three other municipalities have contacted him to come and work for them.

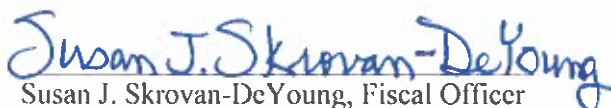
**A motion to send the recommendation to Council for Simon Bednarski to be compensated for his water certification and replace Clearwater Operations was made by Mr. Smith with a second from Mr. Szell. Motion passed unanimously.**

**a. Light Plant Survey of Easement underway:** Steve said he has not been able to reach the original surveyor that we used and will need to find another surveyor.

The next Finance/Safety Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 28, 2024.

**Adjournment:** A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Szell with a second from Mr. Bisutti. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

**Respectfully Submitted by:**

  
Susan J. Skrovan-DeYoung, Fiscal Officer

**Attest:**

  
Chris Szell, Finance Chairman  
MAYOR