

# Hiram Village Council Meeting

Rosser Municipal Building  
11617 Garfield Road, Hiram, Ohio 44234

August 8, 2023

The following Members of Council were present: Mr. Szell, Mrs. Greenwood, Mr. Hemphill, Mr. McCreight, Mr. Smith and Mr. Spencer. The following were also present: Mayor Lou Bertrand, Village Solicitor Tom Reitz, Fiscal Officer Susan Skrovan-DeYoung, Police Chief Brian Gregory, Fire Chief Bill Byers, Village Administrator James McGee and Asst. Village Administrator Steve Schuller.

The following persons were present: None.

Mayor Bertrand called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Mayor asked that all cell phones be silenced. There was a moment of silence followed by the pledge to the flag.

Mayor asked for a motion to approve the public hearing minutes of July 11, 2023. A motion to approve the public hearing minutes as presented was made by Mr. Hemphill and seconded by Mr. Spencer. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.

Mayor asked for a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of July 11, 2023. A motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. Hemphill. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.

Mayor asked for a motion to approve the proposed agenda as presented. A motion to approve the agenda as submitted was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. Hemphill. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.

## GUEST AND PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

## DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

*\*Police Chief Brian Gregory provided their monthly report.*

There were 177 offense reports for the month of July. Traffic stops were down; 41 traffic stops resulting in 23 citations.

The Annual Car Show was this past Saturday; Brian thanked those who attended and supported the event. After expenses the department only netted \$215.00 plus \$1,000 from their event sponsor, Protec! Daystar did not sponsor them this year and Charles Chevrolet gave \$25.00. This year they had the best giveaways they've ever had!

Cops and Kids fishing day is set for Saturday, August 19<sup>th</sup> from 9-1 pm at Camp Asbury. Chief Brian Gregory thanked Assistant FO, Wendelin Taylor, on making application for and receiving the NOPEC Community grant for \$500.00. Metro Security also donated \$400.00 last year which really helps with the items for the event.

The mandated Continued Professional Training through the State of Ohio will be reimbursed 100%. Disbursements will be sent quarterly; Brian has not seen any funds yet this year.

Chief Gregory wanted to bring up to Council an issue today with a resident. Brian will be going to the prosecutor's office tomorrow; it is an issue. Brian feels this person is a dangerous individual; a simple trespass was blown all out of proportion! This person already has thirteen protection orders against him; one in our Village and the rest in Columbus. He has five violations of these protection orders! The general contractor hired by him has come into Brian's office to apologize for his behavior! In his mind, we are all racist and homophobic.

**\*Fire Chief Bill Byers provided their monthly report.**

The Chief reported his department's response time has dropped back down.

The Fire Department received a \$20,000 grant from the Ohio Ambulance Transportation Program under the ARPA funds for recruitment and retention of personnel, bonuses and for pay! The check came today. He will be working with Susan. We have until June of 2024 to use these funds. Bill would like to see if it can be used as a current employee retention bonus and/or a bonus for working during COVID; in a lump sum rather than by the hour. He will be talking with Jason Groselle as well to iron out the details.

Bill explained the department's issues with callouts to older residents aging in their homes. They are getting a lot of repeat calls, for lift assists or other minor issues.

**Village Administrator James McGee provided their monthly report.**

James reported on a recent issue with a family at the cemetery. He brought this issue up to the Finance Committee; they would like to reimburse the family \$300.00. They had scheduled a cremains burial on a Saturday. James or Steve usually dig the hole the Friday before; Steve was off that day and James completely forgot. A frantic call came into our Police Department who called James. James came in immediately and handled the services. He tried originally to dig it by hand but the ground was so hard, he had to apologize to the family and go get a piece of equipment and come back to get it done. He was laid to rest in about 45 minutes. James offered to reimburse the widow for part of the cost and would ask Council for a motion to refund her.

**A motion to reimburse \$300.00 to a family for a Saturday burial that was not prepared beforehand was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Hemphill. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.**

On that same issue; James reported that his department has been putting in veteran markers and paying that cost. James said he was requested by our Mayor to do that for our veterans; he would just like to have something on the record to have legal backing to do. The Mayor said we have 260 veterans buried in our cemetery; he thinks it is important that the Village honors them. The Mayor did say the Veterans Administration does provide the plaques; we secure them. The Mayor felt we should set up some kind of trust. James said we have a current request; he has reached out to Portage Marble & Granite to mount the plaque at a cost of \$300.00. It was for a cremains burial that the Village got \$150.00. James asked if we want to set some parameters on how much the Village wants to contribute to this. Paul Spencer asked if there was any reimbursement through the VA? Dave Smith said there is some kind of reimbursement for burial costs; he does not know what it is. Paul thought we should reach out to the VA first. James said he would reach out to them. More discussion followed. Susan noted that since 2017, the Village usually covers two each year, not every year, at a total annual cost of about \$600.00. We just don't have a written policy. Village Solicitor Tom Reitz said the Mayor should have Council authorize whatever he decides to do. It should be put into your cemetery regulations. James will take his thoughts to Finance Committee to iron out the details.

James said the Hinsdale Road project is done! This was an Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) project totaling \$300,000 comprising of a \$250,000 grant and a \$50,000 loan. The project came in under the estimate at \$278,543.16 which reduces the loan owed by the Village to \$28,543.16 over sixteen years.

The water tower project is underway; they are waiting on a special ring to be inserted into the concrete base.

James brought up Camp Asbury; they need a place to do their lab work for their water & sewer. They have asked if the Village could do this for them and are offering to pay \$50.00 per quarter to have this done. Chris Szell asked if we are authorized to use our lab? Steve said yes, it will not be all of their lab testing, some will be sent out. For the rest, it is just easier for their operator of record to use our lab. Solicitor Tom Reitz clarified the motion.

**A motion to allow Camp Asbury to conduct some of their wastewater treatment plant testing in our lab in exchange for payment in the amount of \$50.00 per quarter was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Hemphill. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.**

James brought up the Kimble trash contract; it is going up in September. We are starting our 3-year renewal option with a 5% increase or CPI; whichever is greater unless you want it to go out for bid. The Mayor said Hiram Township has been contacted; they wish to remain with Kimble. Dave Smith would like to see it put in our Communicator.

## **Mayor's August 8, 2023 Report to Council**

### **PLANNING AND ZONING:**

The Commission did not meet on Tuesday, August 1<sup>st</sup> as no business or zoning applications were to be considered.

### **LIGHT PLANT PROPERTY:**

The "Old Light Plant" property is to be advertised for bids and sold. Our learned legal counsel has prepared an Ingress and Egress Easement to and from the College property to access Wakefield – SR 305. (Legal description is pending.)

### **STUDENT ATHLETES ARE BACK IN TOWN AS OF YESTERDAY (August 7, 2023)**

**BECAUSE OF THE RETIREMENT OF OUR VILLAGE SOLICITOR, THE HIRAM VILLAGE WILL BE RETAINING A NEW VILLAGE SOLICITOR:** This position should be advertised with the local paper plus the Legal News and form a Committee consisting of Council President, VA, Police Chief, Fiscal Officer and Mayor.

### **RESIDENT PROPERTY OWNER WITH JUST UNDER \$1,000.00 PAST-DUE WATER/SEWER BILL:**

A number of customer residents are falling behind paying their water/sewer bills. Your Mayor contacted two (2) local Churches to assist in payment of the bill for a property owner on a very low fixed income; the entire bill was paid by the FRIENDSHIP ALLIANCE CHURCH, SR 44, Auburn Township, Geauga County.

Submitted by:

**MAYOR LOU BERTRAND**

***\*The Fiscal Officer Report: Susan Skrovan-DeYoung presented the monthly financial reports for July.***

**The following reports were provided to Council for this meeting:**

The July Bank Reconciliation balanced with the UAN with two small adjusting factors, has been posted to the UAN and is now available for signing by Council & Mayor.

Cash Summary by Fund as of July 31, 2023 was provided last Friday by email & in their packets.

List of bills as of August 4, 2023 was provided to Council last Friday by email & in their packets.

Council Regular meeting minutes of July 11, 2023 was provided to Council last Friday by email & in their packets.

Council Public Hearing minutes of July 11, 2023 was provided to Council last Friday by email & in their packets.

UAN Municipal Income Tax receipts YTD report was provided to Council Monday & in their packets.

Comparison of Budgeted & Appropriated YTD report was provided to Council last Friday by email & in their packets.

**A motion to approve the Fiscal Officer's report for July as submitted was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Hemphill. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.**

**The bill's list was reviewed. A motion to approve the bill's list as submitted was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. Spencer. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.**

Susan wanted to bring up one bill for discussion. Council had approved by motion the cost of a survey for the 99-year lease with Hiram College not to exceed \$2,000. The invoice came in at \$2,100. Susan asked for a motion by Council to approve the additional \$100.00.

**A motion to approve the additional \$100.00 to Pearson Surveying was made by Mr. Hemphill and seconded by Mr. Szell. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.**

# HIRAM TOWNSHIP REPORT

No Township report tonight.

## LEGISLATION

### ORDINANCES

**2022-20: AN ORDINANCE ENACTING SECTION 351.17 OF THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM CODIFIED ORDINANCES TO ESTABLISH PARKING PERMIT PROVISIONS. TABLED ON 2<sup>nd</sup> READING.**

**2023-13: AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING A GRANT AND AMENDING THE PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS IN THE KIDS AND COPS FISHING DAY SPECIAL REVENUE FUND (2274-110-420-0127) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** A motion to suspend the rules was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Szell. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor. A motion to approve as an emergency was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. Smith. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.

### RESOLUTIONS

**2023-15: A RESOLUTION REPEALING RESOLUTION 2021-20 WHICH AUTHORIZED MUTUAL AID CONTRACTS TO OTHER POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS. 2<sup>nd</sup> READING.**

**2023-17: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPLICATION FOR AND SUBSEQUENT ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDS BY THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM AND RATIFYING PAST ACTIONS WHICH ARE NOW AUTHORIZED BY THIS RESOLUTION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** A motion to suspend the rules was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. Hemphill. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor. A motion to approve as an emergency was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. Smith. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** None.

**A motion to convene into Executive Session for pursuing imminent litigation at 7:43 pm was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Hemphill. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor. Police Chief Brian Gregory was invited to stay.**

**A motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:13 pm was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. Smith. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.**

**A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Szell. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:14 pm.**

These minutes are pending approval by Council.



Mayor Lou Bertrand

ATTEST:



Fiscal Officer, Susan J. Skrovan-DeYoung