

Hiram Village Council Meeting

Rosser Municipal Building
11617 Garfield Road, Hiram, Ohio 44234

August 16, 2022

The following Members of Council were present: Mr. Hemphill at 7:15 pm, Mr. Smith, Mr. Spencer and Mr. Szell. The following were also present: Mayor Lou Bertrand, Village Solicitor Tom Reitz, Fiscal Officer Susan Skrovan, Police Chief Brian Gregory, Fire Chief Bill Byers, Asst. Fire Chief Jason Groselle, Village Administrator James McGee and Assistant Village Administrator Steve Schuller.

The following persons were present: Stacy Turner; reporter with The Weekly Villager and Denny Taylor.

Mayor Bertrand called the regular meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. once there was a quorum. 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 7/12/22. A motion to approve the hearing minutes as presented was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. Smith. The result of the voice vote was 4-0 in favor.

Mayor asked for a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of 7/12/22. A motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented was made by Mr. Hemphill and seconded by Mr. Spencer. The result of the voice vote was 4-0 in favor.

Mayor asked for a motion to approve the proposed amended agenda. A motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. Hemphill. The result of the voice vote was 4-0 in favor.

GUEST AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Denny Taylor representing the Hiram Historical Society spoke about the relationship between the Village and the historical society. He stated that the Village did not respond to their letter from April of this year regarding the water problem. It is a shared problem. Village Solicitor Tom Reitz read the lease. Paul Spencer wants to see this fixed for the next generation of Council! Solicitor Reitz will bring some options back to Council. It is a binding contract! Chris Szell said it is the responsibility of the Historical Society to correct, is it not? Tom Reitz said yes! Denny Taylor said they are getting more proposals from contractors.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

**Police Chief Brian Gregory provided their monthly report.* There were 288 offense reports for July.

Chief Brian Gregory said the Hiram College students are coming back for the new school year.

Some updates on personnel; Officer Paul Maroni has resigned and there is legislation before Council to retire the K-9 Officer Guapo. His department is running very tight financially and he needs to look at raises for officers to keep them! Fundraising efforts from the community for Guapo have gone into a special line item; the Chief would like to allow Officer Devin Brown to use these funds for the care of Guapo. Chief Gregory explained what the fundraising dollars covered for the K-9; they did not cover any labor, training or fuel costs!

Brian brought up the feral cat problem! Many of them come from the College properties left behind by students leaving. He would like to update our codified ordinances to address this issue. More discussion followed on issues with residents feeding feral cats and how to manage this issue. Solicitor Tom Reitz will research and present his findings.

*Fire Chief Bill Byers provided their monthly report. Bill had emailed his report.

Chief Byers said their response times did tick up.

The RA training for the new college students has been completed; it was the most tentative group they have had!

Village Administrator James McGee provided their monthly report.

James explained the progress on the lift stations.

James said they were awarded a grant/loan for rebuilding the sewer lift station on Constance Avenue of \$367,000. This project is expected to begin July of 2023. The local match is 20% or \$73,000 with an OPWC 0% loan for \$50,000 and an OPWC grant for \$244,000.

The OPWC grant for Hinsdale/Winrock project will start in 2023 due to the lack of bidders for asphalt at this time.

The College property for composting; Nancy Rubin, CFO with Hiram College has not found any time to meet with us about the property at the water plant. She has been either working remote or on vacation.

The Street Department will begin street marking painting the roadways this month.

Surveyors have completed the survey for the cemetery; the survey for the light plant will start tomorrow.

Mayor's August 16, 2022 Report to Council

Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting:

The Planning & Zoning Commission did not meet the first Tuesday of the month as there was no new business or zoning application pending, next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Sept. 6, 2022 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting with Hiram College President David Haney, PhD:

- As reported in the July meeting, President Haney stated he was in favor of the Village placing the additional .25% earned income tax levy on the November ballot to assist in the shortfall in the Police Budget since a majority of the tax increase will be paid by the Hiram College employees.
- What are Pres. Haney's thoughts on the 1% credit for taxes paid to other Ohio taxing authorities?
- Negotiations on the College/Village safety contract are ongoing.

Discussion on Village Budget:

Credit for municipal earned income taxes paid by residents to other municipalities and/or school taxes, which will increase the money raised in the projected annual amount of \$50,000 - \$60K. (College President Haney voiced support for this legislation.) In your Mayor's opinion, the proposed Resolution should remain tabled until a full Council membership is present to vote.

Cash Collateral Loan from Middlefield Bank:

July email from Middlefield Bank

Mayor Bertrand;

It was a pleasure to speak with you this morning.

In follow-up to our conversation, we will adjust the interest rate on deposit accounts to .85%. To address the borrowing need for the Kubota tractor (\$90,000), we would provide a 48-month Certificate of Deposit at 1.00% and an off-setting loan priced at 3.00%.

You will note that I have copied Kathy Vanek, our Mantua Branch Manager, and Mike Ranttila, our Chief Financial Officer.

Jim Heslop
The Middlefield Banking Company

***The Fiscal Officer Susan Skrovan presented the monthly financial reports for July.**

The following reports were provided to Council for this meeting:

July Bank Reconciliation balanced with the UAN with one adjusting factor, a \$0.05 error on a water/sewer receipt, has been corrected and posted to the UAN and is now available for signing by Council & Mayor.

Cash Summary by Fund as of July 31, 2022 was provided to Council today by email and in their packets.

List of bills as of August 12, 2022 was provided to Council by email last week and today in their packets.

Council Public hearing minutes & the Regular meeting minutes of July 12, 2022 were provided to Council by email today & in their packets.

R.I.T.A. income tax receipts YTD report was provided to Council today in their packets.

Comparison of Budgeted and Appropriated YTD report was provided to Council today in their packets.

Susan received a letter from the Department of Commerce regarding liquor license renewals. If there are no issues, they will simply renew. Chief Brian Gregory said there are no issues.

Last Tuesday evening, August 9th, Susan attended the Budget Commission meeting for the Local Government Funding. There was a good turnout from all communities. There is legislation before Council tonight to approve the method of apportionment as long as the County agrees to keep their percentage of 39.8%. Susan has not heard anything from the County at this time. Everyone at the meeting was in favor of this method and to go for 10 years.

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 4-0 in favor.

The bill's list was reviewed. A motion to approve the bill's list was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Szell. The result of the voice vote was 4-0 in favor.

HIRAM TOWNSHIP REPORT

No Township report tonight.

LEGISLATION

ORDINANCES

2022-08: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 182.081 OF THE INCOME TAX REGULATIONS OF THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM. TABLED ON 2nd READING.

2022-10: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS IN SEVERAL FUNDS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. 1st READING.

RESOLUTIONS

2022-24: A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND ACCEPTING THE PORTAGE COUNTY BUDGET COMMISSION'S ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF APPORTIONING AND DISTRIBUTING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUND AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. 1st READING.

2022-25: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A CONTRACT WITH WORKMAN INDUSTRIAL SERVICES, INC. FOR THE WATER TOWER REPLACEMENT PROJECT WITHIN THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM, PORTAGE COUNTY, OHIO AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. 1st READING.

2022-26: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A CONTRACT WITH THE ENGINEERING FIRM CT CONSULTANTS, FOR ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE WATER TOWER REPLACEMENT PROJECT AND DECLARING ON EMERGENCY. 1st READING. Chris Szell asked what fund this would be coming from? James said the water fund.

2022-27: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RETIREMENT OF K-9 OFFICER GUAPO FROM THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM AND AUTHORIZING COUNCIL TO EXECUTE A K-9 OFFICER ADOPTION AGREEMENT WITH DEVIN BROWN AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. 1st READING.

The consensus of Council was to hold a Special Council meeting on August 30, 2022 at 7:00 pm following the regular Finance & Safety meeting to address the legislation that is on emergency and cannot pass tonight.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Village Solicitor Tom Reitz brought up to Council the recent award for the One Ohio Opioid class action settlement agreement. The Village was one of many in the suit that was awarded a monetary settlement. Here is the issue, what we were awarded gets paid to us over a period of 18 years! If the Village accepts these funds, \$6,554.76, we will also have to create a special fund, report on the monies received and it can only be spent to battle opioid addition issues! You can decline the award and if you do decline, Portage County will receive our funds, not us. Council would like to decline the award and allow the funds to be used by the County.

Tom Reitz provided an update on the vacant house on Plum Ridge. Mr. Miles has been served with the criminal complaint and has pled not guilty! Ms. Texler is no longer at her last known address. The case is proceeding.

Tom also informed Council that the easement for Mr. Holmes is done; Tom is waiting on a legal description from Mr. Holmes to finish up the documents.

Paul Spencer spoke on Ruby Brown's property; he was contacted by her daughter. She is making attempts to make the necessary repairs. The Couch property and the house by the old Fire & Ice we have heard nothing! Dave Smith asked about the former Township hall? Paul said they did come for a permit to do renovations.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. Hemphill. The result of the voice vote was 4-0 in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

These minutes are pending approval by Council.



Mayor Lou Bertrand

ATTEST:



Fiscal Officer Susan J. Skrovan