

# Village of Hiram

## Finance/Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

May 30, 2023

**Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Szell called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

**Committee Members Present:** Lou Bertrand, Mayor  
Chris Szell, Chairman  
Beth Greenwood, Councilperson  
David Smith, Councilman  
Paul Spencer, Councilman arrived at 6:02 pm  
Susan Skrovan-DeYoung, Fiscal Officer

**Committee Members Absent:**

**Hiram Officials Present:** Frank Hemphill, Councilman  
Brian Gregory, Police Chief  
Bill Byers, Fire Chief arrived at 6:10 pm  
James McGee, Village Administrator  
Steven Schuller, Asst. Village Administrator

**Others:** Mr. Robert Bohrer; Interim President of Hiram College, Mr. Denny Taylor.

**Minutes:** A motion to approve the meeting minutes of April 25, 2023 as presented was made by Mr. Smith with a second from Mrs. Greenwood. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

**Agenda:** Chris Szell asked for a motion to approve the agenda. A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Mayor Bertrand with a second from Mrs. Greenwood. Motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

**Guests/Public:** Robert Bohrer thanked members for the invitation to be at the meeting tonight. Denny Taylor said letters were sent from their legal counsel regarding the Couch Farm.

### **Department Updates:**

**Police Department:** Police Chief Brian Gregory reported the grant application he made to the Ohio Public Safety has been denied! We do not have enough fatal crashes to be eligible; it is frustrating!

Regarding his repeaters, one went down and is disabled. To repair it would cost \$1,108.94; Brian believes he cannot afford to have it repaired.

The red phone in the lobby of our municipal building is dead. We are having issues with our old phone box in the fire bay and cannot get the lines repaired because it is too old. May have to run a separate phone line to the phone.

Distracted driving law went into effect on April 4 of this year; it has already shown a reduction of 9 percent in crashes related to distracted driving! It may not sound like a lot; however, it has helped to prevent over 500 crashes!

Brian mentioned if we installed the traffic photo monitoring devices, we would lose money! Finance members discussed this further. Beth and Dave still think it would help slow people down; there is more to learn.

Brian said he is waiting to purchase any car boots until probably July; that would be before school starts again and if we can afford to purchase them.

**Fire Department:** Fire Chief Bill Byers reported on the issues with our mutual aid billing. He believes it is not worth going after and fighting for. It would hurt our relationships with other communities. Bill does believe that it reduced the number of mutual aid calls that we do receive. Other communities have either staffed better or called other communities closer to them. It is a give and take. Paul felt if we are not going to enforce our mutual aid billing to collect; we should rescind the legislation that is in place. Dave agreed with Paul to enforce it or rescind it.

**A motion to have legislation come before Council to rescind the Mutual Aid billing legislation was made by Mr. Spencer with a second from Mr. Smith. Motion passed unanimously 6-0.**

Dave Smith asked about the fireworks last night around 10:00 pm? He thought they were right behind Chris Szell's home or near Paul; maybe Great Northern Apartments. Paul said he heard them but thought they were coming from Alpha Road. Brian spoke about the fact that the State of Ohio allows for the sale of fireworks. However, our ordinance does not allow fireworks to be set off within Village limits. Did anyone call the police about it last night? If they did not, there is no way of knowing where they were being set off.

**Village Adm/Utilities:** VA James McGee reported the Hinsdale/Winrock Roads have been paved, mostly. They did find a gas line that needs to be moved; Dominion told them somewhere between 1-4 months! In addition, the Hinsdale extension was not included in the original project! James it putting it back in and it will use all of the surplus we had in the project.

**Mayor:** The Mayor felt we need a police levy, and have Hiram Township join with us. The Mayor said he could not do Brian's job! No one would, he is spreading himself too thin! Fire Chief Bill Byers spoke about getting all our ducks in a row before talking with the Township. Dave said we cannot do it without the Township. The Mayor said we could do a 2 to 3 mill levy between the Village and Township and that would do it. Brian said he has asked the Township before; if they pass a levy, they would expect 24/7 coverage! We would have to iron out the details. Dave said do not sell yourself short Brian; it would be part of the package and include capital!

The Mayor asked about the easement for the Light Plant to Robert Bohrer; the college needs to sign the paperwork. Mr. Bohrer said he would take a look at it.

Memorial Day observances, we had the best speaker in his opinion! However, we had a low turnout overall and not many at the reception following the services. The Mayor said he took the leftover cookies, cupcakes, water and juice home; he felt it would be left behind there and attract ants.

The Mayor is planning on attending the Mayor's convention for one day.

The Mayor spoke on the upcoming Hungarian Festival on Abbot Road; Sunday June 11<sup>th</sup>.

Beth Greenwood had to leave the meeting at 7:00 pm.

**Fiscal Officer/Admin:** Susan Skrovan-DeYoung reported on the recent expenditures out of the General Fund; the largest one was the balance of the Salon roof at \$3,600. Most were very small. We are at 37% spent as of May 30<sup>th</sup> which is lower than the average for this time of year at 41.665%.

Susan brought up the 2024 Tax Budget and explained the steps we need to take to pass it by July 20<sup>th</sup>. We did not receive our Certificate of Estimated Resources from the County Auditor until after our May Council meeting. We will have first reading on June 13<sup>th</sup> and will have to schedule a public hearing for the night of our Finance meeting on June 27<sup>th</sup>, which would be our second reading. Then pass it at our July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting to it can be taken to the County Auditor. Susan passed out some reports showing our estimated revenues for this year as well as our current appropriations. Unless Council decides to generate some new revenue, Susan will keep most of the 2023 figures the same for 2024.

Susan passed out the 2022 income tax collections broke out on a spreadsheet like she is now doing for the 2023 collections so Finance and Council members could compare what we receive.

Susan reported a retainer refund from 2022 from Regional Income Tax Agency will be coming next month; it is \$8,593.00! Chris asked where those funds will be receipted? Susan said most of it will go back to the General Fund with the rest to the Street Infrastructure Fund.

Chris Szell asked what we had left in the ARPA funds? Susan said about \$31,000. Chris asked if we could use the ARPA funds plus the refund from Regional Income Tax Agency towards the purchase of a police cruiser? Susan said yes, we should be able to. Finance discussed selling the Crown Vic sitting in the parking lot; it has not moved in quite a while.

**A motion to sell the Crown Victoria police cruiser was made by Mayor Bertrand with a second from Mr. Smith. Motion passed unanimously 5-0.**

Finance members would like to see this year's official certificate of estimated resources, which shows the inside and outside millage, provided from the County as well as last years in order to compare them. Susan will make copies for the next Council meeting.

**Bills List:**

Bills list was reviewed. A motion to pay the bills was made by Mr. Spencer with a second from Mr. Smith. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0. Dave asked about the \$500 insurance deductible bill on the list? Susan said she believed that was for the bumper on the fire squad. Dave asked why it has taken this long to pay our deductible? Susan said the Fire Chief had just provided a purchase requisition to her to pay the deductible. It was something they believed should have been covered by the person who was negligent for the crash. Susan said Dave should ask Bill Byers about it; he should be able to explain it in better detail.

**New Business:**

**a. ODOT Speed Study (Attachment 1):** Chris said Council will see legislation at their next meeting to authorize the study. Chris is sending it over to Tom Reitz to prepare.

**b. Traffic Cameras and Village Speed Limits (Attachments 2 & 3):** Finance has already discussed this item. Chris did mention that if we were to rezone our frontage on our state routes as Commercial, we could reduce our speed!

- Unfinished Business:**
- a. Street Parking (Attachment 4):** Chris does not think we should pursue it. A lot of vehicles that travel through Hiram are the same vehicles! Members discussed other options. Chris felt we should leave the legislation tabled. Chris said some residents he spoke with would rather have a tax increase!
  - b. Solar Panels – Electrical Engineer:** James has talked with our engineers.
  - c. Light Plant Structural Engineer:** We are waiting on the written report.
  - d. 1-acre 99yr Lease:** We are waiting on it to be surveyed. Susan hasn't paid Hiram College for the lease yet; members agreed not to pay it until we have the survey.
  - e. Village Levies:** Chris reminded Finance members that Susan had sent out by email our current levy information.
  - f. HV/Twp Fire Contract:** Dave Smith said we have a good relationship with the Township now. He wondered if we were meeting our obligations.
  - g. Address any outstanding matters from last month's minutes that were not addressed previously in the agenda:** None.

**EMS Collections:** None.

The next Finance/Safety Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 27, 2023.

**Adjournment:** A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Spencer with a second from Mr. Smith. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.

**Respectfully Submitted by:**

**Attest:**

  
Susan J. Skrovan-DeYoung, Fiscal Officer

  
Chris Szell, Finance Chairman