

# Village of Hiram

## Finance/Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

August 29, 2023

**Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Szell called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

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

**Committee Members Absent:**

**Hiram Officials Present:** Frank Hemphill, Councilman  
Brian Gregory, Police Chief  
Bill Byers, Fire Chief  
James McGee, Village Administrator

**Others:** Mr. Glenn Branam with Blue Line Solutions

**Minutes:** A motion to approve the meeting minutes of July 25, 2023 as presented was made by Mr. Smith with a second from Mr. Spencer. Motion passed unanimously.

**Agenda:** A motion to approve the proposed agenda. A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Mrs. Greenwood with a second from Mr. Spencer. Motion passed unanimously.

**Guests/Public:** Representative with Blue Line Solutions, Mr. Glenn Branam presented their traffic camera system. They specialize in school zone and hand-held laser cameras. They would first set up and do a speed study. Some of the communities they are already working with include; Girard, Campbell and New Lexington. They can reimburse our officers for overtime to run the hand-held units. Blue Line would get 40% of the revenue brought in from the cameras; the Village would get 60%. Glenn said there are no other fees except the 40% of the ticket revenue. On average, 100 tickets a month covers the costs. There is no cost to us for the program! They do have sample legislation available if we need it.

Chris Szell said we have one other company coming to Council on traffic cameras.

### **Department Updates:**

**Police Department:** Police Chief Brian Gregory reported on the fishing with a cop event on Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup>; it was a small turnout but a great day! There may have been 50 there.

The ODNR Step Outside grant has been awarded to our department, approved for \$500.00.

The mandated CPT training by the Attorney General's office will cover 100% reimbursement, or \$3,984.00 in training. Susan added that we will need legislation before Council to increase the appropriations and approve an advance from the General Fund.

The Hiram College school year has begun! There are a lot more students this year which will mean more parties and noise issues. Mr. Smith reported on a noise complaint; more discussion.

Hiram College amended their liquor license permit application to cover more areas on campus.

Brian reported on the storm damage Thursday night! Officer Hoskin worked overtime that night as well as our Fire Department out late cutting trees off the roads; they did a great job!

Mutual aid agreement; the Chief drew up a new one for Council to review. The last one we had passed in 2001. It will then be presented to Garrettsville, Mantua, Windham, Aurora, Geauga County Sheriff, Portage County Sheriff and the State Patrol.

Brian brought up an issue that was brought to his attention by campus safety who was planning on attending tonight's meeting. It was a complaint from AVI. Our Councilman Chris McCreight told AVI that the parking lot by the hike & bike trail is going to be put back to greenspace and that they can no longer park there! It is a public parking area that we share with the College. James felt because he is chair of the Park's Board; he felt he could address this directly to them. Paul said any one person on Council does not have the authority to make that determination. James told them unless something comes down from Council; they are allowed to park there. James looked into the original hike and bike trail grant; we planned on two parking lots but ran into unexpected cost overruns. We were unable to afford paving both parking areas and removed the one at 305 completely. James heard that Chris McCreight had also asked them to move their composting bins which were not on Village property. There needs to be a conversation with all of Council. The Mayor said when the original donation took place on the hike and bike trail from the College; we agreed to share that parking area. Chris Szell said as long as they are not parking there overnight; which was the issue. More discussion on the retention ponds located there. Chris Szell said he would speak with Chris McCreight.

**Fire Department:** Fire Chief Bill Byers reported he will have legislation for Council on the EMS grant award of \$2,975.00. This too will be an advance from the General Fund until received and reimbursed.

Bill commented on the recent storm damage, power outages and his personnel coverage.

**Village Adm/Utilities:** VA James McGee reported to Bill the breaker was turned off on the tornado siren because it was short cycling. Fire Department personnel had asked James to come in and do that.

The water meter system is down, the technician is coming in on Friday. We believe lightning.

The water tower ring is in and the cement poured for the base of the water tower.

There will be legislation for the ODOT two-year renewal for the state routes agreement.

James reported on the .gov; there are still some issues to iron out.

The application for the EPA composting facility has been submitted.

Chris Szell asked if the survey done for the light plant property has been recorded? Not yet, we just received the legal description. The final paperwork still needs signed off by Hiram College.

**Mayor:** The Mayor felt the Village was very lucky with the minimal storm damage that occurred.

The Mayor said the Solicitor Committee will need to meet; we have received a number of applicants. Susan said she had Wendelin make copies to pass out to the committee members for their review first and then we can set a meeting to review. Deadline for applicants was today at 4:00 pm.

**Fiscal Officer/Admin:** Susan Skrovan-DeYoung reported no unusual spending in the General Fund last month.

Middlefield Bank is holding our interest rate at 4.65% at this time. Lisa, bank manager, will try to have more information by Council. Chris Szell said STAR Ohio is at 5.65% for the annualized yield. Chris just does not want to see it drop below 4.65%. Susan provided prior year interest yields and our year-to-date interest. Beth Greenwood said prime is at 8.5%; banks are lending at 8.5% and businesses are borrowing at 10.5%.

Susan passed out copies of the spreadsheet that Steve Schuller put together on the prior year costs of legal fees by our Village Solicitor; fees have been very reasonable. Since 2018, costs have been \$4,550 or less! The Mayor said the County Prosecutor wanted \$10,000 a year!

**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.

**New Business:** None.

**Unfinished Business:** None.

**EMS Collections:** None.

The next Finance/Safety Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 26, 2023.

**Adjournment:** A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Spencer with a second from Mayor Bertrand. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:23 pm.

**Respectfully Submitted by:**

**Attest:**

  
Susan J. Skrovan-DeYoung, Fiscal Officer

  
Chris Szell, Finance Chairman