

Village of Hiram

Finance/Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

July 23, 2024

Call to Order: Chairman Chris Szell called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

Committee Members Present: Anne Haynam, Mayor
Chris Szell, Chairman
Beth Greenwood, Councilperson
David Smith, Councilman
Susan Skrovan-DeYoung, Fiscal Officer

Committee Members Absent: Justin Bisutti, Councilman

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

Others: None

Minutes: The Mayor asked to approve the 6/25/2024 meeting minutes as presented. A motion to approve the 6/25/2024 minutes was made by Mr. Smith with a second from Mrs. Greenwood. Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Agenda: The Mayor asked to approve the proposed agenda as presented. A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Mrs. Greenwood with a second from Mr. Smith. Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Guests/Public: None

Department Updates:

Police Department: Police Chief Brian Gregory had sent his report out to members. Brian was asked about the status of the speed camera violations and provided an update on how it is working.

Chris Szell asked if there were any questions on the liquor permit renewal paperwork that was sent around by the Assistant FO. Are there any issues with liquor permits? Brian said no.

Our MARCS radios are to be reprogrammed next year, the cost from VASU is \$3,521.74 for all his radios.

Fire Department: Fire Chief Bill Byers had sent his statistical report out to members. Finance members noticed that mutual aid was up for Troy Twp.

Finance members congratulated the Fire Department on the ARPA grant award for employee retention.

Village Adm/Utilities: VA Steve Schuller provided a verbal report to members. The volleyball court at Reign Hadsell park is almost completely leveled out and ready for posts. The water plant has been painted, doing some touch up and lighting work. Summer help is sealing the hike-n-bike trail.

Finance members asked about the light plant survey. Tim Lannon is trying to get a surveyor here. Steve said he has a video meeting with Ohio Edison tomorrow about that substation.

Steve was asked whether he heard anything more from Hiram Township about tying into our water system. Steve said no, he has not heard anything from them since Chris attended their township meeting.

Steve was asked to provide an update on the water tower. Steve said they came today and did some antenna work for Fire. He is waiting for the rest of the panel for the new SCADA system, which is a wireless system. The new system will run off an app and will notify our personnel of any issues; they can look at the system through the app. It is part of the water tower project at a cost of \$35,000, however, the savings on personnel time and the elimination of phone lines will be huge. It will also notify us if there is anything happening at the water tower, water wells and lift stations.

Mayor:

Mayor Anne Haynam was gathering some feedback on how the Village wants to move on cost of living increases this fall. She wanted to get a sense of when we do this and how often. Chris said typically the VA would provide us the information. Steve provided a simple spreadsheet by departments for full-time personnel only at this time. The Mayor indicated that some of our part-time staff currently are not as competitive as we would like. The current cola is 3.2% and would not be tied to merit-based increases. Steve said this has been brought up partly because of the changes coming in the employee handbook including the possibility of removing several paid days off. The Mayor wants more information by October on:

- When was the last cost of living increase?
- Calculate a spreadsheet for all full-time and part-time personnel

This way, we can have a sense of where we sit with all of this and how we move forward.

Fiscal Officer/Admin: Susan Skrovan-DeYoung provided a verbal report to members. Susan requested email addresses from all employees in order to sent their payroll EFT stubs electronically. They are starting to be received into her office. Susan is working on paying vendors by ACH as much as possible provided the vendor has the ability to accept electronic payments.

Susan did receive an email from Justin Bisutti regarding the talk to text software and is looking into that ability. The software app is Fireflies.ai.

Finance chair Chris Szell asked about the upcoming audit and the email received for the fraud reporting questionnaire. Susan said this is the first part of our audit which Council must fill out and return. Not everyone received the email; Chris will forward to all.

Bills List:

Bills list was reviewed. A motion to pay the bills was made by Mr. Smith with a second from Mayor Haynam. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

New Business:

a. Water Billing System: Members discussed the ongoing issues with our current water billing system which has two components; the Sensus metering system and the Tyler billing system. We had 57 “no reads” last month as well as at least a dozen bills that the system pulled the billing start date all the way back to the end of April. We had an antenna issue last summer that did not get totally fixed until December of 2023. We also have issues with adding new accounts and both systems not speaking to each other. This needs to be under one department to understand the entire process. The Village Administrator will be taking over for the August billing to consolidate. The VA will be the point person; he will make the best judgement. Members discussed the options of doing a full audit, waiting for customers to come forward with an issue or simply starting over in the billing system.

Finance members want to re-open the bill pay box in the Village entranceway. Contact those with letters and see what they should pay. The VA may try and rent a license from Tyler Technologies for two months. Members agreed to put it into one department.

b. Hiram Inn – hill safety: members discussed possible short-term fixes with options to close it or fence it at the top. What is the Villages liability for the sidewalk; the Mayor will check with our legal counsel. In our codified ordinances there are steps to take to address this; the VA can send a letter to Hiram College as well. The AMATS application for the intersection widening project does include improvements to the sidewalks.

c. Solar Installation ideas: Two ideas for locations were sent out by the Fiscal Officer which had been forwarded by our chairman Chris Szell originating from CT Consultants.

d. Other: Finance members discussed the college contract and a paid parking program. The striping of the parking areas is done. Any paid parking program would not start this year; it would probably be in January where it would be phased in with full implementation by fall. Council had tabled Ordinance 2023-24 on paid parking; it would not take three reads to get it passed. The Mayor will check with our legal counsel on the sunseting of this legislation. Chris Szell would like to target the most frequently used parking areas. Cost is \$3,500 start up fee and \$450.00 per month. There are 48 spots from Hinsdale to Peckham and another 185 spots elsewhere in the Village. Five of them would be only fifteen-minutes parking in front of the business district. Brown and Bancroft are variables; these could be excluded.

Old Business:

a. Res 2024-25 – Tax Levy for Emergency Services: Are we on schedule? The fiscal officer sent all of the required paperwork down to the Board of Elections the day after Council. She has not yet received an example of the ballot language from the BOE.

The next Finance/Safety Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 27, 2024.

Adjournment: A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mayor Haynam with a second from Mr. Smith. Motion passed unanimously 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:59 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Attest:


Susan J. Skrovan-DeYoung, Fiscal Officer


Chris Szell, Finance Chairman