

# Hiram Village Remote Video Conference Council Meeting

Rosser Municipal Building  
11617 Garfield Road, Hiram, Ohio 44234

May 11, 2021

The following Members of Council were present online: Mr. Dempsey, Mr. Greenwood, Mr. Hemphill, 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 and Village Administrator James McGee.

The following persons were present online: Stacy Turner with The Weekly Villager and Wendy with The Portager.

Mayor Bertrand called the regular meeting to order at 7:04 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 regular meeting minutes of 4/13/2021. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Szell. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.

Mayor asked for a motion to approve the proposed agenda. A motion to approve the proposed agenda as presented was made by Mr. Greenwood 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 was present to provide their monthly report.** There were 416 offense reports for April.

Starting July 1<sup>st</sup>, the State of Ohio is mandating new uniform traffic tickets. Our department started using them last month with quite a few issues.

There were no issues on voting day.

The Chief has made application to ODNR for their Step Outside Grant for the Cops and Kids fishing day event August 28<sup>th</sup>.

Click It or Ticket, the police department is not going to have this year other than to post banners.

Dave Smith asked the Police Chief about the cost of ammunition expenses. The costs look really high this year on the bill's list. Chief Gregory explained the Mantua Hardware bill was from last years order. However, ammunition costs have doubled! Usually we use about \$3,500 in ammunition; we have set only three range dates due to costs.

Chris Szell asked the Police Chief about the township issues on his report and whether they have been resolved. Brian said no; they have been out there six times. Every time they go, the dog is not out.

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**\*Fire Chief Bill Byers provided their monthly report for tonight.** The report was emailed to everyone.

Chief Byers reported on a recall for the Kiddie smoke detectors. The fear is that they will not work when needed.

Dave Smith asked about the mutual aid calls and felt there was abuse of our mutual aid to some neighboring communities; Garrettsville and Troy. Dave is not opposed to helping our community neighbors. Chief Bill Byers spoke about staffing issues all departments are facing right now. Chief Byers is working on the costs associated with mutual aid calls. We discussed in the past about implementing a billing fee for calls that are not truly mutual aid calls. Dave said Community EMS does charge Windham for mutual aid calls; we may need to look at that as well. More discussion followed. Chris Szell would like to see some numbers from the Chief around the mutual aid calls. Frank Hemphill would like to see those numbers brought to our next Finance/Safety Committee meeting.

**\*Village Administrator James McGee presented the monthly report.** James provided project updates. The Garfield Road watermain project now has construction signs out; they are removing vegetation and fire hydrants are ordered.

The water meter project is just getting ready to begin; documents are being sent out once the Mayor signs the contract.

The water tower project; costs of metal have gone up substantially! Some of the extra items they planned in the project have had to come out of the project. James proposes we apply for a grant to cover these extras like the pump and water pipe with the help from CT Consultants.

His department has been working on some drainage issues at the water plant.

The next round of the CARES Act funding and how best to spend it. Does Council want the department heads to get together to discuss the best use of these funds. The Mayor spoke about the Ohio Municipal League bulletin regarding the CARES Act Funds; it is 159 pages long and provides some direction. The Mayor spoke with our new County Commissioner, Tony Badalamente and he too felt it has been very confusing to everyone! \$31.5 million is going to Portage County! The Mayor felt it was premature to discuss how to spend it right now; we should be going back to having live meetings soon and Council can discuss it further then. Chris Szell said if we do plan to go back to live meetings and do not allow the public to attend live; can we use some of the COVID funds for technology for the public? Mike Greenwood asked about what is legal with the public attending by Zoom meetings only, would the rules permit it. Village Solicitor Tom Reitz said he was not sure and would look into it. Tom spoke about live meetings and who is vaccinated? Most Council members except Frank Hemphill have been vaccinated. The Mayor and department heads have been vaccinated. Frank was given information to go to the College for a vaccine.

## **MAYOR'S MAY 11, 2021 REPORT TO COUNCIL**

### **PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MEETING:**

On Tuesday, May 4, 2021 the Planning & Zoning Commission met to streamline and construct a user-friendly change to Hiram Village zoning procedures. This is due to the efforts of Council member CHRIS SZELL. The current application procedure for zoning permits and variances is antiquated and confusing. It is the hope of all that this project will be submitted to the P&Z Committee at its Tuesday June 1st meeting.

Pursuant to Section 1105.03 of the Hiram Village Zoning Code, the following members were reappointed: Willard Greenwood and Norm Christley. However, Norm's intention is to serve, if possible, month to month until a replacement can be found.

CAN ANY ON COUNCIL SUGGEST SOMEONE ABLE AND WILLING TO SERVE?

### **THE CDC COVID-19 REPORT AS OF TODAY:**

A. 32,571,814 U.S. Cases

Total Deaths: 579,366

Total Cases in the last 7 days: 266,299

Total with at least one vaccination: 153,448,316

Total Fully vaccinated: 116,576,359

**ODH COVID-19 NEWS:**

Total # of Cases: 1,085,733  
Number of Hospitalizations in Ohio: 57,545  
Number of ICU Admissions: 7,939  
Number of Deaths: 19,439

COVID -19 RELIEF FUNDS TO PORTAGE COUNTY FOR 2021 is: \$31,510,000  
COVID -19 RELIEF FUNDS TO GEauga COUNTY FOR 2021 is: \$18,160,000  
COVID -19 RELIEF FUNDS TO TRUMBULL COUNTY FOR 2021 is: \$38,400,000

gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov. Have questions about the mass vaccination clinics or need assistance scheduling an appointment? Call 1-833-4ASK-ODH/I- 833-427-5634 between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. for assistance.

**MAY 4, 2021 PRIMARY RESULTS IN HIRAM VILLAGE:**

There are 636 registered voters in Hiram Village. Total ballots cast in this election were 106, that is 16.67%. Portage County Children's Services additional tax levy passed by 96 to 9. Hiram Village Tax Levy renewal also passed 89 to 15. The proposed Crestwood Local SD Income Tax Levy vote was approved: 84 to 22, but lost district wide.

**MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE:**

- B. SPEAKER: ADMIRAL MICHAEL PARKS (USCG, RT)  
HON. TONY BADALAMENTI, PORTAGE COUNTY COMMISSIONER
- C. READING OF VETERANS NAMES: MAJ DEBRA BLAKE, RN (USA, RT)

Submitted by:  
MAYOR Lou BERTRAND

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

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

April Bank Reconciliation balanced with the UAN system with no adjusting factors and is available for signing by the Mayor and Council.  
Cash Summary by Fund as of April 30, 2021 was provided in Council e-Packets.  
List of bills as of May 7, 2021 was provided in Council e-Packets.  
Council Regular meeting minutes for April 13, 2021 were provided in Council by email on Monday.  
R.I.T.A. income tax receipts YTD report was provided in Council e-Packets.  
Comparison of Budgeted and Appropriated YTD report was provided in Council e-Packets.

Susan thanked the Hiram Village voters for approving the renewal of the 4.4 mil general operating levy!

Susan received a letter from the Board of Elections informing the Village that due to a change in Ohio law, future levies to be placed on the ballot can now be emailed to the BOE. Resolution of Necessity and Resolution to Proceed can be emailed. Deadlines must be adhered to. Election Petitions must still be taken in person to the BOE office.

The Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield health insurance renewed May 1. It looks like we should see a savings of about \$20,000 annually going to an HRA and a higher deductible with reimbursement by the Village.

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

Dave Smith asked James about his water/sewer monthly report and why our running balance has been going down. Is the plan to reduce our carryover balance. James explained they have had to replace some large pieces of equipment; there is a \$30,000 bill on the bill's list for the UV lighting, which was actually CARES Act funds. This still reflects in our overall report.

## **HIRAM TOWNSHIP REPORT**

No report.

## **LEGISLATION**

### **ORDINANCES**

**2021-06: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM'S EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK, SECTION 4.12. 2<sup>nd</sup> READING.** Chris Szell asked, other than the part-time fire personnel, are there any other part-time personnel getting reimbursed for their cell phone use. James said his water/sewer personnel are all full-time. Dave Smith said they discussed not having fire personnel in this legislation because they have cell phones to use during shifts. Dave asked who wrote in which personnel were eligible for reimbursement? Solicitor Reitz said he was the author of the legislation; however, he does not take any liberties with writing legislation and writes what he was told to write. Fire Chief Bill Byers spoke as far as for him; this would not be applicable. He could not speak for his assistant Fire Chief. Paul Spencer asked how this would be paid; from the General Fund or from department budgets or hasn't that been determined. Susan said it has not yet been determined. As far as she knows, it would come from the General Fund. More discussion followed. Solicitor Tom Reitz will amend the personnel for the fire department to cover only the Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief.

**2021-07: AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 911.22 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM TO IMPOSE CODE REQUIREMENTS ON NOISE PRODUCED BY EXCAVATIONS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH OTHER NOISE REGULATIONS WITHIN THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM. 1<sup>st</sup> READING.** Paul Spencer asked about excluding Sundays; that is not relevant today. Chief Brian Gregory agreed; we should include Sundays from 8:00 am to 9:00 pm.

**2021-08: AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A RATE OF COMPENSATION FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS AND MAYOR OF THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2022. 1<sup>st</sup> READING.** The Mayor compared Hiram with Boston Heights; workloads have increased substantially!

### **RESOLUTIONS**

**2021-11: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPLICATION FOR AND SUBSEQUENT ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDS BY THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM FROM THE HIRAM COMMUNITY TRUST. 2<sup>nd</sup> READING.** A motion to suspend the rules was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Dempsey. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor. A motion to approve on second reading was made by Mr. Hemphill and seconded by Mr. Szell. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

Village Administrator James McGee asked for a motion to approve the Park Board submitting a grant application to the Hiram Community Trust.

**A motion to approve the actions of the Hiram Park Board in submitting a grant application to the Hiram Community Trust was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Hemphill. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. Greenwood. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm.

These minutes are pending approval by Council.

  
Mayor Lou Bertrand

ATTEST:

  
Fiscal Officer Susan J. Skrovan