

# Hiram Village Remote Video Conference Special Council Meeting

11617 Garfield Road, Hiram, Ohio 44234

September 29, 2020

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 online: Mayor Lou Bertrand, Village Administrator James McGee, Fiscal Officer Susan Skrovan, Assistant Village Administrator Steven Schuller, Police Chief Brian Gregory, Fire Chief Bill Byers and Assistant Fire Chief Jason Groselle.

Others present online: Ed Frato-Sweeney, Crystal Teicher and Tom Bollenbacher.

Mayor Bertrand called the special meeting to order at 6:05 pm. The purpose of this special meeting is to discuss the CARES Act Funds, approve legislation and any other business that may properly come before Council.

The Mayor led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

The Mayor asked for a motion to approve the proposed agenda. A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Spencer. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.

**2020-20: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS IN THE NEW SPECIAL REVENUE FUND (2151) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** A motion to suspend the rules was made by Mr. Greenwood and seconded by Mr. Spencer. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor. A motion to approve as an emergency was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Dempsey. The Mayor asked if there were any comments or questions on the legislation or from the public. Crystal Teicher spoke up and then said she had nothing to say. She then stated that these Zoom meetings are difficult to use and felt the Village had a real problem with WiFi and cellular services! She signed off. Chris Szell said he has lived here for 13 years and has never had any problem with the WiFi or cellular service. Paul Spencer called the question. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.

**2020-21: AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH A POLICY AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL HAZARD PAY FROM THE CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR EMPLOYEES WHO ARE SUBJECT TO WORKING IN HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS DURING A DECLARED STATE OF EMERGENCY AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** A motion to suspend the rules was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Szell. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor. A motion to approve as an emergency was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Szell. Paul Spencer stated these emergency funds are not to be used for bonuses and not for wages that would normally be paid out anyway! More discussion. Paul felt the funds could be used for communication equipment; especially for Police & Fire. Police Chief Brian Gregory said he called the Auditor and the State Auditor on this issue. They told him it must be COVID related. The Chief felt that everything we do could be considered COVID related, even reading water meters! Office workers are exposed daily by walk-in residents and sales reps. Service workers exposed during their daily work. Chief Gregory said even though, as Solicitor Reitz has stated, we cannot use other departments as an example, others around the State are using hazard pay by giving an increase on their hourly rate. Paul said it is not to be used as a bonus. Department heads said it is not being used that way. Chief Brian Gregory said no one has a clear-cut answer. More discussion on how to pay out the hazard pay to employees. Department heads felt the most accurate way would be with an hourly rate paid for hours worked during the COVID-19 Pandemic period. A motion to amend the legislation that the hazard pay is in addition to their base salaries/wages and set the per hour rate of \$1.25 per hour for all five departments was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Szell. Chief Bill Byers spoke on the special meeting the department heads held to discuss the CARES Act funds and items each department would want to purchase and how much would be left to cover hazard pay. He did not want to see the hazard pay go over the amount we have available once everything else is purchased.

The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor. A motion to approve Ordinance 2020-21 as amended was made by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Dempsey. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor.

Public: Ed Frato-Sweeney wanted to mention to Council that they are going to set up an online candidate's night on October 8, 2020 at 7:00 pm. The Zoom link will be on their website.

Ed also wanted to mention that Hiram College announced they would be going virtual with classes during the holidays. Students will be home at Thanksgiving and back the second week of January.

Chris Szell will follow up with Ms. Crystal Teicher to see what issues she had concerning the last meeting.

Rob Dempsey said Council should discuss Trick or Treat. Paul thought the CDC cancelled all trick or treat activities. Chief Brian Gregory said the Ohio Health Department said last week that it would be up to each individual community to make that decision. Rob Dempsey said most of the communities around us are having trick or treat. The Mayor said he would ask our Assistant Fiscal Officer, Wendelin, to take a poll on what other communities are doing in Portage County. Ed Frato-Sweeney said Hiram College would not be having their community trick or treat event this year as well as their haunted quad. A decision will be made on October 13.

A motion to adjourn the special meeting was made by Mr. Greenwood and seconded by Mr. Szell. The result of the voice vote was 6-0 in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:41 pm.

These minutes are pending approval by Council.

  
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Mayor Lou Bertrand

ATTEST:

  
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Fiscal Officer Susan J. Skrovan