On Tuesday, March 8th, 2022 at 6:00PM, Mayor Fries-Seip opened the Council meeting with a word of prayer, and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited by those present.

The regular meeting for the Council of the Village of Monroeville was then called to order.

Present at roll call: Chris Raftery and: Melissa Fries-Seip, Mayor

 Sue Rogers Bonnie Beck, Fiscal Officer

 Bob Whitacre Tom Gray, Village Administrator

 Joe Galea Jim Barney, Solicitor

Also attending: Chief Gary Lyons, Lieutenant Troy Kimball, Jeff Pean, Al and Sally Petrie and Brad Lapp.

The February 2022 financial reports and bank reconciliations were previously distributed to Council via e-mail.

**EXCUSAL OF COUNCIL MEMBER**

Craig Franklin had previously notified Bonnie that he would be unable to attend the meeting. Bob Whitacre made a motion to excuse Craig Franklin from the meeting, seconded by Sue Rogers. Motion carried with no discussion.

**PROCLAMATION FOR JEFF PEAN**

The Mayor presented a proclamation to Jeff Pean of Pean’s Pizza, for the thirty-five years of business he has given to the community and its neighbors and thanked Jeff for his dedication and hospitality.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mayor Fries-Seip asked for Council’s approval of the agenda. Joe Galea made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried with no discussion.

**DISPOSITION OF MINUTES**

Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Bob Whitacre, to approve the minutes as presented from the February 8th, and March 3rd, 2022 Council meetings. Motion carried with no discussion.

**APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to approve the February 2022 financial reports as presented. Motion carried with no discussion.

**APPROVAL OF THE MONTHLY CREDIT CARD REPORT**

Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Bob Whitacre, to approve the February 2022 credit card report as presented. Motion carried with no discussion.

**OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS COUNCIL**

Al Petrie, treasurer of the Monroeville Model Railroad Group, said he and Brad Lapp (vice president) are attending the meeting on behalf of the railroad group. Mr. Petrie extended an invitation to the public for a free open house that is scheduled for 4/24/22. Mr. Petrie discussed the commercial base rate that the group is currently paying for water, sewer and electric. Their primary source of income is their membership dues. Mr. Petrie and Mr. Lapp asked general questions in regards to meters and consumption and Bonnie responded accordingly. They asked if they are paying the commercial rate and Bonnie verified, noting that the Village has two billing rates, one for residential, and or for non-residential, which is classified as commercial. Mr. Petrie advised their business is not open to the public daily and they have one bathroom. Mr. Petrie asked if discussion can be had to add a third billing rate, as he feels what they are paying is too high for minimal usage. Mr. Petrie asked for the procedure in regards to disconnecting the water and sewer service. Bonnie went over the process and fee amounts for disconnection and reconnection. Mr. Lapp asked how to get the ball rolling on a possible third rate for billing. The Mayor advised that Council would need to research and discuss further. Bonnie added that John Courtney would need to be part of that discussion.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

***Administrator –*** Tom Gray presented his report that was in Council’s packet. He asked for Council’s approval to hire Colton Ott as a full-time Electric Department line worker at $15.00 an hour, effective 3/14/22. Tom discussed the contract with North Central EMS (NCEMS) and provided follow-up information in regards to the prior presentation from NCEMS Director Ashley Ballah. Jim spoke in regards to the contract that NCEMS has with Ridgefield Township. Jim advised it will be up to Council to decide if they want to renew the contract with NCEMS or not. Tom said NCEMS needs adequate housing in Monroeville when the truck is here. Housing has been discussed with the HRJFD but talks haven’t been successful. Bob stated he still doesn’t understand what the Village is paying for in the contract and that Ashley has never provided a sufficient answer to that question. Tom advised the best option is to have another discussion with Ashley and make sure that all questions are sufficiently answered as well as determine what future costs will be. Bob asked if Ridgefield Township can be involved in that discussion. Tom advised no. Tom asked for Council’s permission to enter into discussions with NCEMS as soon as possible to go over where we are today, where we are going in the future and the cost structure. Tom advised of the new CDL requirements as of 2/7/22. Individuals are now required to have forty hours of dedicated, classroom training, as well as fifty-four hours behind the wheel, plus field testing. The cost range is anywhere from $4,000.00 to $6,300 for classroom training plus fees. Jim advised that the new requirements became effective 2/7/22; however, it doesn’t become effective in the states until the states themselves pass regulations. Ohio’s regulations don’t go into effect until March 24th. If the Village can get employees temporarily licensed by March 24th, they wouldn’t need to go through the new regulations. After March 24th, there are no exceptions. The Village should be fine in regards to the two new employees, Isaiah Scheid and Colton Ott. Tom spoke about the upcoming July 4th holiday in regards to fireworks. Jim had previously prepared legislation for the Village of Milan that placed restrictions on fireworks being shot off. A copy of that legislation was presented to Council and Chief Lyons for consideration to see if the same restrictions and/or time limits should be in place for the Village of Monroeville. The Mayor advised this can be discussed at the next work session and verified with Jim that the new law goes into effect 7/1/22. Tom addressed one more issue that wasn’t included in his agenda. Don Clark’s vacation time has been rolled over more than once. Don currently has 146 unused vacation hours and 184 new vacation hours will be effective on his anniversary date in April 2022. Tom proposed taking the unused 146 vacation hours and doing a one-time pay-out of $4,451.55. There was a sewer line collapse on Manchester Street. An oil purchase ban was put in place with Russia. Nuclear fuel that is used by several companies in the United States comes from Russia. Coal generation is up 38.9% from a year ago as it’s more competitive than natural gas on a cost per kilowatt hour. Natural gas is becoming short in supply. It’s down 12.8% from a year ago, in the United States. There is a lot in play with energy as a whole among the Ukrainian conflict.

***Fiscal Officer*** – Bonnie presented her report that was in Council’s packet. Additional money will need added to four purchase orders. One is for the repair of the digger derrick truck for $5,132.00, Buckeye State Pipe for $5,000.00, an increase of $4,000.00 to cover any other water leaks as leaks have been numerous this year, and $15,000.00 for RA Bores for the sewer line work on Manchester Street. Chris Raftery made a motion to approve the increase for the purchase orders, seconded by Sue Rogers. Motion carried with no discussion. Bonnie recommended amending the Purchasing Policy in regards to eliminating having to wait to do repairs on vehicles and equipment for over $2500.00. It’s not a purchase. It’s maintenance and sometimes there are emergency repairs that need to be done before the purchase order can be approved. Bonnie would like to be able to move forward with maintenance repairs before getting Council’s approval of the purchase order. Chris Raftery made a motion to accept the modification to the purchasing policy, seconded by Bob Whitacre. Motion carried with no discussion. There is a sewer excusal that needs discussed and another will be forthcoming soon. The excusal requested is $723.16 to be excused from the sewer portion of the resident’s bill for account 03\*988\*4. Chris Raftery made the motion to accept that sewer excusal, seconded by Sue Rogers. Motion caried with no discussion. Training for Administrative Office personnel will be $965.00 for Bonnie Beck and Heather Alicea for 2022. Sue Rogers made a motion to accept those training expenses, seconded by Joe Galea. Motion passed with no discussion. Elisa Brown from Old Soul Woodworking is interested in having a food truck. This will be discussed at the next work session. Twist-n-Shout recently changed owners and the Mayor suggested doing a proclamation for their fifteen years of service. Council was provided with a copy of the letter from Berry Global’s payment representative in regards to the request to waive the $10,000.00 late fee on Berry Global’s utility bill. Discussion. Chris recommended making a one-time exception in regards to the request for the late fee waiver. Joe Galea advised he is saying no. It’s different when a large business is being discussed and Tom pointed out the same the last time this was discussed. If Berry themselves were to come to Council, it would be a different scenario in regards to bearing a certain amount of risk with those kinds of mistakes being made. When a one-time exception is made, that one-time exception can turn into more, especially when a residential customer has the same request. Joe Galea made a motion to deny the request for late fee waiver, seconded by Sue Rogers. Chris Raftery voted nay. The rest of Council voted yay. Motion passed with no discussion. Bonnie will contact the payment representative on 3/9/22 to advise. Bonnie advised Council has until the end of the month to make a decision for the RFQ proposals for casualty and liability insurance. The Village has a good working relationship with our current provider. Bob Whitacre made a motion to accept the proposal from Ohio Plan and the increase for the Cyber coverage, seconded by Chris Raftery. Motion carried with no discussion. ***Police*** – Chief Lyons presented his report that was in Council’s packet. There is a hearing scheduled 3/24/22 for GATSO citations and ten claimants are scheduled to appear. There was an article in the Norwalk Reflector stating that the Ohio Collaborative shows Monroeville Police Department (MPD) has become certified and that was premature. MPD has been given provisional certification. A representative from the collaborative will be visiting the MPD in two weeks for an inspection and at that time certification should be given. Jim advised the opioid settlement money will filter down with 15% to the individual municipalities, 35% goes to the State and 55% goes to the rest of the municipalities. Jim explained the trickle-down system between regions. There may be an opportunity for someone from Monroeville to sit on the local board and that would be a good idea. The Mayor asked how and when would this member need to be established and what does Jim recommend. Jim advised he is unaware at this time and that whoever is interested could advocate as we are all on the same page, whether it’s a member of the community or Administration/Council. Joe Galea expressed interest.

***Mayor –*** The Mayor asked for a motion in regards to the pay-out on Don Clark’s 146 unused vacation hours and doing a one-time pay-out of $4,451.55. Bob Whitacre made that motion, seconded by Chris Raftery. Motion carried with no discussion. The Mayor asked for a motion to accept the hiring of Colton Ott as a full-time Electric Department line worker at $15.00 per hour, effective date 3/14/22. Sue Rogers made that motion, seconded by Joe Galea. Motion carried with no discussion. Since there are only four Council members present, emergency legislation cannot be passed. The Mayor advised a special meeting will need scheduled before the next work session. Bonnie asked for a Finance Committee meeting to be scheduled a week before that since budget items need addressed. The Finance Committee meeting will be 3/22/22 and the special meeting followed by a work session will be 3/29/22. The newsletter is coming up and the Mayor asked Joe to prepare something for himself as a new Council member. The deadline for article submission is 3/18/22.

**BOARD & COMMITTEE REPORTS**

***HURON RIVER JOINT FIRE DISTRICT –*** Bob Whitacre provided an update per the HRJFD meeting that was held on 3/2/22. There were fourteen calls in February 2022. The new tanker truck will be arriving next month and the pumper is being worked on.

***FINANCE COMMITTEE*** – Chris Raftery provided an update per the Finance Committee meeting that was held on 2/15/22. Good attendance and good discussion were had.

**APPROVAL OF BILL SUMMARY**

Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Bob Whitacre, to approve the bill summary as presented. Motion carried with no discussion. The summary includes memo expenses and check # 043915 to # 043998, for a total of $221,744.98.

**COUNCIL BUSINESS**

Joe Galea went over his telephone call with Tom Gray and Senator Manning in regards to grant allocation for the State. Economic growth, development and diversification are the goals for the Village of Monroeville and the Village is on Senator Manning’s radar in regards to reaching these goals. Senator Manning is scheduled for a visit to this area. Jim advised there are two bills before the House Committee that are an offensive infringement on local governments rights, which would be good to bring up to Senator Manning. The first puts limits on what the local municipalities can do in regards to income tax collection and the second is the outright banning of local municipalities ability to regulate short-term rentals.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Bob Whitacre, to adjourn to executive session to discuss the sale or purchase of real property. Motion carried with no discussion. The meeting adjourned to executive session at 7:50 PM and reconvened at 8:10 PM.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other business to come before them, Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Bob Whitacre, to adjourn. Motion carried with no discussion. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

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 Heather Alicea, Administrative Spec.

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Melissa M. Fries-Seip, Mayor

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