

On Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at 6:00 PM, Mayor Joseph Galea 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: Joseph Galea, Mayor
Mark Miller	Tom Gray, Village Administrator
Sue Rogers	Bonnie Beck, Fiscal Officer
Tammy Schlachter	Heather Alicea, Administrative Specialist
Bob Whitacre	Jim Barney, Solicitor
Sam Wiley	Jon Earl, Chief of Police

Also attending: Electric Superintendent Dave Hamons, Phil Wheeler from the Attica Hub, and Cindy Wilson.

The August 2024 financial reports, bank statements, balance sheets, check reports, and bank reconciliations were previously distributed to Council via e-mail.

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Mayor asked for Council's approval of the agenda. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Sam Wiley, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried with no discussion.

#### **DISPOSITION OF MINUTES**

The Mayor asked Council for a motion to approve the minutes from the regular Council meeting on 8/13/24. Chris Raftery made that motion, seconded by Tammy Schlachter. Motion carried with no discussion.

#### **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS**

The Mayor asked Council for a motion to approve the August 2024 financial reports. Chris Raftery made that motion, seconded by Sue Rogers. Motion carried with no discussion.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE MONTHLY CREDIT CARD REPORT**

The Mayor asked Council for a motion to approve the August 2024 credit card report. Sam Wiley made that motion, seconded by Tammy Schlachter. Motion carried with no further discussion.

#### **OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL**

Cindy Wilson spoke in regards to the sidewalk in front of her mother, Marlene Wilson's, home. She thanked Council for having someone from the Village remove the cold patch that was previously placed on the sidewalk and putting down concrete patch instead. Cindy said the concrete patch is now busting up and she asked what the Village is going to do, as her original sidewalk complaint was lodged 120 days ago. Cindy received the letter from Bonnie Beck that verifies per the Ohio Revised Code (ORC), the property owner is responsible for sidewalk repairs. Cindy said her mother didn't create the problem with the sidewalks, the Village's trees caused the problem. Cindy understands that home owners are responsible for maintaining the sidewalks but it's the Village's responsibility to maintain them when the Village plants the trees. Cindy said there are many residents in Monroeville that are in the same predicament. Cindy asked if the Village would assume some of the sidewalk repair cost if she and her mother found someone to make sidewalk repairs. Cindy reminded Council that when her mother previously objected to the trees being cut down on Broad Street, she was told it was none of her business and that the trees belonged to the Village. Tom said letters are scheduled to go out to property owners tomorrow, whose portion of the sidewalk the Village completed a sidewalk survey on. Marlene Wilson is one of those property owners. The letter addresses the leveling that can be done to mitigate the uneven surface. The leveling contractor said the leveling would provide enough compensation to overcome the fact that the tree roots have pushed the sidewalk panels out of alignment. The letter also advises that the Village is offering leveling services at the price quoted by Buckeye Leveling, to the property owner, and it will be the property owner's choice to accept the cost. If the property owner chooses to seek private repairs, it's at their expense. The letter doesn't address the ongoing problem of tree roots, whether it be from the curb lawn trees or from privately owned trees that have encroached the sidewalk area. Sue asked Tom if he obtained a quote as to how much the leveling will cost. Tom said the cost was included in a prior report sent to Council, but he believes the total cost was upwards of \$7000. Bonnie said every person receiving a letter has a different cost, as they have different sections of the sidewalk that need to be leveled. Sam verified that the prior report sent to Council showed a quote of \$9480. Bonnie advised Cindy that when her mother receives the letter, she has 30-days to reply. Cindy asked if the Village is going to assume any of the cost. Bonnie said no. Bonnie also explained that the tree roots are not the

responsibility of the Village. Cindy asked Bonnie why the trees were planted in the first place. Bonnie said Cindy is asking the wrong person. Cindy repeated that her mother was previously told by the Village that it was none of her business as to why two of the trees on Broad Street were cut down and two were replanted. Cindy said if the trees belong to the Village, then the Village needs to assume some of the responsibility. Cindy said she believes there are at least 9 locations in the Village that need leveling work. Bonnie explained that the locations in the letters are from the initial investigation that was done. Tom said that 34 locations were looked at and the locations were culled down to the repairs that need done more expeditiously to start with. The Village also needs to see if the leveling will allow us to retain the concrete panels and see what it will do for restoration of those areas. Cindy said this is making residents guinea pigs. Cindy asked if her Mother can ask the Village to remove the trees on Prospect Street, including stump removal, like the Village recently did on Broad Street. Bonnie said the Village has taken trees down at that location previously, per the property owner's request. Bonnie said if Marlene has a request, it can be taken to the Shade Tree Commission for review. Cindy asked if it's the Village's responsibility if a tree on private property comes down during a storm and blocks the sidewalk. The Mayor said he believes it's the homeowner's responsibility. Cindy said last month there was a storm and a tree on private property came down across the sidewalk and into the road on State Route 99. The Village removed it from the road and from the resident's private property, and they cut the tree up for the resident. Cindy asked if she can have the same courtesy extended to her Mother's trees. Tom explained in that particular situation, it was an emergency restoration of electric service to the Village. It was also a safety hazard with the downed tree encroaching the sidewalk and the road. ODOT gave the Village permission to remove the tree because they would not come to the Village and remove it. The Mayor added that he doesn't think the Village addressing that kind of emergency obligates the Village to remove a tree for Cindy's mother. Cindy said the Village plays favorites. Cindy said her mother's sidewalk is as much of a hazard as the downed tree that occurred. Tom explained that the tree trunk and the tree proper were laying on the primary line. The only way to safely remove the tree from the line was to come up on private property, with the owner's permission, and cut the tree trunk into several sections. Most of what they removed was in the road. The rest of the tree was cut into chunks, which the property owner was then going to take care of. Had the Village not done the restoration, the primary wires wouldn't have been able to go back up in the air. Cindy said she still has her opinion and she thinks it's terrible that she's been led on for over four months. Cindy expressed her disgust for the Village and said the Village needs to fix the sidewalks that the trees have ruined. Cindy said the Village needs to make it clear to the property owners that they are responsible for the trees that they request be planted in the tree lawn. Cindy exited the meeting at 6:22pm.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

**Administrator** - Tom presented his report that was previously submitted to Council. Tom asked for Council's approval to promote Colton Ott to a grade 2, year 3, Apprentice Line Worker, with the acknowledgement of his successful completion of the American Municipal Power Basic 2 Line Worker Training, at a new rate of \$26 per hour. Tom said Electric Superintendent Dave Hamons is here tonight in support of Colton Ott. Tom said Colton has been a valued employee since he walked into the Electric Division. Colton is quick to learn and he represents the values of the Village and its services. Tammy asked Tom if we are still on task this year for the water tower located in the Industrial Park. Tom said we are debating whether the expenditure should be made this year to clean the tower. The inspection will still take place. Bonnie said the expenditure is part of the set-asides. Tom asked for Council's approval to extend Dustin Crabtree's medical leave, due to extenuating circumstances surrounding the birth of his child. Dave spoke in support of Colton Ott and said he couldn't ask for a better trainee than Colton Ott. Sam Wiley made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to promote Colton Ott to a grade 2, year 3, Apprentice Line Worker. Heather asked if this is at the rate of \$26 per hour and Council verified. Heather asked for the effective date. Tom advised 9/9/24. Motion carried with no further discussion. Sam Wiley asked if Dustin Crabtree's extended sick leave could be covered by FMLA. Bonnie said no, as the Village doesn't have enough employees to offer FMLA. Tammy Schlachter made a motion, seconded by Chris Raftery, to approve Dustin Crabtree's extended sick time leave. Motion carried with no further discussion.

**Fiscal Officer** - Bonnie presented her report that was previously submitted to Council. Bonnie asked Council to write off utility account 02.604.4, at a cost of \$198.32. The owner of the residence passed away and the granddaughter took ownership right away, and it wasn't her utility bill to pay. Sam Wiley made that motion, seconded by Tammy Schlachter. Motion carried with no discussion. Bonnie spoke about water meter read issues with the Monroeville Local Schools MAC building. Don Clark indicated to Bonnie that he is changing the way the reading is being done. Unfortunately, the meter can't be automated and has to be read by a person. The school was overcharged for 4 months, for water and sewer. Bonnie asked for Council's approval to reimburse the school for the amount they overpaid. Chris Raftery made that motion, seconded by Tammy Schlachter. Bob asked if the school still has a meter that they don't pay sewer on. Bonnie verified, and said it's to water the football field. Motion carried. After the motion was carried, Phil Wheeler asked for the amount that was excused. Bonnie advised \$2814 for water use and \$4759 for sewer use. No further discussion. Bonnie asked for Council's approval to increase the threshold amount for requisitions, which is currently set at \$2500, due to increasing costs and increasing emergency

requisitions. Bonnie asked Council to approve increasing the requisition threshold to \$5000, and anything over that threshold would have to be submitted to Council for approval. Chris Raftery made that motion, seconded by Sue Rogers. Motion carried with no discussion. Bonnie thanked Council for their support in hiring Ashley Hankins for the Administrative Office. Ashley started her employment last week and is doing great. Bonnie asked Council for a formal motion to approve hiring Ashley Hankins, with the effective date retroactive to 9/3/24, at \$15 per hour, as a part-time employee. Sam Wiley made that motion, seconded by Tammy Schlachter. Motion carried with no further discussion. Mark asked if Ashley will eventually be full-time and Bonnie verified. Bonnie asked for Council's approval to accept the Drug-Free Workplace Policy that was previously presented to Council. Jim Barney reviewed it and Bonnie made the changes that Jim recommended. The Mayor said that Chief Earl also reviewed the policy and had some comments/suggestions. The Mayor asked Bonnie if Council can wait for another meeting to approve the policy, and take into consideration what Chief Earl had commented on. Bonnie said her report is due 9/28/24, so she was hoping to get the policy approved tonight. Bonnie asked if Chief's suggestions could be reviewed now, as the policy could be amended and still be approved tonight. Chief commented on the wording regarding legal drug use, which indicates that any medications that the employee is taking would need to be approved in order for the employee to report to work. For example, Chief has a cold right now and if he took something for that, it would have to be reported in order for him to report to work. Chief asked if that section can be modified as a Schedule 1-5, showing narcotics listings, prescribed medications that are legal, etc. There was also language in reference to defining who are considered "safety sensitive employees" in regards to selection for random drug testing. Chief asked if that can be changed to all Village of Monroeville employees, rather than just "safety sensitive employees". Bonnie explained that Council can pass the policy tonight as amended, in order for Jim to include the modifications that Chief is suggesting. Once that is done, Bonnie will give the Mayor and Council the final draft before she sends it to OBWC. Council agreed with Chief's suggestions. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Chris Raftery, to approve the Drug-Free Workplace Policy, as amended, in order to include Chief Earl's recommendations. Motion carried with no discussion. Jim asked how Council wants to define "safety sensitive" employees. Bonnie suggested looking at the language in the ARPA grant to see which employees are safety sensitive. Chief asked if that can just be changed to "all Village of Monroeville employees" to make it easier. Council agreed. Mark asked who makes the decision to send an employee based on probable suspicion. Bonnie advised it would be brought to the attention of the Village Administrator and/or the Chief of Police, depending on which department the employee worked in. Chief and Tom verified they both have taken training on probable suspicion.

**Police** – Chief Earl presented his report that was previously submitted to Council. After Chief's report went out, Chief received a letter of resignation from part-time Officer Kyle Sheehan, effective 9/22/24. Chief asked Council for a motion to accept Officer Sheehan's resignation. The Mayor asked Chief to speak in regards to a domestic situation that recently occurred in the Village. The victims had come into the PD and said that the suspect was going to cause an incident and would start a fight with the PD, and that he had swords and knives available in the basement of the home. The victims were afraid it would turn bad for the PD. Chief Earl had the Columbus SRT team on standby, but the Chief and his officers were able to take the suspect into custody with no issues. The County also responded with two detectives and a Sargeant. Chief Earl advised he is ALICE certified and oversaw active shooter training with Monroeville Local Schools. The Mayor asked Chief if he would like to advertise for a part-time officer. Chief verified. Sam Wiley made that motion, seconded by Mark Miller. Motion carried with no discussion. Sam asked what Chief thinks of the staffing levels in the PD. Chief said he believes it would take a lot of part-time officers to fill the role of a full-time officer, if a full-time officer were to be on leave. The PD potentially has a full-time officer that may be going out for surgery. Chief is concerned with the training levels of the part-time officers, and what they've witnessed. For example, Chief had a part-time officer with him during the recent domestic violence occurrence. That officer had never handled anything like that before, and the full-time officers here haven't handled many of those situations either. Chief is working with the Mayor to see about having trainings conducted and getting the officers up to speed on handling these kinds of calls. Sam asked if the staffing level is appropriate. Chief said he thinks we need to hire another part-time employee and he would love to see a full-time school resource officer as well, one that could help on the street when needed. As he has said before, when an officer is in the school, the school is going to pay for them and when the officer is on the street, the Village is going to pay for them. That's a good way to handle things, financially speaking. Chris asked if a decision has been made regarding the old police cruiser. Chief said from what he has been told, the cruiser is unsafe to drive. If we could donate it, it would be great. Sam Wiley made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to accept part-time Officer Kyle Sheehan's resignation, effective 9/22/24. Motion carried with no further discussion.

**Solicitor** – Jim Barney had no information to present. The Mayor asked for a status of GATSO citations. Jim said it hasn't been decided as to how to collect from non-payers. A discussion will need to be had with Bonnie, Mayor, Council and the Chief. Chief said he had recent training with GATSO staff, and he would love to sit down with everyone and have a discussion about the non-payers. The Mayor asked Jim if there's been any progress with the receiver and payment from the bitcoin miners. Jim said we've had several discussions with the receiver and his staff. We've had discussions with a company that wants to mine in

the Industrial Parkway, in order to make the Village whole/ That entity wants to build up the bitcoin mining and get more energy than we originally planned. Jim said it has the potential to be very profitable for the utilities. Jim said we are making progress. The receiver is a very energetic and a talkative person. The receiver may not always give a realistic idea of when things are going to happen, so we're learning to take what he says to be true, but perhaps not on the timeline that he says it. We're moving in the right direction. The Mayor explained to Council that the Village had entered into an agreement with Gray Matter Data for bitcoin mining, which uses a lot of electricity. There's been a lot of chicanery that has occurred with Gray Matter Data and they owe the Village a lot of money for electrical usage. Tom, Jim, Bonnie, John Courtney, and outside counsel John Coyle, have worked hard to make sure the Village gets paid for the electric usage. Judge Conway has been appointed the receiver over the operations. The money is there, we just have to make sure it gets paid to the Village. Jim said Gray Matter owes a lot of people a lot of money and they didn't pay anyone as it turns out. The receiver's sole responsibility is to the Village.

**Mayor** – The Mayor said that he spoke with members of the Village Flea. The mural they paid to have created is close to completion. They would like to get it installed by fall, and if not, storage is available. The Mayor said he would like to nail down an agreement between the Village, the building owners where the MMRG is housed and the Village Flea members in regards to Village accepting the donation of the mural and taking ownership of the artwork. The building owners would give the Village permission to mount the mural on their building. If something happens and we take the mural off the building, the building owners wouldn't be responsible for removing it. The Mayor wants those involved to come to a meeting and answer questions, if Council is willing to entertain the idea. The Mayor suggested holding a work session later this month to further discuss it, along with any other business that comes before Council. The Mayor said the building location where MMRG is housed isn't the only option, but is a good option in regards to traffic coming into the Village. Sam asked if the Village is liable if the artwork does damage to the building. The Mayor said that would have to be discussed as part of the agreement. Janotta & Herner is doing the installation, so they may be able to provide some kind of warranty.

#### **BOARD AND COMMISSION REPORTS**

H.R.J.F.D.: Bob Whitacre reported that the H.R.J.F.D. met on 9/4/24. There were 7 calls in August, 2 of which were in the Village. The new truck was finished and during the pickup inspection, a handful of issues were found. Those issues have to be corrected and then the truck should be delivered to the fire department building next week.

#### **ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS FOR PASSAGE**

The Mayor asked for a motion to suspend the rules for the following legislation. Sue Rogers made that motion, seconded by Chris Raftery. Motion carried with no discussion.

**Ordinance 2024-18** *An Ordinance repealing section 1(a) of Ordinance 2024-06 regarding the fund establishment for the transfer and accumulation of resources for unused sick and vacation leave for the General Fund, and declaring an emergency* was presented for passage. Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Sam Wiley, to pass Ordinance 2024-18 by title only. Motion carried with no discussion.

**Ordinance 2024-19** *An Ordinance declaring the necessity of constructing, leveling, or repairing sidewalks for the Village of Monroeville, Ohio, and declaring an emergency* was presented for passage. Sam Wiley made a motion, seconded by Tammy Schlachter, to pass Ordinance 2024-19 by title only. Motion carried with no discussion.

**Ordinance 2024-20** *An Ordinance amending or supplementing certain funds for appropriations Ordinance no. 2024-02, and declaring an emergency* was presented for passage. Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Tammy Schlachter, to pass Ordinance 2024-20 by title only. Motion carried with no discussion.

**Resolution 2024-28** *A Resolution authorizing the Fiscal Officer to transfer funds from the General Fund to the Sidewalk Capital Project Fund for the purpose of the 2024 sidewalk project construction or repairs, and declaring an emergency* was presented for adoption. Sam Wiley made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to adopt Resolution 2024-28 by title only. Motion carried with no discussion.

**Resolution 2024-29** *A Resolution accepting the amounts and rates as determined by the Budget Commission and authorizing the necessary tax levies and certifying them to the County Auditor, and declaring an emergency* was presented for adoption. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Mark Miller, to adopt Resolution 2024-29 by title only. Bob asked if we received the money. Bonnie verified it's collected through the county and then distributed to the Village, twice a year. Motion carried with no further discussion.

**Resolution 2024-30** A Resolution authorizing the preparation and submission of an application for funding assistance from the Ohio Public Works Commission for the Hamilton Street Reconstruction Project, and declaring an emergency was presented for adoption. Sam Wiley made a motion, seconded by Bob Whitacre, to adopt Resolution 2024-30 by title only. Motion carried with no discussion.

**APPROVAL OF BILL SUMMARY**

The Mayor asked Council for a motion to approve the bill summary. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Mark Miller, to approve the bill summary as presented, which included memo expenses and check # 046292 to check # 046376, for a total of \$667,330.51. Motion carried with no discussion.

**COUNCIL BUSINESS**

The Mayor advised that the Shade Tree Commission has two members whose terms are expiring at the end of this year and they would both like to be reappointed. The Mayor recommended Doug Long and Karen Wagner for reappointment to the Shade Tree Commission. Chris Raftery made the motion to approve the recommendation, seconded by Tammy Schlachter. Motion carried with no discussion.

Tammy asked how long it will be before we know anything about a grant for Hamilton Street. Tom said we won't know anything until 2025.

A Council work session was scheduled for Tuesday, 9/24/24, at 6pm. Sam Wiley said he will not be available for any more meetings until November 2024.

Chris Raftery would like to schedule a Planning Commission meeting for 10/7/24. Bonnie asked for the purpose. Chris said to review plans for Clark Park and for the downtown parking lot.

Sam Wiley asked to be excused from the October Council meeting. Tammy Schlachter made that motion, seconded by Mark Miller. Motion carried with no further discussion.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other business to come before them, the Mayor asked Council for a motion to adjourn. Sam Wiley made that motion, seconded by Mark Miller. Motion carried with no discussion. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

---

Heather Alicea, Administrative Specialist

---

Joseph Galea, Mayor

**THIS IS NOT A RATIFIED OR APPROVED COPY**