

Minutes of September 6, 2017 Martins Ferry City Council Meeting

The Martins Ferry City Council met in Regular Session on Wednesday September 6, 2017 at 6:00 pm at the Donald Myers Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order by Council President Kristine Davis with the Pledge of Allegiance and was followed by a prayer by the Clerk.

Answering Roll Call were Robert Hunker, First Ward, Bruce Shrodes, Second Ward, John Davies, Third Ward, Rick Rodgers, Fourth Ward, Ben Neiman, Jim Schramm, and Jack Regis Council at Large.

Minutes: Minutes from the August 16, 2017 Council Meeting were approved as received.

Reports of Officers of the City:

Service Director:

Mr. Cleary said the County approved expanding the N. Ridge Dr. paving project to include S. Ridge.

ODOT will close St. Rt. 647 any time now for the slip repair project. Suriano Shortcut will be closed at this time. Traffic will be directed to use School Rd. The project should last three months.

Patching was completed on Seabrights Lane and in the Third Ward. Hanover St. will be done tomorrow. First and Second Ward will be completed after Hanover St.

A large tree at Walnut Grove Cemetery needs to be removed. The tree is split and rotted in the center. If it falls it will damage several historic markers. Last year an estimate of \$20,000 was given to remove the tree. Another company was contacted this year and gave an estimate of \$9300. Mr. Cleary asked Council to approve the cost to remove the tree. The Belmont Co. Rubberneck Tour will stop at the cemetery and the tree is a safety hazard.

An issue was brought up regarding a bill to the Water Dept. for rebuilding a fire hydrant. A purchase order was not requested so the Auditor could not pay the \$4899.95 bill to Totterdale's.

Mr. Cleary asked that the ordinance allowing for sewer inspections be passed.

RCAP advised that a \$3 increase be made on the sewer bill. Mr. Cleary said the increase would help with long term and short term needs, including addressing the many non-functioning storm sewers.

Mr. Cleary said a Class 2 Operator of Record is needed for the Sewer Dept. Ideally, someone already working in that dept. could get their license, but a contract with someone outside would be needed for a while.

An increase in sanitation rates will be discussed at the Finance Mtg.

Mayor Krajnyak could not attend tonight's meeting due to a family matter.

Mr. Davies asked about the hydrant repair bill. Ms. Randall said the needed supplies were purchased without a purchase order. If the amount is over \$3,000 it needs to be approved by Council before it can be paid.

Mr. Davies said the sanitation department was \$50,000 in the red at the beginning of 2017. Now the department is \$8,000 in the black. Mr. Cleary said \$20,000 has come in since the beginning of June. Ms. Randall said the department will break even. Mr. Davies said the department is there to provide a service, not make a profit. Mr. Rodgers said he spoke with several towns and they said the Water Superintendent can spend \$5,000 with approval. Mr. Rodgers wanted to know why the bill has to be approved if over \$3,000. Ms. Randall said the amount is stated in the codified ordinances for purchases made without a purchase order. Ms. Randall said it can be faxed but this came in a month after the purchase. Mr. Rodgers said it is a shame the company has had to wait to be paid and the policy should be looked at. Ms. Randall reminded that this isn't a City policy, it is in the codified ordinances. President Davis added that the city could be audited. Mr. Rodgers asked if additional funds were needed for patching. Mr. Cleary said not at this time. Mr. Cleary said he would love to be able to rent a small dozer or grater. Grant Ave. is a good example; there is 24-28 inches to the base.

Mr. Rodgers asked about the issue on N. 6th Street hill. Mr. Cleary said Mr. Vaughn needs to look at it. He has been in contact with him. It was suggested to patch to help with runoff.

An offer on the old City Garage property is being sent to the Belmont County Port Authority.

Mr. Rodgers asked about EMS and billing. Mr. Cleary said he has not discussed that and Mr. Rodgers should ask Mayor Krajnyak.

Mr. Cleary was asked about an estimate on the house on N. 7th. Mr. Cleary said the estimate has not been received.

Mr. Neiman asked about the status of the sewer truck. Mr. Cleary said the City has had demos on 2-3 trucks. It is a 4-5 month wait after purchasing.

Mr. Cleary suggested getting ours fixed and building up money with the rate increase to purchase a new truck. Mr. Neiman asked if the pump can be rebuilt. Mr. Cleary said we can replace it with a rebuilt pump at a cost of around \$30,000. The trade in value is \$12,000 and a new truck costs \$330,000. Mr. Davies asked to be sent a picture of the pump.

Mr. Shrodes said the County has a small grater. Mr. Cleary will ask about it next week.

Mr. Cleary said Bellaire's sewer truck is also down. Mingo Junction and Toronto have helped. Mr. Cleary said Bellaire approached about sharing equipment. Mr. Cleary said a lot of issues would need to be worked out first.

Mr. Shrodes said the Tourism Council may be able to help with the cost of the tree removal. Mr. Cleary will ask.

Auditor:

End of the month financials were distributed. Also, the resolution certifying levy amounts needs to be passed. Copies need to be to the County before the end of the month.

Ms. Randall said that in regards to the sanitation rate increase discussion, sanitation is an enterprise fund and it should raise enough revenue to cover expenses. This didn't happen in the past. The department will break even, but did not make their portion of the garage payment.

Ms. Randall also explained that the Service Director and the Mayor can spend up to \$50,000 without Council's approval but they must have a purchase order. A purchase order cannot be obtained for over \$3,000 after the event.

Mr. Rodgers asked if the audit was finished. Ms. Randall said they are close. Mr. Rodgers asked if they are over budget. Ms. Randall said that the original estimate was \$29,000 and now it is at \$41,000.

Law Director: no report

Police Dept: no report

Fire Dept: no report

Park District: no report

Committees of Council:

Finance/Audit: A Finance Committee meeting will be held on September 13 at 5:30 pm.

Street: No report

Ordinance: No report

Sewer/Sidewalk: No report

Code: No report

Safety: No report. A meeting was held to discuss a central fire station.

Service: No report.

Code: No report

Cemetery: Mr. Neiman said the cemetery looks nice.

PR: No report

Real Estate: Mr. Davies asked about setting up an appointment with a surveyor. Mr. Cleary set a time needs to be set up.

Mr. Regis said the cemetery did a great job with the help they had. Mr. Regis thanked them for the work. Mr. Cleary thanked the CAC for laborers. Mr. Cleary also told Council that a new tree has been planted with more to come.

Citizens to be Heard:

Candace Rinkes of 205 S. Zane Hwy addressed Council with concerns over rats at a neighboring home. Mr. Cleary said officers are ticketing for putting out trash not contained in a sealed garbage can. Mr. Shrodes said the ordinance states the limit is three cans with tight fitting lids and address on the cans.

Patricia Roper of Dehlia Ave. said that a house at 809 Dehlia has rats, garbage, and smells. The home is not occupied and doors are open. Mr. Cleary said it was declared a nuisance. There is very little help in these situations. The Health Dept and EPA will not

go into homes. The most that can be done is a tax lien. Landbank can't take a house unless it's in foreclosure. Pest inspectors have been called for estimates.

Tom Burns of 411 Grant Ave. agreed that serving on the Property Maintenance Board has shown him that it is a huge issue.

Mr. Burns asked about the area torn up from the water break. Mr. Cleary said Wilson Blacktop will take care of the problem.

Mr. Rodgers asked if there has been a bid for Wilson Ave. Mr. Cleary said no.

Phil Wallace of 808 Springhaven announced that there will be a Democratic Gubernatorial Debate on Sept. 12 at the Martins Ferry High School. There will be a cocktail hour at the Elks at 4:30. Cost for the Meet and Greet at the Elks is \$35. Tickets are required for the debate.

Richard Hord of 915 Virginia Street asked about the dilapidated house signs and if the signs come with a time limit for repair. Mr. Cleary said the signs are really to guarantee that the house cannot be rented or sold. Mr. Hord asked how many signs were posted. Mr. Cleary said approximately 35.

Mr. Hord asked if the City is considering a qualified Development Director or City Manager. President Davis said not at this time and that hiring a City Manager would mean changing the City Charter. Mr. Cleary said Project Forward is joining Heritage Ohio which is similar to a consulting service. Cambridge is a member as well.

Mr. Hord suggested a strategy to honor businesses in the City. Mr. Regis said a lot is done development wise that cannot be discussed. Mr. Cleary said we need to focus on what we have, not what we don't have.

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO TRANSFER REAL PROPERTY OWNED BY THE CITY TO THE BELMONT COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Floto Field) was given a second reading. No action was taken and the ordinance will go on to a third reading.

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING AN ANNUAL INCREASE TO FEES FOR UTILITY SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF MARTINS FERRY was given a second reading. No action was taken and the ordinance will go on to a third reading.

AN ORDINANCE INCREASING THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF AUXILIARY POLICE OFFICERS was given a second reading. Mr. Rodgers moved to suspend the rules. Mr. Davies seconded the motion. A roll call vote was heard with Council Members Hunker, Shrodes, Davies, Rodgers, Neiman, Schramm, and Regis voting yea and the rules were suspended. Mr. Davies moved to pass the ordinance as read. Mr. Neiman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was heard with Council Members Hunker, Shrodes, Davies, Rodgers, Neiman, Schramm, and Regis voting yea and the motion was declared passed.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 925.10 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF MARTINS FERRY, OHIO TO PROVIDE FOR INSPECTIONS was given a second reading. Mr. Shrodes moved to suspend the rules. Mr. Rodgers seconded the motion. A roll call vote was heard with Council Members Hunker, Shrodes, Davies, Rodgers, Neiman, Schramm, and Regis voting yea and the rules were suspended. Mr. Shrodes moved to pass the ordinance as read. Mr. Schramm seconded the motion. A roll call vote was heard with Council Members Hunker, Shrodes, Davies, Rodgers, Neiman, Schramm, and Regis voting yea and the motion was declared passed.

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 was given a first reading. Mr. Regis moved to suspend the rules. Mr. Hunker seconded the motion. A roll call vote was heard with Council Members Hunker, Shrodes, Davies, Rodgers, Neiman, Schramm, and Regis voting yea and the rules were suspended. Mr. Hunker moved to pass the ordinance as read. Mr. Davies seconded the motion. A roll call vote was heard with Council Members Hunker, Shrodes, Davies, Rodgers, Neiman, Schramm, and Regis voting yea and the motion was declared passed.

Miscellaneous Business:

Mr. Regis moved to accept the reports of supervisors and management. Mr. Davies seconded the motion and after hearing an affirmative voice vote, the motion was declared passed.

Mr. Schramm moved to authorize the payment of \$4899.95 to Totterdale's. Mr. Neiman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was heard with Council Members Hunker, Shrodes, Davies, Rodgers, Neiman, Schramm, and Regis voting yea and the motion was declared passed.

Mr. Davies asked about the Cemetery Capital Outlay. Ms. Randall said no money has come in and she is waiting for State approval of the fund.

Mr. Davies moved to appropriate up to \$9300 from the General Fund for tree removal at Walnut Grove Cemetery. Mr. Cleary will still pursue help with the funding of this project. Mr. Regis seconded the motion. A roll call vote was heard with Council Members Hunker, Shrodes, Davies, Rodgers, Neiman, Schramm, and Regis voting yea and the motion was declared passed.

Mr. Davies asked about funds for patching. It will be discussed at the Finance Meeting.

Mr. Shrodes asked about the Cemetery Capital Improvement Fund. Ms. Randall said the state wouldn't approve it as it was worded. It was reworded and resubmitted to the State. We are waiting for their decision. Mr. Cleary said when a grave is sold the amount put in

perpetual care has been reduced and the other money will go into the fund that is not set up.

Mr. Hunker moved to adjourn. Mr. Regis seconded the motion and after hearing an affirmative voice vote the meeting was adjourned with a salute to the flag.

Lee Ann Cleary, Clerk of Council

Kristine Davis, Council President