

## **Bethel Village Council June 23, 2008**

Council of the Village of Bethel, Ohio, met in regular session in Council Chambers in the Bethel Municipal Building on Monday, June 23rd, 2008 at 6:30 pm with Mayor John Swarthout presiding.

The meeting was video taped and will be aired on cable television.

Mr. Ausman delivered the invocation followed by Mayor Swarthout leading the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Upon roll call, the following were counted as present: Council Members Alan Ausman, Joe Houlihan, Donna Gunn, Gary Hutchinson, Tim Cherry, James Dick. Also present: Village Administrator Travis Dotson and Fiscal Officer Angel Burton. Solicitor George Leicht arrived after roll call.

A motion to approve the minutes from June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008 as written was made by Mr. Hutchinson. Seconded by Ms. Gunn. All ye.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Nil

### **ADMINISTRATION AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Mayor Swarthout**

Mayor Swarthout read a letter from Bethel Librarian, Patty Szuskiewicz, thanking the Village for the use of the Burke Park and Shelter House for their Summer Reading Carnival. The turn-out included 132 children and 63 adults.

Dr. Charles Frost, a local dentist, also wrote the Village, commending the new crosswalk markings and signs, resulting in more noticability.

Mayor Swarthout thanked all Mitch Hatfield, and all the other Village departments and employees, for the nice work done at Burke Park in preparation for the Founder's Day Celebration.

#### **Village Administrator**

Mr. Dotson continued with the commendation to the public works employees for a job well done at the park, notably the tree work.

Mr. Dotson clarified statements made regarding the utility rate increase during the June 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. The utility clerks did not request any expediting of the utility rate increases, nor that the legislation readings be waived. The new rate structure was implemented at one time for ease of updating the utility billing software.

A list of items to be sold at online auction was distributed for signature approval from Council.

#### **Fiscal Officer:**

Nil

**Solicitor Leicht:**

Solicitor addressed the proposed annexation of property adjacent to the Village. The property is approximately 4 ¼ acres, and is used as a goat farm. The Village's legislation prohibits properties under 5 acres to herd hooved animals. The property could be annexed as non-conforming use, but the question is if the zoning of the property becomes conforming residential if it is sold in the future. The non-conforming zoning of the property and the ability to herd could be valuable to a future buyer.

Mr. Dotson asked that the owner be contacted regarding his willingness to annex with the understanding that the property would be zoned conforming residential if any future sale occurs.

A motion to approve the expense of an annexation plat of the property was made by Mr. Hutchinson. Seconded by Mr. Dick. All yea.

**Chief of Police:**

Nil.

**Finance Committee:**

The next finance meeting will be Monday, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at 5:30 p.m.

**Public Works:**

Mr. Cherry spoke on behalf of the Public Works Committee. The committee met this evening. The committee is getting quotes on roof repairs for the Burke Park shelter and restrooms.

The next Steering Committee meeting will be July 1, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. at the Community Center.

**Safety Committee:**

The next safety committee meeting will be Monday, July 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

**Burke Trust Committee:**

Nil

**Planning Commission:**

Mr. Dick spoke on behalf of the Planning Commission. The committee discussed bylaw changes at their June 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The next planning meeting was rescheduled to July 10th, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. at the municipal building.

**Call of Members:**

Mr. Ausman: Nil

Mr. Houlihan: Nil

Ms. Gunn: Nil

Mr. Hutchinson: Reminded everyone that the next yard sales will be July 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Cherry: Nil

Mr. Dick: Nil

**Public Input:**

Sharon Schmidtgesling spoke before Council regarding the number of overgrown, cluttered properties in town. She would like to see at least the grass mowed. She also asked if Council had considered a Bethel Clean-Up Day. Ms. Schmidtgesling also mentioned her concern over a dead tree and its proximity to the power lines on South Union Street.

Mayor Swarthout informed Ms. Schmidtgesling the zoning administrator is working on the overgrown properties, though it is not a quick process and the Village does not want to become a lawn mowing service. The village must consider property owners' rights in enforcing the maintenance code.

The township does have clean-up days each spring, and Rumpke will pick-up a large number of items, if notified in advance.

Mr. Dotson stated the electric department is in the process of removing dead trees around town, and he will have the department check on the tree in question on South Union Street.

Mr. Ausman echoed Ms. Schmidtgesling's concern with unkempt properties around town, noting they decrease the value of surrounding property.

Mr. Leicht stated many of the properties are bank-owned, and the Village may need to consider a new approach in handling the matter.

**Legislation:**

ORDINANCE 1591 CHANGING THE NAME OF CHARITY WAY, 2nd reading

ORDINANCE 1593 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS, 2nd reading (Mr. Leicht will be putting the corrections in legislative form for the next Council meeting)

**Payment of Bills:**

A motion approving the payment of the presented expenses and bills was made by Ms. Gunn. Seconded by Mr. Ausman. All yeas. Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Cherry. Seconded by Mr. Houlihan. All yeas. 7:10 p.m.

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Mayor John Swarthout

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Angel Burton, Fiscal Officer