

Bethel Village Council May 11, 2009

The Council of the Village of Bethel, Ohio, met in regular session in Council Chambers on Monday, May 11, 2009, with President Pro Tempore Donna Gunn presiding until 6:40pm when Mayor John Swarthout arrived and took over. The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m.

The meeting was videotaped, to be aired on cable television.

Mr. Ausman delivered the invocation, followed by President Pro Tem, Donna Gunn leading the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Upon roll call, the following members were counted as present: Council Members Alan Ausman, Joe Houlihan, Donna Gunn, Gary Hutchinson, Tim Cherry, James Dick; George Leicht, Solicitor; Travis Dotson, Village Administrator and Laurie Taylor, Police Clerk taking minutes for absent Fiscal Officer Angel Burton. Mayor Swarthout arrived at 6:40pm.

A motion to approve the minutes from the April 27th, 2009 meeting, as written, was made by Mr. Hutchinson. Seconded by Mr. Houlihan. All yea.

COMMUNICATIONS

Nil

ADMINISTRATION AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor John Swarthout

Apologized for being a few minutes late; He and Mr. Dunn were in attendance at an event in Eastgate, and stated they broke away as soon as an appropriate moment arose.

Village Administrator, Travis Dotson

Mr. Dotson spoke with Tate Monroe after discussion with a resident last meeting about water rates. Tate Monroe General Manager, Greg Stanley, confirmed Mr. Dotson's calculations. A bill based on 11,000 gallons of usage would be \$75. This would be \$5 per 1,000 gallons plus a \$20 minimum usage fee that is charged on every bill.

They charge a minimum \$20 for no usage. Therefore, based on 4,000 gallons Tate Monroe would charge \$40 to the user, \$20 for minimum usage and \$20 based on the actual usage. For the residents in the Village 4,000 gallons would be charged \$36.40 which is based on our minimum which is \$18.20 per 2,000 gallons. If the user lived outside the Village based on 4,000 gallons would be charged \$39.20, which is based on \$19.60 per 2,000 gallons. These numbers show that the minimum usage is less than Tate Monroe.

Mr. Dotson asked the members what they wanted to do about the next Council meeting, which would fall on Memorial Day. A small discussion ensued, and they came to the agreement that unless something came up that needed immediate attention that they would forgo the meeting on May 25th, 2009, and just meet in June as scheduled.

Fiscal Officer, Angel Burton

Nil.

Solicitor, George Leicht

Nil.

Police Chief Mark Planck

Nil.

Finance Committee, Chairperson Donna Gunn

Ms. Gunn read a statement to all present addressing the financial issues facing the general fund. She stated that Finance Committee in agreement with Safety in making the recommendation to lay off one full-time officer from the Police Department. They also ask for an ordinance to repeal a former ordinance establishing the pay scale for auxiliary officers with the Police Department. They would like the auxiliary officers to donate the first 24 hours for free with the Village agreeing to hold their commission. After the 24 hours free, an officer would be paid \$10 per hour if scheduled by the Chief of Police. The Chief was given a cap of 200 hours to be paid out at this \$10 per hour.

A motion to lay off one full-time officer was made by Mr. Ausman. Seconded by Mr. Dick.

Mr. Hutchinson stated that he wanted to make everyone aware that cutting only one officer would result in it taking possibly 4 years to be back to operating in the black. He says that this is not nearly enough. He is not trying to cut anyone else, he just wants everyone made aware that this is not enough. Ms. Gunn stated that Finance and Safety would like to wait until the final auditor's report comes out before they cut anymore. She doesn't want to jump the gun. Mr. Ausman stated he does not want the safety of the officers and the residents to be jeopardized, and it would be with more cuts. He feels anymore cuts could cause the Village to go uncovered. He hates that the Police Department has to "suffer", and that even one cut will be hard. Mr. Cherry said that they are aware that the Police Department uses 2/3rds of the general fund. He doesn't want to cut any more because it would put gaps in coverage, and that would be like gambling with the Village's safety. Mr. Ausman stated he would like to watch a few months with the new auxiliary pay and with the cut of one officer and then reevaluate it if need be at that point. He is hoping it will alleviate some of the problems. Mr. Ausman does not want the coverage and professionalism to suffer due to the cuts. Mr. Hutchinson stated that he does not want to see the Police Department cut off at the knees; he just wants everyone to be aware this is not enough. We will have to come back and revisit this again. Ms. Gunn stated again that she doesn't want to "jump" yet. She would like to wait for the Auditor's word. Mr. Hutchinson said he is keeping his fingers crossed to bring that officer back, but believes the numbers are only going to get worse. Mr. Ausman said, "We'll just let it play out." Mr. Dick wanted to be clear that the lay off came from a recommendation from the Chief with support from the Mayor? Solicitor Leicht corrected Mr. Dick that it is a recommendation from Council.

Roll Call on motion: All yea. Motion carried.

Ms. Gunn informed Council that Mr. Dunn attended Finance regarding the new zoning fee structure. Solicitor Leicht told him he did not get a chance to look at the fee plan from Mr. Dunn. He would work on an ordinance and have it ready for Legislation at the end of the meeting.

Public Works Committee, Chairperson Tim Cherry

Mr. Cherry feels that unless something comes up, they do not see a need to meet since their normal scheduled meeting would fall on May 25th, which is the observance of Memorial Day. Therefore, unless needed the next Public Works meeting will be June 22nd, 2009, before Council.

Safety Committee, Chairperson Joe Houlihan

Mr. Houlihan stated that everything they had to present was the same as Finance, and that Safety was in agreement with what was discussed by Finance Committee Chair, Donna Gunn.

The next Safety meeting is set for June 1st, 2009 at 5:30pm.

Personnel, Chairperson Donna Gunn

Nil

Burke Trust Commission, Chairperson Donna Gunn

Chairperson Gunn informed the members that they had 25 applications submitted this year for scholarship consideration. She reminded Council that last year they only had 18 applicants and starting at 6:30pm they did not get finished until after 10pm. She feels that they should try and start the interviews earlier if it is ok with the other members. All agreed to meet at 5pm on May 18th for the interviews of the scholarship applicants. Mayor Swarthout agreed to contact the applicants and see if he can find a few that are available to meet with them in those early time slots. There are a few that might need the later times due to their District track meet, but they are sure they can get several able to meet with them early.

Ms. Gunn requested that all the Council members have a question ready ahead of time. She would like them to email or call the other members so that no questions are duplicated. She hopes this will cut down on some of the time also.

Ms. Gunn asked Mr. Hutchinson and Mr. Houlihan if they could get the essay scores to her before the meeting so that she can have them calculated before the interviews. Mr. Hutchinson questioned what point scale they should be grading on for the essays. Mayor Swarthout stated that it should be a 5 point scale.

On other business, Ms. Gunn stated that Burke Committee is going to hold off on the purchase of the picnic tables and benches. They believe that they may be getting some help from Grant Vocational School to offset some of the cost.

The next meeting will be Monday, May 18th, 2009 at 5pm to interview applicants.

Planning Commission, Councilperson James Dick

Nil.

CALL OF MEMBERS

Alan Ausman: Nil

Joe Houlihan: Nil

Donna Gunn: Nil

Mayor Swarthout: Read a proclamation making the week of May 17th, 2009 Emerald Ash Borer Awareness Week.

Gary Hutchinson: Wanted to remind everyone that our first “fee free” Village wide yard sales were this weekend May 15th, 16th, and 17th. He hoped that everyone would take advantage and get out and buy from their neighbors.

Tim Cherry: Nil

James Dick: Wished to add to Mr. Hutchinson’s comment about the yard sales: He wanted to remind everyone that Village yard sales meant a lot more traffic and many more pedestrians. He also reminded everyone that pedestrians in crosswalks do have the right of way. He would like everyone to be mindful of cars stopping abruptly and kids and adults that maybe crossing between cars. He wants traffic to slow down so this will not be a dangerous time for shoppers.

PUBLIC INPUT

Nil

LEGISLATION

ORDINANCE 1624 REPEALING ORDINANCE 1476 ESTABLISHING GENERAL RULES FOR EMPLOYING THE AUXILIARY POLICE OFFICERS IN THE VILLAGE OF BETHEL

All auxiliary officers will donate the first 24 hours they work a month for free. The Village will in turn hold their commission in the State of Ohio. After they have worked 24 hours they will be paid at a rate of \$10 per hour. The Chief of Police will only have 200 hours to be paid at the \$10 per hour. This is to be watched by the Finance Committee and the Chief of Police.

A motion was made to waive the 3 reading rule on Ordinance 1624 Repealing 1476 Establishing General Rules for Employing Auxiliary Police Officers by Mr. Dick. Seconded by Ms. Gunn. By Roll: Mr. Dick “yea”, Ms. Gunn “yea”, Mr. Ausman “yea”, Mr. Houlihan “yea”, Mr. Hutchinson “yea”, Mr. Cherry “yea”. Motion carried.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 1624 Repealing 1476 Establishing General Rules for Employing Auxiliary Police Officers was made by Mr. Houlihan. Seconded by Mr Cherry. By roll: Mr. Houlihan “yea”, Mr. Cherry “yea”, Mr. Ausman “yea”, Ms. Gunn “yea”, Mr. Hutchinson “yea”, Mr. Dick “yea”. Motion carried.

Zoning Administrator Ron Dunn was present, and asked what he needed to do to get the new zoning fee structure approved. Solicitor Leicht informed all members that it must be approved by Planning Commission before it can be adopted by Council.

A motion was made to send the Zoning fee structure to Planning Commission by Mr. Dick. Seconded by Ms. Gunn. All yea.

PAYMENT OF THE BILLS

Mr. Dick asked if the Ohio Municipal League training for the Magistrate and Prosecutor was mandatory every year. Police Clerk Taylor informed Mr. Dick that both must be recertified every year.

Mr. Dick also wanted to know about the tuition to Officer Teague for his recertification class. Mr. Dick was informed by Chief Planck and Village administrator Dotson that they receive reimbursement for classes that we require. The Police Department keeps track of those reimbursements, and the Officer only gets reimbursed if the class has been preapproved by the Chief and Fiscal Officer. He just wanted to be sure we had policy regarding this matter.

A motion to approve the payment of the presented bills and expenses was made by Mr. Ausman. Seconded by Mr. Hutchinson. All yea.

A motion to enter executive session to discuss pending litigation was made by Ms. Gunn. Seconded by Mr. Hutchinson. By Roll: Ms. Gunn “yea”, Mr. Hutchinson “yea”, Mr. Ausman “yea”, Mr. Houlihan “yea”, Mr. Cherry “yea”, Mr. Dick “yea”. 7:10pm

A motion to enter regular session was made by Ms. Gunn. Seconded by Mr. Dick. By roll: Ms. Gunn “yea”, Mr. Dick “yea”, Mr. Ausman “yea”, Mr. Houlihan “yea”, Mr. Hutchinson “yea”, Mr. Cherry “yea”. 7:30pm

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Ausman. Seconded by Mr. Houlihan. All yea. 7:31 p.m.

Mayor John Swarthout

Angel Burton, Fiscal Officer