

Bethel Village Council January 9, 2012

The Council of the Village of Bethel, Ohio, met in regular session in Council Chambers on Monday, January 9, 2012 at 6:30 p.m., with Mayor Alan J. Ausman presiding.

Mr. Ausman delivered the invocation, followed by Mayor Ausman leading the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Upon roll call, the following members were counted as present: Council Members Priscilla Johnson, Janice Ireton, Donna Gunn, Lucy Shepherd, Rev. Jeremiah Hembree, Village Administrator Travis Dotson and Solicitor Julia Carney. Fiscal Officer Bill Gilpin was absent.

Also in attendance were John Seney of the Community Press, Ruth Gelter of the Independent Press, Gary Hutchinson, Kristin Bednarski of the Clermont Sun, Heather Hembree, Rus Whitley, Amy Planck and Doug Green.

Ms. Gunn made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 15, 2011 meeting, as written, seconded by Ms. Johnson. By roll:

Ms. Johnson "yea" Ms. Ireton "yea" Ms. Gunn "yea"
Ms. Shepherd "yea" Mr. Hembree "yea" Ms. Planck "yea" Motion Carried

COMMUNICATIONS

Nil.

REPORTS

Mayor Alan J. Ausman

Mayor's Court report for the month of December, 2011; Total revenue of \$6,204, revenue to the village of \$4,421, \$58.50 to the indigent driver alcohol treatment fund and \$1,724.50 to the state.

Mayor Ausman read aloud a letter of commendation received from Sheriff Rodenburg praising Chief Planck for his efforts in apprehending a suspect while in the Village of Batavia.

Mayor Ausman gave support to confirming Melanie J. Reising as the new magistrate for the village. Ms. Reising was confirmed by ordinance (see below).

There are updated APHIS print outs available for anyone interested.

Mayor Ausman will deliver his State of the Village address at the next council meeting.

There was discussion on the vacant council seat that has come about due to Mr. Ausman being elected Mayor during his term as a council member. Two individuals have submitted applications for the vacant council seat; Amy Planck and Rus Whitley. Both Amy Planck and Rus Whitley introduced themselves and spoke about their respective qualifications and desire to be on village council.

Ms. Gunn made a motion to appoint Amy Planck to the vacant council seat, seconded by Ms. Ireton. By roll:

Ms. Johnson "yea" Ms. Ireton "yea" Ms. Gunn "yea"
Ms. Shepherd "nay" Mr. Hembree "yea" Ms. Planck "yea" Motion Carried

Ms. Planck was sworn in by Mayor Ausman and took her seat as a member of council.

Mayor Ausman indicated that council needs to select a president pro-tempore for 2012 and asked for nominations.

Ms. Ireton made a motion to appoint Ms. Gunn as council president pro-tempore for 2012, seconded by Ms. Johnson. By roll: Ms. Ireton "yea", Ms. Johnson "yea", Ms. Gunn "yea", Ms. Shepherd "yea", Mr. Hembree "yea", Ms. Planck "yea". Motion carried.

Village Administrator, Travis Dotson

Jim Hollandsworth and Brad Moore have successfully completed the second round of lineman training in Columbus, a 2 week in school training.

The drive thru roof repairs have been completed.

Fiscal Officer, Bill Gilpin

Travis Dotson reported on behalf of Bill Gilpin;

The 2011 annual financial report has been completed and the file has been uploaded to the state auditor's office. The next task at hand is to begin to build the reserve balance in the general fund by maintaining the same approach to budgeting and appropriations that have been in place the past few years. I look forward to assisting with the effort to bring the village back to where it needs to be financially in all funds in 2012.

Solicitor Julia Carney

Nothing to report.

Police Chief Mark Planck

Last Wednesday the robbery suspect from KeyBank was indicted. It took much research and work to accomplish this.

The village has been awarded a license plate reader to assist with identifying individuals who are wanted for anything associated with their license plate number.

Mayor Ausman stated that everyone appreciates all that the police department does and gave some statistics on police officers who lost their lives in the line of duty in the past year across the country.

Finance Committee, Chairperson Donna Gunn

Committee met on January 5.

On December 31, 2011 all funds were positive after transferring money to the sidewalk assessment fund and police pension fund. The village anticipates requesting release from fiscal emergency in March 2012.

In late spring or early summer we will receive information on the next round of local government fund revenue reductions.

Thanks to Mr. Dotson for obtaining a CDBG grant to replace the Charity Street bridge. The grant is for \$204,000 and the village contributing \$5,700.

The electric rate study has been completed. The finance committee discussed all options and is recommending a 9% electric rate reduction to council. Ms. Gunn read a note from fiscal officer Bill Gilpin supporting the 9% rate reduction. There is an ordinance to reduce the electric rates prepared for council's consideration this evening. The finance committee would like to see the ordinance passed as an emergency measure so the lower rate can take effect with the next billing cycle.

Ms. Gunn asked all council members to submit preferences for committee assignments to her in the near future.

Next meeting will be scheduled at the next council meeting.

Public Works Committee

Nothing to report

Safety Committee

Nothing to report

Personnel Committee

Nothing to report

Burke Trust Commission, Janice Ireton

Planning on meeting with the commission and request a donation in support of the Asian Longhorn Beetle legal defense fund.

Planning Commission, Priscilla Johnson

Nothing to report

CALL OF MEMBERS

Priscilla Johnson: Welcome to the new council members; thanks to Chief Planck.

Janice Ireton: Thanks to Chief Planck for all you do; support the high school sports programs.

Donna Gunn: The Asian Longhorn Beetle legal defense fund needs donations; Corsi Tree Farm is making spruce trees available with the proceeds going to the ALB fund; prints of a painting are also available as a fund raiser.

2012 committee assignments; discussion has been to keep finance, personnel, safety and Burke Trust while doing away with public works, letting Mr. Dotson take care of public works and bring any issues before council. There will also still be a council representative on the planning commission. The rules of council will need to be amended if public works is eliminated.

Ms. Shepherd asked why we were considering eliminating the public works committee. Ms. Gunn replied that the committee has only been in existence for 2 years and that Mr. Dotson deals with those issues on a daily basis. Mayor Ausman added that the structure of the village has also changed in the past few years; we now have a public works supervisor who reports to Mr. Dotson. Mr. Hembree asked what the protocol was changing the rules of council. Ms. Gunn replied that there would need to be a motion to amend the rules of council to eliminate the public works committee. Ms. Ireton asked Mr. Dotson how he felt about this. Mr. Dotson replied that it would help streamline processes.

Mr. Hembree made a motion to amend the rules of council and eliminate the public works committee, seconded by Ms. Gunn. By roll:

Ms. Johnson “yea” Ms. Ireton “yea” Ms. Gunn “yea”
Ms. Shepherd “nay” Mr. Hembree “yea” Ms. Planck “yea” Motion Carried

Lucy Shepherd: Thankful to be here; please support the local churches and children as they are our future.

Jeremiah Hembree: Thank you for the privilege to serve; looking forward to working with everyone; please support the elementary school weekend food program.

Amy Planck: Thanks to everyone for their confidence in me; looking forward to serving.

PUBLIC INPUT

Gary Hutchinson asked if the village was going to return the savings realized from the AEP contract to the residents or keep the money. Ms. Gunn stated that she feels it is ironic that Gary Hutchinson would bring this up since he has previously stated that he was appalled that the electric fund had no reserves. Ms. Gunn also stated that the reserves in the electric fund are not yet back to the level that they once were; the village is justified in retaining the money for a rainy day. Gary Hutchinson stated that he feels Ms. Gunn is misinformed and that there are other ways to build up reserves. Ms. Ireton stated that we all pay the same rates and will be grateful that the reserves are on hand if a disaster occurs. Gary Hutchinson agreed with Ms. Ireton but feels that the reserves are being built up in an improper way. Mayor Ausman stated that as a resident he is thankful that the village is able to grant a 9% reduction in rates; had it not been for the AEP contract there may not have been the opportunity for a rate reduction at all. Gary Hutchinson

stated that he feels the council just gave away power when eliminating the public works committee by transferring duties from elected officials to someone who is not elected. Ms. Gunn stated that final decisions will still rest with council. Ms. Shepherd stated that there are village residents who struggle with having food in the house and fund reserves are not important to them.

LEGISLATION

RESOLUTION 917-AUTHORIZING THE VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR TO APPLY FOR THE NATUREWORKS GRANT THROUGH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Dotson stated that this was an application to re-apply for a grant that was denied last year due to lack of funding.

Ms. Ireton made a motion to waive the three readings of RES 917 NatureWorks Grant, seconded by Mr. Hembree. By roll:

Ms. Johnson “yea” Ms. Ireton “yea” Ms. Gunn “yea”
Ms. Shepherd “yea” Mr. Hembree “yea” Ms. Planck “yea” Motion Carried

Ms. Ireton made a motion to adopt RES 917 NatureWorks Grant, seconded by Ms. Johnson. By roll:

Ms. Johnson “yea” Ms. Ireton “yea” Ms. Gunn “yea”
Ms. Shepherd “yea” Mr. Hembree “yea” Ms. Planck “yea” Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 918-AUTHORIZING THE SIGNATURE AUTHORITY ON CERTAIN BANK ACCOUNTS OF THE VILLAGE OF BETHEL, A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Ms. Gunn made a motion to waive the three readings of RES 918 Signature Authority, seconded by Ms. Ireton. By roll:

Ms. Johnson “yea” Ms. Ireton “yea” Ms. Gunn “yea”
Ms. Shepherd “yea” Mr. Hembree “yea” Ms. Planck “yea” Motion Carried

Ms. Gunn made a motion to adopt RES 918 Signature Authority, seconded by Ms. Johnson. By roll:

Ms. Johnson “yea” Ms. Ireton “yea” Ms. Gunn “yea”
Ms. Shepherd “yea” Mr. Hembree “yea” Ms. Planck “yea” Motion Carried

ORDINANCE 1675- FIXING THE ELECTRIC RATES TO THE VARIOUS TYPES OF CONSUMERS SERVED BY THE VILLAGE OF BETHEL MUNICIPAL ELECTRIC SYSTEM, REPEALING ALL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES OR SECTIONS THEREOF AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Mr. Hembree made a motion to waive the three readings of ORD 1675 Electric Rates, seconded by Ms. Johnson. By roll:

Ms. Johnson “yea” Ms. Ireton “yea” Ms. Gunn “yea”
Ms. Shepherd “yea” Mr. Hembree “yea” Ms. Planck “yea” Motion Carried

Ms. Ireton made a motion to adopt ORD 1675 Electric Rates, seconded by Ms. Gunn.

Discussion: Ms. Shepherd stated that she felt that the village progressed in part due to the electric rates. Mayor Ausman replied that the electric rates have nothing to do with the general fund and that the village made good progress due to budget cuts. There was additional discussion on how the 9% rate was decided upon and clarification on some of the wording of the ordinance. By roll:

Ms. Johnson “yea” Ms. Ireton “yea” Ms. Gunn “yea”
Ms. Shepherd “yea” Mr. Hembree “yea” Ms. Planck “yea” Motion Carried

Ms. Johnson made a motion to adopt ORD 1675 as an emergency measure, seconded by Ms. Ireton. By roll:

Ms. Johnson “yea” Ms. Ireton “yea” Ms. Gunn “yea”
Ms. Shepherd “yea” Mr. Hembree “yea” Ms. Planck “yea” Motion Carried

ORDINANCE 1676-CONFIRMING MELANIE J. REISING AS MAGISTRATE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Ms. Ireton made a motion to waive the three readings of ORD 1676 Magistrate, seconded by Mr. Hembree. By roll:

Ms. Johnson “yea” Ms. Ireton “yea” Ms. Gunn “yea”
Ms. Shepherd “yea” Mr. Hembree “yea” Motion Carried

Ms. Ireton made a motion to adopt ORD 1676 Magistrate, seconded by Ms. Johnson. By roll:

Ms. Johnson “yea” Ms. Ireton “yea” Ms. Gunn “yea”
Ms. Shepherd “yea” Mr. Hembree “yea” Motion Carried

Mr. Hembree made a motion to adopt ORD 1676 as an emergency measure, seconded by Ms. Johnson. By roll:

Ms. Johnson “yea” Ms. Ireton “yea” Ms. Gunn “yea”
Ms. Shepherd “yea” Mr. Hembree “yea” Motion Carried

PAYMENT OF THE BILLS

Ms. Ireton made a motion to approve the payment of the presented bills and expenses in the amount of \$158,249.46, seconded by Ms. Gunn. By roll:

Ms. Johnson “yea” Ms. Ireton “yea” Ms. Gunn “yea”
Ms. Shepherd “yea” Mr. Hembree “yea” Ms. Planck “abstain” Motion Carried

DECEMBER EXPENSES

Ms. Ireton made a motion to approve the December, 2011 expenses, as presented, seconded by Ms. Johnson. By roll:

Ms. Johnson “yea” Ms. Ireton “yea” Ms. Gunn “yea” Motion Failed
Ms. Shepherd “abstain” Mr. Hembree “abstain” Ms. Planck “abstain”

After discussion of the fact that the information was provided in the council packets days prior to the meeting that would allow the new council members to review:

Ms. Ireton made a motion to approve the December, 2011 expenses, as presented, seconded by Ms. Johnson. By roll:

Ms. Johnson “yea” Ms. Ireton “yea” Ms. Gunn “yea” Motion Carried
Ms. Shepherd “yea” Mr. Hembree “abstain” Ms. Planck “abstain”

Doug Green, candidate for the 66th district state house of representatives introduced himself and spoke of his local government experience.

Ms. Johnson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Ireton. All yea. 7:50 pm.

Alan J. Ausman, Mayor

William R. Gilpin, Fiscal Officer