

Village of St. Paris
November 20, 2023
Council Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The invocation prayer was led by Pastor Jeremy Spence of the First Baptist Church St. Paris.

Roll call was taken by Mayor Brenda Cook. Joe Curran, Terry Ervin II, Lynn Miller, Susan Prince, Sam Ronicker and Randy Smith were present. Village Administrator Spencer Mitchell, Fiscal Officer Mark McGuire and Chief of Police Eric Smith were also present.

Motion was made by Councilor Ervin and seconded by Councilor Prince to approve the Council agenda, as amended. Motion passed.

Public Comments on Agenda Items: none

Motion was made by Councilor Prince and seconded by Councilor Smith to approve the Council meeting minutes dated November 6, 2023. Motion passed.

The presentation of financials dated October 31, 2023 was reviewed. **Motion** was made by Councilor Ervin and seconded by Councilor Prince to approve the financial reports as presented. A roll call vote was taken and Council voted in favor 6-0. Motion passed.

The presentation of the Bank Reconciliation dated October 31, 2023 was reviewed. **Motion** was made by Councilor Prince and seconded by Councilor Smith to approve the Bank Reconciliation. A roll call vote was taken and Council voted in favor 6-0. Motion passed.

The presentation of Water/Sewer Account Adjustments dated October 31, 2023 was reviewed. **Motion** was made by Councilor Prince and seconded by Councilor Miller to approve the Water/Sewer Account Adjustments. A roll call vote was taken and Council voted in favor 6-0. Motion passed.

The presentation of the Appropriation Supplemental dated October 31, 2023 was reviewed. **Motion** was made by Councilor Prince and seconded by Councilor Ervin to approve the Appropriation Supplemental. A roll call vote was taken and Council voted in favor 6-0. Motion passed.

Mayor's Notes:

- Graham Elementary School is hosting a Thanksgiving community meal on November 23, 2023 at 12:00 PM. The Federation of Churches is providing food and asks for volunteers to help with the meal. Delivery service of the Thanksgiving meal is available.
- Our Town St. Paris Association's annual Christmas in the Village celebration is on December 2, 2023 from 1:00 – 6:00 PM.

Police Department:

- For the month of October, there were 68 recordable calls for service, 13 arrests for 32 criminal charges, and 20 citations issued.
- A search warrant was served at 122 N. Springfield Street on November 11, 2023, for reasons that a meth lab was inside the house and meth was being sold.
- The new cruiser has been ordered.
- A training session with Kit for K9's has been scheduled. The training is for trauma first aid and basic first aid, bloat, K9 CPR, basic health care and IV catheter placement.
- The Chief noted false accusations, threats, hostile work environment created by a council member. Mayor Cook asked Council if they wanted to discuss the accusations in an executive session. No motion was made to enter into executive session. Council did not discuss any further.

Administrator:

- The bid language is being finalized for public advertisement for playground equipment at Harmon Park.
- 2024 budget/appropriation recommendations are being reviewed by the Administrator and Fiscal Officer.
- The St. Paris Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) met to hear conditional use applications from Jim Taylor, Gaye Carafa and Clay Ruffner. Each application was a separate hearing and the BZA granted the conditional use to all 3 applicants.
- Employee evaluations were completed in October. All of the staff do a great job at serving the Village.
- Reconstruction of the municipal parking lot, behind the municipal building and West of the Police building, will be done before the end of year. The project includes a storm drainage improvement that will tie in the downspouts of the municipal building as well as a new gravel parking area.
- Administrator Mitchell informed Council that the minimum bid pricing requirements has been raised to \$75,000 with a 3% increase every year thereafter. The previous minimum bid requirement was \$50,000.

Committee Discussion:

Budget: none

JSP Fire Board:

- The next meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2023 at 7:00 PM at the firehouse.
- The JSP Fire District recently signed a contract for a new fire engine costing over \$800,000 with delivery approximately in July 2025.
- Councilor Ervin thanked the public for their support in passing the recent JSP Fire District levy.
- **Motion** was made by Councilor Prince and seconded by Councilor Smith to appoint Terry Ervin as the Village of St. Paris Council representative to the JSP Fire District Board for a two-year appointment. Motion passed.

Land & Buildings: none

Park & Trees: none

Planning Commission:

- The next meeting is scheduled for January 4, 2024 at 7:30 PM in the council room.

Safety: none

Old Business:

- Ordinance 2023-7 Zoning Amendment. Mayor Cook conducted the third and final reading of Ordinance 2023-7 which amends zoning ordinance 420 to include regulations regarding rural residential districts within the Village of St. Paris. **Motion** was made by Councilor Smith and seconded by Councilor Prince to approve Ordinance 2023-7. A roll call vote was taken and Council voted in favor 5-1, with Councilor Ronicker voting no. Motion passed.
- The Village employee's Medical Mutual health insurance renewal was discussed. The renewal is a 19.7% increase from last year. Other options include the village getting out of the "grandfathered" plan and moving to other Affordable Care Act (ACA) plans that have higher deductibles and higher maximum out of pocket costs for the employees. The ACA plans, while fractionally less expensive than the current plan, do not offer the employees the benefits currently provided. **Motion** was made by Councilor Prince and seconded by Councilor Smith to approve the Medical Mutual health insurance renewal. A roll call vote was taken and Council voted in favor 6-0. Motion passed.

New Business:

- Resolution 1372 – Vacation Buy Back, Chief of Police. Mayor Cook read Resolution 1372 to the public. **Motion** was made by Councilor Prince and seconded by Councilor Ervin to approve Resolution 1372. A roll call vote was taken and Council voted in favor 6-0. Motion passed. Payment will be made with the first payroll date in December.
- Ordinance 2023-8 – Amending the Municipal Income Tax Ordinance. Due to Ohio House Bill 33, the state's biennium budget bill, changes were made to the Ohio municipal income tax law and these amendments need to be adopted by municipalities to existing income tax ordinances. The Regional Income Tax Agency, (RITA) asks that these amendments be adopted and in effect prior to January 1, 2024. Ordinance 2023-8 does not repeal the existing St. Paris income tax ordinance, it only makes amendments as outlined by RITA. Mayor Cook conducted the first reading of Ordinance 2023-8. The second reading will be held at the next regularly scheduled council meeting on December 4, 2023.
- Council was given a spreadsheet for 2024 temporary appropriations to be reviewed and a Resolution for 2024 temporary appropriations will be brought to council at the next regularly scheduled meeting on December 4, 2023.

Public Comments:

- Joyce Bowlin, 274 W. Poplar Street, expressed gratitude to all for the cards and kind words during her recovery.
- Tim Bierbaugh, 346 W. Elm Street, congratulated the police on the recent drug bust. Mr. Bierbaugh then explained that council should abide by a code of conduct as outlined in the Ohio Revised Code (ORC). He referenced ORC code section 734.45, 733.33 thru 733.37, 705 and section 3.08 and stated that Council should be familiar with these sections. Mr. Bierbaugh noted that if Council fails to abide by these codes, then the public can take the issue to a probate judge for possible removal of Council.
- Janie Douglas, owner of Family County Cuts, stated that she is having a "cut-a-thon" on December 2, 2023, to help a local family, from Vance Road, who's house recently burned down. Keith Calland will be available at Family County Cuts to perform chair massages with the proceeds going to the family as well.
- Frank Blair, 203 Dugan Street, distributed a handwritten complaint to Council regarding Councilor Curran and asked Council to address the issue.
- Councilor Prince mentioned that Lifewise Academy is having a Graham Open House on Monday, December 11, 2023 from 5:00 – 8:00 PM. The open house is at the Evans-Purk Building located at 103 S. Church Street in St. Paris.

There being no further business, **motion** was made by Councilor Prince and seconded by Councilor Smith to adjourn at 7:48 PM. Motion passed.