

**Village of St. Paris**  
**January 2, 2024**  
**Council Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. 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.

**Mayor Oath of Office:**

- Sam Ronicker was ceremonially sworn in by Wild Man, President of the Eagles Breed Brotherhood Motorcycle Club, with the reading of the Oath of Office and began his term as Village Mayor which concludes December 31, 2027.

**New Council Members Oath of Office:**

- Frank Blair was sworn in by Mayor Ronicker with the reading of the Oath of Office and began his term as Village Councilor which concludes December 31, 2027.
- Tony Hoyt was sworn in by Mayor Ronicker with the reading of the Oath of Office and began his term as Village Councilor which concludes December 31, 2027.

**Roll Call:**

- Roll call was taken by Mayor Sam Ronicker. Frank Blair, Joe Curran, Terry Ervin II, Tony Hoyt and Susan Prince were present. Village Administrator Spencer Mitchell, Fiscal Officer Marc McGuire and Chief of Police Eric Smith were also present.

**Mayor's Comments:**

- Mayor Ronicker stated that it is a new year, a new day and hopes for a new attitude and a path forward for the village. Mayor Ronicker's points included 1) let the village move forward, 2) be transparent and 3) know our role on council and how we are representatives for the good of all the people.

**Approval of Agenda:**

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

**Public Comments on Agenda Items:** none

**Elect Council President Pro-Temp:**

- Mayor Ronicker asked for Council President Pro-Temp to be elected. **Motion** was made by Councilor Ervin and seconded by Councilor Curran to elect Councilor Prince as Council President Pro-Temp. **Motion** was made by Councilor Hoyt to elect Councilor Blair as Council President Pro-Temp. The motion to elect Councilor Blair failed as there was no second motion. Motion passed to elect Councilor Prince as the Council President Pro-Temp.

**Approval of Council Meeting Minutes:**

- **Motion** was made by Councilor Prince and seconded by Councilor Hoyt to approve the Council meeting minutes dated December 18, 2023. Motion passed.

**Committee Appointments and Discussion:**

- Mayor Ronicker noted that the village is required, by Ohio Revised Code, to have a JSP Fire Board Committee and a Planning Commission Committee. The Mayor suggested that council have a work session as the first meeting of the month to discuss as any village needs instead of having committees. Council Curran noted that the standing committees should continue, even if not meeting on a regular schedule. Councilor Blair wants to get rid of all committees, except those required, since there are regular reports given to council. Councilor Ervin stated that having a work session, instead of a regular council, meeting would delay any voting for Ordinances that require 3 reading before council votes on the Ordinance. Mayor Ronicker stated that a decision on whether or not to have committees does not need to be made at this time and asked for a motion to table the discussion. **Motion** was made by Councilor Prince and seconded by Councilor Blair to table the committee appointments and discussion. Motion passed.

**Old Business:**

- Mayor Ronicker noted that his former council seat is vacant and recommends that council review letters of intent and suggested a January 10, 2024, deadline as to when letters of intent should be received. Mayor Ronicker stated that any letters of intent received are a public record. Also noted was that Ohio Revised Code does not give any guidelines to the procedure of appointing a resident to the vacant council seat. Councilor Prince stated that council has 30 days to fill a vacant seat and if not done within the allotted time, the mayor can then appoint to fill the vacant seat. Councilor Ervin suggested that council move to the agenda item of new business to discuss the date of the next council meeting to determine if most of council would be present due to the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday being the same day as the next proposed council meeting date. Councilor Ervin's concern was to make sure there would be a quorum for the next meeting. **Motion** was made by Councilor Prince and seconded by Councilor Curran to fill the vacant council seat. A roll call vote was taken and Council voted in favor 4-1, with Councilor Blair voting against. Motion passed. Councilor Prince gave the 3 residents, who had turned in letters of intent, an opportunity to address council and the public. Trent Westfall, 203 W. Main Street, stated that he has lived in the village for approximately 9 years and wants to make a difference and move the village forward to make a better town. Greg Hayes, 216 Cottage Street, stated that his letter of intent speaks for itself and made no more comments. Steve Lett, 139 Dugan Street, stated that he has been involved in the St. Paris community and wants to be involved in village council. **Motion** was made by Councilor Prince and seconded by Councilor Ervin to appoint Steve Lett to fill the vacant council seat. A roll call vote was taken and Council voted in favor 4-0, with Councilor Blair abstaining. Motion passed.

**New Business:**

- Council further discussed on when to conduct the next council meeting being as how it falls on the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. **Motion** was made by Councilor Prince and seconded by Councilor Ervin to conduct the next council meeting on Monday, January 15, 2023, at 7:00 PM. Motion passed.

**Public Comments:**

- Charlene Hess, 240 W. Troy Street, stated that she was disappointed in council and did not give a fair chance in regards to filling the vacant council seat.
- Councilor Prince asked Mayor Ronicker to administer the Oath of Office to the appointed Steve Lett. Mayor Ronicker administered the Oath of Office to Steve Lett.

There being no further business, **motion** was made by Councilor Ervin and seconded by Councilor Prince to adjourn at 7:52 PM. Motion passed.

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Marc McGuire, Fiscal Officer

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Sam Ronicker, Mayor

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Date