

Regular Council Meeting

Thursday, April 7, 2022

Mayor Mike Petrella called the meeting to Order.

Roll Call: Gael Damron Present, Randy Spence present, Carmen DeStefano present, Pennie Scarpone absent, Jason Mattern present, Bob Merriman present.

Officials: Mayor Mike Petrella present, Fiscal Officer Denise Geanangel present, Administrator Walt Ziemba present, Solicitor Jake Linn present.

Moment of Silence

Pledge of Allegiance

Reading of Minutes

Motion by Bob Merriman seconded by Gael Damron to approve the minutes from the March 17, 2022 meeting.

Vote: Gael Damron yea, Randy Spence yea, Carmen DeStefano yea, Jason Mattern yea, Bob Merriman yea.

Motion passed 5-0.

Persons Appearing Before Council

Larry Taylor representing Trebel Energy addressed council about the current gas and electric aggregation contracts. The Village's current electric aggregate, Volunteer Energy has filed bankruptcy. The village resident's have been sent back to the AEP utility at the regular rate. Trebel is continuing to watch the volatile market and is working to secure another aggregate when the time is right. Councilman Mattern requested a spreadsheet reflecting the overall saving since the beginning of the electric contract. The gas market is crazy as well right now. Archer Energy is offering a 2% guaranteed variable rate until the set "trigger" point of .565 is reach then switch to a fixed rate at that time.

Randy Theodore spoke to council about his concerns with the R.I.T.A. and having to pre-pay taxes. The fiscal officer did get in touch with Randy earlier in the day and spoke to R.I.T.A. on his behalf taking care of his concerns. Mr. Theodore had a complaint about his neighbor's deplorable living conditions asking for council's help in getting 39 Squirrel Hill Road cleaned up. Mayor Petrella ensured Mr. Theodore he would get the code enforcement officer out there being advised that the property owner was cited last year into court regarding the same issue.

Ordinance and/or Resolution

Resolution 2022-03: Authorizing Participation in the ODOT Road Salt Contract Awarded in 2022 was read for the first time. Motion by Jason Mattern seconded by Bob Merriman to suspend the rules for an emergency read.

Vote: Gael Damron yea, Randy Spence yea, Carmen DeStefano yea, Jason Mattern yea, Bob Merriman yea.

Motion passed 5-0.

Resolution 2022-03: was read for the second and third time. Motion by Gael Damron seconded by Jason Mattern to approve.

Vote: Gael Damron yea, Randy Spence yea, Carmen DeStefano yea, Jason Mattern yea, Bob Merriman yea.

Motion passed 5-0.

Ordinance 2022-04: Amending Section 505.071 Subsections (C)(3) and (D)(3) of the Codified Ordinances of the Village of Wintersville, Ohio which Address Cruelty to Companion Animals was read for the first time.

Ordinance 2022-05: Providing for Pay Raises for the Village Police Officers and Increasing the Starting Pay Rate for Village Police Officers was read for the first time.

Mayor Petrella asked that this be read as an emergency ordinance. Solicitor Linn advised that he had not written the ordinance as an emergency and will prepare as such for the next meeting.

Ordinance 2022-06: Amending Chapter 151.02(c) of the Codified Ordinances of the Village of Wintersville to Include Juneteenth as a Paid Holiday was read for the first time.

Motion by Gael Damron seconded by Randy Spence to retro-actively accept the resignation of Dr. Michael Ross effective December 31, 2021.

Vote: Gael Damron yea, Randy Spence yea, Carmen DeStefano yea, Jason Mattern yea, Bob Merriman yea.

Motion passed 5-0.

Reports & Announcements and Communications

Mayor Petrella read the Magistrate, Police and Code Enforcement officers reports for the month of March.

Mayor Petrella thanked the fire department, EMS and police for their help in servicing the fire in Overlook Hills. Mayor Petrella had the opportunity to participate in the Rise Community Youth Group children's program with the JVS. He also took a two hour tour of the village sewer plant to get familiar with the daily operations.

Mayor Petrella thanked the new owners of the Winter Drive-In for choosing Wintersville and investing millions of dollars. He also welcomed Beltone Hearing as a new business. Videographer Keith Wilson has created a podcast to enable interested parties to now listen to the council meetings.

Motion by Gael Damron seconded by Randy Spence to approve the municipal building roof repairs by Kalkreuth for \$5,175.00.

Vote: Gael Damron yea, Randy Spence yea, Carmen DeStefano yea, Jason Mattern yea, Bob Merriman yea.

Motion passed 5-0.

AJ Cochran, grandson of former Mayor Cochran will be donating the funds for the roof repairs in honor of his grandfather.

Mayor Petrella announced the resignation of Chief Fowler effective April 9, 2022. Motion by Randy Spence seconded by Carmen Destefano to accept Chief Fowler's resignation.

Vote: Gael Damron yea, Randy Spence yea, Carmen DeStefano yea, Jason Mattern yea, Bob Merriman yea.

Motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Petrella spoke to former Chief Laman about Lou Vandeborne's 29 years experience as an officer with the Village of Wintersville starting as an auxiliary police officer working his way up to Captain in 2008.

Motion by Bob Merriman seconded by Randy Spence to approve hiring Lou Vandeborne as the Police Chief.

Vote: Gael Damron yea, Randy Spence yea, Carmen DeStefano yea, Jason Mattern yea, Bob Merriman yea.

Motion passed 5-0.

Motion by Gael Damron seconded by Carmen Destefano to approve Chief Vandeborne's annual salary of \$59,529.60.

Vote: Gael Damron yea, Randy Spence yea, Carmen DeStefano yea, Jason Mattern yea, Bob Merriman yea.

Motion passed 5-0.

Administrator's Report:

Administrator Ziemba reported 1,490.88 ton of safety salt has been purchased from Morton Salt at a cost of \$94,536.66 for the 2021-2022 winter.

Mr. Ziemba reminded the recreation committee that the grant deadline is April 22, 2022 and he will need additional input in preparation of the grant.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business

Councilman Mattern asked that the finance committee re-group to review fund balances once the new wages go into effect knowing the affect it will have on the general fund. Mr. Mattern also requests that the police clerk's wages be re-evaluated since they were not increased when the police officer's were. Mr. Ziemba added that there is a planned substantial increase of the Ohio Police & Fire Pension Fund employer's contribution plan.

Councilman Spence reported that the time clocks have been installed.

Councilman Mattern said that the drainage on Ellsworth needs to be fixed as it is causing flooding of homes.

Mr. Mattern spoke of the Airbnb Ordinance being a sensitive issue to neighbors dealing with parking, noise, etc. Solicitor Linn said the General Assembly will regulate these short term taking away the powers of municipalities. He also recommends waiting on passing an ordinance. Councilman Mattern is encouraging resident's to call their local representatives as this matter is not a good fit for our village and feels it is council's responsibility to protect our residents. Mr. Mattern also inquired as to who will be using the time clocks to punch in. The police department and clerks will be using Jayco to punch in. He also said he is glad to see the village get antiquated and inquired as to the smartphone apps as a newer version of "time clocks". Mr. Mattern congratulated new Chief Vandeborne.

Councilman Damron thanked Walt for the new "Village Limit" sign by Big Lots and the speed limit sign. A community garden will be launching soon and anyone can donate flowers. Veteran banners coming soon and she asked if permission was needed to hang them on electrical poles. She was advised that anything placed on the AEP poles have to be approved. She and Mayor Petrella had the opportunity to meet with Bob Howell and the Warrior Museum.

Mr. Greco has made a \$1,000.00 donation for the wall mural art contest with the Jefferson County Christian School and Indian Creek Schools students participating.

Mayor Petrella reiterated the importance of getting the police pay wages ordinance passed ASAP.

Transfers/Advance:

Motion by Bob Merriman seconded by Jason Mattern to approve an advance from the general fund (1000) to the magistrate agency fund (9902) for \$ 555.47 dated January 6, 2022.

Vote: Gael Damron yea, Randy Spence yea, Carmen DeStefano yea, Jason Mattern yea, Bob Merriman yea.

Motion passed 5-0.

Motion by Jason Mattern, second by Randy Spence to pay bills.

Vote: Gael Damron yea, Randy Spence yea, Carmen DeStefano yea, Jason Mattern yea, Bob Merriman yea.

Motion passed 5-0.

Next scheduled Meeting is April 21, 2022 at 7:00 P.M.

Denise Geanangel
Fiscal Officer

Michael W. Petrella
Mayor