

**Village of Whitehouse
Village Council Meeting As A
Committee of the Whole
Village Hall, Whitehouse, OH
Immediately Following Council Meeting December 5th, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

Meeting called to order at 7:06pm by President of Council Bob Keogh.

Council Members Present: Steve Connelly, Mindy Curry, Louann Artiaga, Rebecca Conklin Kleiboemer and President of Council Bob Keogh

Council Members Absent: Richard Bingham – President of Council Keogh asked for excused absence to be recorded

Staff Present: Administrator Jordan Daugherty, Deputy Administrator Joshua Hartbarger, Director of Public Services Steve Pilcher, Police Chief Allan Baer (online), Fire Chief Jason Francis and Clerk Nicole Hartbarger

Guests Present: Wendy Gehring, Tim & Carrie Tuohy, James Cairl, Larry Yunker, Dave Riggerbach, Phil Whaley, Terry Bradfield, Karen Gerhardinger, Julie Studer (online)

Motion by Councilwoman Curry, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to approve the minutes of the November 14th, 2023 Committee of the Whole Meeting. 5 ayes

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AGENDA ITEMS

Council President Keogh asked if there were any citizen comments to be made regarding the agenda items. There were none.

FINANCE

Village Administrator Jordan Daugherty started off the finance review stating that there are two overall budgetary topics to review during tonight's meeting.

Formal Approval of Previously Reviewed Pay Scale

Administrator Daugherty reminded all in attendance that a year ago the Village implemented an organizational transition, for a multitude of reasons including the upcoming ALS Life Squad contract change. This was also a focus of not just salary cost savings but job opportunities and a better fit for staff abilities. Daugherty reminded Council that changes are all on Council records over the last year.

Administrator Daugherty asked Council to review the supporting information. He stated that the COLA was already approved for the pay scale ordinance. He shared that positions listed in red are not new, they are already pre-voted on and approved through the organizational changes. Daugherty reminded Council that Whitehouse had a Police Lieutenant around 10 years ago and we are now resurrecting – there will be no Deputy Chief position. On the Fire Department side, the Village will now have Advanced-EMT to support minimal

requirements for advanced life support coverage. The Platoon Chief position will be a new hire now that Deputy Administrator Hartbarger has moved out of the Fire Department. Daugherty commented that this will be a minimal projected impact on the budget, but the Village has saved \$150k by not filling positions and stalling for this year.

Committee members shared the following comments and questions during their discussion:

- Councilwoman Curry asked if the Crossing Guard position that was open at the beginning of the school year was ever filled. Deputy Administrator Hartbarger confirmed that the one Crossing Guard is able to take care of both requirements/duties at this time.
- Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer asked for clarification that positions/steps A1 and A2 are true newly created along with the Platoon Chief position. Daugherty confirmed that yes they are.
- Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer asked if next step is to approve to recommend the reviewed pay scale to council at the next meeting. Daugherty states that yes that is the action needed by the committee tonight.

Motion by Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to recommend to Council the pay scale classifications as presented. 5 ayes

Review Proposed Budgets (Service, Fire, Life Squad, Police, Administration, Capital Projects)

Administrator Daugherty began by sharing that this budget has been reviewed in detail with Acting Mayor Keogh as it is the Mayor's budget. He also shared that he has reached out to Council Elect Members in order for them to get comfortable with the budget process – there is so much detail in the budget, Whitehouse goes above and beyond what the state auditor requires. At this time, Daugherty suggested that the pages of the detailed budget be reviewed one at a time in order for questions to be answered and discussions to happen.

Committee members shared the following comments and questions during their discussion:

- Budget, Page 2
 - Administrator Daugherty explained that these are estimated fund balances, the left column is the estimate of the fund balance. He stated that per the state auditor there cannot be a negative balance in a fund. If there is negative balance, most likely it is the general fund that is the 'parent'. Daugherty shared that anything under the general fund is highly restricted, we cannot just pull funds for any reason. He called out that the general fund is decreasing, but it has a better than expected fund balance, attributable to not filling certain employee positions, and not buying anything that is not absolutely needed. He said that this page is a summary of all remaining pages.
 - Councilwoman Artiaga asked if the Covid Relief Fund of \$315k is permanent or set to expire. Administrator Daugherty confirmed that we have to spend at the latest in 2025, so that it is gone by 2026. He said that strict spending requirements for this money are basically gone; the spend just needs a reasonable justification. He shared that the Village will be looking at bigger

ticket items that we don't want to put in a different budget line – the money will definitely be spent.

- Councilwoman Curry asked if income tax collection is still going well with RITA. Administrator Daugherty confirmed that yes, it is going even better than expected. Expenses to use the service have stayed the same so far over time, and the Village has been able to collect more income tax funds than ever before. Councilwoman Artiaga asked how we pay RITA. Daugherty shared that we pay percentage of tax funds that are collected. Curry asked to confirm that RITA can track people who have not filed. Daugherty confirms that yes RITA has more resources than what the Village would have for this purpose.
- Daugherty confirmed that this is as tight a budget that staff can come up with that doesn't cut into known services. Already cut a bit with refuse, with previous decisions, but this is the best we can do to keep services as close to what residents are used to.
- Budget, Page 4:
 - Administrator Daugherty directed everyone to the highlighted 2024 Budget column. He shared that the next few pages are only focused on revenue.
 - Councilwoman Artiaga asked where the fire/co-op money is. Daugherty confirmed that it will be seen on page 5 of the budget.
 - Daugherty commented that there shows a down tick on the general fund, related to a more conservative estimate of income tax revenues.
- Budget, Page 5:
 - Administrator Daugherty explained the special revenues include state highway fund, park fund, and motor vehicle revenue which is license tax.
 - Daugherty called attention to the fact that Life Squad line includes June 3rd contract expiration/decrease.
 - Daugherty shared that transfers represent a large amount of general fund starting to go out. He commented that the debit showing on the fire truck line, will need to transfer revenue in.
 - Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer shared with the Council Elect Members in attendance that Administrator Daugherty's projections have always come in extremely close and can be greatly relied upon.
- Budget, Page 7:
 - Administrator Daugherty explained that the review is now starting to get into capital, this is the revenue side of capital; the total cost of the projects and appropriations will come up later in the budget.
- Budget, Page 8:
 - Administrator Daugherty started out by reminding council that the water and sewer fund - big dollar items - have already been reviewed through approving the rate and fee schedule.
 - Daugherty shared that Income Tax A is for capital exclusively at 30%. Income Tax B is the general fund portion of income tax revenue; 70% of this goes to general fund – for example \$1 comes in \$0.70 goes to general fund.
 - Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer brought up a comment to note, from the 2023 budget to 2024 budget, going from \$875k to \$750k estimated revenue for Income Tax A, and for Income Tax B going from \$1.95M to \$1.75M

estimate. Daugherty confirms the decrease but says he hopes we can say this is an estimate and numbers will come in much differently, more in line year over year.

- Budget, Page 11:
 - Administrator Daugherty shared that we are now starting to review budget funds that are department focused, starting with police.
 - Councilwoman Artiaga asked about the line item boarding of prisoners for \$12k; is that annual or do we pay otherwise. Chief Baer commented that we have reduced that cost every year. He shared that if we arrest someone under Village code we pay; if we arrest someone under a state charge we do not have to pay. Baer shared that this budget amount was previously \$36k and the department has been able to lower that with the focus on Ohio code.
 - Councilwoman Artiaga asked for clarification on the line item 'Equipment – Other' for \$10k. Chief Baer confirmed that this amount is a buffer, for unknown purchases that can't be anticipated i.e., cameras, tasers, ballistic helmets, RTF rifles for training, etc.
 - Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer asked Chief Baer if there is anything that decided to go without within the 2024 budget. Chief Baer commented that Flock cameras are on the wish list. The minimum purchase is \$18k, we only have \$7.5k currently budgeted, not enough. He shared that if we had a Flock camera we could have had picture of the vehicle license plate that drove into Steve Rogers Ford and stole a vehicle over this past weekend. He states that this would be great technology to have.
 - Councilwoman Curry asked for more information on Flock cameras. Chief Baer explained that Flock cameras are license plate readers with an included database. He shared that this is how suspect at high school was identified earlier this year from Maumee police; not a need but a want. He stated that with the current more lean budget, they did not include full amount.
- Budget, Page 12:
 - Administrator Daugherty commented that this page is focused on the fire department.
 - Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer shared that items listed on this budget sound a lot more familiar after holding tax levy townhalls this year.
 - Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer asked Chief Francis if there is anything that they decided to go without within the 2024 budget. Chief Francis explained that within the equipment budget they were going to look at purchasing another ventilation fan this next year which decreases carbon monoxide. He commented that with Life Squad service going away have decided to use that funding for a Lucas Device that costs around \$24k.
 - Councilwoman Artiaga asked if chaplains are paid or volunteers. Chief Francis confirmed that for the Fire Department, Reverend Clifton does not charge. Daugherty confirmed that the police chaplain is not paid either.
- Budget, Page 13:
 - Administrator Daugherty commented the next several pages have focus on the Public Works Department budget.
 - Public Works Director Pilcher commented that the first budget is the parks department.

- Pilcher shared there is no significant increase in the parks department. Some items he called out include: ballfield backstop fencing in repair and maintenance, \$7k for trail repair and money in equipment for disc golf course as Council has tentatively approved this which includes a year round portable restroom. Pilcher said they have also included an AED for the shelter house as it is being used more and more by the public.
- Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer asked if we have offered training on AED usage. Chief Francis confirmed that yes training has been given by request with calls to the department.
- Budget, Page 14:
 - Public Works Director Pilcher commented that the next budget is the Sanitation Department.
 - Pilcher commented that Council has already eliminated the curbside bulk pick up expense, all other items are basically the same. He commented that Ohio Compost did not raise their price for this year so that is the same as 2023.
 - Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer asked for confirmation that the contractual services line item is down in dollar amount because of the curbside bulk pick up removal. Pilcher confirmed that yes, that is the reason for that decrease.
- Budget, Page 15:
 - Administrator Daugherty shared that this page focuses on the budget for the Administration Department; same line items as last year, nothing new.
 - Councilwoman Curry asked if the beautification grant has been used. Daugherty confirmed that yes, we have two applications as we speak, one has been approved and one is pending. He shared with all in attendance that the beautification grant is a small Whitehouse grant to encourage downtown businesses to incorporate common themes/materials in their frontage. He commented that these have been really good improvements, great money spent by the businesses and Village.
 - Daugherty commented that the biggest number is transfers, most of which is to Life Squad, as we saw on the revenue side, this is where it is coming out.
 - Councilwoman Artiaga asked about the scholarships that the Village used to support. Deputy Administrator Hartbarger confirmed that we did not have an applicant this year. Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer commented that it was not really promoted. Artiaga asked about the status going forward; Daugherty shared that it was mainly run by volunteers, and it wasn't a priority this year. Conklin Kleiboemer shared that this is a good reminder that it is still there and available, does not believe this to be frivolous spending.
- Budget, Page 16:
 - Administrator Daugherty commented that this page is an extension to Administration; budget is almost the same as 2023.
 - Councilwoman Artiaga asked for clarification on the professional services line item. Daugherty shared that this is kept in the budget to have funds ready for new economic development; council established several years ago. He said we have it if someone needs an immediate incentive to come into the Village.

- Councilwoman Curry asked if some of this budget amount can be used for flock cameras. Daugherty said that we can certainly reduce the amount and redistribute. He shared that in January he will be coming up with new ideas for revenue streams, we are trying all that we can while being responsible.
- Budget, Page 17:
 - Public Works Director Pilcher stated that this page is focused on the Maintenance Department budget.
 - Pilcher commented that this includes maintenance of Village Hall and other buildings that Public Service helps maintain around Whitehouse. The only change seen are some expenses on the equipment line including an AED for Village Hall.
 - Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer asked if this includes any repair of Village Hall front cobble stone. Pilcher confirmed that yes, this amount is under repairs.
 - Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer asked Pilcher if there is anything that they decided to go without within the 2024 budget. Pilcher commented that the biggest going without for Public Service would be the tax split; it used to be 50/50 so we are doing the same with less budget money. He commented that he is thankful for what they can get done with the money allotted to the Public Works Department. Administrator Daugherty commented that this is important and why we are doing a lot more projects in house, development of talent to do this, etc; this keeps us cost effective and efficient.
 - Councilwoman Artiaga shared that she has heard comments about the flowers in downtown, the park across from Local Thyme, etc. - has been told this is frivolous spending. She comments that she would love new the Council to have a different aspect on things; if we expect new businesses and residents to come in, we have to be a community that is attractive to others – there is a cost to the Village to not spend on those things in the loss of economic development.
- Budget, Page 18:
 - Administrator Daugherty shared that this budget page focuses on the overall general fund.
 - Councilwoman Artiaga asked if we spend all money budgeted on payments to the health department. Daugherty confirmed that yes, all goes to health department, mostly for burial responsibilities. He shared that state law requires municipalities to pay for funerals where there is no heir to take care of the deceased. Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer asked doesn't this now fall to the FTUCD. Daugherty confirmed that it falls to actual communities for a resident, the bare minimum funeral.
 - Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer asked if health department fees are different at city-hood. Daugherty commented that yes they are somewhat different; as a city you are absolutely required to pay for the health department services, we currently choose to sub-contract with them.
 - Daugherty called out a few more line items including contractual services with law director, which is the contractual amount to provide legal rep to council. He said this is standard for most municipalities and the amount has not changed for 15 years; they do an excellent job for us.

- Budget, Page 19:
 - Administrator Daugherty shared that this page focuses on the Streets funding.
 - Councilwoman Artiaga asked how often do street sweepers come. Pilcher confirmed that they pass through once a week from April to October 31, as long as no snow/ice, and costs around \$20k a year. This includes downtown area every week, while the rest of the Village is parsed out and one area hit each week.
 - Councilwoman Artiaga asked for confirmation on what the sidewalk program is. Pilcher shared that it includes replacements of sidewalks as needed and as they are seen. He said this could also include connection points and extension of sidewalks as needed. Artiaga asked does that include just public areas or residential as well. She commented that residential was responsibility of homeowner at one point. Pilcher commented that we normally fix by complaint, if resident calls in - most of the time fixes are required from tree roots heaving the sidewalk – we take care of those without expense to homeowner.
 - Councilwoman Curry commented that the street sweeping, you can clearly see where it has gone, can we share with residents the schedule to allow them to move cars off the street. Pilcher commented that yes, we could try to get that posted so residents are aware.
 - Pilcher shared that road salt line item is down this year as we have not yet needed to replenish.
 - Pilcher commented that the road maintenance budget of \$25k for road repairs; there are a lot of sections of roadways that could be addressed to extend the life of them and help avoid a lot of roads coming due all at the same time.

Administrator Daugherty suggested a break at 8:17pm.

Committee of the Whole reconvened at 8:27pm.

- Budget, Page 21:
 - Administrator Daugherty shared that this page focused on the specialized funds.
 - Daugherty shared this includes the State Route 64 responsibility.
 - Councilwoman Artiaga asked how many years is the Bond listed. Daugherty confirmed it is a 20 year bond.
 - Daugherty explained how the listed transfers work – these are a lot of non-cash exchanges. All JEDD and JEDZ special funds that the state allows, municipality is the agent that is passed back. We are the collector on behalf of the township; we retain some but send most to township.
- Budget, Page 22:
 - Administrator Daugherty shared that this page of the budget focuses on the Life Squad within the fire department.
 - Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer asked to confirm if this is for Life Squad 9 – she also asked Council Elect if they understand the difference. Chief Francis confirmed that yes, one is Lucas County funded, other units are Village funded. Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer commented that the

biggest jump is professional services. Chief Francis confirms yes, this is partly due to dispatch costs changing.

- Budget, Page 23:
 - Administrator Daugherty shared that this page is focused on the Fire Co-Op funding.
 - Daugherty shared that it is required by ballot law that this fund is only receiving in exactly the amount that was established by the ballot vote; this is why this goes into its own fund - to be specifically tracked.
 - Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer stated that \$438k is a significant amount of money – without this levy we would not be able to do a lot of what we are doing and more would come out of the General Fund.
- Budget, Pages 24 & 25:
 - Public Works Director Pilcher stated that these pages encompass the Water Department budget.
 - Pilcher shared that the breakdown is in three different sections; this helps to know the breakdown of water rates each year for possible changes if necessary. He said there have not been a whole lot of change to this budget.
- Budget, Page 26:
 - Public Works Director Pilcher stated that these pages encompass the Sewer budget.
 - Pilcher called out that a push camera is in the budget this year to help identify where a sewer break may be. He said the current system is a VHS device.
 - Councilwoman Curry asked about the current Westwyck sewer repair. Pilcher pointed out that it was put in around 1972; some components are ductile iron and leaking. This repair is an effort to repair before breaking.
- Budget, Page 28:
 - Administrator Daugherty commented that this page shows breakdown of Income Tax A.
 - Daugherty shared that transfers shown are funding the capital projects.
- Budget, Page 30:
 - Administrator Daugherty shared that this page of the budget contains the capital projects detail.
 - Daugherty said that this year there are only two categories; almost exclusively looking at projects where we get significant funding like OPWC grant. He said we are going forward with Blue Creek bike trail project, this is mostly funded by federal funds – the Village has received around \$2.5M in federal funds between this blue creek trail grant and water tower grant.
 - Daugherty commented that this includes some in house beautification projects such as the mini roundabouts that were discussed in previous COW meetings.
- Budget, Page 31:
 - Administrator Daugherty commented that this page is specific to the Water Tower project.

Thanks were shared to all department heads, staff and Administrator Daugherty for their hard work in putting the 2024 budget together.

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilwoman Conklin Kleiboemer to recommend to Council the 2024 Appropriations and Budget as presented. 5 ayes

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Council President Keogh asked if there were any Citizen Comments to be heard.

Dave Riggensbach – 6313 Sydney Drive – shared his thanks to Council and staff for the detailed review of the budget.

OTHER BUSINESS

Council President Keogh asked if there was any other business to discuss. There was none.

Council President Keogh asked for comments on other business from all Committee of the Whole members. There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilman Keogh, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to adjourn the meeting at 8:48pm. 5 ayes

Respectfully submitted by Nicole Hartbarger, Clerk of Council