

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL – PRAYER – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM by Mayor Rich Bingham.

Council Members Present: Louann Artiaga, Dave Riggerbach, Carrie Tuohy, Steve Connelly and Larry Yunker

Council Members Absent: N/A

Staff Present: Village Administrator Jordan Daugherty, Deputy Administrator Joshua Hartbarger, Solicitor Kevin Heban, Director of Public Services Steve Pilcher, Council Clerk Nicole Hartbarger

Guests Present: Stephen Bond, David & Sharon Prueter, Rob Casaletta, James Cairl, Tim Tuohy, Mandy Tilton, Joe Bublick, Wendy Gehring, Bob Keogh, Karen Gerhardinger, Phil Whaley

Council Prayer was given by Pastor Stephen Bond of Community of Christ Church

COUNCIL CONSIDERATION OF VACANT SEAT

It was explained that during the previous weeks Committee of the Whole meeting, three well qualified individuals were interviewed for the vacant Council seat. The committee members went into an executive session after the interview process to deliberate and decide upon who will be chosen to fill the opening. It was confirmed by Solicitor Heban that a nomination needs to be made for the individual chosen, there is not a need for a second – after the nomination a voice call vote should occur.

Councilman Connelly nominated Steve Fine for the vacant council seat. Vote by voice call, 5 ayes.

Mayor Bingham approached the front along with Steve Fine for the purpose of swearing in Fine as the newest council member.

Councilman Fine sworn in and now a voting member of council.

Motion by Councilman Riggerbach, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to approve the minutes of the January 2nd, 2024 council meeting. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Connelly to approve the bills totaling \$13,347.52 dated January 11th, 2024 and the Addendum bills totaling \$356,862.08 dated January 16th, 2024. 6 ayes

PERSONS TO APPEAR BEFORE COUNCIL

Mayor Bingham asked if there were any persons to appear before council. There were two scheduled topics.

Request for Great Black Swamp Festival of Races on March 16, 2024

There were no persons in attendance to discuss or share details, but it was confirmed by several council members and staff that this is an event that happens every year for the last several years. Has been a well received and attended event in the past.

Motion by Councilwoman Tuohy, seconded by Councilman Yunker to approve the Great Black Swamp Festival of Races to be held in Whitehouse on March 16th, 2024. 6 ayes

Request for Whitehouse Primary School 5k on April 13, 2024

Mandy Tilton, representing the Whitehouse Parents Club 5k Race Committee was present to answer any questions that Council might have. She gave a brief description of the event and informed all that this is the 16th Annual. During this time, Councilwoman Artiaga asked

for confirmation on history of Council waiving the fee of hosting this type of event in town. It was confirmed that yes, in the past, these fees have been waived as it is a school sponsored event. Councilwoman Artiaga suggests that council continue to waive this fee in order to support the school and our great relationship with them. Councilman Riggenbach thanked Tilton for planning a great event every year.

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Connelly to approve the Whitehouse Primary School 5k Race to be held in Whitehouse with the associated fees being waived. 6 ayes

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Bingham asked if there were any committee reports to share.

Report on the Spencer Township JEDZ Meeting

- i. Councilwoman Tuohy reported that the committee met on January 4th, 2024 at 6pm.
- ii. Appointed chairs were in attendance along with the secretary.
- iii. The committee discussed several things including the question of the grant that is offered, if this is allowed to be applied for more than once.

Report on the January 9, 2024 Committee of the Whole Meeting

- i. President of Council Artiaga reported that the meeting was called to order at 6:31pm and there was only one item on the agenda, interviewing applicants for the vacant council seat.
- ii. Questions were asked of each applicant and each was given time to provide council with their answers. President Artiaga suggests that anyone interested in reviewing the questions and answers should access the online recorded meeting and minutes from this date.
- iii. The committee went into an executive session to deliberate and discuss the candidates.
- iv. Steve Fine was chosen and sworn in during tonight's Council meeting.

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

Mayor Bingham shared that the first topic he has was the appointment of several individuals to open Board and Committee spots.

Mayor Bingham nominated Joe Bublick to fill the first open Board of Zoning Appeals position. He asked for any questions or discussion on this nomination; there were none.

Councilman Riggenbach made a motion to approve the appointment of Joe Bublick to the Board of Zoning Appeals, Councilwoman Artiaga second. 6 ayes

Mayor Bingham nominated Bob Kimball to fill the second open Board of Zoning Appeals position. He asked for any questions or discussion on this nomination; there were none.

Councilwoman Artiaga made a motion to approve the appointment of Bob Kimball to the Board of Zoning Appeals, Councilman Fine second. 6 ayes

Mayor Bingham continued with the topic of Community Outreach.

He first suggested that he would like to bring back the annual easter egg hunt in Village Park this year, if possible. He is suggesting Council and staff work with the Chamber and churches if needed. He asked other council members if they agree. All in agreement that it is a good idea and was a successful event in the past. Mayor Bingham commented that he will talk to Wendy at the Chamber to gauge their interest in helping.

Next, Mayor Bingham discussed hosting a Coffee with the Mayor/Council event toward the end of April. He said that he would be looking for three available council members. Several

Council members showed interest and said they would be willing to participate. Looking to host this at Copper Press Coffee shop.

The next community outreach idea Mayor Bingham discussed was hosting a booth at Cherry Fest in June. He said this has been discussed with Wendy from the Chamber and he would be looking to make sure someone is there to man the booth during all open times. He commented that the goal is to be there to talk to people, answer questions about any upcoming ballot issues, etc. Mayor Bingham also suggested that he would like council/mayor to have a float in the Cherry Fest parade; they can advertise where residents can come find council to answer questions, etc. All council members in agreement, no questions were asked. Mayor Bingham said they will work on schedule of who can cover for the open times, Friday and Saturday.

Mayor Bingham finished up with a few comments regarding the closure of the Ardagh plant. He said there has been nothing from the union at Ardagh just yet on how many employees they will be taking to other plants. Mayor Bingham stated there will be a job fair hosted for employees and others locally.

REPORT OF THE CLERK OF COUNCIL

Mayor Bingham asked for any items to report from Clerk Nicole Hartbarger. There were none.

REPORT OF THE VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR

Mayor Bingham asked for any items to report from Administrator Jordan Daugherty.

Administrator Daugherty shared with council that the next Committee of the Whole meeting will be pretty heavy with several topics right away this year. He wants to share with Council what some of those topics are.

Daugherty stated that the long-awaited ALS contract will need to be reviewed and passed forward by Council. He shared that some municipalities are already passing this proposed contract and the Whitehouse/Waterville/Waterville Township Co-op, W3, have already reviewed and recommend passing. Daugherty states that this is a big impact item, but a lot of good work has been done for the same, if not better, ALS service.

Next, Daugherty shared that they will resume revenue discussions. He said this will not be anything new but presenting the same information to be reviewed by the newly appointed body. He commented that if Council has any ideas or need research done to give him a heads up.

Administrator Daugherty shared that Whitehouse may have more than one ballot issue this fall, could be up to four. He said that during Committee of the Whole meetings these will be talked about including: revenue, aggregation, charter amendments, etc. Daugherty commented that electric utility aggregation is good for the residents but fairly technical to discuss; it will be a savings to the households. He went on to state that the Charter Review Commission has an upcoming meeting and there will be topics to discuss from these meetings.

Councilwoman Tuohy asked for clarification on the electrical topic – if this is the co-op option. Councilman Fine confirmed that yes, 98% of Lucas County already participates. Mayor Bingham confirmed that Council is trying to support this for the whole village.

Councilman Riggerbach asked Daugherty if there is any value in updating the projections previously discussed that will be discussed now going forward. Daugherty confirmed that yes, he will update in same format, but there will be no new options.

Councilman Yunker asked about primary amendment, is this a separate issue than passing charter. Solicitor Heban shared that we will talk to Committee about this - do we adopt whole new charter or just add specific issues to ballot and update those. Heban shared that Toledo City tends to put a whole new charter on to vote on, there are positives and negatives to this approach. Mayor Bingham asked if this would be confusing to update the whole charter to vote on. Solicitor Heban said it is one of the options, committee/council can make the decision on how to proceed.

REPORT OF THE VILLAGE SOLICITOR

Mayor Bingham asked Solicitor Kevin Heban for any items to be reported. There were none.

Mayor Bingham asked Heban about the ordinances on the agenda and the fact that several of the new council members may not be as familiar with the topics as previous. Heban said they can do a review of those topics right now.

Councilman Fine asked, regarding chickens, what is definition of 'rear yard'. Solicitor Heban confirmed it is from the front set back and then back – corner lot is two set backs then back. Councilman Fine commented that there is a 20 ft set back where other places have different i.e. zoning code is 25 ft – how would residents know if they require a larger set back. Heban stated that staff will have to look at codes after a resident applies for chicken coop. Mayor Bingham stated nobody talked to the zoning inspector who has to enforce, and the zoning inspector said it is basically impossible to enforce. He stated that with the small number of residents who want this, the zoning inspector does not support. Solicitor Heban commented that subdivisions can prohibit keeping of chickens within their own HOA rules. Councilman Yunker commented that he sees nothing in the ordinance that provides for any penalties for policing this and that is a concern.

Councilwoman Artiaga asked Heban what are the options with this ordinance - can we vote no to take it off the agenda going forward. Heban confirmed that it can be defeated. Councilwoman Artiaga suggested to council to make a vote today and not continue to table. Councilman Yunker asked Heban if it were voted down today and brought up in future with different language is that allowed. Solicitor Heban confirms that yes we can absolutely revisit the topic in the future.

Mayor Bingham began the discussion of the trash cans placement ordinance by stating that an updated ordinance passed last year in regard to their placement. He stated that he feels the issue with changing is people will be in violation no matter what they do, as their house is visible from all sides. Councilman Riegenbach asked to confirm if this updated ordinance is less restrictive to residents. Solicitor Heban confirms that yes, now you can have trash cans on side of the house even if visible. Several council members commented that if the current ordinance is not being enforced – where trash cans cannot be visible – it makes sense to change the ordinance to be less restrictive.

Councilman Yunker commented that he agrees that we should make less restrictive. He also commented that a lot of legislation has been done by emergency, including changing rules that affect residents, rules that we live by. He is suggesting in cases like this, unless it is a pressing matter, we should do three standard readings. Councilman Yunker continued that if the issue is not an emergency, the standard readings gives the public a chance to hear what is going on and have a chance to have right of referendum.

Mayor Bingham confirms that the ordinance will be less restrictive with this change – wording updated to allow placement on side of house. All of council agrees.

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Bingham asked for Citizen Comments pertaining to Agenda items.

Rob Casaletta, 6701 Blue Creek East – Asked to briefly speak about Ordinance 6-2023, regarding chickens. He asked if Whitehouse crafted that ordinance or did we copy from

Perrysburg. He commented that this has been going on for a while, and he agrees with some Council members stating that its time to get rid of this – we can always go back. He stated that from years ago, the possession of pot belly pigs was an issue and this feels very similar. Casaletta finished his comments stating that he hopes this ordinance will be turned down – he does not feel it is a good thing for Whitehouse.

ORDINANCES

Acting Mayor Keogh asked Solicitor Kevin Heban for any ordinances to be reviewed or voted on. Previously discussed Ordinances are on the agenda to be voted on.

Motion by Councilwoman Tuohy, seconded by Councilman Riggenbach to approve **Ordinance 5-2023: Amending Whitehouse Municipal Code Section 955.03(b)(4), Residential Waste Collection Regulations**, First Reading. 6 Ayes

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilman Connelly to approve **Ordinance 6-2023: Enacting Whitehouse Municipal Code Section 1257.30, Keeping of Chickens**, First Reading. 0 Ayes, 6 Opposed

RESOLUTIONS

Mayor Bingham asked Heban for any resolutions to be reviewed or voted on. There were none.

OTHER ITEMS DISCUSSED

Department Heads

Public Services Director Steve Pilcher shared his thanks for Mayor Bingham for his kind words during the promotional ceremony that was held just before this council meeting.

Council Comments

Councilman Yunker began by thanking all of the parties that came forward with interest in being appointed to the vacant council seat. He shared that all had good characteristics, but unfortunately Council could only pick one. He also encourages all to stay involved, and to please make their talents available to Council.

Councilman Connelly seconds Yunker's comments; he said selecting the new Council member was not an easy decision – it is good to see people wanting to participate. He went on to thank Mayor Bingham for the community engagement ideas – thinks this is great, and Council and the Village need this. Connelly stated he is excited for good things to come. He finished up his comments by stating that someone asked him about extending a sidewalk in a certain location and he will talk with Administration.

Councilman Fine shared that he is humbled to have the opportunity to serve the Village and is looking forward to it – thank you to all.

Councilwoman Tuohy commented to Joe Bublick that he will be an asset to the BZA and she is excited for that. Councilwoman Tuohy thanked Deputy Administrator Hartbarger for the planning and execution of the promotion ceremony; very well done. She also thanked Councilman Fine for joining Council and stated that she is excited to work with him. Lastly, she thanked Bob Keogh for his time and efforts over the years and hope to see him involved going forward.

Councilman Riggenbach congratulated Councilman Fine and welcomed him to the team. He also shared his thanks to Joe Bublick and Bob Keogh for their interest in the Council position. He wished good luck to Joe on BZA and thanks to Bob thank you for all he's done and what he will continue to do. He finished up with congrats to all for pulling off a great promotion ceremony; he stated this was a huge deal, three years in the making.

Councilwoman Artiaga echoed all sentiments already shared on where we’ve been and new additions. She said she is extremely excited, lots of important issues, excited for possibilities.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Acting Mayor Keogh asked if there were any Citizen comments to be heard.

Rob Casaletta, 6701 Blue Creek East – Casaletta shared that he is on the executive committee of United Way Greater Toledo. He shared they sponsor a service called ‘Call 211’, where folks at Ardagh, or any others, can get any kind of help or assistance they may need: jobs, unemployment, health care. He shared that he talked to VP of United Way regarding 211, and they had a meeting regarding possibilities of calls from these folks so they are prepared. Casaletta said his next item is the Charter Revision Commission; he has put an agenda together for Solicitor Heban and Deputy Administrator Hartbarger to look at. He is asking Hartbarger to please verify terms and info included on agenda. Casaletta stated there will be election of officers for 2024. He shared that in 2023, there was only one meeting - on March 10th - plan is to review meeting minutes from that meeting. He stated that items to discuss include changes identified by Village solicitor, review of any proposals by Mayor/Council/Admin along with reviewing charter revision proposals submitted. Casaletta commented that the charter should not be politicized - it had a tendency to be so in the past.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilman Yunker, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to adjourn the meeting at 7:34pm. 6 ayes

Duly Appointed Clerk of Council

Mayor