

# Hiram Village Council Meeting

Rosser Municipal Building  
11617 Garfield Road, Hiram, Ohio 44234

February 13, 2024

The following Members of Council were present: Mr. Szell, Mrs. Greenwood, Mr. Ed Frato-Sweeney, Mr. McCreight and Mr. Smith. The following were also present: Mayor Anne Haynam, Village Solicitor Jennifer Kangas Berendt, Fiscal Officer Susan Skrovan-DeYoung, Police Chief Brian Gregory arrived late, Fire Chief Bill Byers, Asst. Fire Chief Jason Groselle, Village Administrator James McGee, Asst. Village Administrator Steve Schuller, Officer Hoskin and Officer Miavitz. The following were absent: Mr. Holmes.

The following persons were present: Madison Palm, Hiram College student, Denise Summers, Sean Fabich, Jim Reager, Kristin and Mr. Len Sippel; CFO with Hiram College.

Mayor Haynam called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Mayor asked that all cell phones be silenced followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Mayor asked to approve the regular minutes of January 9, 2024 of Council. Motion to approve the January 9, 2024 Council meeting minutes was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. Smith. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor.

Mayor asked to approve the proposed Council agenda as presented. Motion to approve the proposed agenda as presented was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. Frato-Sweeney. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor.

## GUEST AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Denise Summers spoke briefly.

Sean Fabich spoke to Council.

## DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

***\*Fire Chief Bill Byers provided their monthly report.***

Chief Bill Byers presented Council with the department's annual report. It was a productive year.

***Village Administrator James McGee provided their monthly report.***

James informed Council there will be a couple pieces of legislation for their consideration; one for the purchase of a used leaf vacuum and the second for the purchase of a new 2024 truck.

His department has been busy cleaning out the water treatment plant. They also have plans to refurbish the women's bathroom in the Village Hall. They continue to work on the EPA violations. There will be an IT company out this Friday to meet with them. The speed camera signs have been posted. The Street Department has set up a planning room in the street garage; all plans have been collected. The Constance Road Lift Station project has been advertised for bid; bid opening is March 6<sup>th</sup>.

Steve Schuller spoke with Joe Bodnar at the Portage County Building Department regarding the Hiram College bar. The college is changing the "use" of that space and they need a motion by Council to allow for the change in use. There was concerns about the occupancy for the new use. The liquor license was already approved by Council.

**Motion to approve the change of usage for the purpose of a bar for a portion of the ground floor of the Kennedy Center as long as it complies with the County Building Code was made by Mr. Szell with a second from Mr. Ed Frato-Sweeney. The result of the voice vote was 4-0-1 with an abstention by Mr. McCreight. The motion passed.**

Steve handed out a report showing the breakdown of the General Fund for Council's review.

## **February 2024 Mayor Report**

### **Campus Meetings & Village Pass:**

In the past month I've had meetings in 9 different offices on the Hiram campus including a meeting with interim President Bohrer in an effort to increase collaboration and assess resources that the Village can better utilize. Tonight, I'm announcing the Village Pass program which will launch in early March. Residents of Hiram Village can pay a 1-time fee of \$25 for an individual/\$40 for a family and essentially get all of the benefits of being a faculty or staff member such as using the athletic facility, getting discounts, and free access to athletic contests. In return, members commit to one or more options for helping support our students and the college community. More details will be released later this month.

### **Committee Updates:**

Planning & Zoning met on Feb 6<sup>th</sup>. Two items still with P&Z are the house inspections and feral cats.

Recreation & Park Board met earlier this evening and is working on adding recreation opportunities.

Beautification Commission met earlier this evening and is working on the tree canopy project.

Economic Development will meet on Feb 20<sup>th</sup>.

Website task force was formed to include Lynn Brewster and Dave Dreimiller.

Last Saturday I attended a conference focused on how to become a Buckeye Trail Town. As you might know, Hiram is on the Buckeye Trail and there's statewide marketing connected to being a Trail Town. Subsequently, Tom Franek and I have formed a Trail Town Initiative Task Force made up of members of the Township, Village and College to initially work on developing a network of trails that circle the Village and long term to connect the Village to the Headwaters Trail as well as re-route the Buckeye Trail directly into the Village center.

**Public Forum** scheduled for Feb 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7 pm in the KC Ballroom. It will entail a 20-minute Q & A with Trevor Elkins from Targeting Solutions regarding the speed camera implementation followed by small group and large group work arounds our Village identity.

**Personnel** Keith Holmes has resigned his seat on Council and will repay to the Village the compensation received in 2024. Council has 30 days to vote in a replacement or the Mayor can appoint someone.

Recommending a personnel change in the Village office such that Steve Schuller be appointed to the VA position at a compensation rate of \$58,000 and James McGee be reassigned to the assistant VA position at a compensation rate of \$53,000.

**Motion to re-assign roles, Steve Schuller as Village Administrator and James McGee as Assistant Village Administrator as described in the Mayor's report was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mrs. Greenwood. James spoke to Council regarding his position and his pay especially since he has not received any written warnings in his personnel file. Council members discussed the difference in pay; Steve would be \$9,000 more and James would now be \$4,700 less. Motion to postpone the decision was made by Mrs. Greenwood with a second by Mr. McCreight. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The motion passed.**

Chairman Chris Szell spoke briefly about the resignation of Keith Holmes. His life circumstances have changed. Mr. Holmes plans to pay back to the Village what he has been paid to date. Information on the vacant seat will be put in our Communicator and on the Village's website. Council will review this position in March.

**\*Fiscal Officer Report: Susan Skrovan-DeYoung presented the monthly financial reports for February.**

The UAN system remains in temporary mode to allow the Fiscal Officer to work in both 2023 and 2024. It will remain open until the 2023 year-end can be closed and no later than February 29, 2024.

The fiscal office is in the process of setting up payments using credit and debit cards. The Mayor, Fiscal Officer and Assistant Fiscal Officer met with a representative from BancCard whom partners with our Middlefield Bank to provide the equipment. There is a 3.5% transaction fee that is passed onto the payee. Initial set up fee is \$149.00; the BancCard terminal is free. The monthly "base" fee is \$50.00; however, if we have \$500.00 in card transactions, there is no cost that month. The plan is to utilize this service until we can eventually set up for online payments.

Lisa Muldowney, branch manager with Middlefield Bank visited the Village's fiscal office to review our accounts. It was discovered that our NOW Checking, Money Market and CD's have outdated names as signers. They are; Lou Bertrand, Susan Skrovan-DeYoung, Wendelin Taylor and Thomas Wadkins. Susan would ask Council for a motion to update the NOW Checking Account and the Money Market Account to reflect Mayor Anne Haynam, FO Susan Skrovan-DeYoung, Asst. FO Wendelin Taylor and Council President Chris Szell as signers on these accounts. And, for the two CD's to reflect Mayor Anne Haynam and Fiscal Officer Susan Skrovan-DeYoung on them.

**Motion to correct the signers at Middlefield Bank to reflect the new names on the Village's accounts to Mayor Anne Haynam and Council President Chris Szell was made by Mr. Ed Frato-Sweeney with a second by Mr. Smith. There was brief discussion regarding our bonds and who should be bonded for the Village. Mr. Szell called for the question. The result of the voice vote was 4-0-1 with an abstention by Mr. Szell. The motion passed.**

**A motion to accept the Fiscal Officer's report was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mrs. Greenwood. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The motion passed.**

**The bills list was reviewed. A motion to approve the bills list as presented was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mr. Smith. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The motion passed.**

**\*Police Chief Brian Gregory provided their monthly report.**

Chief Brian Gregory thanked Officer Miavitz for attending the first part of the Council meeting in his place tonight. The Chief has no monthly report to provide; he has been dealing with a volatile situation in the Village. He also attending a chief's meeting today.

The Chief reminded everyone of the upcoming total eclipse on April 8, 2024.

## **HIRAM TOWNSHIP REPORT**

No Township report tonight.

## **LEGISLATION**

### **ORDINANCES**

**2023-19: AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 1113.21 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM- REGARDING CHICKENS. TABLED ON 3<sup>RD</sup> READING.** A motion to take off the table was made by Mr. Frato-Sweeney with a second by Mr. Szell. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. A motion to approve on 3<sup>rd</sup> reading was made by Mr. Frato-Sweeney with a second by Mr. McCreight. Ed Frato-Sweeney informed Council that the Planning & Zoning Commission board reviewed

and made some changes based on the feedback they received. Chris Szell raised a question regarding the Couch Farm & 5-acres. Chris felt Council should take “chickens” out of item a. A motion to table for one more month Ordinance 2023-19 was made by Mr. Frato-Sweeney with a second by Mr. Smith. Mrs. Greenwood asked if we have an enforcement mechanism in place? Mr. Frato-Sweeney said violators would work with our zoning inspector. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The motion passed.

**2023-25: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF A PARKING VIOLATIONS BUREAU WITHIN THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM, OHIO AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON 3<sup>rd</sup> READING.** A motion to approve on 3<sup>rd</sup> reading was made by Mr. Szell with a second from Mr. McCreight. This was sent back to the Finance & Safety Committee for review. It was discussed by committee; this only establishes a “Parking Bureau”, nothing more. Mr. Szell called for the question. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The motion passed.

**2023-28: AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH SECTION 121.08 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES ENTITLED PUBLIC COMMENTS W/EXHIBIT A. 3<sup>rd</sup> READING.** A motion to approve on 3<sup>rd</sup> reading was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mr. Frato-Sweeney. There was discussion between Council and the public regarding this ordinance and exhibit. Mr. Frato-Sweeney called for the question. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The motion passed.

**2024-02: AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 303 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM REGARDING ENFORCEMENT, IMPOUNDING AND PENALTY. 1<sup>ST</sup> READING.**

**2024-03: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PROPORTIONING OF VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR AND ASSISTANT VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR SALARIES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** A motion to suspend the rules was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mr. Frato-Sweeney. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. A motion to approve as an emergency was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mr. McCreight. Council members discussed with the Fiscal Officer the details of setting this all up in the payroll system. Mr. McCreight felt documentation would be beneficial. Mr. Frato-Sweeney called for the question. The result of the voice vote was 4-1 in favor with a nay vote by Mr. Smith. The motion passed.

**2024-04: AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 351 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM REGARDING PARKING GENERALLY. 1<sup>ST</sup> READING.**

**2024-05: AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 319 AUTOMATED SPEED AND TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** A motion to suspend the rules was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mrs. Greenwood. Discussion followed between the Mayor, the Police Chief and Council regarding the details of the program, setting up the proper set point for mileage of the posted speed limit for ticketing. The Chief did say they did a study on our speed in the Village; only six were over the eleven-mile limit. A motion to approve as an emergency was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mr. Smith. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The motion passed. There was more discussion. A motion to rescind Ordinance 2024-05 for passage was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mr. Frato-Sweeney. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. A motion to postpone Ordinance 2024-05 was made by Mr. Frato-Sweeney with a second by Mr. McCreight. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The motion passed.

## RESOLUTIONS

**2024-01: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE INTERNET SALE OF UNNEEDED, OR UNFIT, OR OBSOLETE PERSONAL PROPERTY, INCLUDING MOTOR VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT OWNED BY THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM. 2<sup>nd</sup> READING.**

**2024-02: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR TO PURCHASE A 2010 ODB TRAILER, LEAF VACUUM AND JOHN DEERE DIESEL ENGINE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** A motion to suspend the rules was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mrs. Greenwood. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. A motion to approve as an emergency was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mrs. Greenwood. Chris Szell noted that this had been discussed at Finance. More discussion by Council followed. Mr. Szell called for the question. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The motion passed.

**2024-03: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR TO PURCHASE A 2024 FORD 4X4 TRUCK AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** A motion to suspend the rules was made by Mrs. Greenwood with a second by Mr. Szell. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. A motion to approve as an emergency was made by Mr. Frato-Sweeney with a second by Mrs. Greenwood. Mr. Frato-Sweeney asked why we are not considering a used vehicle. Steve spoke to Council on their plans with the new truck and future plans for equipment. More discussion followed. Mr. Szell called for the question. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor.

**2024-04: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR AGREEMENT WITH DEBORAH WORDELL FOR A FINANCIAL EFFICIENCY TEST AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** A motion to suspend the rules was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mr. Frato-Sweeney. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. A motion to approve as an emergency was made by Mr. Frato-Sweeney with a second by Mrs. Greenwood. Council members asked where this will be paid out of. This would come out of our General Fund. Section 2, we should remove “attached Exhibit A” if we do not have a contract document. Mr. Szell called for the question. A motion to approve as amended was made by Mr. Frato-Sweeney with a second by Mrs. Greenwood. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The motion passed.

**2024-05: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND THE FISCAL OFFICER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH TARGETING AND SOLUTIONS LIMITED FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF FEES PAID TO MICHAEL CICERO RELATING TO SPEED ENFORCEMENT SYSTEMS IN THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** A motion to suspend the rules was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mr. McCreight. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. A motion to approve as an emergency was made by Mr. Frato-Sweeney with a second by Mr. Smith. Several Council members said they did not receive the exhibit; Ed, Beth and Chris Szell. Copies were provided to them. Mr. Szell called for the question. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The motion passed.

**2024-06: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND THE FISCAL OFFICER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH ATTORNEY MICHAEL CICERO AND NICOLA, GRUDBRANSON & COOPER, LLC FOR LEGAL ASSISTANCE IMPLEMENTING THE SPEED ENFORCEMENT SYSTEMS IN THE VILLAGE OF HIRAM AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** A motion to suspend the rules was made by Mr. McCreight with a second by Mr. Szell. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. A motion to approve as an emergency was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mr. McCreight. Council discussed the approval date of the agreement and decided it needed to be corrected. Mr. Szell called for the question. A motion to approve as an emergency as amended was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mr. McCreight. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The motion passed.

**A motion to convene in Executive Session for Personnel Matters at 9:25 pm was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mrs. Greenwood. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor.**

A motion to reconvene into Regular Session at 10:47 pm was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mrs. Greenwood. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor.

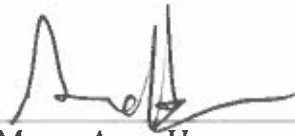
A motion to approve the personnel change such that Steve Schuller be appointed to the Village Administrator position at a compensation rate of \$57,000 and James McGee be reassigned to the Assistant Village Administrator position at a compensation rate of \$55,000 was made by Mr. Smith with a second by Mr. Szell. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The motion passed.

A motion to address the unused 2023 vacation time of the Fiscal Officer Susan Skrovan-DeYoung such that 1/3 will be paid, 1/3 will carry over to be used by December 31, 2024 and 1/3 will be forfeited was made by Mr. Szell with a second by Mr. McCreight. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The motion passed.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS: None.

The Mayor asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. McCreight. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:57 pm.

These minutes are pending approval by Council.

  
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Mayor Anne Haynam

ATTEST:

  
Fiscal Officer Susan J. Skrovan-DeYoung