

Regular Council Meeting
01/28/2021
7:00 PM

Meeting held via Zoom teleconference and streamed live on the Village of Blanchester Facebook page

Gary Bauer, Harry Brumbaugh, Don Gephart, Chad Hollon, Reilly Hopkins, and Richard Simpson were present. Mayor John Carman presided over the meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

HOPKINS/HOLLON: Motion to accept agenda as presented. All voted yea.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from 01/14/2021 meeting were presented to Council.

SIMPSON/BRUMBAUGH: Motion to approve minutes from 01/14/2021 meeting as presented. All voted yea.

APPROVAL OF BILLS/ADJUSTMENTS

Bills and adjustments were presented to Council. Mayor noted correction to the bills list (item #6) that should have read “James” instead of “Jeff”.

ADJUSTMENTS FOR 2021 APPROPRIATIONS
PRESENTED TO COUNCIL 01/28/2021

FUND/DEPT	UAN ACCT #	FUND
TOTAL GEN FUND		\$0.00
WATER CONTRACTUAL SERVICES	5101-531-300	\$692.66
WATER CAPITAL OUTLAY	5101-531-500	(\$692.66)
SEWER CONTRACTUAL SERVICES	5201-541-300	\$702.66
SEWER CONTINGENCIES	5201-930-930	(\$702.66)
ELEC OTHER CONTRACTUAL SERVICES-BILLING	5301-512-390	\$4,484.68
ELEC CONTINGENCIES	5301-930-930	(\$4,484.68)
CHERRY ST PHASE 1 PROJECT ENGINEERING SVCS	4905-800-346	\$2,358.15
CHERRY ST PHASE 1 PROJECT CAPITAL OUTLAY	4905-800-500	\$626.85
TOTAL OTHER		\$2,985.00
TOTAL GEN FUND+OTHER		\$2,985.00

HOLLON/HOPKINS: Motion to approve bills/adjustments as presented. Roll call was made. All voted yea.

GUEST SPEAKERS: SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROJECT

Mayor gave a brief overview of past events regarding the Safe Routes to School Project and what the project would entail. He introduced Dunrobin Associates, also present for the meeting, as the firm representing the middle man between Village and property owners for said project. Mayor informed Council there was some recent concern from the residents regarding the instigation of the project.

Holly Drummond, Village of Blanchester resident, spoke on behalf of the residents on Baldwin street and a petition against the project had been circulated with residents there regarding concerns. She stated the residents were confused as to why there was a need for a new sidewalk installed in this area for the elementary school on their property side of the street when there was a sidewalk on the opposite side already available. Holly cited an ODOT study provided that revealed there were 2 walkers to school currently. She questioned if sidewalks were installed, the property value would go up, but so would property taxes. Holly conversely stated if trees were removed, property value would decrease. She directed Council’s attention to Columbus Street where she noted there were no sidewalks on either side of the street, but

there was a bus stop for the school children. She declared the residents' petition filed against the project contained 16 signatures in consensus of discontinuing the project.

Mayor confirmed there are several areas in the Village without sidewalks. He noted in the original plan in 2019, Regional Planning reported that out of 27 miles in Village, only 8 miles of sidewalk exist currently. He posited sidewalks should be properly installed and maintained for those who use motorized wheelchairs/scooters as well as those who would like to use sidewalks to maintain a healthy lifestyle by walking, jogging, etc. Mayor announced this project was fully funded with a grant with no required match from the Village funds. He affirmed all work to be completed was within the right-of-way as to not impede on anyone's property. He noted trees that are in the right-of-way must be addressed by the Village.

Lisa Burns, representative of Dunrobin Associates, confirmed all construction for said project was in existing right-of-way, currently available to the Village of Blanchester. Temporary easements were being required was to ensure yards grade cleanly into the sidewalk, and impacted trees would be properly removed. Temporary easement was to grant rights to be on residents' property for the duration of the project only. There would not be any permanent fee takes or easements would be involved in said project.

Mayor elaborated that so far out of a very competitive federal grant that had been awarded for this project, \$48,000 has already been expended. He asserted if the Village were to pull out of the project at this point, future possibility for federal grant funding may become more difficult as the Village would be considered a risk to award grant money. Don stated he believed the previously referenced ODOT study was performed before the COVID pandemic and at that time, there were more frequent walkers to school. Harry stated he was raised on that street and he mentioned he had seen traffic patterns. He believed that putting the sidewalk on the opposite side of the street it will be presenting additional traffic problems, possibly endangering children. He recommended placing a safety officer to police the sidewalks. Reilly asked if electric poles would need to be removed for the project. Ram confirmed poles would be replaced by BPA as needed. Chad stated the Village was indeed in need of additional sidewalks, but the construction of sidewalks would need to start somewhere. Lengthy discussion took place with several differing opinions being offered by Council members, Mayor, Dunrobin Associates and Holly. Lisa Burns provided information on ODOT proceedings with possible right-of-way/easement proceedings with resident disagreements, and affirmed that at the end of the day, if the resident went to court, it was possible the resident might end up paying out of pocket costs, but court proceedings would not halt the project from advancing.

GEHART/HOLLON: Motion to move forward with the appropriation process for the Safe Routes to School Project. Roll call was made. BAUER, GEPHART, HOLLON, HOPKINS voted yea; BRUMBAUGH, SIMPSON voted no. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Mayor brought Council's attention to the Fawn Lane drainage situation. Paul Daniels stated after reviewing the drainage issue, he was unable to find any voids. Mayor shared an engineer's drawing of the drainage pipe system that is currently in place. He stated that the pipes were inverted, meaning the water was lower entering the pipe than exiting the pipe causing some backup issues. After speaking with the county engineers, they stated it could be cut, but care must be taken to prevent further issues. Common consensus after inspecting the drainage area was tree/brush blockage has caused water to backup over the years since the drainage system was originally built about 20 years ago as well as inverted pipe issues. ChoiceOne had been contracted to provide a drainage study and appropriate box culvert size needed to improve water flow under the roadway. This estimate should be arriving in approximately 2 weeks.

President Pro Tempore of the legislative authority was the next topic discussed.

HOLLON/SIMPSON: Motion to appoint Reilly Hopkins as President Pro Tempore for Council in 2021. All voted yea (except HOPKINS abstained).

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor introduced Amended Resolution 2021.001. Date for placing on levy renewal on ballot had been revised to November 2021.

GEPHART/BRUMBAUGH: Motion to adopt Amended Resolution 2021.001, Resolution Declaring it Necessary to Renew a Levy Tax in Excess of the Ten Mill Limitation. Roll call was made. All voted yea.

Mayor introduced Ordinance 2021.003. Katie provided clarification on ordinance language regarding a full-time Mayor salary versus a part-time salary and established this was not an interchangeable rule in the ordinance to be changed if the Mayor's job situation were to change mid-term, but would need to be established at the beginning of the Mayor's term as one or the other. Don stated more work needed to be performed to clarify parts of the ordinance. Mayor professed if the salaries are being increased, the additional money should not be mandated in excess of the increase in salary. Various Council members voiced their opinions on the topic. Common consent was that the additional cost for special meetings were not a burden as an elected official and existing Council members did not really desire the additional money fee.

BRUMBAUGH/HOLLON: Motion to place Ordinance 2021.003, Establishing the Salary for the Mayor, Council and the Board of Public Affairs, on first reading striking the \$50 additional meeting bonus language and reduction of salary if meetings are missed. Roll call was made. All voted yea.

Mayor gave Council background regarding a resident phone call who had received pardon for their garbage collection fee. Mayor displayed a copy of the last renewal addendum of the Rumpke contract revealing the section regarding multiple family residences of less than four (4) units per building. He also displayed the Rumpke contract which defines how many units the Village will be paying for to Rumpke (1,475 units). Chad stated he didn't see anything wrong with enforcing the contract the way it was written.

BAUER/GEPHART: Motion to recess to executive session pursuant to 121.22(G)(2) to consider the purchase of property for public purposes, the sale of property at competitive bidding, or the sale or other disposition of unneeded, obsolete, or unfit-for-use property in accordance with section 505.10 of the Revised Code inviting Mayor, Solicitor, Fiscal Officer, Ram Reddy, and Tom Lee to meeting. Roll call was made. All voted yea. Meeting recessed at 8:59 PM. Roll call was made. Meeting resumed at 9:13 PM.

HOLLON/GEPHART: Motion to remove fence and Village property line in parking lot be restored. Roll call was made. All voted yea.

SOLICITOR
None.

FISCAL OFFICE
None.

MAYOR

Mayor announced after further discussion, the decision was being made to keep the Municipal Building closed until the end of March due to the vaccination not being readily available.

HOLLON/HOPKINS: Motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:18 PM.

Approved: February 11, 2021

Mayor: John M. Carman

Attest: Julie Cortel

