

01/13/2022

Regular Council Meeting

7:00 PM

Meeting in council chambers and streamed live on the Village of Blanchester Facebook page

William Garner, Don Gephart, Chad Hollon, Reilly Hopkins, Tyler McCollister and Josh Parks were present. Mayor John Carman presided over the meeting.

**HOPKINS/GEPHART: Motion to excuse Harry Brumbaugh. All voted yea.**

Mayor Carman welcomed the new council members and cautioned the public that the meeting was council's meeting and all comments should be held until the public comment portion.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Agenda was presented to Council.

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from 12/30/2021 were presented to Council.

**GEPHART/PARKS: Motion to approve minutes as presented. All voted yea.**

**APPROVAL OF BILLS & REALLOCATIONS**

Bills and reallocations were presented to Council.

**MCCOLLISTER/GEPHART: Motion to approve bills and reallocations. All voted yea.**

**ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE**

Mayor Carman opened the floor for nominations and explained the responsibilities of the President Pro Tempore as one elected would step in and perform mayoral duties in the event something would happen to the mayor in office.

Mr. Gephart made a motion to nominate Mr. Hopkins. Mr. Parks made a motion to nominate Mr. McCollister. Mayor Carman closed the floor to nominations after no others were made.

**Mr. Hopkins Nomination: Roll Call: Mr. Garner, No; Mr. Gephart, Yes; Mr. Hopkins, Yes; Mr. McCollister, No; Mr. Parks, No.**

**Mr. McCollister Nomination: Roll Call: Mr. Garner, Yes; Mr. Gephart, No; Mr. Hopkins, No; Mr. McCollister, Yes; Mr. Parks, Yes.**

**STREET DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Daniels requested approval to purchase a mower to replace a 1996 Snapper Walk Behind. He presented two quotes from Buckeye Power Sales and Caplinger's. Discussion followed regarding the details of the mower. The Water Department is interested in the old mower.

**MCCOLLISTER/GEPHART: Motion to approve the purchase of the new mower from Caplinger's. All voted yea.**

Mayor Carman asked Mr. Daniels about the dedication of Mill Street Meadows. Mr. Daniels stated they were waiting on the bond, but it has never been received and it has been over 12 months. A resident called and asked about treatment on the road.

**MCCOLLISTER/PARKS: Motion to dedicate Mill Street Meadows. All voted yea.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**ORDINANCE 2021.042** – Tree placement, removal –Discussion ensued among council regarding specifics of trees. Mr. Hopkins said he was looking for input from council. Mr. McCollister stated concerns about

planting trees of any kind due to past experience with problems that they create. Also included in discussion was contacting other entities for policies and possibly forming a committee.

**Mr. Hopkins made a motion to table the ordinance. All voted yea.**

**RESOLUTION 2021.043 – Village Comprehensive Plan**

Mayor Carman introduced the resolution for its second reading. Mr. Parks inquired about annexation. Mayor explained that property owners would sign an agreement to be annexed. The county would need to sign off because it would lose revenue. Mr. McCollister stated if any ground would be annexed into the village, utilities would need to be available. He said there is a lot of property already in the village where there are no utilities. Council would need to work with the BPA. Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Gephart stated they agreed with Mr. McCollister. Mr. Parks made a motion to put the resolution on a second reading. There was no second. Mr. McCollister requested to table the resolution for further review. Council agreed to table the resolution.

**ORDINANCE 2021.046 – Income Tax – Third Reading**

Mayor Carman introduced the ordinance and explained that it is actually an earnings tax for those who work within the village and includes reciprocity. It is not a tax on social security, unemployment, and many other types of income. The mayor is hoping to have a representative from RITA at the next meeting to discuss the process and potential revenue. The 0.5% earnings tax would generate approximately \$250,000.00 which would all go toward the Police budget. The village struggles because of the low pay scale for the police department. Mr. McCollister asked if any consideration had been given to putting it on the ballot. Discussion followed about the options. Mr. Hopkins stated he had no problem tabling the ordinance for further review. Mr. Parks questioned where the money would go and that the village doesn't have a budget. Mrs. May explained that there is a temporary appropriation budget for the first quarter of the year and that is permitted by law. The permanent appropriations are being prepared. The budget will include \$733,000. 00 transferred to the police operating fund. That amount will account for all of the property tax, local government, kilowatt tax and other revenues that the general fund receives. Mr. Parks suggested a property tax. Mayor Carman said that a property tax would not apply to individuals who drive into Blanchester to work and would put a burden on residents on fixed incomes. Mr. Gephart added that property tax increased greatly in 2019 and there was no increase in social security and pensions. He stated that an earnings tax was fair and would not affect senior citizens. Mr. Parks noted an individual would receive a 1% raise if the ordinance passed. Mayor Carman stated that was not known for sure and it was being reviewed. Mr. Hopkins stated that is a separate issue with a different board. Council is responsible for the police department.

**HOPKINS/GEPHART: Motion to approve the ordinance. Garner, No; Gephart, Yes; Hopkins, Yes; McCollister, No; Parks, No.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**RESOLUTION 2022.001 – Establishing limits and setting amounts for the Fiscal Officer to Follow for Accounting Purposes for the Fiscal Year 2022**

**HOPKINS/MCCOLLISTER: Motion to dispense with rules and to put the resolution on final reading. All voted yea.**

**RESOLUTION 2022.002 – Solid Waste Management Plan**

**GEPHART/HOPKINS: Motion to dispense with rules and to put the resolution on final reading. All voted yea.**

**REPORTS**

**SOLICITOR**

Not present due to a lengthy jury trial.

**FISCAL OFFICER**

Following up on the 12/30/2021 meeting regarding AFLAC, Mrs. May requested approval to cancel the AFLAC payroll account so that employees could be billed directly.

**GEPHART/MCCOLLISTER: Motion to approve the fiscal officer's request to cancel the AFLAC payroll account. All voted yea.**

The Fiscal Officer revisited the funding from the American Rescue Plan Act. She recommended a portion of the funding be utilized to pay for water meters. Mr. Hopkins stated he would rather have a plan for the total amount, to which Mrs. May agreed. Required training for new council members was addressed. A link to Sunshine Laws and Ohio Ethics Laws training was included on the agenda. Mayor Carman stated the training needed to be completed within the first quarter.

**MAYOR**

In follow up to the hearing held on December 30, 2021, Mayor Carman requested approval to address the following:

- 1) Revise wording in Ordinance 90.017 from Zoning Inspector to Code Enforcement Officer.

**HOPKINS/GEPHART: Motion to work with the solicitor to revise wording from Zoning Inspector to Code Enforcement Officer in Ordinance 90.017. All voted yea.**

- 2) Correct zoning on West Main Street to properly reflect activity on the property.

**MCCOLLISTER/GEPHART: Motion to move forward to obtain proper paperwork to correct zoning and to hold a public hearing to update zoning for a fuel station. All voted yea.**

- 3) Ordinance 99.002 – Recommend amendment to change the fence height from 42" to 48". Mr. Hurst stated he would like to review fence installation on an individual basis.

**HOPKINS/GEPHART: Motion to amend Ordinance 99.002 changing fence height from 42" to 48". All voted yea.**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MCCOLLISTER/GEPHART: Motion to recess to executive session for the following:**

**Matter 1) Pursuant to 121.22(G)(1) to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee for the Police Department.**

**Matter 2) To consider the Compensation of a public employee or official pursuant to Ohio Revised Code §121.22 (G)(1), for the Mayor's Office.**

The mayor invited Council, Fiscal Officer and Chief Reinbolt to Executive Session. Roll call was made.

Recessed at 8:15 p.m.

Roll call was made. Council resumed at 8:38 p.m.

**Matter 1) Pursuant to 121.22(G)(1) to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee for the Police Department.**

Mayor Carman announced that Chief Reinbolt will be retiring on January 28, 2022. The village will be seeking to fill the position. Mr. Hopkins asked the mayor to consider making the chief's last day Scott Reinbolt day in Blanchester and to sign a proclamation.

**Matter 2) To consider the Compensation of a public employee or official pursuant to Ohio Revised Code §121.22 (G)(1), for the Mayor's Office.**

Mayor Carman recommended moving Fiscal Officer, Tammy May, from probation and to move her to step G of the pay scale effective the next full pay period.

**GEPHART/HOPKINS: Motion to approve the mayor's recommendation. All voted yea.**

**Discussion Items**

A. Quote for Men's Restroom in Main Hallway – Mayor explained that a new estimate for an ADA compliant renovation of the men's restroom in the amount of \$18,094.00. It was noted that it was best practice to obtain multiple quotes. Mr. Hopkins questioned the cost. Mayor Carman noted that the estimate presented is the new quote. Mr. Parks stated he thought the village should obtain more bids. Mr. Hopkins suggested that Mr. Parks work on securing more bids and that it is difficult to obtain bids. Contractors don't want to work with the village. Mr. McCollister asked what the issue was with the bathroom. Mayor Carman stated it was dated. Mr. Hopkins said all the other bathrooms had been upgraded. Mr. Gephart reiterated the project and said he thought it was a good bid and it would get rid of asbestos. Mr. Lee asked if it had been determined that asbestos was present. Mr. Hopkins stated the renovation would go over what was in the restroom and asked Mr. McCollister his opinion of the price. Mr. McCollister stated he didn't know and that it was probably a good price, but it was a lot of money to put in an old building.

**MCCOLLISTER/PARKS: Motion to have main hallway, men's bathroom, women's bathroom and cafeteria tested for asbestos. All voted aye.**

B. Quote to replace lights – Mr. Hopkins noted that LED lights have been purchased and are awaiting installation. The utilities departments are unable to assist due to scheduled work but have installed some as time permits. Mayor Carman noted that not all lights needed replaced and the quote is based on 48 lights and also noted the ordinance just passed included the BPA paying for 33% of work done in common areas. Mr. McCollister asked who the quote was from. The mayor noted it was the same vendor. Mrs. May asked who would talk to the BPA regarding the bill. The mayor stated he would.

**HOPKINS/GEPHART: Motion to approve quote to install lights and to allow the mayor to negotiate terms. Garner – yes; Gephart – yes; Hopkins – yes; McCollister – no; Parks – no.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

James Constable, 716 Cherry Street, stated he agreed that the men's restroom needed to be brought up to ADA compliance and that more bids needed to be obtained. He asked what was going to be done about the ladies' restroom. There is a sign that it is handicapped accessible and it is not. It either needs to be made ADA compliant or take the sign down.

**Motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.**

Approved: January 27, 2022

Mayor: John M. Carman

Attest: Janet S. May