

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
MINUTES OF VILLAGE OF BLANCHESTER REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
April 11, 2024

The Village of Blanchester Council met in regular session on April 11, 2024, at 7:03 p.m. with the honorable Mayor John Carman presiding.

Prior to the start of the meeting Marie Broker was acknowledged for her dedication, and effort and support to the Blanchester Police Department. She was given a vase of flowers and Chief Houghton presented her with the police coin, which is only presented to those who show true dedication and hard work. Thank you, Marie for all you do!

All present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance and had Opening Prayer

Roll Call	Mr. William Garner	Present
	Mr. Don Gephart	Present
	Mr. John Hill	Present
	Mr. Reilly Hopkins	Present
	Mrs. Lynn Lewis	Present
	Mr. Josh Parks	Present

Agenda

It was moved by Mr. Parks and seconded by Mr. Hopkins to approve the amended agenda.

Vote: Yea – Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hill, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis, Mr. Parks

Motion Passed

Guest Speaker - None

Old Business - None

Public Comment

James Constable, 135 Orchard View Lane, Blanchester. Is wanting us to check with the solicitor to see if our Street Permissive tax can really be used for sidewalks. He doesn't believe it can be.

Minutes

It was moved by Mrs. Lewis and seconded by Mr. Hill to approve minutes from the March 28 and April 4, 2024.

Vote: Yea – Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hill, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis, Mr. Parks

Motion Passed

Bills and Reallocations

Mr. Parks questioned the expenses that the fiscal officer had on the trip to Columbus. He wanted to know who chooses the hotel, if there is a per diem per day, and mileage. He was informed we go by the IRS recommendation for mileage. Hotel and per diem depends upon where the conference is.

It was moved by Mr. Parks and seconded by Mrs. Lewis to approve the March 28, 2024 Bills and Reallocations.

Vote: Yea – Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hill, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis, Mr. Parks

Motion Passed

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Don Gephart reported that the finance department recommends that Josh Allen of the Street Department be given his 6-month probation raise a month early.

It was moved by Mr. Hopkins and seconded by Mr. Gephart to approve the raise of Josh Allen from step E to step F effective next payday.

Vote: Yea – Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hill, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis, Mr. Parks

Motion Passed

The parks department would like to amend their Parks Director pay scale with additional steps as discussed in Finance Committee meeting.

It was moved by Mr. Gephart and seconded by Mrs. Lewis to approve the amendment to the Parks Director line on the pay scale.

Vote: Yea – Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hill, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis
NO - MR. PARKS

Motion Passed

It is also recommended that Donnie Sturgill be given a step raise from step F to step G.

It was moved by Mr. Hopkins and seconded by Mr. Hill to approve the raise of Donnie Sturgill from step F to step G effective next full pay period.

Vote: Yea – Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hill, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis
No – Mr. Parks

Motion Passed

Safety & Service – John Hill had nothing to report.

Cemetery Board – Tom Lee stated he had nothing to report.

BPA – Nothing to report

New Business

We have before us Ordinance 2024.005 authorizing the Mayor and Fiscal Officer to execute an agreement for participation in a regional council of governments relating to the administration and collection of municipal income tax in the Village of Blanchester, and declaring an emergency.

Natalie Zinni a representative of RITA joined the meeting via phone conference to explain what RITA does and to answer any questions council had. Rita is a regional council of government that administers the collection of the Income Tax Levy. The agency will keep 3% of total distributions as its fee. At the end of each year an audit would be done to reconcile the fund. If the ordinance is adopted the board would approve Blanchester as a new member in May of 2024. RITA is a non-profit organization.

It was moved by Mr. Hopkins and seconded by Mr. Gephart to pass Ordinance 2024.005

Vote: Yea – Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hill, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis, Mr. Parks

Motion Passed

The Amended Certificate of Resources was presented to council for its approval for submission. It was brought up by the Mayor that they would start adding a disclaimer to the reports that they are as true as the facts that we have at that particular time. The reports are ever changing though.

It was moved by Mrs. Lewis and seconded by Mr. Hill to accept the Amended Certificate for submission.

Vote: Yea – Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hill, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis, Mr. Parks

Motion Passed

Department Reports

Solicitor – absent – Mayor Carman congratulated Jim Barbieri on being inducted into St. Xavier Athletic Hall of Fame.

Parks Dept – Paul Jackson reported that the Easter Egg Hunt went very well. Lots of kids showed up. Gymnasium project is coming down to the final weeks. Should be finished by the end of the month.

Police – Chief Houghton had nothing to discuss.

Street Dept. – Paul Daniels reported that April 27 is the date for tire recycling. All tires must be off the rim. May 18 is touch a Truck Day at the Blanchester Church of the Nazarene. The time for Touch a Truck is 11am – 2 pm.

Zoning – Jeff Hurst had nothing to report.

Fiscal Officer – Regina Johnson had nothing to report.

Mayor – Nothing to report at this time.

Motion to recess to executive session pursuant to 121.22(G)(1) to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official.

It was moved by Mr. Hopkins and seconded by Mr. Parks to move into Executive Session at 8:15 pm.

Vote: Yea – Mr. Hill, Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis, Mr. Parks

Motion Passed

Present in the Executive Session was Mayor Carman, Mr. Hill, Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis, Mr. Parks, and Regina Johnson, Fiscal Officer.

It was moved by Mr. Gephart and seconded by Mrs. Lewis to end the Executive Session and return to Regular Session at 8:46 pm.

Vote: Yea – Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hill, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis, Mr. Parks

Motion Passed

Mayor Carman announced the resignation of Assistant Fiscal Officer Jack Kirby. His last day will be 4/15/24. He will be replaced by our current Administrative Assistant Carla Flannery effective 4/21/24. It is recommended that Carla be moved to Step I of the Assistant Fiscal Office pay scale for the additional work that she will be doing.

It was moved by Mr. Gephart and seconded by Mrs. Lewis that Carla Flannery be moved to step I as an Assistant Fiscal Officer.

Vote: Yea – Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hill, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis
No - Mr. Parks

Motion Passed

It is recommended that Regina Johnson be moved from Step C to Step D of the Fiscal Office pay scale.

It was moved by Mr. Hopkins and seconded by Mrs. Lewis that Regina Johnson be moved to step D as a Fiscal Officer.

Vote: Yea – Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hill, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis
No - Mr. Parks

Discussion Topics

The Discussion on Food Truck Permits was addressed but ultimately tabled until the solicitor returns. It was recommended by Mr. Hopkins that we look at a \$40 an application fee. Council would like to see the Police Department enforce the permits. Permits would be obtained through the front office during regular business hours. It is also wanted to be seen that the vendors that set up during Village special events be excluded on those dates.

Bidding Policy for a set dollar amount was asked to be discussed by Josh Parks. He would like to see us lower the set bid policy from the State \$50,000 that is currently used. Mr. Parks said he will do more research and bring it back for discussion at a later time.

It was brought to the attention of the Mayor that a resident would like to plant flowers in the flower bed in front of the Mayor office. It has already been set in place to create a rock garden by the Parks Department. It was suggested by council that this resident be allowed to plant flowers around the flag pole instead.

It was moved by Mr. Hopkins and seconded by Mrs. Lewis that the meeting be adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Vote: Yea – Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hill, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis, Mr. Parks

Motion Passed

Approved: 4-25-24

Mayor: John M. Carman

Attest: Regina Johnson

