

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
MINUTES OF VILLAGE OF BLANCHESTER REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
February 22, 2024

The Village of Blanchester Council met in regular session on February 22, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. with the honorable Mayor John Carman presiding.

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. Hopkins and seconded by Mr. Hill to approve the agenda.

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

Motion Passed

Guest Speaker

Melena Siebert – Judge candidate for 12th District Court of Appeals. Works as an attorney with one of the most conservative law firms in the country focusing on constitutional and election law. She will be on the Republican ballot.

Bob Fudge – Candidate for State Representative, District 71 House of Representatives. Lives in Cedarville. Spent 25 years in the Air Force prior to going into law. He would like to make the Ohio Revised Code readable to all. Is the former mayor of Cedarville, Ohio. His focus will be on economic development and workforce development.

Karie Novesl – Hylant, renewal of Risk Management Plan, which covers our property and liability plans through the Ohio Plan. This plan renews every year. The Village has been members of the Ohio Plan for 30 years. The expired plan was for \$54,418 with an advantage credit of \$4,261 making the total policy \$50,157. The new plan reflects a cost of \$57,013 with an advantage credit of \$4,963 for a total premium of \$52,050 for an increase this year of \$1,893. Over all rate increase was 4.6%. Loss ratio over the past 4 years is 54% which is very good. We do have cyber liability options.

It was moved by Mrs. Lewis and seconded by Mr. Hopkins to approve the renewal of the Ohio Plan which expires March 1, 204.

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

Motion Passed

Old Business

Update on Logo Contest_- Mayor John Carman thanked Lynn Lewis for her help in getting the school involved, where they submitted 35 entries. A pizza party will be provided at the school for all those that submitted entries. The mayor presented awards to the following individuals for the Logo Contest.

1st Place - \$300 – Brendon Crothers

2nd Place - \$150 – Taylor Baker

3rd Place – \$50 – Adrian Curley

Public Comment

Marie Brooker, 103 Ash Lane Blanchester. Is reminding the village that voting takes place March 19th and we have a 1% Police Levy on the ballot. Friends for Police will be doing phone calls to the community on February 28th and will also be going door to door to educate the community on the Levy. She is concerned with the negativity on social media as residents are expressing concerns to her about what is being said about our mayor and some things happening on council. She is asking that we all come together and have a unity for our community.

Minutes

It was moved by Mrs. Lewis and seconded by Mr. Hill to approve minutes from the February 8, 2024.

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

Motion Passed

Bills and Reallocations

It was moved by Mrs. Lewis and seconded by Mr. Gebhart to approve the current Bills and Reallocations.

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

Motion Passed

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Don Gephart reported that the finance committee had nothing to report.

Safety & Service – John Hill had nothing to report

Cemetery Board – Tom Lee stated he had new signs and regulations ordered and once they got them in, they would be posted.

BPA – Started training on the new VIP system this week which will go on for the next 16-20 weeks. By July – August utility bills will look different as they will have all electric charges broken down.

New Business

The mayor discussed the audit that has been going on for the years of 2021 and 2022. He once again talked about the issues that have been ongoing, which have made it difficult to reconcile the cash. Perry and Associates are an independent firm that is doing the audit and they would be willing to help with the reconciliation for a cost of not to exceed \$15,000 to find the problem. Once they find the problem, they will share that information with us. The cost is a projected rate of \$100 per hour, Mr. Parks asked how come he did not know that there was this deficit, and the mayor told him it is shown every month on the financial reports that they receive.

It was moved by Mr. Gebhart and seconded by Mrs. Lewis to approve the letter of engagement with Perry and Associates for them to complete the audit.

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

Motion Passed

Department Reports

Solicitor – Nothing to report.

Parks Dept – Paul Jackson reported that the gym project is ongoing. They now pretty much have all demo done. They are working on doors currently to secure all aspects of the gym. Also, all inflatables have been ordered and are ready to go for the splash days this summer.

Police – Chief Houghton discussed a program they are working on between the police, the schools and Talbert House. This program will allow the schools to know if something happened at a child's house, so that the student can be handled appropriately. They are doing College

student ride a long currently to show these students different aspects of policing. These students are Criminal Justice majors.

Street Dept. – Paul Daniels reported that Matt Johnson, Wayne Moore, and himself did a walk through for the Orchard View phase 1 project with Choice One. The department spent a day working in the creek between South Wright and Old Broadway behind Dominos cleaning up debris left by a local contractor. The cost for this clean-up will be billed back to that contractor. He would like council to come up with an ordinance for any contractor who does work in the village that they have to meet with the correct department heads to ensure the proper work is being done.

Zoning – Jeff Hurst had nothing to report. The zoning department is now located on the 2nd floor.

Fiscal Officer – Regina Johnson reminded all department heads to complete the 2-hours of training on the Drug and Alcohol training and to have and all employees take the 1-hour training that is due by March 29, 2024.

Mayor – The Mayor discussed the Open House on March 7 at the Clinton County Administration Building from 4-6. He then discussed that at the first of the year that all councilman and most village employees were given email addresses to use due to cyber security and trying to protect all our interest. We cannot force anyone to use this email, as one councilman has chosen not to, but it is best practice that when we send emails out, we send it to an email we can trust, and especially getting an email back from an unsecure email. The mayor is asking for everyone to please use this email for the security of the Villages information. The mayor would also like for the solicitor to look into the permitting process of Food Trucks.

It was moved by Mr. Hopkins and seconded by Mrs. Lewis that the meeting be adjourned at 8:03 pm.

Vote: Yea – Mr. Garner, Mr. Gephart, Mr. Hill, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Lewis, Mr. Parks
Nay – None

Motion Passed

Approved: March 28, 2024

Mayor: John M. Cannon

Attest: Regina Johnson