

**Village of St. Paris**  
**September 16, 2024**  
**Council Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll call was taken by Council President Pro-Tempore Tony Hoyt. Terry Ervin II, Tony Hoyt, Linda Julien and Steve Lett were present. Mayor Susan Prince, Frank Blair and Joe Curran were absent. Village Administrator Spencer Mitchell and Fiscal Officer Marc McGuire were also present. Joe Curran arrived at 7:02 PM.

Councilor President Pro-Temp Hoyt asked Attorney Drew Esposito for a point of clarification on whether he could cast a vote during the proceedings due to the situation of Councilor Hoyt proceeding over the council meeting in Mayor Prince's absence. Attorney Esposito stated that the Ohio Attorney General has issued an opinion on this type of situation which stated that the Councilor Pro-Temp can cast a vote while presiding over the council meeting.

**Motion** was made by Councilor Lett and seconded by Councilor Julien to approve the council agenda, as amended. Motion passed.

**Public Comments on Agenda Items:**

- Charlene Hess, 240 W. Troy Street, stated that while in executive session, council should ask for the resignation of the Mayor.

**Motion** was made by Councilor Ervin and seconded by Councilor Curran to approve the council meeting minutes dated September 3, 2024. Motion passed.

**Mayor's Notes:**

- The Graham Band Festival is September 21, 2024 at 7:00 PM.
- The community pancake breakfast is September 28, 2024 from 8:00 – 10:00 AM in the municipal garage.
- Beggar's Night is October 31, 2024 from 6:00 – 8:00 PM. Councilor Ervin asked if any special event applications have been submitted for a "trunk or treat" that could be held in the municipal parking lot. No special applications have been received for any Halloween activities on village property.

The presentation of financials dated August 31, 2024 was reviewed. **Motion** was made by Councilor Julien and seconded by Councilor Lett to approve the financial reports as presented. A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 5-0. Motion passed. Councilor Ervin asked if all of the real estate tax collections have been received. Fiscal Officer McGuire noted that all collections have been received from the County Auditor. Councilor Ervin asked about the cable franchise fees and it was noted that the fees are collected quarterly.

The presentation of the Bank Reconciliation dated August 31, 2024 was reviewed. **Motion** was made by Councilor Lett and seconded by Councilor Ervin to approve the Bank Reconciliation. A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 5-0. Motion passed.

The presentation of Water/Sewer Account Adjustments dated August 31, 2024 was reviewed. **Motion** was made by Councilor Curran and seconded by Councilor Lett to approve the Water/Sewer Account Adjustments. A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 5-0. Motion passed.

The presentation of the Appropriation Supplemental dated August 31, 2024 was reviewed. **Motion** was made by Councilor Curran and seconded by Councilor Ervin to approve the Appropriation Supplemental. A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 5-0. Motion passed.

**Administrator:**

- Jay Lewis was hired at a full-time street department employee on September 3, 2024.
- Installation of new light poles have started on Huffman Drive, Wick Court and the Graham Youth Athletic Association (GYAA) parking lot. AES Electric is also swapping out street lamp bulbs and replacing with new LED bulbs.
- Administrator Mitchell recommends the village sell a 2003 Sterling dump truck and a Case Vibromax asphalt roller. Both are no longer needed for village operations.
- Graham Local School District will have a homecoming parade on Thursday, October 3, 2024. The parade starts at the Irish Meadows subdivision and ends at the Graham Elementary School.
- 5 proposals have been received to replace some of the fencing at the GYAA ballpark. Administrator Mitchell will meet with GYAA officials to determine a final design and with the fencing being replaced by the end of the year.
- Downspout drainage tile has been completed at the Harmon Park building. The street department will be working to seed new grass over the construction area and to install new picnic tables and park benches.
- To improve internet connectivity, Spectrum Internet will be established for the water plant, sewer plant and at Harmon Park.
- Administrator Mitchell will meet with the Champaign County Engineer and ODOT officials to discuss truck traffic at the intersections at N. Springfield Street/US Hwy 36 and at Huffman Drive/US Hwy 36. Funding has been requested to study these intersections and make modifications.

**Committee Reports:**

**Budget:** none

**JSP Fire Board:**

- The next meeting is scheduled for October 8, 2024 at 7:00 PM at the firehouse.

**Land & Buildings:**

- The next meeting is scheduled for September 20, 2024 at 10:00 AM in the council room.

**Park & Trees:** none

**Planning Commission:**

- The next meeting is scheduled for October 10, 2024 at 7:30 PM in the council room.

**Old Business:** none

**New Business:**

- Council discussed the need of having Ordinance 2024-6, Ordinance 2024-7 and Ordinance 2024-8 read as emergency Ordinances, eliminating the need to have 3 readings before voting on the Ordinances and if the police cruiser, in Ordinance 2024-8, was ready to be sold. It was determined that the police cruiser needed the equipment and light bar removed before being sold. **Motion** was made by Councilor Julien and seconded by Councilor Ervin to table Ordinance 2024-8 until the police cruiser was ready to be sold "as is". A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 4-1, with Councilor Curran voting against. Motion passed. **Motion** was made by Councilor Lett and seconded by Councilor Curran to amend Ordinance 2024-6 and Ordinance 2024-7 to remove Article 8 stating that the Ordinances be declared an emergency. A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 5-0. Motion passed.
- Ordinance 2024-6, Authorizing the sale of a 2003 Sterling dump truck (VIN 2FZAAWAK03AM10376). Council President Pro-Tempore Hoyt held the first reading of Ordinance 2024-6. The second reading of Ordinance 2024-6 will be held at the next regularly scheduled council meeting on October 7, 2024.
- Ordinance 2024-7, Authorizing the sale of a Case Vibromax asphalt roller (model# W110). Council President Pro-Tempore Hoyt held the first reading of Ordinance 2024-7. The second reading of Ordinance 2024-7 will be held at the next regularly scheduled council meeting on October 7, 2024.
- Resolution 1382, Authorizing the obligation of funds in the 2025 budget for the U.S. Highway 36 waterline improvement project. Council President Pro-Tempore Hoyt read Resolution 1382. **Motion** was made by Councilor Lett and seconded by Councilor Julien to approve Resolution 1382. A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 5-0. Motion passed.
- With the Chief of Police on paid administrative leave since August 5, 2024 and with the retirement of Police Sergeant David Craine, council discussed the need for safety in the village. Council agreed that Mayor Prince should explore options for temporary law enforcement safety for the village. **Motion** was made by Councilor Ervin and seconded by Councilor Curran to authorize the Mayor to seek options for temporary law enforcement coverage and be brought back to council for discussion. A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 5-0. Motion passed.

**Public Comments:**

- Joyce Bowlin, 274 W. Poplar Street, expressed her concern on the police department situation and stated that safety is most important.
- Charlene Hess, 240 W. Troy Street, stated the Sheriff's lack of staffing causes issues with slow response times for village residents, speeding within the village, and no business door checks during non-business hours. Ms. Hess also questioned if council had completed their required training from the Ohio Municipal League.
- Lisa Crutchfield, youth services librarian at the St. Paris Public Library, stated that she has provided a teen center program at the library that provides a safe place for students and a police presence is necessary. Ms. Crutchfield noted that there has been vandalism at the library and she had told Chief of Police Eric Smith but it went nowhere and that another police officer told the teens that they were not wanted at the library. Ms. Crutchfield asked council to figure out the police situation as soon as possible.
- Eric Smith, Chief of Police, asked if council was held to a social media policy since his court docket information was screenshot and posted by the Mayor. Attorney Drew Esposito noted that the court system made his information public. Mr. Smith also wanted to know why his work email and work cell phone needed to be turned in while on paid administrative leave. He stated that his phone and email had nothing to do with what happened at the fairgrounds and that he was being harassed.

**Executive Session:**

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code section 121.22 (G)(1), to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official. **Motion** was made by Councilor Lett and seconded by Councilor Curran to enter into an executive session and to invite Attorney Drew Esposito into the executive session. A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 5-0. Motion passed and council entered into the executive session at 8:16 PM. At 9:32 PM, executive session ended and council resumed the open meeting.

There being no further business, **motion** was made by Councilor Lett and seconded by Councilor Ervin to adjourn at 9:33 PM. Motion passed.

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Marc McGuire, Fiscal Officer

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Susan Prince, Mayor

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Date