

Village of St. Paris
October 7, 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 Mayor Susan Prince. Frank Blair, Terry Ervin II, Tony Hoyt and Linda Julien were present. Joe Curran and Steve Lett were absent. Village Administrator Spencer Mitchell and Fiscal Officer Marc McGuire were also present. Joe Curran arrived at 7:16 PM.

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

Public Comments on Agenda Items: none

Motion was made by Councilor Hoyt and seconded by Councilor Blair to approve the council meeting minutes dated September 16, 2024. Motion passed.

Mayor's Notes:

- Beggar's Night is October 31, 2024 from 6:00 – 8:00 PM.

Old Business:

- Ordinance 2024-6, Authorizing the sale of a 2003 Sterling dump truck (VIN 2FZAAWAK03AM10376). Mayor Prince held the second reading of Ordinance 2024-6. The third and final reading of Ordinance 2024-6 will be held at the next regularly scheduled council meeting on October 21, 2024.
- Ordinance 2024-7, Authorizing the sale of a Case Vibromax asphalt roller (model# W110). Mayor Prince held the second reading of Ordinance 2024-7. The third and final reading of Ordinance 2024-7 will be held at the next regularly scheduled council meeting on October 21, 2024.
- Mayor Prince distributed old contracts that were held between the Champaign County Sheriff and other local villages. Mayor Prince noted that a contract between the Village of St. Paris and the Sheriff would be a temporary contract ending December 31, 2024. Currently, the Village of St. Paris' Chief of Police is on paid administrative leave and there are no other officers employed by the village causing the need for a temporary contract with the Sheriff to provide coverage for the village. Mayor Prince had met with Fiscal Officer McGuire and determined that there are enough appropriated funds within the police budget to pay for a temporary contract. Mayor Prince asked council to determine the number of hours of coverage per week to be provided by the sheriff so that a contract could be written. Councilor Blair stated that the taxpayers are already funding the county sheriff and should not need to pay for any provided coverage to the village. **Motion** was made by Councilor Blair to table the conversation. There was no second motion made by council. The motion fails for a lack of a second motion. Councilor Ervin suggested that the contract state that the village be able to determine the hours of coverage provided by the sheriff. Council agreed that up to 40 hours of coverage per week should be provided by the sheriff. Mayor Prince will work with the Champaign County Sheriff to draft a contract that will be brought back to council at the next council meeting. Council suggested that an executive session be added to the next regularly scheduled council meeting on October 21, 2024, to discuss the contract.

New Business:

- Notice was received from Superior Dental Care and there is no rate increase for the upcoming renewal date that begins November 1, 2024. Superior Dental Care provides dental insurance to full-time village employees. **Motion** was made by Councilor Curran and seconded by Councilor Hoyt to approve the Superior Dental Care renewal. A roll call vote was taken and Council voted in favor 5-0. Motion passed.
- Notice was received from Medical Mutual Health Care and there is a .01% rate increase for the upcoming renewal date that begins on December 1, 2024. Medical Mutual provides health care, vision care and life insurance to full-time village employees. **Motion** was made by Councilor Curran and seconded by Councilor Hoyt to approve the Medical Mutual health insurance renewal. A roll call vote was taken and Council voted in favor 5-0. Motion passed.
- Bob Snavelly, from Palmer Energy, discussed the electric and natural gas aggregation that is on the November 5, 2024 ballot for the Village of St. Paris. All residents within the village will vote on the aggregation. A yes vote would allow for the village to use purchasing power to secure a discount on electric and/or natural gas pricing. All AES and CenterPoint village customers are eligible to participate in the program and would be automatically enrolled, unless a resident is currently in a 3rd party agreement. There is no fee to opt-out of the aggregation program at any time and the historical savings average is approximately \$100 per year per household.

- Councilor Ervin discussed the need for support for the village’s street levy renewal that is on the November ballot. The village has about 40 signs supporting the levy and Councilor Ervin asked the public and council to take signs and to place them throughout the village. Councilor Ervin suggested to schedule an informational meeting to discuss the street levy with the public. Councilor Curran stated that he would attend the information meeting, along with Councilor Ervin, to support the street renewal levy. Administrator Mitchell would also attend. Councilor Ervin and Councilor Curran agreed to conduct an informational street levy renewal discussion on October 14, 2024, at 7:00 PM in the council room. All residents are welcome to attend.

Public Comments:

- Charlene Hess, 240 W. Troy Street, stated she respected the office but not the Mayor and asked council to ask for the Mayor’s resignation. Ms. Hess also expressed that the Champaign County Sheriff will not solve anything in the village.
- Elleyln Hackley, 216 W. Lynn Street, noted that she is co-chairing the Christmas in the Village event, sponsored by the Our Town-St. Paris Association. The event is on December 7, 2024 and celebrates the 20th anniversary of the event. Ms. Hackley invited council to participate in Christmas in the Village and stated that the village could use some Christmas cheer.
- Eric Smith, Chief of Police, questioned why his paycheck is being mailed and noted that he needs access to his work email to complete training.
- Vella Reeves, 274 W. Walnut Street, asked why the Mayor is not responding to FaceBook posts and read aloud a FaceBook post regarding when the Chief of Police will be reinstated from the paid administrative leave. Mayor Prince asked the public that if they had any questions to please schedule a meeting with her. Mayor Prince noted that she has received one email from a resident and asked the resident to schedule a meeting and the resident declined to meet in person.
- Betty Smith, 127 S. High Street, stated that there was an issue at the Habitat for Humanity home, on Poplar Street, with a neighbor causing issues and asked when the Chief of Police will be reinstated. Mayor Prince explained to the public that the Chief of Police has a pending court case against him in regards to his arrest at the Champaign County Fair and there is also an internal investigation against the Chief of Police being conducted by the Village Solicitor and council.
- Yvonne Berger, 210 E. Main Street, asked the Mayor about the internal investigation. Mayor Prince stated that she cannot comment into the specifics of the internal investigation.
- Gerard Nannarone, 130 W. Lynn Street, asked how temporary would the contract be with the sheriff. Council answered that it would likely be an until the end of year contract.

There being no further business, **motion** was made by Councilor Blair and seconded by Councilor Julien to adjourn at 8:20 PM. Motion passed.

 Marc McGuire, Fiscal Officer

 Susan Prince, Mayor

 Date