

Village of St. Paris
October 21, 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, Joe Curran, Terry Ervin II, Tony Hoyt, Linda Julien and Steve Lett were present. Village Administrator Spencer Mitchell and Fiscal Officer Marc McGuire were also present.

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

Public Comments on Agenda Items: none

Motion was made by Councilor Curran and seconded by Councilor Ervin to approve the council meeting minutes dated October 7, 2024. Motion passed.

Mayor's Notes:

- Beggar's Night is October 31, 2024 from 6:00 – 8:00 PM.
- The community pancake breakfast is October 26, 2024 from 8:00 – 10:00 AM in the municipal garage.
- Graham FFA is sponsoring a blood drive on October 29, 2024 beginning at 8:00 AM at the high school.

The presentation of financials dated September 30, 2024 was reviewed. **Motion** was made by Councilor Lett and seconded by Councilor Julien to approve the financial reports as presented. A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 6-0. Motion passed.

The presentation of the Bank Reconciliation dated September 30, 2024 was reviewed. **Motion** was made by Councilor Curran and seconded by Councilor Ervin to approve the Bank Reconciliation. A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 6-0. Motion passed.

The presentation of Water/Sewer Account Adjustments dated September 30, 2024 was reviewed. **Motion** was made by Councilor Lett and seconded by Councilor Julien to approve the Water/Sewer Account Adjustments. A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 6-0. Motion passed.

Administrator:

- Hydroseeding around the Harmon Park playground is complete. Picnic tables have been installed at the park as well.
- Administrator Mitchell requested that council consider establishing a Zoning Enforcement Subcommittee to work on potential changes to the current zoning ordinance and to help enforce zoning issues in the village. Council agreed to add to new business for the next council meeting the topic of establishing a Zoning Enforcement Committee.
- A Special Event Application was approved for Vella Reeves, 274 W. Walnut Street, for a "block party" during Trick or Treat on October 31st. The street department will provide barricades to close W. Walnut Street from S. High Street to S. Church Street for the event.

Committee Reports:

Budget: none

JSP Fire Board:

- The next meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2024 at 7:00 PM at the firehouse.

Land & Buildings:

- The next meeting is scheduled for November 15, 2024 at 10:00 AM in the council room.

Park & Trees:

Planning Commission:

- The next meeting is scheduled for November 11, 2024 at 7:30 PM in the council room.

Old Business:

- Ordinance 2024-6, Authorizing the sale of a 2003 Sterling dump truck (VIN 2FZA AWAK03AM10376). Mayor Prince held the third and final reading of Ordinance 2024-6. **Motion** was made by Councilor Curran and seconded by Councilor Lett to approve Ordinance 2024-6. A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 6-0. Motion passed.
- Ordinance 2024-7, Authorizing the sale of a Case Vibromax asphalt roller (model# W110). Mayor Prince held the s third and final reading of Ordinance 2024-7. **Motion** was made by Councilor Lett and seconded by Councilor Hoyt to approve Ordinance 2024-7. A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 6-0. Motion passed.
- Council discussed the Champaign County Sheriff's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to provide police protection for the village. Mayor Prince stated that the memorandum was reviewed by the Village Solicitor. Councilor Curran noted that the Special Duty Detail rate paid by the village is the overtime rate for each deputy who works the detail. The rate could vary depending on who signs up for the detail. Councilor Curran stated that this is a cost-effective way to provide police protection at a price that the village can afford. Councilor Lett noted that the Sheriff is the best option for the village. Councilor Blair stated that the contract has no dollar figures to what the cost would be. Councilor Ervin stated that the MOU is for coverage through the end of December 2024 with a right to terminate the agreement within 14 days of written intent. Councilor Curran asked that the Sheriff should stagger shifts, have deputies visit local

businesses during working hours, and have deputies patrol bus stops while kids are getting on and off the bus. Councilor Blair questioned the need to have the Sheriff when the village already has a police department. Councilor Curran stated that the current policing model does not work for the village. Councilor Lett mentioned that there was police levy on the ballot in 2016 to provide more money for the police and it failed and he believes that a portion of the residents wants its own police department while a majority just want a law enforcement presence. Councilor Lett explained that any deputy who signs up for the detail is dedicated to St. Paris and will not leave the village unless in the case of extreme emergencies. **Motion** was made by Councilor Curran and seconded by Councilor Lett to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Sheriff of Champaign County and the Village of St. Paris. A roll call vote was taken and council voted in favor 5-1, with Councilor Blair voting against. Motion passed. Councilor Lett reminded all that the MOU is valid through the end of the year, but budgeting needs to begin soon for 2025. Councilor Lett asked that an Ordinance be brought to council to disband the police department. Councilor Ervin suggested that council wait and see how the MOU works and if it is a benefit to the village before any such ordinance be brought to council. Councilor Lett stated that if the village residents want a police department, then it needs to be placed on a ballot to provide funding. Councilor Curran stated that the village needs consistent/professional policing. Councilor Lett stated that the village has not had police coverage since the Chief of Police was placed on administrative leave.

New Business:

- Ordinance 2024-9 Amending Ordinance 420 to rezone 604 E Main Street from M-2 to B-3. Mayor Prince conducted the first reading of Ordinance 2024-9. The second reading of Ordinance 2024-5 will be held at the next regularly scheduled council meeting on November 4, 2024. **Motion** was made by Councilor Ervin and seconded by Council Lett to schedule a Public Hearing in regards to Ordinance 2024-9 on November 4, 2024 at 7:00 PM with the regularly scheduled council meeting to immediately follow the public hearing. Motion passes.

Public Comments:

- Betty Smith, 127 S. High Street, expressed that some of council are here for their own purpose and it is obvious that they want to do away with the police department.
- Joyce Bowlin, 274 W. Poplar Street, wants to keep the village police department and expressed her concern over the cost of having the Sheriff police the village.
- Myke Cooney, 117 E. Walnut Street, thanked council for agreeing to the Sheriff contract and stated that the village needs law enforcement now. Ms. Cooney noted that the village did not pass a police levy back in 2016 and former Chief of Police Jim Pence suggested at that time to use the Sheriff to police the village. Ms. Cooney stated that a good employer provides a livable wage, full benefits and opportunities for advancement and the village cannot afford to provide these to a full-time village police officer.
- Aleesha Spence, 131 W. Plum Street, stated that she cares about the youth of the village and spoke of the issue of not have police presence for the teen center program at the library which provides a safe place for students. However, problem teens have caused issues at the teen center and it was too dangerous to continue the center during evening hours. Ms. Spence stated the need to have the Sheriff while the village has no police force but it would be foolish to disband the police department.
- Bob Welker, 3538 W. US Hwy 36 and former teacher and Graham School Board member, spoke in support of the upcoming Graham School levy on the November ballot.
- Drew Esposito, Village Human Resource Solicitor, noted that the special duty rates are determined by the collective bargaining agreement and village residents thinking that massive increases in how much the Sheriff special duty rates is not realistic.

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; and to consider the investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual, unless the employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual requests a public hearing. **Motion** was made by Councilor Lett and seconded by Councilor Julien 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 5-1, with Councilor Blair voting against. Motion passed and council entered into the executive session at 8:13 PM. At 8:41 PM, Councilor Blair exited the executive session. At 9:20 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 Hoyt to adjourn at 9:21 PM. Motion passed.

Marc McGuire, Fiscal Officer

Susan Prince, Mayor

Date