

Bethel Village Council

May 27, 2008

Council of the Village of Bethel, Ohio, met in regular session in Council Chambers in the Bethel Municipal Building on Monday, May 27th, 2008 at 8:30 pm with Mayor John Swarthout presiding.

The meeting was video taped and will be aired on cable television.

Mr. Ausman delivered the invocation followed by Mayor Swarthout leading the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Upon roll call, the following were counted as present: Council Members Alan Ausman, Joe Houlihan, Donna Gunn, Gary Hutchinson, James Dick. Also present: Village Administrator Travis Dotson, Fiscal Officer Angel Burton and Police Chief John Wallace. (Mr. Tim Cherry arrived after roll call) Solicitor Leicht was not present.

A motion to approve the 04/28/2008, 05/12/2008 and 05/19/2008 meeting minutes was made by Mr. Houlihan. Seconded by Mr. Dick. All ye.

COMMUNICATIONS

nil

ADMINISTRATION AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Swarthout

nil

Village Administrator

Mr. Dotson will be attending a Grant Writing Workshop this Thursday and Friday, May 29th and 30th, in Piketon, Ohio. Due to the distance, he would like permission from Council for an overnight stay, meal and mileage reimbursement.

A motion to approve Mr. Dotson's hotel, food and mileage expenses, incurred while attending the 05/29/08-05/30/08 Grant Workshop was made by Mr. Ausman. Seconded by Mr. Gunn. All ye.

The utility department is working with Frey Software, the provider of our CUBIC utility billing software, on incorporating the ability to pay bills online. The option should be functioning within the next month. Mr. Dotson will have more information at the next meeting.

Mr. Dotson and Ms. Burton met with Ruth Ann Fisk and Rich Blakesley from the State Auditor's office this past Friday. The auditors are finalizing the 2004-2005 report.

Fiscal Officer:

Ms. Burton continued the update on the Village Audit. She was relieved to learn the construction of the 2006-2007 financial records can be unclassified – meaning, expenses and receipts need only be assigned to the appropriate fund, and not broken down into line item detail. Ms. Burton may ask for assistance in building the spreadsheets from one of the utility clerks.

The auditors commended the utility billing department for the organized and productive manner in which they work. There have been no issues related to the management of their Village duties, and the ladies have been a reliable source of assistance.

Ms. Burton met with a FEMA specialist last week, regarding the Snow Event/Removal public assistance grant. The Village should receive around \$3200 by July, 2008. The grant paperwork was a joint effort between Ms. Burton and Mr. Mitch Hatfield. Ms. Burton also mentioned Ms. Michelle Price's assistance in compiling salary information.

Next Monday, June 2, 2008 at 9:30 am will be an Employee Enrollment and Benefit meeting, focusing on the implementation of the TPA. A memo was distributed to all the full-time employees, requesting their attendance at the meeting. Susan Fuller, from Affordable Benefit Solutions, will be leading the meeting.

Ms. Burton has reconciled all the 2008 medical reimbursements and payments for each employee, and copied Council on the outstanding payments to be made. By reconciling expenses paid-to-date, she will be able to provide the TPA with an accurate remaining benefit amount for each employee. She expects a few more reimbursements and payments will be forwarded to her this week, but beginning June 1, the TPA will be managing health benefits.

Though the Village's written policy is to reimburse employees for medical expenses paid out-of-pocket, the former administration paid providers directly, and the employees are used to that process. Ms. Burton stated she will pay the remaining medical expenses directly to the providers on the employee's behalf, for those that did submit unpaid invoices.

On a side note, Mr. Dotson noted the auditors felt the Village's move back to a Third Party Administrator (TPA) was in the Village's best interest.

In the list of bills submitted to Council for approval, Ms. Burton highlighted a contractual expense that does not have an associated purchase order. An invoice was received from Howerton Construction, for a watermain installation. There was surprise at the delay in receipt of the invoice, due to the project being done some time ago. It was also noted this project was not presented to Council. Mr. Hutchinson explained the necessity for the work, and considers it a valid expense. The company was able to provide equipment that provided uninterrupted water service during the project. Mr. Cherry understood the project to be related to a hot-tap, and considered the expense a bit excessive. Mr. Dotson noted this contract was entered into by the past administration, and there will be a clear policy implemented before future involvement of 3rd party contactors.

A motion to pay Howerton Construction \$6,912.63 was made by Mr. Hutchinson. Seconded by Ms. Gunn. All yea.

Ms. Burton has an additional expense for the bill payment approvals. The monthly rent from the Electric and Water departments has not been paid for 2008 – each department pays \$1000/mos rent (though she mentioned she believes the intent was for Electric to pay more), and that money is receipted into the General fund. By paying the "Village", she is able to track the expense, and the subsequent receipt, in the books.

Chief of Police:

New crosswalk signs have been installed, and are much more noticeable. Additional side-signs will be installed as well. Though pedestrians do have the right-of-way, Chief Wallace recommended people wait till all traffic has stopped before stepping into the cross walk. Ms. Gunn relayed a recent experience at the crosswalks, related to the ignorance of the crosswalk by oncoming traffic.

Finance Committee:

Mr. Hutchinson spoke on behalf of the Finance committee. The next meeting is June 9, 2008 at 5:30 p.m

Public Works:

Mr. Cherry spoke on behalf of the Public Works Committee and apologized for arriving late.

The cost of concrete for the skate park has been jaw-dropping, and Mr. Cherry believes the cost of fuel is contributing to the increase. The area to be covered is large, but the dimensions are known, and the “to-include and not-to-include” specifications have been stated.

There will be a Public Works Meeting on Thursday, June 5, 2008 at 5:00 p.m., as well as the regularly scheduled meeting on June 23, 2008 at 5:30 p.m.

Safety Committee:

Mr. Houlihan spoke on behalf of the Safety Committee. The next meeting is June 2, 2008 at 5:30 p.m.

Burke Trust Committee:

Ms. Gunn spoke on behalf of the Burke Trust Committee.

Council met in Special Session last Monday, May 19th for the purpose of interviewing Burke Scholarship applicants. Ms. Gunn mentioned her enjoyment of the process, and noted the nice group of applicants this year. Mayor Swarthout awarded the scholarships to the following 10 students at last weekend’s graduation: Chris Beyer, Tarah Cole, Brittany Fancher, Debra Forsee, Tammy Guseman, Samantha Heist, Andrew King, Jessica Kretzer, Nikkia Oberschlake, Shayna Runyan.

The Village is proud to be able to offer \$20K in scholarships each year. Mayor Swarthout stated 334 grants have been awarded through the years, resulting in over \$650K given, which is more than the original Burke Trust amount. He commended the Burke Trust Commission on their management of the Trust over the years, and encouraged residents and students to volunteer in their communities.

Planning Commission:

Mr. Dick spoke on behalf of the Planning Commission. The next meeting is June 5, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.

Call of Members:

Mr. Ausman: Thanked the village administrator and fiscal officer for their work and professionalism.

Mr. Houlihan: Echoed Mr. Ausman’s sentiments

Ms. Gunn: Agreed, and commended the street department on the upkeep of Burke Park. She believes it looks better than it ever has.

Mr. Hutchinson: Believes the Village’s administration is in good hands.

Mr. Cherry: nil

Mr. Dick: nil

Public Input:

Nil

Legislation:

ORDINANCE 1579 ESTABLISHING NEW ELECTRIC RATES FOR THE VILLAGE,
tabled

ORDINANCE 1581 AUTHORIZING THE VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR TO ENTER
INTO A CONTRACT WITH LIGHTGOV FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISPOSING OF
PROPERTY NO LONGER NEEDED FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES, 2nd reading

ORDINANCE 1582 ESTABLISHING NEW GARBAGE RATES FOR THE VILLAGE, 1st
reading

Payment of Bills:

A motion approving the payment of the presented expenses and bills was made by Ms. Gunn.
Seconded by Mr. Cherry. All yea. Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Ausman. Seconded by Mr. Houlihan. All yea. 9:00
p.m.

Mayor John Swarthout

Angel Burton, Fiscal Officer