

## **Bethel Village Council August 8, 2011**

The Council of the Village of Bethel, Ohio, met in regular session in Council Chambers on Monday, August 8, 2011 at 6:30 p.m., with Mayor James T. Dick presiding.

Mr. Ausman delivered the invocation, followed by Mayor Dick leading the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Upon roll call, the following members were counted as present: Council Members Priscilla Johnson, Janice Ireton, Donna Gunn, Rus Whitley, Tim Cherry, Alan Ausman, Village Administrator Travis Dotson and Solicitor George Leicht. Fiscal Officer Bill Gilpin was absent.

A motion to approve the minutes from the July 25, 2011 meeting, as written, was made by Ms. Ireton. Second by Ms. Gunn. All "yea".

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

George Brown of Clermont Senior Services addressed council, gave an overview of the services offered and asked for council's support of their renewal levy that is on the November ballot.

### **REPORTS**

#### **Mayor James T. Dick**

The fiscal recovery commission met on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The general fund stands at -\$86k as of July 31.

A letter of commendation was noted for Benjamin Dotson for achieving eagle scout status.

#### **Village Administrator, Travis Dotson**

The USDA trailer is up and running.  
The utility software has been transitioned with minimal problems.  
Public Works has working on electric maintenance issues.

#### **Fiscal Officer, Bill Gilpin**

Absent.  
Mr. Dotson asked to add the AEP invoice in the amount of \$152,922.83 to the list of bills for approval.

#### **Solicitor George Leicht**

Hopefully council will name a new solicitor this evening. There is a need for an executive session, but will let it be handled by the new solicitor.

#### **Police Chief Mark Planck**

The KeyBank robbery in May has been solved and is in the hands of the grand jury.

#### **Finance Committee, Chairperson Donna Gunn**

The committee met on August 4. Items discussed were:  
Using a firm for solicitor, committee recommends  
Banking agreement, discussions ongoing with Community Savings Bank to improve the village's interest return.  
Laurie Taylor restitution, working on accelerating payments  
Recommendation to transition from department rents to an administrative fee for the utilities.  
The administrative fee will aid in replacing the lost local government fund revenue as well as assist with the police operations budget.

The financial recovery plan is being modified due to the state budget changes, and will be approved on December 14.

Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 5, 2011.

**Public Works Committee, Chairperson Tim Cherry**

The committee will meet immediately following the council meeting this evening.

**Safety Committee, Chairperson Rus Whitley**

The committee will meet immediately following the council meeting this evening.

**Personnel Committee, Chairperson Alan Ausman**

The committee met on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Items discussed were:

Pros and cons of hiring a law firm versus an individual for solicitor, committee recommends hiring a firm

Utility and police clerk newly hired employee has resigned. Another qualified applicant, Kelly Merckle, is being recommended for hire.

Ms. Johnson asked if the applications could be viewed. Mr. Dotson replied that they are available and asked if Ms. Johnson wished to table the committee's recommendation. Ms. Johnson replied that she would like to table the hiring.

A motion to hire Kelly Merckle was made by Mr. Ausman.

A motion to table Mr. Ausman's motion to hire Kelly Merckle was made by Ms. Johnson. Mayor Dick stated that there is no need for a second of the motion. By roll: Mr. Ausman "nay", Mr. Cherry "nay", Mr. Whitley "yea", Ms. Gunn "nay", Ms. Ireton "yea", Ms. Johnson "yea". Motion failed. Mayor Dick stated that the original motion will stand.

Ms. Gunn seconded the motion by Mr. Ausman. Discussion: Mr. Ausman noted that the administrator makes a recommendation to the personnel committee on whom to hire and that the discussion should take place at the committee level. Ms. Johnson apologized and explained that she was on vacation at the time of the meeting. Mr. Whitley stated that he would like to see all of the top applicants' applications. Mr. Cherry stated that we have a motion on the floor and it needs to be voted upon.

By roll: Mr. Ausman "yea", Ms. Gunn "yea", Ms. Johnson "nay", Ms. Ireton "yea", Mr. Whitley "nay", Mr. Cherry "yea". Motion carried.

The next meeting will be September 12, 2011, at 5:30 pm.

**Burke Trust Commission, Janice Ireton**

Nil.

**Planning Commission, Priscilla Johnson**

Nil.

**CALL OF MEMBERS**

Priscilla Johnson: Would like to see the community come out to vote for the senior services levy, and also to consider running for council.

Janice Ireton: Nil.

Donna Gunn: Likes to see the banners promoting the village events and thanks to the employees for taking care of them.

Rus Whitley: Asked Mr. Dotson if the new code enforcement officer had filed any violations for tall grass. Ms. Ireton stated that she has talked with Kathy and she is working on several issues.

Tim Cherry: Nil

Alan Ausman: To Mr. Whitley, we are all the eyes for the zoning department and need to report issues to the zoning department to aid in the enforcement effort. Congratulations to Ben Dotson on achieving Eagle Scout status. Thanks to police department on solving the bank robbery.

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

Gary Hutchinson asked what the current department rents for the utilities were. Ms. Gunn replied that she thought it to be \$9,000 for electric and \$3,000 for water. Gary Hutchinson asked what the difference revenue would be. Ms. Gunn replied that it should be approximately \$123k per year, which will allow the hiring of a much needed full time police officer.

Julia Carney of Manley Burke introduced herself, gave some background information on their firm and asked if council had any questions of her. Julia Carney stated that she has 5 years' experience as assistant solicitor for the City of Cincinnati.

George Leicht stated that he would urge council to hire Manley Burke.

## **LEGISLATION**

**ORDINANCE 1658- ESTABLISHING AN ALLOCATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES FOR MUNICIPAL ELECTRIC AND WATER DEPARTMENTS, 1<sup>ST</sup> Reading**

**ORDINANCE 1659-AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE RETENTION OF JULIA B. CARNEY AS VILLAGE SOLICITOR AND THE LAW FIRM OF MANLEY BURKE, LPA TO PROVIDE GENERAL LEGAL SERVICES TO THE VILLAGE OF BETHEL, OHIO AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**

Discussion: George Leicht requested that council waive the three readings and pass the ordinance, but not to pass it as an emergency. Julia Carney asked that the ordinance be passed as an emergency. Mr. Whitley asked Mr. Dotson how many applications were received for the solicitor position. Mr. Dotson replied approximately 3 individuals in addition to Manley Burke.

A motion to waive the three readings of ORD 1659 Julia B. Carney was made by Mr. Ausman. Second by Ms. Johnson. By roll: Mr. Ausman "yea", Ms. Johnson "yea", Ms. Ireton "nay", Ms. Gunn "yea", Mr. Whitley "nay", Mr. Cherry "yea". Motion carried.

A motion to adopt ORD 1659 Julia B. Carney was made by Ms. Gunn. Seconded by Ms. Johnson. By roll: Ms. Gunn "yea", Ms. Johnson "yea", Ms. Ireton "nay", Mr. Whitley "nay", Mr. Cherry "yea", Mr. Ausman "yea". Motion carried.

## **PAYMENT OF THE BILLS**

A motion to approve the payment of the presented bills and expenses (checks 22664-22703 plus electronic payments and charges); in the amount of \$214,320.68 was made by Ms. Gunn. Second by Ms. Ireton. All yea.

Mayor Dick asked if there was any other village business.

Brad Moore addressed council about his pay scale. He expressed concerns about going to lineman school and subsequently not receiving an increase in pay as he believes a water department employee would have. Brad Moore also expressed a concern about not knowing what he will be earning in five years, and stated that he will seek employment with a utility company one year after completing the lineman training. Brad Moore requested that he be provided with a

projection of what he will be earning in the future. Ms. Gunn asked Brad Moore when was it that a water employee received a raise for attending a class as was indicated. Mr. Dotson replied that it has not happened since the village had a board of public affairs. Ms. Gunn told Brad Moore that that was a long time ago and times have changed. Brad Moore referred to a paper he had on hand and stated that he should be making \$18.70 per hour. Ms. Ireton stated that in today's economy no one knows what the future holds for pay scales. Brad Moore stated that the village has to have two "A" lineman. Brad Moore asked if he had the ability to decline going to lineman school. Ms. Gunn replied that the employees have the freedom to leave the village employment if they do not want to attend training. George Leicht stated that it is true that in the past the village has had a pay scale, but that at some point it was changed. Mr. Ausman stated that many people are experiencing no additional pay increase after obtaining additional training or certification. Ms. Ireton stated that she prefers merit raises to step raises. Mr. Whitley stated that he also prefers merit raises as well.

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Ireton. Second by Mr. Whitley. All ye.

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James T. Dick, Mayor

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William R. Gilpin, Fiscal Officer