

Bethel Village Council October 12, 2010

The Council of the Village of Bethel, Ohio, met in regular session in Council Chambers on Tuesday, October 12, 2010 at 6:30 p.m., with Mayor James T. Dick presiding.

Mr. Whitley 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, Donna Gunn, Rus Whitley, Mary Daugherty; Fiscal Officer Angel Burton. Council member Janice Ireton, Solicitor George Leicht and Village Administrator Travis Dotson were absent. Council member Tim Cherry arrived at 7:20 p.m.

Mayor Dick thanked Bethel Building and Loan for sponsoring this year's Council meeting videos.

A motion to approve the minutes from the September 27, 2010 meeting, as written, was made by Ms. Gunn. Seconded by Mr. Whitley. All ye.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Jim Smith, Superintendent of Bethel-Tate Schools, and Mr. Dave Brannock, Bethel-Tate School Board Member, addressed Council. A one-percent earnings tax for the district will be on the upcoming fall ballot.

The district is 70% funded by the state. A 10% cut in that funding is expected when the state releases the biennial budget in 2011, resulting in a \$900K loss for two years. Bethel-Tate has already made over \$2.6 million in cuts. District spending is in-line with revenues, with little cushion for catastrophic events. The district was awarded the top state rating of "Excellent with Distinction" despite having the lowest per pupil spending in the region.

The 1% earnings tax will only apply to earned income for Bethel-Tate school district residents. If approved, the tax would be in effect for 5 years, and could not be increased nor extended without further voter approval. The tax would generate up to \$1.2 million for the district, though there will be a lag time before the money is received due to tax filings with the state. Withholdings would begin January 1, 2011. If the tax levy fails, further cuts will have to be made, including staff, programs and services.

REPORTS

Mayor James T. Dick

The Village's Trick-or-Treat hours will be October 30, 2010 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. There is a Bethel Lion's Club breakfast that morning from 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Village Administrator, Travis Dotson

Mr. Dotson was not present due to a father-son golf outing. Mayor Dick spoke in his behalf.

The water tower repainting is complete, and the Village is pleased with the work done by Rural Water Storage. The tower is empty while the paint cures.

Public Works has done some concrete patch work, including the playground slide base. They are also addressing a water main break by the Nazarene church.

Mr. Dotson has been performing the zoning administrator functions, due to Mr. Dunn's resignation, and he has issued 5 zoning permits.

The Jurgensen paving bid was based on incorrect measurements at the Burke Park, and when corrected, the contract price increased over \$9500. Rack Seven's bid ended up being the lowest paving bid submitted, and a notice of award has been sent to them. Mr. Leicht has approved the notice.

A motion accepting Rack Seven Paving's bid for the resurfacing and full-depth repair work as selected by the Village of Bethel, and totaling \$85,546.35, was made by Mr. Whitley. Second by Ms. Gunn. All yea.

Mayor Dick stated the walk-path resurfacing will be done by the end of the year.

Fiscal Officer, Angel Burton

Nil.

Solicitor George Leicht

Absent.

Police Chief Mark Planck

Chief Planck attended the Crimestoppers Awards at the Hyatt Regency last week. Despite the program's success, they are running low on funds, posing a potential end to the service.

Timothy Hoskins pled guilty to the death of his 2-year old stepson, and has been sentenced to 15 years to life. Chief Planck thanked the Clermont County Sheriff's Office for the good work done in the investigation. Bethel PD just doesn't have the resources nor the manpower to handle such a case.

Mayor Dick, together with Chief Planck, recommend Christopher Bass, Andrew McIntosh and Daniel Riffle for appointment as Auxiliary Police Officers. Mayor Dick pointed out that the funding for 2 part-time officers and 4 auxiliary officers was included in the 2010 budget. The Chief has been reviewing auxiliary officer applications for over 6 months, and these 3 gentlemen stood out as the best candidates for the Village.

A motion approving Mayor Dick's appointment of Christopher Bass, Andrew McIntosh and Daniel Riffle as Auxiliary Police Officers was made by Mr. Whitley. Second by Ms. Johnson. All yea.

The three gentlemen were then sworn-in as Auxiliary Police Officers by Mayor Dick.

Mr. Whitley commended Chief Planck's selection and welcomed the new officers to the Village. He pointed out their levels of education and military participation.

Tonight's 3 appointments fill all the current openings in the Police Department.

Finance Committee, Chairperson Donna Gunn

The Finance Committee met last Monday, October 4, 2010, and discussed proposed 2011 appropriations.

Mayor Dick challenged the three department heads to stay within 85% of the 2011 revenues for their respective funds, and they were able to meet that goal, in all by the Water Fund, which is at 89%.

Ms. Gunn believes other municipalities would be envious of such a budget accomplishment. Finance will present the information when the work is final.

The Bick Primary 2nd graders made a field trip to the municipal office a couple weeks ago, meeting with all the departments, and seeing various pieces of equipment. The students were able to see a police cruiser, bucket truck, dump truck and mini-excavator up close. The Village is holding a coloring contest for those students.

A motion to spend up to \$100 from the Bethel Events Fund for the purchase of coloring contest prizes was made by Ms. Gunn. Second by Ms. Johnson. All yea.

The next Finance Committee meeting will be Wednesday, November 3, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.

Public Works Committee, Chairperson Tim Cherry

The next Public Works Committee meeting will be Monday, October 18th at 7:00 p.m.

Safety Committee, Chairperson Rus Whitley

The Safety Committee met this evening, and is pleased with Chief Planck's auxiliary officer recommendations. Mr. Whitley hopes the officers stay with the Village for awhile.

The committee discussed a utility pole behind IGA with 3 transformers and recommends the Public Works committee review the matter.

The Charity Street traffic light is out and will be fixed soon.

A motion approving the establishment of the Auxiliary Emeritus position, and designating Officer John Wallace with such title, was made by Mr. Whitley. Second by Ms. Johnson. All ye.

Personnel Committee, Chairperson Mary Daugherty

The next Personnel Committee meeting is Monday, October 25, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.

Burke Trust Commission, Janice Ireton

Nil.

Planning Commission, Priscilla Johnson

Nil.

Rules of Council, Donna Gunn

Council was given a copy of the proposed changes for their review.

Ms. Daugherty pointed out concerns she had with the amended document:

Section III, Item 9 has added "Determination of the relevance of the meeting's course lies with the Mayor or Presiding Officer." Ms. Gunn stated it means the Mayor or Presiding Officer can terminate the meeting at any time. Ms. Daugherty disagrees with that amendment, and stated the meetings are not "Mayor's Meetings" but "Council Meetings." Ms. Gunn stated a Council vote is not required to open the meeting, and it does not need to be required to end the meeting.

Section IV, Item 1.E has added "Any Resolution or Ordinance presented must first have committee recommendations." Ms. Daugherty considers this to be taking away a council person's right, and also limits operational flexibility. By restricting legislation to a committee recommendation, the power of local self-government is being restricted. Ms. Daugherty stated that Mr. Leicht also has concerns over this amendment. Ms. Gunn said she had not heard from Mr. Leicht regarding any issues.

Section IV, Item 1.H.ii has "relevant" added before discussion related to motions. Ms. Daugherty questioned who decides if the discussion is relevant. Mayor Dick stated the Mayor or the presiding officer may determine if the discussion is relevant, and it is meant to prevent matters straying, as well as personal attacks. Ms. Daugherty believes relevance is subjective, and the amendment limits Council's power.

Mayor Dick recommended the document go back to committee for further discussion.

CALL OF MEMBERS

Priscilla Johnson: Nil.

Donna Gunn: Thanked the American Heritage Girls for their street cleaning efforts.

Ms. Gunn expressed her support for the upcoming school levy. Despite income taxes being unpopular, the lack of education is even more so. Interest in education shows support for children.

She also thanked Mitch Hatfield and the other Public Works employees for all their hard work.

Rus Whitley: Welcomed the new auxiliary officers, and reminded people to be careful of the children that will be out trick-or-treating. He continues to see the Village crosswalks ignored.

Mary Daugherty: Nil.

PUBLIC INPUT

Mr. Alan Ausman invited the Village to attend the Bethel United Methodist Church's "Holy House" on October 30, 2010 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Mr. John Wass has been waiting 2 years for a Burke Park bench, and understands the one on order will take 2 months to receive. He inquired about the status of the Burke Trust request, that is supposed to include 2 more benches, and if the delivery of those will be rushed. Ms. Ireton is working on the request, and Ms. Gunn pointed out that wooden tables are being made for the park, as a part of an Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Wass believes digging the ditches out at Easter Valley would be a good use of the new mini-excavator. Mayor Dick stated the Village cannot do that work, because the Village does not own the property. The Village has offered its assistance to the school, but the school has to initiate the work. Mr. Wass considers the problem to be the Village's responsibility, as well, due to Council approving the plan presented by the now-gone developer. The County also approved the plan, though the drainage work was not completed, and no storm sewers were constructed.

Mayor Dick stressed the fact that the school has to reach out to the Village for assistance. The Village, Duke Energy and the school agreed to a work day, though that date has not been set. Mayor Dick recommended Mr. Wass take the matter to the school board.

LEGISLATION

Nil.

PAYMENT OF THE BILLS

A motion to approve the payment of the presented bills and expenses (checks 21569-21550) was made by Mr. Whitley. Seconded by Ms. Daugherty. All yea.

SEPTEMBER EXPENSES

A motion to approve the September, 2010 expenses, as presented (checks 21428-21550, in addition to payroll and direct charges), was made by Mr. Whitley. Seconded by Ms. Gunn. All yea.

Council adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

James T. Dick, Mayor

Angelina Burton, Fiscal Officer