

TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES FROM: April 16, 2018

Council called to order in regular session at 7:01 p.m. with Mayor Todd Buehrer presiding. Roll call of members: Brenda Mackey, absent; John Heckerman, here; Connie Mehring, here; Jamin Roe, here; Jason Benedict, here; Matthew Shanahan, here. Also present were Village Administrator/Utilities Superintendent/Zoning Inspector/Meter Reader Chad Johnson and Fiscal Officer/Utilities Clerk Ryan Harnishfeger. Visitors present: Brittany Vollmar for Otsego government class, accompanied by Nicole Vollmar. Minutes from the April 2 meeting were approved as submitted.

FINANCE and CLAIMS: A spreadsheet of the current invoices was reviewed and approved by members. Councilman Roe made a motion that these bills be allowed and orders drawn for same. Councilwoman Mehring seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried. A copy of the March RITA report was given to the Finance Committee to review.

Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported receiving a subpoena from the Wood County Common Pleas Court, addressed to Village of Tontogany Utilities Department. The subpoena states, "You are hereby commanded to appear in the Common Pleas Court of Wood County, on the 2nd day of May, 2018 at 9:00 o'clock a.m. (Courtroom: Grand Jury), to attend and give testimony on behalf of State of Ohio in the above entitled case under penalty of law." The subpoena demands to bring electric usage (including kw usage and cost) and billing summary for twelve listed addresses from 4/9/17 thru 4/9/18. Then the subpoena states, "You need NOT appear if the above requested information is EMAILED or FAXED to: Detective Destinie Peterson, Wood County Sheriff's Office, 1960 E. Gypsy Lane Road, Bowling Green, Ohio 43402." Mr. Harnishfeger reported that he emailed a copy of the subpoena to Village Solicitor Paul Skaff and asked for any advice he may have, but he hasn't heard back from him yet. Mr. Harnishfeger said he will contact Detective Peterson and try to supply her with the requested information, so as not to have to appear. Mr. Harnishfeger reported that he looked up the utility accounts for the addresses listed on the subpoena, and the first six of the twelve addresses do not even get billed electric by Tontogany. Mayor Buehrer and Administrator Johnson looked over the subpoena, but neither were able to tell from it what was the legal issue that prompted it.

ZONING: Zoning Inspector Johnson reported that he did the shed permit for Denise Schutzberg, spoken about at the last meeting.

Mr. Johnson reported that he taped a zoning violation notice to the window of the truck owned by the resident at the west end of North Street, advising him that it is against zoning rules to park a commercial vehicle in a residential area, that he is not supposed to drive the vehicle down North Street, and that the village has received complaints about the noise of the truck waking people up. Mr. Johnson said that he had Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger send the same notice by Certified Mail to the truck owner's mailing address. Mayor Buehrer commented that he got it, because he sent the mayor a message, asking where to park commercial vehicles. The truck was seen parked at the Corner Carryout. Mr. Johnson said the Carryout is allowing him to park it there overnight once a week, but they don't want it there all of the time.

Mr. Johnson reported that things appear to be moving on the new house to be built at Wall Street and Broad Street. They were asking him about the location of water lines for the contractor. Mr. Johnson said he advised them to contact Northwestern Water & Sewer District about sewer hookup.

UTILITIES: Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that we received the latest wholesale utilities bill from Bowling Green. The water bill was about \$2,200 more than the same time in 2016 and about \$1,200 more than the same time last year. So it has come down from the \$5,000 and \$6,000 extra in the previous 2 months. Mayor Buehrer asked about the results of Bowling Green's cost of service study for their water rates. Utilities Superintendent Johnson replied that, as a result of the study, they are

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proposing a 6 percent annual rate increase over the next five years, through 2022. Also, 44 percent of the cost increase is going to residential. Mr. Johnson commented that the village would need to raise its rates more than 6 percent, or we would just break even. Mayor Buehrer said he would be concerned that a cost of service study might show that the village needs to raise its rates by some high amount like 30 percent. Councilman Shanahan asked about what methods we might use to inform utility customers about a rate increase. Mayor Buehrer answered that we have done it in various ways in the past, like putting a note on the bills and posting the new rates online. Mr. Shanahan suggested that a letter to customers would be best. Mr. Johnson commented that the village has done a pretty good job of upgrading water lines, but there are still some needed in town. We know we will have to put in two new master meter pits to meet backflow requirements, and the EPA is requiring us to do an asset management plan; these are large expenses coming. Members discussed possible increases to our line maintenance fee, which is currently at \$10 per month for residential, to help bring in more water revenue to help with all of the added water expenses on top of normal expenses and fees from Bowling Green for our meters. Mayor Buehrer mentioned a concern that customers can't control line maintenance fees, which are a constant monthly amount, no matter how much water they use. But they can use less water to make their water usage bill go down, so that gives them some control. Mayor Buehrer said he would like to know how Bowling Green's rate increase on cubic feet compared with the village doing the same percentage increase on gallons sold. Councilman Roe and Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger commented that an increase of a certain percent per volume should work out to the same percentage of increase applied to a different volume. Mr. Johnson said he could work up a comparison to test it out. Mr. Johnson commented that the village should probably have a cost of service study done, like Bowling Green, to more precisely determine what our rates need to be to cover all costs. We could ask the same company that did it for Bowling Green to do one for us. He said he would talk to Dave Kuhn about it and see what he thinks. However, that wouldn't help us this year. We need to do a rate increase now to offset the increases from Bowling Green and other expenses piling up. After a little more discussion, Councilman Heckerman made a motion to have Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger ask Solicitor Skaff to write up an emergency ordinance to increase water rates by 10 percent, effective June 1, 2018, but make no change to line maintenance fees for now. Councilwoman Mehring seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried.

STREETS and ALLEYS: Nothing to report.

SIDEWALKS and TREES: Councilman Roe asked the mayor if he is going to see Palmer and remind them about the ravine by the school drive. Mayor Buehrer said he will be talking to him on Wednesday, but it is getting hard to get contractors to do work anymore. They are so busy and don't have any extra workers to spare. Councilman Roe suggested telling Palmer that if he honestly can't get to it, let us know and there are other people we can ask to do the job.

DRAINS and SEWERS: Councilwoman Mehring reported that she drove through Harley Woods during the recent rain and the culvert by Hartman's is handling the water well.

CITY HALL and PARKS: Councilwoman Mehring reported that Councilwoman Mackey put a new cork board in the sign at Centennial Park.

Councilman Shanahan reported that a hall renter showed him pictures of mice droppings in drawers in the hall kitchen. Mr. Shanahan was concerned that this is not something we want visitors to run into. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger said that there were some mice seen in the hall over the winter. He caught 2 of them in traps in the office. Some mice also got into the sweeper bag and chewed a hole in it. Mr. Shanahan asked if checking drawers before people rent the hall is something that is done or is part of regular hall cleaning. Mr. Harnishfeger answered that he does not know if Karen Graf includes checking

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drawers in her once-a-month hall cleaning, but we can inspect the kitchen drawers before rentals. Mayor Buehrer suggested that maybe we need to have someone routinely come in and set traps. Councilman Heckerman said they have a service come in at Mid-Wood once a month for pest control. He offered to talk to them about doing checks at the village hall. Mayor Buehrer agreed and asked Mr. Heckerman to find out what it might cost to service the hall.

Councilman Shanahan reported that he knows someone who can repair tattered flags for the village for a small price and save us some money on the cost of new ones. The one at the fire hall and the one at the town hall need repaired. Mr. Harnishfeger commented that Councilwoman Mackey had asked him to put up a new flag at the hall before Memorial Day, but a repaired one would work too.

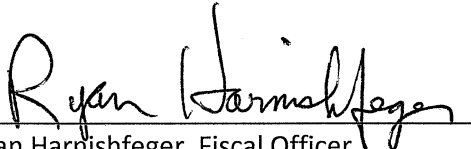
Councilman Roe reported that he went to Centennial Park and measured the spacing of the posts. They were 14 feet on center, so double the amount of posts would put them 7 feet on center. Mr. Roe said he thought that would be a good distance. A car could fit through it, but you would have to go very slow. Mr. Roe said he emailed the company about it. He will touch base with them again about it to try to get an estimate by our next meeting.

Utilities Superintendent Johnson asked the mayor if we are wanting to get two new hydrants soon. Mayor Buehrer responded that we want to get the one in front of the fire hall replaced as soon as possible. We aren't exactly sure yet what is wrong with the other hydrant; it is turned off for now. Mr. Johnson asked how to go about getting a new hydrant for the fire hall. Mayor Buehrer suggested that the hydrant could probably be purchased at Perrysburg Pipe, and then Palmer could be called to come and install it.

With nothing further to discuss, Mayor Buehrer declared the meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.



Todd Buehrer, Mayor



Ryan Harnishfeger, Fiscal Officer