

TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES FROM: June 17, 2019

Council called to order in regular session at 7:06 p.m. with Mayor Todd Buehrer presiding. Opening ceremony: Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mayor Buehrer. Roll call of members: Brenda Mackey, absent; John Heckerman, absent; Connie Mehring, here; Jamin Roe, here; Jason Benedict, here; Matthew Shanahan, here. Also present was Fiscal Officer/Utilities Clerk Ryan Harnishfeger. Visitors present: Lincoln Fox, to submit an application for a variance. Minutes from the June 3 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. Councilman Benedict seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried.

Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that the village's 52-week CDARS investment at the rate of 2.26% will mature on Thursday, June 20, 2019. To reinvest the \$180,000.00 immediately into another CDARS, Council needs to choose from the current investment rate options and submit the reinvestment form by Tuesday, June 18, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. Investment options are 4-wk. at 2.15%, 13-wk. at 2.15%, 26-wk. at 2.15%, 52-wk. at 2.05%, 2-yr. at 1.90%, 3-yr. at 1.90%, and 5-yr. at 1.90%. Mr. Harnishfeger recommended going with the 52-wk. rate at 2.05%. The rates offered by the bank are trending down, rather than up, for a longer investment, and there is no guarantee the 2.15% would be available again at the end of 26 weeks. The 52-wk. plan would lock in 2.05% for a whole year, which is only a difference of \$180 from the uncertain 2.15%. Councilwoman Mehring made a motion to have the fiscal officer reinvest the \$180,000.00 at the 52-wk. rate of 2.05%. Councilman Roe seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried. Mr. Harnishfeger said he would email Council's decision to Huntington Bank this evening immediately after the meeting, so they can email the reinvestment form to him early in the morning to be signed and returned by 9:00 a.m.

Mayor Buehrer invited Lincoln Fox to speak to Council. Mr. Fox told members he recently moved into the house at 18423 Broad Street. He has a situation with zoning and he came to get some clarification. They have a real nice outbuilding structure in the back corner of the property and they would like to apply for a variance to convert that building into a mother-in-law suite. It is a 24' x 16' two-story structure. It has electrical already. They would like to update the electrical and run water and sewage from the house to that building. He has contacted contractors for estimates to get it professionally done. He contacted Zoning Inspector Chad Johnson, who informed him that he would not be able to get a permit to do what he wants because the property is zoned single family. Mr. Fox told members he intends to use the structure only for his family, even though it would technically be a multi-family structure. His mother-in-law has a heart condition and they would like for her to be close to them. It would also help with their childcare needs. Mr. Fox submitted copies of a formal written application for a variance, for the zoning inspector and for council members. He also submitted a map of the property with the building in question highlighted. It is approximately 70 to 80 feet from the back of the house to the building. He also provided pictures of the building. The building is on a concrete slab; there is no basement. Councilman Shanahan asked if there would be rental money exchanged. Mr. Fox replied that there would not; it would only be used as a mother-in-law suite, with no rental. Councilman Roe asked what would be the difference if Mr. Fox just wanted to turn the building into a man cave. Mayor Buehrer replied that adding sewer and water to it would make it a space that someone could live in, which is what they plan on doing. And if they move out in the future, someone could buy the property and try to rent out the extra dwelling. This would set a precedent that anyone could turn their garage into an extra dwelling. Mr. Fox commented that Chad had told him the biggest problem is that the space is not attached to his house, making it a separate dwelling; if it were attached it would not be a problem. Mayor Buehrer stated that if the Board of Zoning Appeals gets involved, they are going to want to know what the hardship is. After a little more discussion, it was decided that Mayor Buehrer

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would contact Village Solicitor Paul Skaff for advice on how we should proceed, what is legal or not, what constitutes an “attached” space (could an enclosed walkway make it attached?), and whether or not we need to get the Zoning Board involved. Mr. Fox asked if signatures from neighbors would be helpful. Mayor Buehrer answered that, if there is a public hearing, the neighbors will get official letters inviting them to the hearing to make their wishes known. Councilman Roe cautioned Mr. Fox that this process takes a while. Mayor Buehrer said he would talk to Solicitor Skaff and then let Mr. Fox know what he finds out. With nothing more to discuss, Mr. Fox left the meeting.

Mayor Buehrer reported that we received our parks grant check for \$4,245.00 for the disc golf course at Centennial Park. He handed the check to the fiscal officer.

Mayor Buehrer read a letter from the Board of County Commissioners, stating, as also reported in the newspaper, that Wood County is working to transfer ownership and responsibility for maintaining and inspecting certain bridges, now incorrectly under the ownership of the county, to the ownership of the municipalities in which they are located, per Ohio Revised Code. The staff in the Engineer’s office is prepared to work with the village on a necessary resolution or ordinance to accept ownership of the bridge; coordination of notification to the State of Ohio to update the State bridge inventory; transfer of annual bridge inspection records to us; discussion regarding future annual bridge inspections; and guidance regarding grants for bridge repair or replacement if needed. The one bridge in Tontogany being transferred from county ownership to village ownership is the one on Main Street. Mayor Buehrer commented that, when that bridge was redone in 2010 the village had to pay a small portion of the cost, but we had to pay for redoing the bridges on Lincoln and Wall Streets, paid through grant money. The Main Street bridge is in good condition. The biggest thing will be the requirement to have it inspected every year, as we should also do for our other bridges. Mayor Buehrer said he would speak with Solicitor Skaff about the ordinance required. We might be able to contract with the county for the bridge inspections; they use three contractors to do inspections, rotating, so the same contractor is not inspecting every year. Councilman Roe suggested that we might want to add a bridges category to our budget and start building up money for future maintenance and bridge costs. Councilwoman Mehring left the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

ZONING: Mayor Buehrer pointed out that everyone received a copy of an email from Ken Taylor, Zoning Inspector for the Village of Weston, expressing interest in finding out more about the zoning inspector position opening in Tontogany. Mayor Buehrer reminded everyone that Solicitor Skaff was going to check with the person who does zoning inspections for the Village of Haskins, that Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger had placed an ad in the paper about the zoning inspector position, and that Councilman Shanahan had someone ask him about the position. Mr. Harnishfeger reported that he had not received a response yet from anyone but Ken Taylor. Councilman Shanahan stated that the only thing that concerns him about Ken Taylor is that he wouldn’t be able to be at every meeting, which he thinks should be part of the job description.

UTILITIES: Nothing to report.

STREETS and ALLEYS: Councilman Shanahan asked the mayor if we got the seeding done on the spot near the church on Broad Street yet. Mayor Buehrer answered that we did not. Councilman Shanahan asked who is responsible to remove the brush that Jim Head cut down at North Street and Tontogany Road. Mayor Buehrer said he was intending to talk to Scott and see if he could get that the next time he gets the chipper out, as well as a couple other places where people put out some brush. Councilman Shanahan reported that the big pile of concrete chunks was removed from the lot on Broad Street and it looks much better.

SIDEWALKS and TREES: Nothing to report.


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DRAINS and SEWERS: Nothing to report.

CITY HALL and PARKS: Councilman Shanahan asked the mayor if he will be running in the upcoming election. Mayor Buehrer answered that it is very likely he will not, because he has applied for a job at the university, and, if he gets the job he will probably have to resign as mayor due to state law. Mr. Shanahan commented that John Heckerman may not rerun for his council seat, which would possibly leave us needing a mayor and a new president of council. Mayor Buehrer commented that Councilman Roe may have to run this year because he was appointed. Councilman Roe responded that he is on his way out too at some point, because he is going to be moving. Mr. Shanahan said he thinks there are important things to consider if we know we are going to have some open seats.

Councilman Roe reported that he spoke with Kevin at EnviroCare about picking up posts for the park project. He gave a verbal quote of \$1,000.00 to do that for us. That would cover a truck and trailer and about an 8-hour day for him and two men to do the job. Mr. Roe said he thinks we should keep looking, because that price seemed a little high to him. Mr. Roe said he knows a couple other people he can ask, and if anyone else knows someone who might do it, ask them. Mayor Buehrer commented that it would be nice to know if they will load the posts for us or not, where we get them. If they would load them, we would just need someone with a truck. Mr. Roe said he would call and find out if they will load them or not. He will also ask if they might deliver them for a price.

With nothing further to discuss, Mayor Buehrer declared the meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.



Todd Buehrer, Mayor



Ryan Harnishfeger, Fiscal Officer