

## TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

### MEETING MINUTES FROM: November 4, 2019

Council called to order in regular session at 7:00 p.m. with Mayor John Heckerman presiding. Opening ceremony: Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mayor Heckerman. Roll call of members: Brenda Mackey, here; Connie Mehring, here; Jamin Roe, here; Jason Benedict, here; Matthew Shanahan, here. Also present were Village Administrator/Utilities Superintendent/Meter Reader Chad Johnson, Zoning Inspector Brian Owens, and Fiscal Officer/Utilities Clerk Ryan Harnishfeger. Visitors present: Andrew Sonderman, President of Suburban Natural Gas Company; Deputy Martha Villegas from the Wood County Sheriff's Office. Minutes from the October 21 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 Mackey seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried. Copies of the October Bank Reconciliation, Fund Status, Revenue Status, and Appropriation Status reports were given to Mayor Heckerman and the Finance Committee to review.

Mayor Heckerman invited Andrew Sonderman to speak to members. Mr. Sonderman began by giving Mayor Heckerman an Application for Community Development Funds from Suburban Natural Gas. The funds offered to the Village of Tontogany this year, based on the number of Tontogany customers, is \$838.00. The only stipulation is that the funds be used for a public purpose that benefits the village. Mr. Sonderman proceeded to go over the information he had handed out to everyone. He talked about the importance of contacting the Ohio Utilities Protection Service (O.U.P.S.) at least 48 hours prior to any excavation activities, small or large, including for things like room additions, decks, fencing, a new post, or even landscaping. He talked about knowing the dangers and the basic signs of escaping natural gas by smell, sight, or sound, and the importance of evacuating the area first and then calling 911 and the gas supplier (don't call while in the area of the leak because a cell phone can spark an explosion). Every three years Suburban does a leakage survey and they classify any leaks detected. This is Tontogany's year to be surveyed. Any significant leak close to residential dwellings will be fixed immediately. Lower class leaks have inspection requirements that they follow. There are currently no large excavation projects in Tontogany. Mr. Sonderman explained that gas prices make up about half of their gas bill. The other half is distribution charges, which pays Suburban's employees. One cost that hasn't gone up is the cost of the gas they buy and sell to customers. In fact, it has gone way down, due to less expensive fracking methods to obtain it. However, they do not make any money on the gas; their only profits come from distribution charges. They have not had a rate increase since 2008, but the costs to operate have gone up over the years. The last two years they didn't make any net profit. So, they had to apply for a rate increase, to be phased in over a three-year period. With nothing further to discuss, Mayor Heckerman thanked Mr. Sonderman and he left the meeting.

Copies of the October incident report were made available for members to review. Mayor Heckerman invited members to direct any questions or concerns to Deputy Villegas. Mayor Heckerman reported a transportation van that appears to be illegally parked at Broad Street and Main Street. Members agreed that they had seen it also and confirmed that it has no plates; it has been there for over a week; it looks like a bookmobile. The deputy said she would check into it when she leaves the meeting. Members reminded the deputy that patrols need to keep watching for speeders, especially during school sporting events. With nothing further to discuss, Mayor Heckerman thanked Deputy Villegas and she left the meeting.

Mayor Heckerman did a first reading, by title only, of Ordinance #906-19, AN ORDINANCE MAKING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2019, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. This ordinance amends the 2019 Permanent Appropriations Ordinance #898-18, by adding \$75,000 from the Electric Fund to appropriation account 5301-513-311, in order to be able to pay for wholesale electric from Bowling Green the remainder of this year. \$600,000 was originally

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appropriated; Ordinance #906-19 will increase that to \$675,000. Councilman Shanahan made a motion to suspend the rules and declare an emergency for Ordinance #906-19. Councilwoman Mehring seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried. Councilman Shanahan made a motion to adopt Ordinance #906-19. Councilwoman Mehring seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger explained that we estimated our cost for wholesale electric lower than usual, thinking the school would be switching to solar power earlier this year, but that didn't happen, so we needed more money to pay for electric purchases through the end of the year.

Councilman Roe asked if a decision had been made about brush pickup. Councilwoman Mackey and Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger answered that a last-minute decision was made by the township last week to do the brush pickup today, November 4, and we rushed to get flyers posted in town and on the website. Councilman Shanahan said he got messages from people asking why leaves weren't picked up today. Mr. Harnishfeger answered that we put up flyers that said leaves would be picked up each Monday in November, as usual, but the township decided to do brush today and start on leaves the second Monday in November.

Mayor Heckerman reminded members that we had talked about the need to put cross braces in the shelter house to make it more stable. He said he will look into that.

**ZONING:** Zoning Inspector Owens reported that someone asked if they needed a permit for new windows and gutters. He told them they don't need a zoning permit for that. Meter Reader Johnson reported that he noticed, while reading meters, that the new owner of Doc's has piled more chairs out back of his establishment. He had put some out before and now it is starting to look like a junkyard. Councilwoman Mehring agreed. Mr. Johnson said that he also noticed that it looks like the owner of Doc's is planning to put up a huge sign on the side of his building. Mr. Owens asked if we have anything to say about it, if the owner intends to put up a sign there. Nobody was sure.

**UTILITIES:** Utilities Superintendent Johnson reported that he did a sanitary survey for the EPA at the beginning of the month. The EPA seems to be going to extremes on their requirements as a reaction to Flint Michigan and other water incidents. For instance, he had repairs done at both master meter pits for the sump pumps not working right, but they still gave us a violation for an inch of water in a pit, even with a new sump pump. There are five or six binders in the office with plans for various kinds of water issues. The EPA seems to be nitpicking to find faults and possibly push small towns out of business. Mr. Johnson reported that he exercised the valves all up and down Kellogg and Tontogany Roads. The EPA gave him a violation for not spelling out the critical valves in the system. The EPA wants educational materials handed out to all customers in the system every year, and for the water operator to have contact with every resident and every business, and do evaluations of the premises to assure that nobody has a cross connection in their house or building. Mr. Johnson said he called Dave Kuhn at Feller, Finch and told him we need to get the asset management plan done.

Mr. Johnson reported that they put down asphalt at the Gutierrez property and covered up the water line valve. Mayor Heckerman and members told Mr. Johnson that he should tell Gutierrez to fix it and not try to fix it himself.

Councilman Shanahan asked Utilities Superintendent Johnson if he had made any headway on the letter to inform customers of the new water rates. Mr. Johnson replied that he had been working on it and hopes to have it finished by tomorrow. The wording is short and to the point. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger asked if members wanted to see the letter before he has it printed and prepared for mailing. Mr. Johnson said he would take a picture of the letter and send it to council members. Councilwoman Mackey asked if the letters will be mailed to the customers separately or mailed with the water bill. Utilities Clerk Harnishfeger answered that he intends to mail the letters separately. He said he would have Staples print and trifold the letters and also print envelopes with our return address. Then

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he will print customer labels at the office, prepare, stuff, seal, and put postage on each envelope, and mail them.

Utilities Superintendent Johnson reported that he called John Stewart at Bowling Green Electric and asked him about the electric pole inspections that were done. He said they won't be doing anything on pole replacements until winter, when things slow down. He will be getting with the ISO person to do some flow testing on hydrants on Monday, for a rating for the village. After a little discussion about the electric pole replacements, it was decided to just re-appropriate the money next year, if Bowling Green does not get the work done for payment this year, plus more money for 2020 electric pole inspections and replacements.

**STREETS and ALLEYS:** Councilman Shanahan reported that, as part of the solar project, the school will have street crossing speed signs for the school in each direction. They will show the speed limit and how fast a vehicle is going. Mr. Shanahan said he doesn't have a timeline for this yet.

**SIDEWALKS and TREES:** Councilwoman Mackey reported that there are still logs laying from the trees that Abe Rowe cut down. Some pieces have already been taken. Mayor Heckerman said someone told him he will be coming back with a bucket to pick up more.

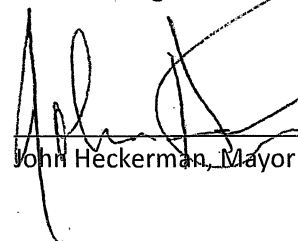
**DRAINS and SEWERS:** Councilwoman Mackey observed that the drains seemed to be working fine with all the rain we had recently.

**CITY HALL and PARKS:** Utilities Superintendent Johnson reported that he turned the water off at the Centennial Park fountain yesterday. Councilwoman Mackey reported that the portable restrooms were removed from the parks on Monday.

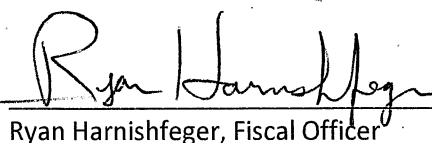
Mayor Heckerman asked Councilman Roe if he heard anything back about drainage at the park. Mr. Roe responded that he has not heard anything. He hasn't been able to get Palmer to call him back. He offered to call Kyle Sherman again to see if he might be able to get us on his schedule for next spring. He said he will call Palmer again tomorrow to see if he can get a response.

Mayor Heckerman reported that the leaf vac is supposed to be delivered tomorrow. He also reported that the Christmas tree has been lit up and it is ready to go. Councilwomen Mackey and Mehring said we need a new bow for the hall wreath and they will try to get one.

With nothing further to discuss, Mayor Heckerman declared the meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.



John Heckerman, Mayor



Ryan Harnishfeger, Fiscal Officer