

TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES FROM: August 16, 2021

Council called to order in regular session at 7:00 p.m. with Mayor Matthew Shanahan presiding. Opening ceremony: Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mayor Shanahan. Roll call of members: Brenda Mackey, here; Connie Mehring, here; Jamin Roe, absent; Mark Smith, here; Robert Bergfeld, here; Damon Lee, here. Also present were Village Administrator/Utilities Superintendent/Meter Reader Chad Johnson, Zoning Inspector Brian Owens, and Fiscal Officer/Utilities Clerk Ryan Harnishfeger. Minutes from the August 2nd meeting were approved as submitted.

FINANCE and CLAIMS: A spreadsheet of the current invoices was reviewed and approved by members. Councilman Smith inquired as to what kind of repairs were done by Bowling Green Municipal Utilities at 18709 North Street and 18505 Tontogany Creek Road for a cost of \$5,304.93. Utilities Superintendent Johnson answered that one was for lost power at the Sewer Plant and the one on North Street was a resident having all kinds of power flicker issues. Councilman Lee made a motion that these bills be allowed and orders drawn for same. Councilwoman Mehring seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried.

Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that he received a payment of \$1,017.60 from Washington Township today for their 32% share of the cost of crack filling on Tontogany Creek Road. Mr. Harnishfeger also reminded members that, in observance of Labor Day, no regular meeting is scheduled for September 6th, the first Monday in September. Mayor Shanahan asked Mr. Harnishfeger to email Haley Wilkins to correct an error on the Village website that shows August 19 as the second council meeting in August, whereas it is actually the 16th, so no one will be misled by the erroneous listing and come, expecting a meeting on the 19th of August.

ZONING: Councilwoman Mehring reported that there are a lot of vehicles sitting at the house on the corner of Lincoln Street and Tontogany Road. Zoning Inspector Owens acknowledged that he is aware of the situation.

UTILITIES: Utilities Superintendent Johnson reported that he repainted Bernard's fire hydrant, as well as some fire hydrants on Kellogg Road and on Tontogany Road. He has a little paint left, which he will use on a few more hydrants; then he will be done. He doesn't want to do them in the future, so he asked Council to see about getting the boy scouts or someone else to paint fire hydrants, as needed, next year and beyond.

Mr. Johnson reported that he spoke with Dave Kuhn of Feller, Finch today about the backflow prevention for Tontogany's master meter pits. Mr. Kuhn told him that the superintendent for Bowling Green has not been getting back to him on what he wants. Mr. Johnson said he told him to go around the superintendent and call Bowling Green Utilities Director Brian O'Connell, so we can get moving on it. Mr. Kuhn also informed him that the cost of the backflow prevention project would be about all of the ARPA funding we get, just for one of our two pits. It will be about \$10,000 for a pit, plus \$10,000 for a backflow device, plus about another \$20,000 for engineering and construction, bringing the total cost for one pit to about \$40,000.

STREETS and ALLEYS: Nothing to report.

SIDEWALKS and TREES: Councilman Smith reported that they went and contacted almost all of the people on the list who had expressed interest in participating in the sidewalk project this year. The accepted bid was for a maximum price, estimated on the high side, so the contractor does not have to come back at the end and ask for more money for cost overruns; however, he can decide to reduce the price. Based on Councilman Roe's measurements, they told people how much the approximate cost

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would be for their property. Knowing that the actual final cost may be lower than the maximum bid price, he suggested that we may want to charge people an upfront amount that would come close to their half of the total cost, without going over and having to write refund checks to people, should the contractor decide to charge lower than the maximum amount because things went smoothly. People would pay the decided-on deposit (maybe \$1,000, or whatever amount is determined) to get on the list and get the work done. Then we would bill whatever is left unpaid when the project is finished. This way we would know people are committed and we could get going on the project. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger agreed that it would be good to avoid having to calculate and send reimbursements to people for overpayments. He said he had expected that maybe the contractor would bill roughly half of the project cost as a down payment and then bill the remainder determined for each property when the project is complete. If so, the resident and the Village could pay the first half without any worry about overpayment. And then the final payment due would also be an exact figure. He asked Mr. Smith if the contractor had said how he intends to bill for the project. Mr. Smith answered that he did not say, so that is something that we need to talk to him about. Councilwoman Mackey suggested that we check with Solicitor Skaff about the legality of collecting money upfront from people, since usually a contractor does not bill us until a project like this is finished. Councilman Lee suggested coming up with a uniform down payment amount for everyone, and then doing a final billing for the remainder when the project is done. Mr. Smith said he needs to talk to the contractor and he would also like to get Solicitor Skaff working on some sort of contract that states an agreement made by residents to pay their half and the Village to pay its half; we currently have no formal written agreement. Mayor Shanahan asked Mr. Smith to get information from the contractor first and then contact Solicitor Skaff about everything. He added that he thinks another important part of the agreement should be exact dates for payments due. Mr. Smith said he would reach out to the contractor tomorrow, let everyone know what is going on, and then contact Solicitor Skaff. The mayor noted that we do not have another regular meeting scheduled for about a month, due to the Labor Day holiday. He said we could call a special meeting, if we feel it is needed. Zoning Inspector Owens advised that we need to have exact measurements for each property, since money is involved and customers will expect billing to contain no errors that would result in them being overbilled. He suggested putting the exact sidewalk measurements on each person's agreement. The mayor pointed out that, even though Councilman Roe measured the lots for the residents, the contractor's measurements will be the final word for billing. Councilwoman Mehring asked if the contractor will come back next year. The mayor responded that our original plan was to alternate between sidewalks and street repairs every other year, but that could be altered as deemed necessary. Ms. Mehring said she asked because Linda Meek had said she will be putting a roof on her house, which would require going over the new sidewalk, which might damage it. Councilwoman Mackey said Ms. Meek had already spoken with her and Councilman Smith about that. Ms. Mackey also reported that one person had asked about putting sidewalk costs on her taxes, to which she had replied that Council had discussed it but had not come to a decision about it. Mayor Shanahan commented that we were leaning against that idea, but we could add it to the list of things to ask Solicitor Skaff about. If he advises against it or for it, we can then make a final decision about it.

Councilman Bergfeld reported that he received a quote for our tree work from Gary Stump Removal & Tree Service, owned by his uncle, Gary Bergfeld. Mayor Shanahan read the quote, totaling \$660 to: clean up the tree across from Doc's on Main Street; on Washington Street and Broad Street, remove a small locust tree, clean up a large locust hanging on a house and clean up a maple tree; clean up a locust tree at 18705 Washington Street; clear the road at North Street and Tontogany Road; all raked and blown clean. Councilman Bergfeld informed members that Gary is a month out on tree work. Members commented that they thought the price was pretty reasonable for all of that work. Councilman Smith made a motion to accept the bid of \$660 from Gary Stump Removal & Tree Service for the quoted work. Councilwoman Mackey seconded this motion. Councilman Bergfeld abstained from voting, since it is his uncle. All other members voted in favor; motion carried.

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DRAINS and SEWERS: Nothing to report.

CITY HALL and PARKS: Administrator Johnson reported that the representative for the security camera company intends to come to our second meeting in September. Mayor Shanahan asked Councilwoman Mackey if she had reached out to the Parks District about security cameras as a viable park grant request. Ms. Mackey replied that she emailed Jeff Baney about this, but she has not heard back from him yet. The mayor asked if we have grant ideas that we are submitting. Ms. Mackey answered that the security cameras is currently the only thing besides a small stretch of sidewalk at Centennial Park that we are considering applying for. Councilwoman Mehring reported that we need two baby seats at Mehring Park; both of ours are broken. The mayor commented that he had spoken with Ms. Mehring about this and had wondered when the last time was that we had spent money to update the equipment at Mehring Park. He said updated swings and maybe some other playground equipment for Mehring Park might be another possible park grant request. Ms. Mehring commented that the baby seats we have won't work properly, even if repaired. The mayor concluded that they need to be removed, if they are a safety issue.

Mayor Shanahan asked if members had any thoughts about who to be the honoree at the tree lighting this December. He said he thought the fire department already has Santa lined up, but he will check with Bill Gase; it seemed to work out well the way they did it last year, driving Santa through the village. The event is scheduled for the first Saturday of December. The COVID situation still warrants some social distancing, so we will do similarly to last year. We will need to replace some lights on the tree again; we can probably find some cheaper than what we paid for them last year. He asked Councilwoman Mehring to look at a catalog and see if she has any suggestions for lighting up the downtown area. He asked Councilwoman Mackey to follow up with Township Trustee Steve Powell to see if they will get their tree lit up for the holidays. He said he thought Larry would be receptive to the idea of decorating Doc's on the outside. Zoning Inspector Owens asked what happened to the idea of a marquee at the fire department. Mayor Shanahan answered that he thought they tabled the idea after the Village Council decided it was not enough of a priority to share the cost of it with the township. Members discussed briefly some ideas for the tree lighting honoree. It seems that most everyone who is an older resident of Tontogany has either been honored in the past or has declined to be the honoree for one reason or another. The mayor suggested Tim Smith; Ms. Mehring said she could ask him. Mr. Owens asked if members had ever thought about expanding the source of honorees to include other than senior members of the community, such as including people with special needs. The mayor and members agreed that we need to expand the types of honorees. Ms. Mackey said we would put our heads together and come up with something. Councilman Lee suggested honoring the fire department personnel.

Administrator Johnson asked if residents can buy hometown hero banners to put up in town. Mayor Shanahan answered that he spoke with the Director of the Wood County Veterans Services, who said he knows of other municipalities outside of Wood County where they have allowed families to pay \$100 to guarantee their family member a banner. The mayor commented that he thinks this takes away a little bit of a personal touch. He also expressed concern about what would happen if a family paid for a banner and then it was discovered that their veteran had actually been dishonorably discharged. We would have to have a way to screen all private applications before accepting them. If we do it ourselves, we can choose from a reliable pool of honorable veterans. Councilwoman Mehring stated that she thought we should just replace the current banners with new ones when these go bad. The mayor answered that it is traditional for municipalities to flood their towns with banners and not just keep them downtown. He is open to doing whatever Council thinks is the right thing to do. We need to take the hometown hero banners down in the winter, so they don't get damaged by severe weather. The mayor said we need to figure out what we want to do, but his original vision was to flood the town with

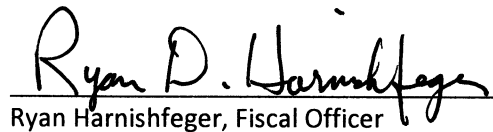
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them. He said he thinks it is good for students to see them as they are going to school. Ms. Mehring commented that she would be for it, as long as it doesn't cost the town any money. The mayor responded that we do budget for banner expenses. Ms. Mehring said she thinks there are other issues more important that we should put the money toward, such as water issues. The mayor responded that we are not taking money out of other funds, such as the water fund, to pay for banners. However, Council is here to offer various opinions and to hammer out a final decision on which way to go and what to spend village dollars on. If the consensus is that the banner program is not the right way to use village dollars, we will not go forward with it; if the consensus is that the banner program is good for the community, we will budget for it and continue it. Councilman Bergfeld asked how much the banners cost. The mayor answered that they were about \$56 each. Mr. Bergfeld stated that it would be about \$100 total with the banner and the hardware to install them. The mayor said he didn't envision us doing more than about six per year at most. Councilwoman Mackey commented that we have covered all of the living veterans in town, as far as we know. There are some veterans who have passed away, who people would still recognize on a banner, but if we go too far back in history, people will not even recognize the person on the banner at all. The mayor agreed and said we need to decide on a plan of how to pick the next group. We need to form a committee amongst ourselves, or maybe even with a couple of the current honorees, to figure out the next group of ten or twelve honorees to propose to Council, from which six would be chosen for the next set of banners. Councilman Smith commented that about \$600 a year would be a small investment that would be good for the town, giving us a way to recognize people who served.

Mayor Shanahan reported that Togany Fest went well. It was one of the biggest crowds he has seen in seventeen years. After a year of restricted interaction, it was good for people to be able to get out and have a good time together again.

With nothing further to discuss, Mayor Shanahan declared the meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.


Matthew Shanahan, Mayor


Ryan Harnishfeger, Fiscal Officer