

TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES FROM: October 18, 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, here; Mark Smith, here; Robert Bergfeld, here; Damon Lee, absent. Also present were Village Administrator/Utilities Superintendent/Meter Reader Chad Johnson and Fiscal Officer/Utilities Clerk Ryan Harnishfeger. Minutes from the October 4th 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.

Mayor Shanahan did a first reading, by title only, of Ordinance #942-21, an ORDINANCE INCREASING THE SALARY OF THE VILLAGE UTILITIES SUPERINTENDENT. The mayor commented that this ordinance is based on the discussion and decision made at the last meeting. Once adopted, the new salary for the utilities superintendent will go into effect January 1, 2022.

Mayor Shanahan reported that Solicitor Skaff updated our solar power agreement and he would like everyone to review it to be sure it is worded the way we want it. Mr. Skaff had suggested that members could review it the first meeting in November and possibly vote on it at the second meeting in November, so it can go into effect January 1, 2022. The mayor said he would email it to everyone to look it over and make notes.

Mayor Shanahan pointed out that everyone had copies of Ohio Revised Code Section 735.273 identifying village administrator powers and duties, as well as Section 15 of Tontogany's Zoning Ordinance #529-91, identifying zoning inspector duties. The mayor reminded members that we are in the process of putting together job descriptions for the village administrator, utilities superintendent, and zoning inspector, to be signed by council members as of the first of next year, to be used to clarify expectations of job duties for these positions.

ZONING: Mayor Shanahan reported for Zoning Inspector Owens that he prepared a zoning permit for a new modular home going in at Washington Street and Tontogany Creek Road. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger added that he received that \$100 zoning fee payment. Utilities Superintendent Johnson commented that he thinks a new water tap will be needed at that location, because a new water line has been installed since the old tap was made. He said he would ask Craig Spoores about it, since he will be meeting with him on Wednesday.

UTILITIES: Utilities Superintendent Johnson reported that he was busy exercising water valves over the weekend and all day today. The EPA made a rule about five years ago that all critical water valves that feed the town have to be exercised every year, and the rest of them have to be done at least every five years, so he has been hitting it hard this week to meet that requirement. He said he found most of them buried and had to use a metal detector to find them. Each one has to be opened and shut three times and then recorded, which is a difficult process, but he has to get them all done this week. He is concerned about one by the elevator that is old and he is afraid it might start leaking. He also said he found that Jeff Smith's fire hydrant didn't have any water going to it. Someone had shut off the valve. He figured it out and got it going again.

Mr. Johnson reported that he went around town and got lead and copper samples a couple of weeks ago. He went to a seminar where he learned that now we not only have to supply the EPA with a lead map showing all of the lead lines in town, but by 2024 they want an inventory of everyone's plumbing from the meter pit into the house and from the meter pit to the road. He said he thought that former Utilities Superintendent Spoores had already verified that there is no lead in the lines from the

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water line to the meter pits. If it can't be verified that there is no lead in a person's house, it is considered "unknown." But this means that, if there is a water line break somewhere in a block, then we have to go through a lot of special EPA regulations to deal with the "unknown" lead status. Every time some water situation happens somewhere, they add more regulations to everyone. Councilman Smith commented that it looks like water service is going to get more expensive. So, we may want to start thinking about what we need to do with the rates to offset increasing expenses in the future, before we find ourselves in an emergency situation. Mayor Shanahan added that we last raised our water rates in 2019; it might be a good idea to start thinking ahead about rate adjustments.

Mr. Johnson reported that we had received another letter from Bowling Green Utilities, requesting a test report of a working backflow prevention device on our master meter pits. He sent it to Feller, Finch, and Dave Kuhn said he would get right on it, since Bowling Green is starting to push it. Dave did find out from Bowling Green that they will allow underground vaults for the backflow preventer, so it will be underground, not above ground. Councilman Roe asked if we had ever decided how we want to use the Covid relief money we are receiving. Councilwoman Mackey commented that she understood that it would reduce federal reporting complications for the fiscal officer, if we choose one project on which to use all of the money. Mayor Shanahan asked what the total Covid relief amount was. Mr. Harnishfeger said it was a little over \$40,000.00, half of which has been received and the other half is to be received next July. He said he thought the backflow prevention would be a good use of the ARPA money, to get at least one of the master meter pits done. If it cost a little more than the ARPA award, the water fund could cover the extra expense. We have until the end of 2024 to have the ARPA money committed. We could possibly use the first half of the money to get the project going, and then schedule it so we could make the final payment for a completed project after we receive the second installment in July of 2022. Mr. Johnson commented that the good news is that we have two feeds of water into the town, so we can still supply water to the town without interruption while one of the pits is shut down and being worked on. Mr. Harnishfeger asked if Northwestern Water & Sewer District might go in with us on the pit on Tontogany Road. Mr. Johnson said he had questioned Bowling Green about why Northwestern doesn't have one at Forst Road and King Road, but they never gave him an answer.

Mayor Shanahan asked Mr. Johnson if we ever found out who the leaning pole belongs to, across from the Post Office in the alley off of Broad Street. Mr. Johnson answered that Jamie Nye told him it belongs to Frontier and they will get to it. Mr. Johnson said he had asked Bowling Green to just cut the pole down, but they told him they can't. The mayor asked Mr. Johnson to follow up on it and let them know it is a priority for Council.

Councilwoman Mehring reminded Mr. Johnson that Donald Buehrer on Lincoln Street had covered up his water valve with asphalt. Mr. Johnson replied that he had called Palmer, who will come and get the asphalt cut away from the valve. The mayor recalled that we had talked about whose responsibility it would be if this happened. Councilwoman Mackey advised that we should have Palmer bill Mr. Buehrer for the cost. The mayor and members agreed.

Mayor Shanahan asked Mr. Johnson if he got his handheld meter reader fixed. Mr. Johnson answered that he did not do that yet. He forgot about it, and it takes a long turn-around time to get it back, so it needs to be sent in early. It works, but it has to be charged multiple times. We definitely want to get it repaired before winter.

STREETS and ALLEYS: Mayor Shanahan reported that he was informed, regarding the car parked in the service alley, reported at the last meeting by Councilwoman Mehring, that the driver is turning around in the yard next to them, leaving deep ruts. The mayor said he intends to meet with Zoning Inspector Owens and have him go tell them that they can't park there, because the neighbors are complaining. Administrator Johnson asked if there was a sign there, saying, "utility vehicles only." Members didn't think there was a sign there. The mayor asked if there were any extra signs. Mr. Johnson said he would look.

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Councilwoman Mackey reminded members that she had asked a couple of months ago about striping Tontogany Creek Road. She asked Administrator Johnson if he would contact the county and see if they could include striping Tontogany Creek Road when they stripe recently repaved Kellogg Road. Mr. Johnson said he would ask Steve Powell. The mayor commented that Steve Powell will let us know what percent (about 34%) they will be responsible for.

SIDEWALKS and TREES: Councilman Smith reported that Powell Creek Tree Service came today and started cutting down trees. There is free firewood, if anyone wants it. He will be cutting trees down tomorrow also. Their plan is to start on sidewalks the next day; he has forms to pour up to 400 feet at a time. Their staging area is set up at Centennial Park, because the parking area there has enough room for their vehicles and trailer. Councilwoman Mackey commented that she thought it is a good place, and there are no more scheduled park rentals for the rest of the year. Mayor Shanahan suggested that it could be put on social media that they will be staged at the park for the duration of the sidewalk project. Mr. Smith suggested that, if anyone see a sheriff's deputy in our area, we could ask them to keep an eye on Powell Creek's equipment at the park. The mayor said he would call the non-emergency line and ask them to notify their patrol officers. Ms. Mackey asked if they know where to take the wood chips. Mr. Smith answered that they do, and he informed them on where to take the concrete as well. Administrator Johnson asked if everyone entered the sidewalk program who said they wanted to. Mr. Smith answered that they all did except one person, who needed to put it off for this year. He also said that Wednesday he would be taking care of a couple of trees that need trimming, including the tree by the Methodist Church that Thelma Wires called about, so the branches will be ready for brush pickup scheduled for Thursday.

DRAINS and SEWERS: Nothing to report.

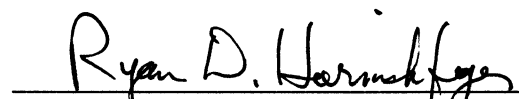
CITY HALL and PARKS: Councilwoman Mackey reminded members that we ordinarily have the porta potties removed from the parks after Halloween. She suggested that we keep the porta potties for an extra month this year, since the sidewalk company may be in town beyond Halloween. The one at Centennial Park is used a lot. Members agreed that it would be good to leave them in place for an extra month this year. Utilities Superintendent Johnson asked when we want the drinking fountain at Centennial Park turned off. Ms. Mackey answered that she thought we should leave that on for another month too. Mayor Shanahan added that we should probably turn off the fountain as soon as the sidewalk project is done, so it doesn't freeze. Members agreed.

Councilwoman Mackey reported that the park grant applications have been turned in. We submitted two grant applications. One was for a little under \$6,900 for a new 2-swing unit and new tot seats at Mehring Park; the other was for a little under \$12,000 for the same thing at Mehring Park plus adding a 2-swing unit at Centennial Park. Mayor Shanahan thanked Councilwomen Mackey and Mehring for their work on the park grant research and applications.

The mayor reported that he has not yet received an update on the status of getting the new slides installed at Centennial Park. He said that he will let members know when he finds anything out.

With nothing further to discuss, Mayor Shanahan declared the meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.


Matthew Shanahan, Mayor


Ryan Harnishfeger, Fiscal Officer