

TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES FROM: March 20, 2023

Council called to order in regular session at 7:01 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, absent; Mark Smith, here; Robert Bergfeld, absent; Damon Lee, here; Lincoln Fox, here. Also present was Fiscal Officer/Utilities Clerk Ryan Harnishfeger. Minutes from the March 6th meeting were approved as submitted.

FINANCE and CLAIMS: A spreadsheet of the current invoices was reviewed and approved by members. Councilman Smith made a motion that these bills be allowed and orders drawn for same. Councilman Lee seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried.

Mayor Shanahan reminded members that we received an invitation to the Wood County Economic Development Commission's 28th Annual Dinner on April 13th. He asked if anyone other than himself was interested in attending the dinner and he reminded members that the deadline for getting payments in was April 5th. Councilman Smith said he might be interested in going, but he would have to check before committing. The mayor asked that anyone who wanted to attend the dinner let Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger know in time to get the payment in by April 5th.

Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that Josh Heckerman stopped in at the office and said he would get us a mowing quote soon, his prices will stay the same as last year, and he wanted us to know that if we need anything extra done, we can just let him know and he will take care of it. Councilman Fox asked how often we paid Josh. Mr. Harnishfeger answered that we pay him monthly. Mr. Fox asked how often Josh mows. The mayor answered that he generally mows weekly and sometimes he may do some extra, such as in the week before Togany Fest.

ZONING: Mayor Shanahan reported that Zoning Inspector Owens had told him he would be talking to the Kinders about their shed. The mayor told members he had seen a couple of emails about the chicken ordinance. He said that at the next meeting we would look at all of the suggested revisions for the version that allows chickens, to be sure it has everything that members want in it, if they choose to have an ordinance that allows chickens. Councilwoman Mackey said she would not be present at the next meeting, but she would look the suggestions over.

UTILITIES: Mayor Shanahan reported that, at his request, Utilities Superintendent Johnson had reached out to Northwestern Water & Sewer District (NWWSD) about patching the hole that they made in Tontogany Creek Road by the school and the problem with stones going into residents' yards. He hadn't heard back yet from Mr. Johnson as to what response he received from NWWSD. Councilman Fox noted that there is another hole further north from that spot as well. The mayor responded that he had asked for that spot to be looked into too and maybe have a second coat applied, because the first patch left a divot. Mr. Fox suggested that they could maybe use some temporary asphalt that comes in bags.

Councilwoman Mackey asked for an update on utilities disconnections. Utilities Clerk Harnishfeger reported that all 14 customers who had received the latest disconnection notices had either paid the amount on the notice or made arrangements to get on an acceptable payment plan. As for the one customer who he had been concerned about with a balance greater than \$4,000, because of a large unattended water leak, he said he had sent them a payment plan agreement and told them the village would like to see them pay \$400 per month on the delinquent balance, while paying their current new billing each month, to get the previous balance paid off in about ten months. The customer had responded that there are two people living there, both disabled and on social security, and they couldn't afford \$400 per month; the most they could do was \$200 per month on the previous balance. Also, they asked for time to get responses from agencies from whom they are seeking assistance before signing a payment plan agreement. They have lined up assistance of around \$700 from one agency and \$1,000

TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

from another so far. Mr. Harnishfeger told members he has been working on an idea that he thinks may get better overall results for the village's goal of resolving delinquent utility accounts. It would include sending a letter and a payment plan agreement option to customers before serving them with a disconnection notice. The letter would warn the customer that they are about to receive a disconnection notice and then explain to them how they can avoid disconnection by entering into an agreement with the village to pay down their delinquent utilities in installments. The letter would suggest a negotiable monthly amount the village would like to have them pay in order to eliminate their past-due balance in 10 to 12 months, with late fees turned off while they pay their full new billing each month plus an agreed-upon amount on their past-due balance. The payment plan agreement would list all of their current delinquent utilities, including water, sewer and electric, so that they would be chipping away at every delinquent utility with each payment and not just part of the delinquent utilities during certain seasons. Members responded positively to Mr. Harnishfeger's proposal, voicing their approval for him to try it, with no one voicing opposition. The mayor commented that the shutoff notices have been producing results as customers have come to realize that the village is serious about disconnections. Mr. Harnishfeger also reported that our commercial customer who had a critically large delinquency has been paying their current billing plus \$1,500 on the previous balance faithfully every month.

STREETS and ALLEYS: Councilman Fox said he would like to discuss putting in speed bumps again. He said we need to rethink how to deal with traffic problems on North Street and Crom Street, because people are flying through the stop sign and driving extremely fast. He said he understands the concern about plowing snow, but, if we got removable speed bumps we could take them out when we know snow is coming. He said he thought the benefits would be worth the cost of \$500 to \$1,000, plus supplies, to put in four speed bumps—two on North Street and two on Crom Street. Mayor Shanahan commented that he thinks we would have to buy speed bump signs as well, to let people know that there is a speed bump there. The mayor went on to say that he had talked to the sheriff directly about the continuing unsolved speeding problems, especially on North Street and Crom Street, and the sheriff shared the information with his road-patrol lieutenant. The sheriff would like to come out for another walk through the village in April or May, giving the residents an opportunity to come out and share their concerns. Mr. Fox noted that the worst times were in the morning and after school or before and after school events. The mayor agreed. Councilwoman Mackey added that she sees a lot of parents coming east and speeding after dropping their kids off at the school in the morning. Councilman Smith said he was happy to have seen a county patrol car sitting at the park this morning. Members discussed the pros and cons of where deputies have been accustomed to be positioned. The mayor commented that he has never understood why the speed limit on Tontogany Creek Road from Kellogg to the cemetery is 25 mph, but the speed limit on the similar stretch of Tontogany Road is 40 mph, even though it goes by residential homes and a park. The mayor and members discussed problems with students' driving. Mr. Fox said he had emailed the school superintendent and asked him to consider staggering start times of junior high and high school by ten or fifteen minutes, to alleviate some of the congestion. The mayor said he needs to pick a date and give it to the sheriff for the walk through the village, probably after spring break week. It will probably be on an evening and any of Tontogany's officials are welcome to walk with him. Once the date is known, the mayor said he will promote it so people are aware that they can come out and discuss concerns. The mayor asked Mr. Fox to come up with a financial estimate on speed bumps for council members to consider at the next meeting. Ms. Mackey asked if there were any laws or regulations that we need to consider regarding speed bumps. The mayor replied that we would need to check with the sheriff's department as well as with Solicitor Skaff. The mayor commented that his concern with a speed bump at the park would be that people will cut through the parking spaces at the park to get around the speed bump. Mr. Fox replied that he was thinking of having the speed bump right before or after the alley by the park, and similarly on Crom Street. Councilman Smith said that he

TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

would ask Morlock for an estimate on speed bumps when they call to ask if we have any projects for them. The mayor asked if they would be removable speed bumps. Mr. Smith answered that Morlock would put in permanent speed bumps, if they did them. The mayor commented that it wouldn't hurt to get estimates on both permanent and removable speed bumps.

Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that John Heckerman had given him a note that the street light at West Main Street and the alley is out. Councilwoman Mackey reported that the street light directly behind the township building is still on all the time, day and night, even though it has been reported to Bowling Green before.

SIDEWALKS and TREES: Councilman Smith reported that there is some fire wood left from the tree cut down on Main Street. Councilman Fox asked if the company who cut it down is coming to take away the huge pieces or not. The mayor answered that they do not typically do that. Mr. Fox commented that, if we have trouble getting rid of the large pieces, we can post pictures and people will pretty quickly show up to take them. The mayor reported that the gentleman who lives where the tree was taken down texted him to thank the village for removing the bad tree.

DRAINS and SEWERS: Nothing to report.

CITY HALL and PARKS: Councilwoman Mackey reported that Playground World has tried to schedule a time to come and remove the concrete anchor of the old basketball goal before installing a new one. The weather hasn't cooperated. She said she asked Mr. Johnson to turn on the water so they would have water for the new concrete. Playground World sent a guy today to try to bust up the old concrete anchor with a jackhammer, but the jackhammer was ineffective on it. Ms. Mackey said she called Todd Buehrer, who told her that we previously had to have Palmer come and take out the old anchor and haul it away before a new one could be put in. After unsuccessfully trying to remove the old anchor, the gentleman from Playground World had called our office and told Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger that we would need to have someone pull out the old anchor, haul it away, and backfill the hole before they could pour a new anchor and install the new goal. Ms. Mackey pointed out that that means we don't have to pay Playground World to dig it out, but we will have to pay Palmer. She said that Palmer also needs to backfill the water pit there, because it is really sunk down. She said she would call Palmer in to do this work, if members were in agreement with her doing that, so Playground World can then come and finish putting in a new anchor and the new basketball goal. She also noted that the extra \$308 of the park grant money that we were wondering what to do with will now need to be used to pay Palmer. Members were in agreement with her calling Palmer to do this work, with no one voicing opposition.

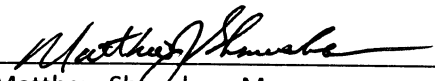
Councilman Fox asked what we were thinking of doing about the damaged slide at Mehring Park. Mayor Shanahan responded that there are two holes in it and we will need to take it out or replace it, so somebody doesn't get cut on it. He said we should probably tape it off for now and then make a plan on what to do about it. Mr. Fox asked if it was a possibility to fix it by applying an epoxy to it and sanding it down. He also suggested that maybe we could just remove the damaged section and replace it. The mayor responded that it may be dependent on the age of the equipment, which is probably pretty old. He commented that on the other slide it was all or nothing because they couldn't match an outdated style. The mayor also said he had not turned in anything to our insurance on this, which would require that we get quotes. Councilwoman Mackey recommended that we try Playground World in Toledo, because they deal with playground equipment and they have been very easy to work with. Mr. Fox voiced his concern that it could raise our insurance rates significantly if we turn in a claim for this slide on top of the other large claims we have submitted in the recent past. The mayor suggested having Playground World take a look at the slide while they are in town to work on the basketball goal. Mr. Fox said he would like to have his father-in-law take a look at the slide and see if he has any ideas, because

TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

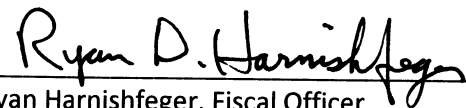
he is a well-versed handyman who might come up with a much more cost-effective solution. The mayor answered that we are open to all ideas.

Mayor Shanahan reported that he went to the Bowling Green Business Expo at the Wood County Fairgrounds a week or so ago and had conversations with two companies. One was a trash company out of Toledo that does large item hauling. The mayor said he asked them about the possibility of setting one or two dates where they would come to Tontogany and pick up, keeping track of the residents and billing them directly. The company representative thought that could be a possibility, and he expressed interest in coming to a meeting and speaking to Council about the services their company offers and to answer any questions members might have. Members voiced a desire to have the mayor invite the gentleman to a meeting. The mayor said he also spoke at the expo with a man about security cameras, who likewise is interested in coming to a meeting and speaking to Council. He said he didn't fully understand all that the gentleman was saying about cameras, but his basic understanding was that there is a fee to put in the cameras, they help us set up an app, and then we monitor everything with the app. Members voiced a desire for the mayor to invite the camera representative to a meeting. The mayor said he would email the two representatives tomorrow, find out what their schedule is, and invite them to come to a meeting.

With nothing further to discuss, Mayor Shanahan declared the meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.



Matthew Shanahan, Mayor



Ryan Harnishfeger, Fiscal Officer