

TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES FROM: February 17, 2025

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; Mark Smith, here; Robert Bergfeld, here; Lincoln Fox, here; Paul Neal, here. Also present were Utilities Superintendent/Meter Reader/Zoning Inspector Chad Johnson and Fiscal Officer/Utilities Clerk Ryan Harnishfeger. No visitors were present. Minutes from the February 3rd meeting were approved as submitted.

FINANCE and CLAIMS: A spreadsheet of the current invoices was reviewed and approved by members. Councilman Neal asked what N.O.M.M.A. stood for on the list of invoices. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger answered that it stands for Northwest Ohio Mayors and Managers Association. Councilwoman Mehring made a motion that these bills be allowed and orders drawn for same. Councilman Smith seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried.

Mayor Shanahan reported that we received an invitation from N.O.M.M.A. to their Annual Steak Dinner, which will be on Monday, March 31st, at 5:30 p.m. at the American Legion Freedom Post #183 (Riverview Banquet Centre) at 405 East Front Street in Pemberville, Ohio. N.O.M.M.A. members get the discounted price of \$40 per attendee. The mayor said that he will be attending, and the invitation is also open to any village officials who would like to attend. He asked members to let the fiscal officer know if they want to attend, so he can get the information and payment submitted in plenty of time.

Mayor Shanahan noted that everyone had a copy of a quote from TruGreen for spring and fall park lawn fertilizer and weed control, with an additional grub preventative treatment recommended, for a total of \$2,295.15. The mayor also reminded members that Councilman Smith had sent them a text about a quote he received from Ground Services, Inc. (GSI) for spring and fall weed control and bare ground herbicide for both parks, for a total of \$1,478.84. The mayor asked Mr. Smith if GSI's quote includes grubs. Mr. Smith answered that it does not. Councilman Bergfeld commented that we weren't too worried about grubs. The mayor pointed out that GSI's quotes were significantly less than TruGreen's. Councilwoman Mackey remarked that the GSI quote also included weed control on the playgrounds as well as on park lawns. Mr. Smith explained that what GSI is offering for the playground areas is a one-time herbicide with a soil sterilant, which should provide an entire season of weed control from one application. They basically have a season-long warranty on it; if there are any problems, we just let them know and they will come out, add more, and take care of it as part of the deal. The herbicide is safe as soon as it dries. GSI is happy to send us Material Safety Data Sheets on any products they apply. Ms. Mackey asked if the GSI quote included the lawn at the town hall. Mr. Smith answered that does not. Ms. Mackey commented that she thinks Josh takes good care of the hall lawn for us. Mr. Smith added that we don't have the kind of problems at the hall as at the parks and Josh uses Roundup as needed at the hall. He also commented that he has seen GSI's work, and this is the same treatment schedule they have used for the Village of Haskins for the past three years. He suggested that members could call Haskins before accepting the quote, if they have any reservations about it. Councilman Fox made a motion to accept the GSI quote. Councilwoman Mehring seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried. The mayor asked Councilman Smith to let GSI know we accepted their quote. He also asked Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger to let TruGreen know that Council decided to go with another company for our park lawn treatment in 2025. Mr. Smith told Mr. Harnishfeger that he would give GSI the Village's email address so they can deal with the fiscal officer directly for a tax-exempt certificate and billing.

Mayor Shanahan asked Councilwoman Mackey if she was able to get a mowing quote from Josh Heckerman. Ms. Mackey responded that Josh had said that he would drop off a quote at the office this week. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger added that he had not seen a quote from Josh yet. The mayor said that we will look at it at the next meeting and decide which way we want to go with grass cutting services.

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ZONING: Zoning Inspector Johnson reported that he received a voicemail from a woman who said she wanted to convert the garage on Aaron Asmus's old property to a house. He called her back and left a message that she would have to clear it with the Wood County Building Inspections. She called him back and left another message that the Wood County Building Inspector said they had nothing to do with it because the garage sits on a concrete slab; it would be up to the Village. Mr. Johnson commented that it would be asking for a huge problem to let someone move into that garage and try to make a house out of it. Members noted that it does have water and electric hookup. Mayor Shanahan asked if the property is zoned as residential. Mr. Johnson answered that it is zoned as R1 residential. The mayor asked if she was wanting to renovate it into a house or just move into it. Mr. Johnson answered that she just said she wanted to make a house out of it. The mayor asked if there was any reason not to allow someone to put a house there, since it is zoned as R1. Mr. Johnson replied that it would be a non-conforming use, since there was previously a house on the property and the garage was just an accessory building. The mayor and members commented that they would hope she would come to a meeting to discuss her plans before she buys the property. Members discussed the matter a little more and said they thought she would be better off just building a small house on the property where the old house had been, rather than trying to convert the garage into a home.

Zoning Inspector Johnson reported that he received a text from a gentleman interested in buying the only remaining lot left on Tontogany Creek Road. The neighbor to that lot has been giving him and anyone else who wants to buy it a hard time, saying that the lot is not buildable, and you cannot build a house out back. Mr. Johnson said that there is no zoning problem that would disallow building a house on the back of that property. Tontogany's only rule is that the house must be forty feet off of the road, which it would be. The mayor commented that people have told the man who doesn't want anyone to build on that property that he should buy it himself, if he wants to control it. Mr. Johnson said that the prospective buyer told him he wants to build a ranch house with a four-car garage, set behind the tree line. He intends to remove the tree line and put in a driveway up the right side of the property to the four-car garage. The garage would face the neighbor's house. His house would be angled, looking toward the cemetery. Mr. Johnson said he told the gentleman that he doesn't see any problem with it. He asked the gentleman if there were any deed restrictions from Miller Diversified on the property and he answered that there were none. Mayor Shanahan said he would consult with Solicitor Skaff about what kind of conversation Council should have with a neighbor that is harassing or trying to intimidate potential property buyers. Members said they thought that would be a good idea.

Zoning Inspector Johnson reported that he didn't see too many issues while walking the town to read meters. He said he did check the camper downtown. It has an expired license plate on it, and it is sitting right in front of the speed sign. Therefore, he said he figured the police should be able to get him to move it, but he would ask him to move it from in front of the speed sign. He added that all the owner needs to do is put a current tag on it and then he will probably move it over onto Broad Street. Mayor Shanahan suggested that we can ask him to park on the side of Broad Street with parallel parking, rather than the side with angled parking.

Zoning Inspector Johnson reported that he spoke with Tony Hafner's wife or girlfriend about the problem Camaro and asked her to put a current tag on it and move it to her house. She told him to just tow it out of town. Mayor Shanahan commented that he is not living there anymore, and she had stopped the mayor before the last meeting and told him, "It has nothing to do with us anymore." He also reported that the Camaro now has a current tag on it.

Councilman Neal asked Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger if we had received the new 2025 edition of Ohio Basic Code books yet. Mr. Harnishfeger answered that we had not received them yet. Mr. Neal said he would bet that in the vehicle section of the Ohio Basic Code there is something covering campers parked at the curb. Mayor Shanahan commented that a lot of communities have ordinances that boats and campers can only remain in the driveway for twenty-four to forty-eight hours, after which they must be

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moved. This gives time for unpacking the camper after a trip, but then it must be moved to a storage facility of the owner's choosing. Councilwoman Mackey commented that that would apply to more than a couple of people in town. Councilman Bergfeld asked what is considered a "driveway." He gave the example of one camper parked on private property near an alley, which he has no problem with. The mayor commented that Haskins has camper rules, but he doesn't know if they are enforced by an HOA or by the town. He said he would have to ask them about that. Mr. Bergfeld said he thought that if people were reasonable and considerate about where they parked campers, he would have no problem with it, but parking in front of a speed sign is not acceptable. Councilman Smith pointed out that Ohio Revised Code says you can't park them on the roadway. Mr. Johnson mentioned a city that required campers to be on a concrete slab in a designated area, basically in the back and out of sight. Concerning the camper downtown, the mayor reiterated that Mr. Johnson should ask him to move it from in front of the speed sign and tell him that Council recommends that he park it in a horizontal spot so that it doesn't stick out into traffic causing an issue, as has happened in the past.

Councilman Neal asked what is happening with the old Moser building downtown. Zoning Inspector Johnson answered that they never got back with him about that; the Building Inspector was supposed to write a letter to the owner and send Mr. Johnson a copy of the letter. Mayor Shanahan asked Mr. Johnson to follow up on it.

Mayor Shanahan apprised Zoning Inspector Johnson about the situation of recycling debris blowing into the Tontogany Road ditch from the property on the north side of the corner of Lincoln Street and Tontogany Road, discussed at the previous meeting. He asked Mr. Johnson to send them something to tell them to stop putting unsecured recycling out there next to their fire pit, which the wind blows into the ditch. Mr. Johnson said he would tell the people in the house and in the apartment above, since it is unknown who is putting the recycling out there.

UTILITIES: Utilities Superintendent Johnson reported that Dan Ballard had a water spot near his meter pit that never happened before, so he thought might be a leak. Mr. Johnson said he checked it out, took a sample, and found that it was not a water leak. Mayor Shanahan concluded that it must have been pooled water from recent rains, that froze and remained in a low spot. Mr. Johnson added that a real leak would have come out of the meter pit.

Mayor Shanahan asked Meter Reader Johnson if we had an age restriction or requirement for a person reading meters, if, for instance, an eighteen-year-old is interested in the job. Mr. Johnson answered that there wouldn't be any problem with an eighteen-year-old doing it. The mayor reported that we did have an eighteen-year-old email the Village with interest in the meter reading job, but he hadn't followed up with him yet. The mayor said that the young man will be graduating from Otsego School this spring and the mayor wants to see what his education plans are after graduating. He said he could call the young man tomorrow and set up an opportunity for him to accompany Mr. Johnson on the meter reading route coming up at the end of February. He said he would give him Mr. Johnson's number, so he can call him if he is interested in doing a walk-around with him. Mr. Johnson agreed that that would be fine.

STREETS and ALLEYS: Councilwoman Mackey observed that the streets are snow-covered and slippery. She said she wondered why our streets aren't getting plowed, and she has heard the same question from residents. Mayor Shanahan answered that he didn't have an answer; he agreed that it seems a little slower this year. Ms. Mackey suggested that maybe the mayor needs to go to a trustee meeting and check it out. She pointed out that we pay the same taxes as the rest of the township pays, plus the Village pays for the hours of labor to plow our streets. Councilman Fox asked if we pay for salt too. Ms. Mackey said she did not know. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger answered that we may pay for salt, but he would have to check to be sure about that. Councilman Smith said he thought they only used gravel in town instead of salt. Ms. Mackey responded that she talked with Isaac the other day and he told her

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they prefer not to use gravel in town because it gets into people's yards and makes a mess. He also told her the township has some trouble getting salt, but they do have salt. Councilman Fox said he didn't know how much we pay, but he wondered if it would be cheaper for us to hire a third party. Other members responded that it would definitely not be cheaper to hire a third party, which could be several thousand dollars per snow event. The mayor asked Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger to research what we have paid the township in the past and email that information out to members. Members discussed the township's responsibility to plow the streets in town as well as throughout the township and that they are somewhat short on laborers. They noted that the trustees are supposed to help with snow removal as part of their duties, but they do not have CDL licenses, which limits the size of trucks they can use. Members even said they would be willing to help plow snow if the township needs some help from time to time. Mr. Fox suggested possibly working with other towns. The mayor said he would follow up with the township on the issue.

Councilman Bergfeld asked if we could get a grant for doing the water line or street repairs on Broad Street, to help with some of the cost. He observed that Weston has a person who writes grants for them. Mayor Shanahan answered that we could get a grant writer and the State site has a lot of grants available, but one of our bigger challenges is that grants often require a matching fund that is more than we could afford. If we could get a qualified village administrator, grant writing would be part of the work they would do for us. Councilman Smith commented that it would solve a lot of parking problems if we put curbs up and down Broad Street, making it very well defined.

SIDEWALKS and TREES: Nothing to report.

DRAINS and SEWERS: Nothing to report.

CITY HALL and PARKS: Councilwoman Mehring reported that Dan Sheperd has been intending to come to a council meeting to ask for a donation from the Village to help pay for a replacement commercial refrigerator for the concession stand at the baseball field, which would be a township purchase. She said she wanted to let members know that he intends to do this, although she said she thought it would not be right to give the town's money to the township for their expenses. Mayor Shanahan replied that Mr. Sheperd is welcome to come and speak to Council anytime he wants. The mayor and members commented that a used refrigerator could easily be found for a couple hundred dollars or so.

Councilwoman Mackey reminded members that Gail Christofferson had come to a recent meeting and gone over a list of activities planned for the 150th Celebration, a couple of which will take place in the town hall. She remarked that the paint on the hall's walls is in bad shape. She told members that she and Ron had come to the hall recently to look at the paint condition, with the thought of possibly touching up the spots where renters have pulled off paint with decorations taped to the walls. But rather than them going ahead and touching it up, they thought it would be good to ask if Council would like to have it patched up first or have the hall repainted, since the last time it was painted was over ten years ago. Mayor Shanahan asked if the Village had contracted out the last paint job on the hall. Ms. Mackey answered, "Yes." She said there is a full gallon of the current wall paint and some trim paint kept at the hall, under the kitchen cupboards. She pointed out that the paint is loose on the old plaster and it is loose around one or more of the windows. Councilman Bergfeld commented that it needs some prep work. Ms. Mackey offered, if Council so wished, that she and Ron could do some touch-up painting and see if that is sufficient. She also noted that it is in the Hall Lease Agreement that renters are not supposed to tape anything to the wall. However, it is difficult to try to enforce that until the walls are painted or touched up. The mayor suggested that we have council members check the condition of the hall with renters, before and after each rental, to see if any damage has been done. Members agreed that that would be the only way to be sure who to charge for damage. Members decided to have the

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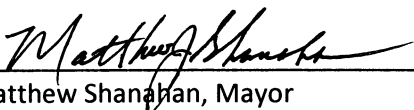
Mackeys touch up the bad spots on one wall and see how that looks. If it isn't satisfactory, an estimate will be sought to have the hall painted professionally.

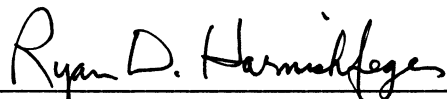
Mayor Shanahan said he would like to get back to a spring cleaning of the office, which we had intended to do before COVID hit. Councilman Smith commented that we need a dump trailer. The mayor added that we may need to rent a couple of shredder bins and have the company pick them up and take them to shred sensitive documents. Councilwoman Mackey pointed out that some of the \$5,000 appropriated for 150th expenses could be used for sprucing up the hall.

Mayor Shanahan reported that he received an email from another Scout in Troop 347, preparing to start an Eagle Scout project, and asking if the Village had anything that we would like for him to work on. He mentioned a fence around the recycle bins in his email and asked if that is still something Council would like to see happen. Councilman Bergfeld mentioned that the flagpole in front of the hall needs painted. Members agreed. As for a fence for the recycle bins, the mayor suggested putting an L-shaped fence about five feet out into the grass, just to block debris from escaping and flying all over when the wind blows. Councilman Fox suggest revamping the sign on Kellog Road as a possible Scout project. Mr. Bergfeld suggested that school kids could paint the signs when they are looking for a project. The mayor added that they could maybe also paint fire hydrants. Councilman Neal suggested a project of adding to our mural, including mention of the date Tontogany was incorporated. Mr. Bergfeld said that, if we had the Scout do the fence, we should probably put stone underneath the fence for mowing and walking beside it. Councilwoman Mackey added that the fence would need to be anchored well, like the surrounds for the porta johns. Mr. Bergfeld suggested that the Scout, if he wants to do the fence around the recycle bins, should present a plan to Council first. Councilman Fox wondered if it would be possible to enclose part or all of the shelter house, to make it more of a multi-season facility. He noted that by putting a small heater in it, it could be used all year round. He also suggested the possibility of adding a second shelter house at Mehring Park, offering people two places to rent a spot at a park. He said he wasn't sure if something like that would be too advanced for an Eagle Scout project. Ms. Mackey commented that the barbeque shelter at the Legion was an Eagle Scout project.

Councilwoman Mehring asked Mayor Shanahan if we had decided to put up five new veteran banners this year, and, if so, who would be the honorees. The mayor answered that we have not decided on names for veteran banners this year. He asked Ms. Mehring to bring her suggestions to the next meeting. He said he also still has a list of names that Orville Buehrer gave to him.

With nothing further to discuss, Mayor Shanahan declared the meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.


Matthew Shanahan, Mayor


Ryan Harnishfeger, Fiscal Officer