

TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES FROM: April 7, 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, absent at roll call, but arrived at 7:02 p.m.; Robert Bergfeld, here; Lincoln Fox, here; Paul Neal, here. Also present was Fiscal Officer/Utilities Clerk Ryan Harnishfeger. Visitors present: Derek Brewer and son Crosby Brewer, regarding an Eagle Scout project; resident Dan Sheperd. Minutes from the March 17th meeting were approved as submitted.

FINANCE and CLAIMS: A spreadsheet of the current invoices was reviewed and approved by members. Councilman Neal asked what Hylant Administrative Services was on the invoices list. Mayor Shanahan explained that they handle our Ohio Plan insurance package and they billed for the addition of electrical infrastructure coverage on our policy. Councilwoman Mehring made a motion that these bills be allowed and orders drawn for same. Councilman Bergfeld seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried. Copies of the March Bank Reconciliation, Fund Status, Revenue Status, and Appropriation Status Reports were given to the mayor and the Finance Committee to review.

Mayor Shanahan invited Dan Sheperd to speak to Council. Mr. Sheperd reported that he and his neighbor, Mike, installed the flexible PVC tubing onto the bottom of the pickleball fence, which he had spoken to Council about at the last meeting. He said they heard from people that it works well to keep the balls from escaping under the fence. He turned in a couple of receipts amounting to \$43.72 for zip ties he purchased out of pocket for the project and asked to be reimbursed. The mayor responded that we could do that with no problem and he thanked Mr. Sheperd for fixing the gap in the pickleball fence. He also told Mr. Sheperd that he got the pickleball nets put up.

Mr. Sheperd reminded members of the pop cooler and the little chest freezer he had spoken to them about at the last meeting. He reported that he has raised \$2,955 in donations toward the total cost of \$3,700 for the new cooler and freezer, leaving only \$745 still needed. He said he shared the same information with the Washington Township Trustees and they expressed a willingness to go 50-50 with the Village on donating the final \$745 needed (\$372.50 from each). Mr. Sheperd reasoned that he considers this worthy of the township's and the town's involvement, considering how many teams of kids, both local and visiting, benefit from the ballpark. He said there are more kids using the park now than ever before. Mr. Sheperd asked if there were any questions. Councilman Smith complimented Mr. Sheperd on a nice job of fundraising for the cooler and freezer. Councilwoman Mackey commented that we had discussed the fact that it is a township park, but she said she realized that the trustees have already invested in the park by way of paying all of the utilities for it, paying for the upkeep, the mowing, etc. Mr. Sheperd commented that they have enlarged the infield so that this spring it will accommodate playing with full 90-foot distances between bases. The mayor asked if members wished to discuss the matter any further. Councilman Smith answered that he was happy with what he heard from Mr. Sheperd and the fundraising efforts he has successfully made. Councilman Bergfeld added that we were waiting to hear what the township was willing to do, but now we have that information. The mayor asked Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger where we would pull the money from to make a donation of \$372.50 for the cooler and freezer. Mr. Harnishfeger suggested pulling the money from a line item in the general fund that is available for miscellaneous expenditures. Councilwoman Mackey asked if there was any stipulation against us donating money, unless for something specific. Mr. Harnishfeger answered that he did not know of anything that would prohibit a donation for something like this that serves the community. The mayor asked if we should have an invoice of some sort for a paper trail. Mr. Harnishfeger replied that we would want some type of documentation to put with the payment record for the auditors. Mr. Sheperd offered to provide documentation showing who all donated what, and a copy of the documentation for the equipment being purchased. Councilman Fox asked who retains ownership of the equipment. Mr. Sheperd answered that it will belong to the trustees. The mayor asked

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Mr. Sheperd to provide an invoice or a receipt. The mayor asked who the check would be made out to. Mr. Sheperd answered that it is all being handled through the township trustees, so he assumed that payment should be made to them. He said he thought the mayor should probably call the trustees to let them know what the Village plans to do and find out from them specifically who to show as the payee. Councilman Bergfeld made a motion to donate \$372.50 to the township trustees toward the purchase of a pop cooler and chest freezer for the ballpark. Councilman Smith seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried. Mr. Sheperd thanked members for the donation. The mayor thanked Mr. Sheperd for him and his neighbor helping the town with a quick fix of the pickleball fence problem. With nothing further to discuss, Mr. Sheperd left the meeting.

Mayor Shanahan invited Crosby Brewer and his dad, Derek, to speak to Council about Crosby's proposed Eagle Scout project for the town. Crosby reported that he chose the fence for the recycle bins and the signs at the park as his project and he filled out a proposal for it. He said he needed to get signatures for the approval of the proposal. The mayor asked Crosby to elaborate a little on what his proposal is. Crosby said he intended to build a fence around the south and east sides of the recycle bins area. He said he intended to refurbish the signs at the park, leaving them similar to what they are but maybe a little more vibrant. The mayor asked about the possibility of adding a box for doggie bags to the sign that asks people to please pick up after their pets. Crosby answered that that could be an addition. Councilman Fox asked what Crosby thought about concreting the signs down, so the wood doesn't rot in the ground. Derek answered that the proposal includes concrete for the signs. He also said that they intended to put together more complete diagrams of the proposed fence and signs work and come back to show Council. Councilwoman Mackey suggested that it would be a good idea for them to check with Rumpke to make sure the fence they intend to put up will not interfere with their trucks picking up recycling. Councilman Smith asked if they were thinking about prebuilt panels for the fence or building it piece by piece. Derek answered that they could use any option that works. Mr. Fox asked if they intended to stain the fence. Crosby answered that they did intend to stain or paint it. After a little more discussion about the size and placement of the fence, the mayor asked Crosby if he wanted him to sign his proposal. Crosby said he did, so the mayor signed it. The mayor thanked Crosby and Derek and asked them to keep Council posted. With nothing more to discuss, they left the meeting.

Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that he received the annual notice from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control, stating that, "All Class C and D retail permits that sell alcoholic beverages in your political subdivision will expire on June 1, 2025. To maintain permit privileges, every retail permit holder must file an online renewal application with the Division." Mr. Harnishfeger went on to say that the notice tells the legislative authority that it has the right to object to the renewal of a retail permit and to request a hearing. And the notice says, "If you determine that there are no permit premises within your jurisdiction that you wish to object to, you do not need to take any further action." Mr. Harnishfeger asked members if they had an objection to any permits. Members answered that they had no objections to any.

Mr. Harnishfeger reported to members that he also received a notice from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control regarding a specific liquor permit applied for by Danielle Bertok for Doc's Rib Cage. The notice included a form that must be completed by the Clerk of Council and returned to Liquor Control, indicating whether or not the legislative authority requests a hearing about the issuing of this permit. Mr. Harnishfeger asked members if they wished to request a hearing about issuing this permit for Doc's. Members answered that they did not wish to request a hearing. Mr. Harnishfeger said he would mark the form to indicate no hearing requested and he would email it to the Division of Liquor Control.

ZONING: Mayor Shanahan reported that he reached out to Solicitor Skaff about the proposed sports lighting upgrade for the school. The mayor told members that basically nothing is happening this calendar year on that project. The company that would do the work presented the proposed project to the school. The school responded, regarding the very significant proposed cost to the school, that they

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feel this is something that should go to the voters for approval. The school is not in a position to pay for the cost. The mayor said the company that would do the work mentioned to him that the school had expressed that the boosters potentially would pick up the project. The mayor remarked that that will not happen either, at least not in this calendar year. Councilman Fox asked why there is a need to upgrade the lights, since they work fine right now. The mayor answered that the football lights are extremely old, part of the lights in a bank of lights don't work, and it is getting expensive to get up there and replace them. So, the desire is to upgrade to cost-effective LED lights in the current style. The mayor added that he was told specifically that nothing would happen before July of next year. He commented that the cost to the school for the project is so high that it makes the Village's \$16,600 cost for the electrical upgrade needed seem like pennies. The mayor said, therefore, that he didn't think there was a reason for us to push or worry or have an expedited conversation about our part in it; we have plenty of time. Councilman Neal commented that, if put before the voters, the wording about the relationship and who pays what will be stated clearly. The mayor responded that, if the voters didn't approve the levy, he didn't think they would approve the athletic lighting project either. Mr. Neal suggested that we should probably consider appropriating money in our 2026 budget for the possibility of this project happening. Mayor Shanahan agreed and said that we would probably have a better idea from the school by the time we have a 2026 budget meeting about what size of a lighting project, if any, they are likely to actually do and what our cost would be to upgrade our electrical equipment to handle it.

Councilman Neal asked if we knew anything more about the old Moser building downtown. Mayor Shanahan responded that Zoning Inspector Johnson was intending to reach out to them again about it; however, no new information has come back from Mr. Johnson yet. Mr. Neal stated that it seemed to him, at some point, that Solicitor Skaff should be involved in this matter, and he noted that Mr. Skaff was involved in the same type of process in Weston and should know who to call to get quick answers. The mayor said he would seek an update from Mr. Johnson. Councilman Fox asked if the owner would be out the money and no longer possess the property if the Village condemned the building and had it torn down. He asked if the Village would take possession of the property in such a case or if the Village would have to pay the owner for the property. Councilman Smith answered that if we condemn it, tear it down, and then put it on the owner's property tax, it could turn into a costly problem for the Village if the owner doesn't pay his property taxes. We would then foreclose on the property and eventually own it for back taxes. But we would be left with an unsellable piece of property worth \$10,000, with \$100,000 of back taxes on it. It would be dead forever; no one would look at it or be interested in it. Mr. Neal commented that, after we submit the nuisance report with terms that the owner must meet to abate the nuisance, if they don't remedy the nuisance according to the terms in the nuisance report, then we take it to court. At that point, the Village makes a determination of what we are willing to deal with in terms of giving the judge what choices he or she has to settle the dispute. He added that our risk at this point is practically zero in terms of money. If the owner says they won't fix the problem and the Village says it will not fix the problem, then there are several paths that the judge will decide are available to him or her regarding the parties involved. Councilwoman Mackey reported, on a related issue, that she has word that the owner of the Brandeberry (Deluca) problem house on Main Street is back in town, who had been away for the winter. She advised that Zoning Inspector Johnson should be timely in contacting Ms. Deluca again about dealing with the nuisance issues of her house on Main Street before she may decide to leave town again. Mr. Smith commented that he would hate to see us go \$100,000 in the hole trying to knock down a property, because that is what it cost in Weston for them to knock down a building. We could put it on the taxes, but a buyer of property has to pay back taxes on the property, so a property with an extra \$100,000 in back taxes will never sell. It would just remain a vacant lot that we mow. Mr. Fox remarked that the best-case scenario is that whoever owns it just fixes it up. Mayor Shanahan added that they could fix it up or sell it cheap so someone else could fix it up. Regarding the old Moser building, Mr. Neal reiterated that he thinks we should get Solicitor Skaff involved so that the Village has someone looking out for our best interests. He said he didn't know what

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perspective Wood County has on the matter, but Solicitor Skaff has experience to know what needs to be done, since he represented Weston in a similar situation.

UTILITIES: Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that the Kellogg Road Backflow Preventer Project is now complete and all three parties—the contractor, the engineer, and Mayor Shanahan—have signed the Certificate of Final Completion.

STREETS and ALLEYS: Councilman Bergfeld reported that the plates are expired on the camper parked downtown that we previously discussed. The mayor said he would ask Mr. Johnson to follow up on that again. Councilman Fox reported that there is a tanker truck parked the wrong way on Broad Street. The mayor said he also saw it and he asked how long it had been there. Mr. Fox answered that it was just there today.

Mayor Shanahan reported that on Friday he saw somebody driving the previously discussed dune buggy down North Street to Tontogany Creek Road. Then they turned south and drove on the sidewalk. The mayor said he saw that a deputy was sitting at the school, so he went to him and asked him to look into the unlicensed off-road dune buggy, since it was driving on the sidewalk, creating a safety concern and possibly doing damage to the sidewalk, as well as driving through the park and possibly making ruts and other damage to the park. The mayor said he also told the deputy where the dune buggy has been routinely parked. Councilman Neal commented that the Ohio Basic Code says that, if you want to run it on the streets, you have to have two headlights and two tail lights. The mayor and members commented that it would also have to have valid plates. Mr. Neal added that it is not allowed to be parked on the street, but should be parked on private property.

Councilwoman Mackey reported, concerning Otsego Serves Day on May 2nd, that she contacted Mary Gase and she filled out an online form on which she checked project ideas from a provided list. She said that another lady working with Mary contacted her a couple of weeks ago, wanting to know how many students we could use and if we could use more than the ten that were initially requested. Ms. Mackey said she told her that we could use fifteen students, but she asked if there would be adult supervision with them. The lady answered that there would be more than one adult to supervise that many students, and she reminded Ms. Mackey that the Village needs to provide supplies and equipment, such as wheelbarrows, trash barrels, brooms, and shovels. We also need to have a contact person that morning to let them know what projects we want to have done. Ms. Mackey told the mayor and members that she will not be here on May 2nd, and she asked if anyone else was willing to be here to guide the students. She said she had spoken about sweeping and shoveling up debris on the streets and sidewalks of downtown area. She said picking up brush at the parks had been on the list, but she understood that Josh Heckerman already did that. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger added that Josh had told him that he intended to do mulching at the hall soon. Ms. Mackey answered that mulching was on the list of projects the students were willing to do, so we should contact Josh if we would rather have the students do the mulching. The mayor reminded Ms. Mackey that we had talked about having the students paint the fire hydrants and we would provide the paint, brushes, and gloves, which we can purchase on account at Sherwin-Williams. Per Fire Chief Bill Gase's instructions, the base of the hydrants is to be painted yellow and the tops should be painted whatever color designates the line size. Ms. Mackey asked for confirmation that painting the hydrants is one of the projects we definitely want the students to do. All agreed that it was. Along with painting fire hydrants she said she would ask for cleaning up the downtown and picking up brush and trash around town. She asked if members wanted her to ask the students to do mulching at the hall and, if so, she volunteered to call Josh and work it out with him. Members agreed that the students could do mulching and suggested that it would be helpful to have Josh trim the bushes at the hall before the mulching is to be done. Councilman Smith said he could do measurements and order mulch and get it delivered. Ms. Mackey asked if anyone will be here on May 2nd. Mr. Smith answered that he would be off work on that day. Councilman Bergfeld said he

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might be off that day as well. Ms. Mackey said she would find out what time and if the students could meet at the hall for instructions and to pick up tools. The mayor told Ms. Mackey that he would like for her to find out the times when the students would be available and if we would need to provide meals for them or if they will go back to the school for lunch. Ms. Mackey said she would find out and let the mayor know. Mr. Bergfeld asked if we wanted to get a dump trailer. Mr. Smith said he might be able to get a large dump trailer. Councilman Fox suggested getting rid of junk in the shed by the hall. Mr. Smith commented that we could also get rid of some junk from upstairs in the hall, as well as discardable stuff in the office. The mayor asked if members wanted him to place an order to Sherwin-Williams for paint. Members agreed that he should and suggested that Mr. Johnson would know about how much to buy, since he did the last painting of the hydrants.

SIDEWALKS and TREES: Nothing to report.

DRAINS and SEWERS: Nothing to report.

CITY HALL and PARKS: Mayor Shanahan reminded members that there was not full agreement at the last meeting on veterans to honor with banners this year, having wanted Councilwoman Mehring to be present for the final decision. Councilwoman Mackey reminded everyone that she had offered Donald Current's name at the last meeting as worthy of a banner, and Alan Current had already given her his specs and a picture (which may be a high school graduation picture). The mayor noted that Donald would be the sixth name selected. He also told Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger that he had spoken with the Executive Director of the Wood County Veterans Service and found out that they have a banner reimbursement program. After we pay our invoice for banners, we can email a copy to the Veterans Service and they will reimburse us \$50 for each veteran banner purchased. The mayor added that he asked if we could also submit last year's invoice for veteran banners and the Director said to send it to them. So, we have been paying \$75 or \$80 per banner, but we will get back \$50 per banner. Councilman Fox asked if there was a cap on the amount of the reimbursements. The mayor answered that he didn't say, but he did say that not a lot of people are taking advantage of the program. The mayor said he reminded the Director that when we started our banner program, we were the first municipality in Wood County to do so. Since then, Grand Rapids, Weston, Haskins, Perrysburg, Rossford, and Bowling Green have all added them. Bowling Green's were done with a grant. Councilwoman Mackey said she thought some communities are asking for family donations for banners. The mayor replied that we could go with applications and donations, but we haven't done so for the reason that some families could give us names of veterans that were dishonorably discharged and we would not know the difference. Mr. Fox suggested that we could take applications and then vet them to be sure they were honorably discharged. The mayor agreed that we could probably run the names through the Wood County Veterans Service to check for honorable discharge. Mr. Fox said he thought that might be the way to go so we don't exclude anyone, and it would be on the veterans and their families to let us know if they would like a banner displayed. The mayor reminded members that our goal has been to honor veterans from Tontogany, and most of those will be deceased. He pointed out that with applications, families might apply for a banner for veterans who were in the township, but not in Tontogany, perhaps just a half a mile outside of Tontogany in some cases. Then we have to decide if we are going to accept any of those applications or not and where to draw the line. He cautioned that we would be opening ourselves up to issues like people asking us to explain why their application was turned down while another was accepted. Members discussed possible criteria they could use for determining how to prioritize who gets a banner first and so on. The mayor suggested that we could ask for application forms from other communities that use them, to use as a guide in modeling an application form for Tontogany. Councilman Neal commented that he was in the National Guard and he added that one of his assignments was a prison riot. The mayor responded that Mr. Neal is a resident of Tontogany, so

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maybe he will see himself on a hometown hero banner sometime. The mayor went through the list of six names he had and he determined that he and Councilwomen Mackey and Mehring would seek a picture, rank, and branch of service information for each name. If there is a problem getting a picture, he commented that he has seen veteran banners displayed without a picture. Ms. Mackey asked why we would put up a banner, if we can't contact any family member related to the veteran. Other members agreed. Councilman Bergfeld suggested that, if we are short a name, that we do a banner for Paul Neal. Other members voiced agreement. Councilman Smith asked Councilman Neal if we could put him on a banner. Mr. Neal answered that they certainly could do so. The mayor asked Mr. Neal to provide a photo, his rank, and his branch of service.

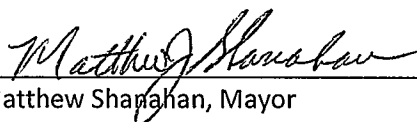
Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger pointed out that everyone had a copy of the Village Hall Lease Agreement that he had updated, and he had also emailed them a copy. He noted that in point 4 on the agreement he had updated the wording, per Council's request, to emphasize avoiding damage to the walls of the hall, to let the renter know that they would forfeit their security deposit if damage to the walls or anything else was found, and that renters have the option to protect themselves from liability for damage to the hall by taking photos before and after the rental and emailing them to the Village. Mr. Harnishfeger asked for Council's approval to the updated wording, so he could begin using the new version and he could send it to Haley to post on the Village website. Councilwoman Mackey commented that not only damage to the walls, but things like appliances should also be mentioned. Mr. Harnishfeger answered that the wording in point 4 covers appliances by name and any other type of damages, including the walls. Members voiced their approval of the updated version, with no objections voiced.

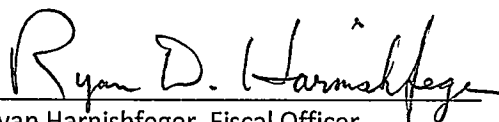
Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that he gave a hall key to Councilwoman Mackey, to be shared with Councilwoman Mehring for inspecting the hall, especially when there are back-to-back rentals. He also reported that there are three upcoming hall rentals scheduled in April. One is on Saturday, April 12th (the renter will come in on Friday to set up). Then there are two back-to-back rentals scheduled for Saturday, April 19th, and Sunday, April 20th. He said there are no rentals scheduled for May yet.

Councilman Neal reported that he had a meeting last week with Steve Powell as part of the revitalization program. He said Mr. Powell wanted to give council members each a copy of the Tontogany Centennial book, and Mr. Neal passed copies out to members. He reported that Mr. Powell had told him that the trustees are going to announce something called Knox Box. It is a program that they are going to offer to the residents of Tontogany that allows residents to put a house key in a special box that only the fire department or first responders have access to, so they can enter the home in an emergency when no one is there or someone there is incapacitated. Councilman Smith remarked that it is way cheaper than having to replace a door that had to be broken through.

Councilman Neal told members he would like to spend a little money on the website to add all of the events for the 150th Celebration on the events page. He said it might cost about \$100 to \$200 to have Haley do that. Members voiced no opposition to him having Haley do so.

With nothing further to discuss, Mayor Shanahan declared the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.


Matthew Shanahan, Mayor


Ryan Harnishfeger, Fiscal Officer