

# ***VILLAGE OF HEBRON***

## COMBINED COUNCIL COMMITTEES MEETING MINUTES

May 17, 2023

6:00 pm

This meeting was held both remotely and in person.

### **Call to Order**

Interim Village Administrator/Fiscal Officer Deborah Morgan called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

Mrs. Morgan asked everyone to stand to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Roll Call**

Councilmembers in attendance: Council President Dr. Valerie Mockus, Councilmembers Stacy Stoner, Paige Seymour, Kenney Nauer, Randy Wolf and Annelle Porter.

Others in attendance: Mayor James Layton, Interim Village Administrator/Fiscal Officer Deborah Morgan, and Clerk of Council/Administrative Assistant Christina Furbee.

Others in attendance remotely: None

Visitors: Tim Bubb, Bob Snavely

### **Visitor Comments**

Mrs. Morgan said she would like to move a discussion item up on the agenda to allow the guests to speak so they do not have to stay for the entire meeting.

### **Electric/Gas Aggregation**

Licking County Board of Commissioners President Tim Bubb, 20 s. 2<sup>nd</sup> St, Newark, said aggregation can be thought of as group, or wholesale, purchasing of kilowatt hours of natural gas or electric. He said residents or groups have a right to purchase these services from the open market so that they can obtain the best price, and an aggregation program would be beneficial for the Village of Hebron to join and offer to its residents, if Council chooses to execute it and put it on the ballot. He said residents would also have the ability to opt out for free if they are not interested in joining the aggregate program. They can also opt back into it later if they choose. Mr. Bubb said customers of the Energy Cooperative do not qualify for the program, as the Energy Cooperative is a member-owned cooperative. Mr. Bubb said areas such as Newark, Heath, Johnstown, Alexandria, Hanover and Gratiot joined the program and locked in prices through December 2025, and they are inviting other communities to aggregate as well. Bob Snavely of Palmer Energy said AEP Energy is raising their price to compare to 12 cents in June, but Licking County locked in an aggregate program with Energy Harbor at 6.24 cents per kw hour for those areas listed above. He said when joining an aggregate program, he encourages everyone to read the contract thoroughly, because sometimes fees may be applied if you choose to leave a contract. Dr. Mockus asked how AEP may feel about the Village writing to them to ask them to fix infrastructure issues within the Village, if a significant number of residents move from AEP to Energy Harbor. Mr. Snavely said the regulated portion of the bill is completely separate from the deregulated portion and AEP has led the way in letting people know the higher rates are coming and encouraging them to look at their options. He said the utility companies have to provide the supply but it's not really a revenue driver for them and an aggregate program should not affect the Village's request. Mr. Bubb encouraged the Village to move forward with writing to AEP and asking about the infrastructure repairs.

Dr. Mockus asked about the possibility of prices going up when someone leaves an aggregate program. Mr. Snavely said when residents sign up with new suppliers and the contract expires it is common to be placed back on a month to month market rate which usually includes a significant increase; however, this is not allowed with aggregation programs. He said at the end of the contract period, Licking County will start the RFP process again and investigate rates and opportunities. He said they look at when is an optimal time to do so, to take advantage of the best savings, and they will negotiate on behalf of the residents. Mr.

Bubb said the sample legislation presented to Council has ballot language on it, and if Council is interested, it must be turned in to the Board of Elections before the August deadline. He said they will help market the program as much as they can to help get the information out there to residents, and they would be willing to hold a meeting or have a Question and Answer session, if needed. There was some discussion about the process of implementation of an aggregation program. This item will be carried over to the next Council Meeting agenda.

#### **Pending Legislation**

**ORDINANCE 15-23-AN ORDINANCE WHEREBY THE VILLAGE OF HEBRON, OHIO AUTHORIZES THE CONVEYANCE AND EXCHANGE OF LAND KNOWN AS AUDITOR'S PARCEL NUMBER 075-344928-00.000 AND AUDITOR'S PARCEL NUMBER 075-344870-00.000-First Reading**

**ORDINANCE 16-23- (SALE OF POLICE CRUISER)-First Reading**

#### **Committees:**

**Finance - (Dr. Valerie Mockus-Chair, Randy Wolf, Stacy Stoner)**

None

**Economic Development-(Stacy Stoner-Chair, Randy Wolf, Paige Seymour)**

#### Jim Lenner's Services

Mrs. Morgan said she thought Mr. Lenner was planning to attend this meeting. Mayor Layton said he spoke to Mr. Lenner last night and it looks like everything that has been discussed is in the Comprehensive Plan now; Mr. Lenner just has to finish the economic development portion. Dr. Mockus said a resident questioned when the public survey will be completed. Mayor Layton said he will ask Mr. Lenner about it. Mrs. Porter asked how much compensation Mr. Lenner receives for his services. Mrs. Morgan said Mr. Lenner receives \$2000 a month for Economic Development services. She said there was also a fee for his work on the Comprehensive Plan, and he has received one payment for that so far.

**Police Committee-(Paige Seymour-Chair, Annelle Porter, Dr. Valerie Mockus)**

None

**Water, Wastewater Committee –(Kenney Nauer-Chair, Annelle Porter, Paige Seymour)**

Mrs. Morgan said Mr. Untied and a couple Councilmembers mentioned the possibility of doing something different with the Department Head reports that are given at each Council Meeting. She said the suggestion was that the Department Heads provide the report to her ahead of time and she will distribute it to Councilmembers. Dr. Mockus said she likes seeing the Department Heads in person. She asked if they could highlight an area they would like to briefly discuss, and suggested they may be more comfortable with being available to answer questions instead of presenting a full report. Mrs. Morgan said the Department Heads will continue to attend the meetings, but they will send their reports for Council review ahead of time.

#### Licking County Water update

Mayor Layton said the Village sent a bulk water proposal to Licking County and we are waiting to hear something back from them. He said the proposal agreement says Licking County will pay the proposed rate, and if our rate goes up, they will pay 4% less than our rate. Mr. Nauer said he thought the Village would wait until closer to when the current contract expires. Mayor Layton said we were waiting on the rate study and he feels once we have that information, we can move forward with the agreement. The push is to get treated water to everyone in the county. Dr. Mockus addressed an email Mr. Nauer sent with concerns about the agreement. She said each day, the Village has a capacity of water that can be produced and she feels we either sell it or we lose money. There was some discussion about the cost to produce and treat water. Dr. Mockus said the rate study will help to determine the best options as we move forward. Mayor Layton said if Licking County finds they need a larger amount of water in the future, the agreement states they would participate in making that happen.

Dr. Mockus asked if there is an opportunity for Councilmembers to be involved in the discussions with Licking County. Mayor Layton said most of the discussions have already taken place but he will let Councilmembers know about future meetings.

Mayor Layton said he met with Lakewood Schools Superintendent Dr. Gleichauf and he asked if the schools have room to take on more students. Mr. Gleichauf said enrollment has continuously decreased for six years in a row, even with the new development in the Lake Forest Subdivision. He said there is plenty of room for more students at Lakewood schools.

Mayor Layton said another Comprehensive Plan discussion took place last night.

Mrs. Morgan said a meeting with Burgess & Nipel was held today. She said a lot of information about the rate study was discussed, but much of the information was from the previous billing system so it will need to be updated and brought current.

#### Waterline to Canyon Road Resident

Mrs. Morgan said she received an email from a gentleman who is planning to build a home on Canyon Road, wanting to know the Village's intentions for water and sewer on Canyon Road. He asked if Council would be willing to enter into an agreement with him allowing him to not connect to Village water and sewer for a fixed period of time, to allow him to maintain a well and septic for 7-10 years, should the Village decide to run water and sewer there. Mrs. Morgan said this is a Council decision. There was some discussion about options now and with the possibility of future development. Dr. Mockus said she would support allowing a 7-year agreement with the stipulation that it would be on the homeowner to reach out to the Village of Hebron ahead of time if they want to ask for an extension. This item will be moved to the next Council Meeting agenda.

#### **Parks, Recreation, Public Works Committee**-(*Annelle Porter-Chair, Kenney Nauer, Dr. Valerie Mockus*)

Mrs. Morgan provided updates and answers to previous questions for the Public Works Department.

She said the Village is still waiting on Mr. Cumbo on Warden Street to make a decision about granting an easement for access to a storm sewer there. He is discussing options with V3 Companies Ltd.

She said the work on 5<sup>th</sup> street is complete, but it could not be completed as planned because of EPA restrictions. Mr. Nauer asked if Mr. Ward checked with V3 Companies about permissible options there. Mrs. Morgan said she will ask Mr. Ward.

Mrs. Morgan said plates have been removed on Water Street. She said there is still some grading and seeding to be completed.

She said tilling and seeding for wildflower areas is scheduled to be done tomorrow and Friday.

Mrs. Morgan said due to short staffing, the landscaping for the Municipal Building cannot be done until mid-June, though due to the summer heat, it is not ideal to do the planting until mid-September.

She said measurements have been done for paving repairs to be made by ODOT on US 40. She said the work is expected to be done the third week of June, with a full-depth repair on one spot.

She said the paving bid opening will be on June 8<sup>th</sup>. This includes the walking path and the parking lot at Evans Park.

The new 5500 dump truck was ready for pick up, but it cannot leave the lot yet as there is a brake chip recall.

She said the truck that was at Coughlin Ford for repairs is back in service.

Mrs. Porter asked if the streets in Crossroads Manor and Hopewell Commons are privately owned or maintained by the Village, as there are problems there. Mr. Nauer said the Village maintains the streets up to the complex, but not inside of it. Mrs. Porter said the owner needs to be notified that there are issues. Mrs. Morgan said she will have Mrs. Miller reach out to them. Mrs. Porter said the apartment patios in Crossroads Manor are also slanted. Mrs. Morgan said that issue is in the hands of our prosecutor, as the Village has reached out to the owners many times.

Mrs. Seymour said she loves the flowers in the downtown area. Mrs. Porter agreed.

Mr. Nauer said a crosswalk light on south SR 79 has been turned and needs to be reset to the correct position.

Mr. Nauer said there are weeds growing at 127 Hamilton Street where tile was placed.

He said a drain from Deacon Street is not opened up yet, and is full of water.

Mrs. Porter said she is perplexed about the Public Works Department needing two more employees. Mrs. Morgan said one fulltime staff member left for a job with the County, and a part-time position has never been filled since the person in that position left. She said interviews for the full-time position are scheduled for this Friday and part-time position interviews are scheduled for Monday.

Mrs. Morgan said she learned that one of the programs that ODOT offers is a free CDL classroom training, which will also help with the driving portion of it. She said Mr. Ward was already aware and started the program.

Dr. Mockus said she would like to talk to Mrs. Morgan and Mr. Ward about feedback from a coach about issues at the soccer field. Mrs. Morgan said the Village has been very gracious to the soccer league over time and we are doing what we can do to address the issues.

Mr. Nauer said SR 79 is not being mowed all the way to the fence. Mrs. Morgan said Mrs. Furbee reached out to the company that handles the work. Mrs. Morgan said she will follow up with Mr. Ward. Mr. Nauer said there are logs there that need to be removed as well.

**Personnel, Annexation, Insurance Committee**-(Randy Wolf-Chair, Stacy Stoner, Kenney Nauer)

Mrs. Morgan said the advertisement for the open Village Administrator position has been posted for a second time, and so far, the Village has received another five applications. She said they will begin reviewing applications on June 12<sup>th</sup>. She said the Village found interest in two possible candidates from the first round of interviews. They were both informed and indicated that they want to remain in the hiring process. She added that two of the interviewees were not found to be a great fit for the Administrator position, but demonstrated a skill set that may fit elsewhere. They were sent letters asking if they want their application to remain on file for any possible future position. Mrs. Morgan said she heard back from one of the candidates who wants their resume to remain on file.

Mr. Wolf said there was an apartment fire on Lakewood Drive. He said he heard the fire trucks leaving the fire house before he even received the call notification. He said multiple Departments arrived at the scene very quickly. Councilmembers agreed the West Licking Fire District has demonstrated a great response time. Mrs. Morgan said she has been working with the Fire Prevention Officer for proposed developments, and the developers have said they are very impressed.

**Other Items not listed**

Noise Ordinance

Mrs. Seymour said she asked about this topic because of a resident's complaint about noisy neighbors. Mayor Layton said he is not aware if the Village has ever had a noise ordinance, and he believes the Disturbance of the Peace ordinance would apply. He said he believes a noise ordinance would require a means to measure the noise level. Mrs. Morgan said she

recommends not putting a noise ordinance into the zoning ordinances as the Hebron Police Department would better handle those complaints than the Planning & Zoning Board. Mayor Layton recommended talking to the Police Chief about the noise issues and how to enforce it. Mrs. Morgan said the resident who came to the Council Meeting said the issue was reported to the Police Department twice. Mayor Layton said he will talk to Chief Brooks to see if he has a plan in place to help resolve the situation. Mrs. Morgan said the resident felt a noise ordinance would eliminate having to call the Police Department multiple times. Dr. Mockus said she has two other examples of noise ordinance complaints for Mrs. Seymour to discuss with the Police Department. Mrs. Seymour said she will talk to Chief Brooks about the complaints.

**Open Discussion**

Mayor Layton said he is working on a plan for revitalization of the downtown area. He said he is waiting for a company to send us a program.

Mr. Wolf said it would be nice to have a Village of Hebron name tag to wear to meetings. Mrs. Furbee said she will order him one. Mrs. Morgan said she will send out a link to Councilmembers to order shirts with the Village logo on them if they are interested.

**Visitor Comments**

None

**Adjourn**

Mrs. Porter moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:26pm, second by Mrs. Seymour. A roll call vote was taken with all Councilmembers present voting in favor.

\_\_\_\_\_(on file)\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor James Layton

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_(on file)\_\_\_\_\_  
Deborah Morgan, Village Fiscal Officer