

February 13, 2023

Council President Mr. Martin called the February 13, 2023 Belpre City Council meeting to order at 7:35 PM. The roll was called with the following members present: Mrs. Dennis, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. McClead, Mr. Millhone, Mr. Null, Ms. Abdella and Mr. Wallace present. Also present were Mayor Lorentz, Safety-Service Director Mrs. Hoblitzell, City Auditor Mrs. Nolan, City Law Director Mr. Webster, Treasurer Mrs. Cassidy and Clerk of Council Mrs. Meredith.

Council President Mr. Martin asked that everyone please rise for the Prayer and remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Lorentz gave the invocation and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President of Council Mr. Martin asked that everyone turn off cellphones or turn them to vibrate so they don't interfere with the recording.

If you address council this evening, please state your name and address clearly so that the clerk can record it for the minutes.

President of Council Mr. Martin asked for a motion to accept the minutes of January 23, 2023. Ms. Abdella made a motion to accept the minutes of January 23rd, 2023 as presented and by-pass the reading. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Reports of City Officials:

Mayor Lorentz reported that during a meeting with the Solid Waste Authority the director stated that Belpre had their act together. Our recycle gathered is the cleanest and best sorted of all the participants.

The patio addition is complete at the Sr. Center. The group is already planning activities as soon as weather breaks.

We continue to meet with the Transit Authority to assess the need for a bus line in Belpre. All the parties involved are excited to get the study under way and plan a route. If this can happen it should serve many of our residents

Governor Dewine was in Washington County explaining his addition to the budget. The Governor's H2-Ohio fund is a much-needed initiative to protect our water ways and our drinking water. My hope is they are also monitoring the injection wells that are popping up in our region.

The Sergeant's test was given January 30th with all four Patrolmen participating. All the Patrolmen did a good job on the test as we knew they would. Kerry Nichols will be our newest shift supervisor. I will swear him in this evening.

At this time, Mayor Lorentz along with Chief Stump swore in Sergeant Nichols to his new position.

Mayor Lorentz stated that the leadership in the police department has changed in the past year for which I'm very proud of.

A ribbon cutting is scheduled for Wings etc. March 6th at 10 am. This new restaurant will be a great addition to the center. A special thank you to the owners and Jet Lag for making this happen.

The Service Director and I met with ODOT via a Team Meeting to discuss a paving project for 2023. Hopefully we can get Rockland Avenue and Farson Street repaired this year. Today I received an estimate of our obligation for this work.

The Actor's Guild has asked my daughter and I to participate in the Lip Sync Battle on April 1st. If you hear of Sonny and Cher being in town don't get too excited its just Christina and me.

Ms. Abdella stated that in your report you mentioned street repair. What is our obligation as a city for this project. Mayor Lorentz stated that it was somewhere between \$51,000 to \$53,000.

Ms. Abdella also mentioned the Transit Authority that is on her list of committee assignments that she didn't know much about. Mayor Lorentz stated that we are getting ready to start the study and he feels that it is a much needed service for our community. Ms. Abdella asked what the study was on. According to the mayor it is on routes. Mrs. Hoblitzell told Ms. Abdella that if she could stop by her office, she could provide her with information.

Safety-Service Director Mrs. Hoblitzell reported that we have spoke to three different telephone vendors about our phone system. We are waiting on these quotes to come back for review.

After 30 years with the city, David Shaffer retired. Mrs. Hoblitzell wasn't at his retirement party however Mayor Lorentz stated that we just shut the doors from 11:30am until about 1:00pm to celebrate David. David has done a great job during his time with the city. A meal was prepared and co-workers all chipped in to bid him farewell.

I have put a Board together for EMS Services. Tom is working on the by-laws and applying for corporation. These are the two final pieces that are needed until we can get back to providing the EMS services.

I posted testing for job opportunities on the city's website today for two vacant positions. One is for a Laborer II in the water department and the other is for a police officer.

The sound system for council chambers will be installed in the next few weeks.

Snow plowing was offered to our Belpre City Schools however insurer informed us that we would lose our statutory immunity if we acted as a sub-contractor for the Board of Education.

I talked to Scott Trew and it has been decided that we are not going to do the service and thanked us for trying to help them.

Light in front of Las Trancas will be replaced on Wednesday. Please watch for stopped and slow-moving traffic until it is repaired.

Washington Boulevard will be closed tomorrow from 9am-2pm to replace a broken pole across a roadway.

Rick Dostell is with us this evening to talk to us about residential building codes. Rick discussed building codes, ways to apply, etc. Our company would like to offer residential inspections. After his presentation there was discussion on the topic. Mr. Dostell stated that there is no cost to the city for residential or commercial inspections. The cost is paid for by the cost of the permit. Ms. Abdella would like for him to come back when council is better prepared so that we can ask additional questions. Mr. Null asked where he was located at and did, they have a contract with the City of Marietta. Mr. Null was informed that he is located on the 1st Floor of the Court House, Marietta, Ohio. They do have a contact with the City of Marietta. Mrs. Hoblitzell has a packet regarding the residential building codes. Mr. Millhone was concerned about plumbing codes. He was informed that plumbing codes is taken care of through the Health Department.

City Auditor Mrs. Nolan reported that the January Utility Adjustment report is on the back table and needs approval from Council. Ms. Abdella made a motion to accept the January Utility Adjustment report as presented. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

City Law Director Mr. Webster had no report.

City Treasurer Mrs. Cassady reported that the November, December and Year-End Treasurers Report is before you this evening and is needing approval by council. Copies have been placed on the back table for the audience to view.

Council President Mr. Martin asked for a motion for the November's Treasurers

Report. Mrs. Dennis made a motion to accept the November's Treasurers Report as presented. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Council President Mr. Martin asked for a motion for the December's Treasurers Report. Mrs. Dennis made a motion to accept the December's Treasurers Report as presented. Discussion followed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Council President Mr. Martin asked for a motion for the Year-to-Date Treasurers Report. Mrs. Dennis made a motion to accept the Year-to-Date Treasurers Report as presented. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Communication and Petitions:

Council President Mr. Martin had no Communication and Petitions.

Council President asked if everyone received his email concerning the meeting of the Health Department? Everyone had received.

Council President Mr. Martin announced that he has signed the bank reconciliations for September thru December 2022.

Reports of Standing Committee

Mr. Ferguson reported that his committee met prior to this evening's meeting at 6:30PM to discuss the 2023 budget. I would like to call another committee meeting for February 20th, 2023 at 4:30pm to further our review on the 2023 budget. Mr. Ferguson made a motion to add to the agenda on February 27th, 2023 **AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING CALENDAR YEAR 2023 APPROPRIATIONS**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mrs. Dennis, Police and Fire Committee had no report.

Ms. Abdella, Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewer Committee had no report. Ms. Abdella announced that on Friday at 8:30 am there will be a meeting at Washington State Community College regarding Community Health Assessment get together that is sponsored by both Health Departments and Marietta Memorial Hospital. If anyone of you would like to be part of our Community Assessment please plan to attend.

Mr. Millhone Utilities Committee reported his committee met at 6:45pm prior to this evening's meeting for the purpose of drafting legislation to rescind authority of safety-service director to raise water rates. The following two statements were read. They are as follows:

1. I have heard that we are not eligible for grants because our water rates are too low, since the city raised the rates in 2021 and also put the \$6.00 fee on starting in 2022. My question would be how many grants did we apply for in 2022 that we were denied and how many was denied due to our low water rates?

2. I have presented a rough draft for changing legislation or we can just vote to repeal 939.08 completely which might be easier at this point. The city in my opinion should not be able to change our water rates which effect every citizen in Belpre without coming to council who they elected to represent them and the city should be able to justify the increase and get approval of council for any increase. It should be discussed in an open forum for all the citizens to hear and understand the reasons for any increase.

At the conclusion of the meeting, I asked our law director to draft legislation on the 4 ½ water rate increase repeal.

Mr. McClead Parks and Recreation Committee had no report.

Mr. Wallace Planning and Zoning Committee had no report

Mr. Wallace, Economic Development Committee had no report.

Mr. Null, Rules Committee stated that we have a problem with feral cats in our city. Tonight I have legislation that I would like to add to the agenda for first reading. I would like to have our budget completed before completing this piece of legislation. Mr. Null made a motion to add to the agenda **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PAYMENT OF TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$10,000.00) TO SAVE A KITTY FERAL CAT PROGRAM FOR SPAYING AND NEUTERING FERAL CATS IN THE CITY OF BELPRE.** Ms. Abdella stated that this legislation looks like it is a grant opportunity verses a contract for services. Is there an agreement that goes with this or are we just getting the \$10,000.00? Mr. Null deferred the question to the law director who stated that there is no agreement. Mr. Null discussed the Save the Kitty Program.

Mrs. Dennis stated that we had two other organizations come to us and ask for funds, one being Discovery World that would have helped 100 families in our community.

A vote was called on the motion. All members of council present voted aye except for Mrs. Dennis who voted nay

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL - AGENDA items only ((President of items.))

Karen Locke 726 Tuttle Street, Belpre stated that she was in support of Mrs. Dennis' comment. We have had organizations come and ask for funds that would support our children. I don't feel we should be giving \$10,000.00 for feral cats.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: ((President of City Council will recognize that there is or is not any Unfinished Business this evening)). None

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Null brought before council for first reading **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PAYMENT OF TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$10,000.00) TO SAVE A KITTY FERAL CAT PROGRAM FOR SPAYING AND NEUTERING FERAL CATS IN THE CITY OF BELPRE.** Discussion followed. Ms. Abdella stated that there is no performance clause that states what they have to do. Ms. Abdella stated that she didn't disagree with Mr. Null that something needs to be done however it needs to be a contract. Mr. Wallace stated that there needs to be a performance clause. After additional discussion Mr. Null withdrew his motion and tabled. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL:

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:22pm for the purpose of discussing real estate. There will be no further action taken at this evening meeting. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

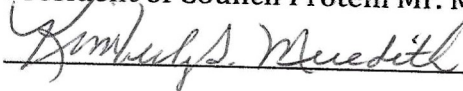
Mr. Ferguson made a motion to resume at 8:35pm. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

ADJOURN:

Ms. Abdella made a motion to adjourn. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.



President of Council Protem Mr. Martin



Clerk of Belpre City Council Mrs. Meredith