

April 22, 2024

Council President Mr. Martin called the April 22, 2024 Belpre City Council meeting to order at 7:30 pm. The roll was called with the following members present: Mr. Ambrozy, Mrs. Dennis, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Godfrey, Mr. Locke, Ms. Riffle and Mr. Seebaugh present. Also, present were Mayor Abdella, City Auditor Mrs. Nolan, City Law Director Mr. Webster, and Clerk of Council Mrs. Meredith. Absent from the April 22, 2024 meeting was Treasurer Mrs. Cassady. At this time there has been no Safety-Service Director appointed.

Council President Mr. Martin asked everyone to please rise for the Prayer and remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance. Police Chief Stump gave the invocation and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council President Mr. Martin asked all present if you have cellphones or any electronic devices to please turn them off or to vibrate so it won't interfere with the recording.

If you plan to address council this evening, please stand, come to the podium, state your name clearly so the clerk can get your information, and address council.

Council President Mr. Martin asked for a motion for the April 8, 2024 minutes. Mrs. Dennis made a motion to accept the minutes as amended and by-pass the reading. Council President Mr. Martin asked what the amendment was. According to Mrs. Dennis we needed to remove under Mr. Ambrozy Utilities Report, second line, participated in the Preparedness Exercise and change set to sat. Mrs. Dennis stated that there was some confusion in the verbiage. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson stated that on April 8th, 2024 we passed **Ordinance #5, 2024**. Since the incorrect attachment was attached to the Ordinance.

Mr. Ferguson asked for a voice vote to change the attachment to reflect 40 instead of 41. Libby was no longer working.

Reports of City Officials:

Mayor Abdella presented her 100 Day State of the City, April 22, 2024 report before council. It is as follows:

Citizens of Belpre

First, I would like to thank you for trusting me to take on this challenge for our future. I must say it has been a rollercoaster of emotions. The first 30 days were a tremendous challenge, from computer issues, documents unavailable and finding many unpaid invoices from the previous couple years. But I must say, the department heads who are all also new to their roles have performed in an outstanding manner. We have a new council that is engaged and truly interested in collaborating and being part of the team that will help the city to make the changes we all want to see.

During this time of transition, I have met with many leaders across the county as well as a peer community to discuss best practice opportunities as well as build bridges towards collaboration. These discussions have provided a solid understanding of obstacles and opportunities that are ahead of Belpre. I must say that the strategic discussions with the department heads that included several council members, really highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of the city. The greatest strength of this community is its workforce. Where our biggest weakness is an extreme neglect of our community's infrastructure, poor planning, and budgeting.

During the first 100 days we have implemented a technical review committee to support developers and individuals that are wanting to create businesses, build homes, or improve their property. Our goal is to create a collaborative approach to help remove obstacles for people wanting to invest in Belpre while following the guidelines that are in place. We are here to help facilitate change.

We have hardworking employees and young leaders that are eager to learn and grow in their roles. As they grow, they will lead this community into the future. We as the administration and council must provide them with a seat at the table and an opportunity to be heard so they can provide input on critical decisions.

Our priority for this community is to ensure that our key infrastructure is up to standards set forth by Ohio EPA. They have mandated several projects to ensure every community in the state of Ohio has safe drinking water. An example of this is Belpre currently has approximately 7 miles of 2" waterline that are assumed to be galvanized. Which under this project will be required to be replaced. Not just the trunk lines but the lines to people's homes. There is also a water tank that is critical to the development of a Childrens Hospital that needs to be completed. These are just a few of the projects in our utility department.

At this time, I would like to review some of the work that is being done to position Belpre for the future.

Slide Presentation

Currently, I do not have a plan of correction. We are working on it. However, to correct these issues and get the city on a plan for infrastructure repair we will have to make some extremely difficult decision as administration, council and community.

Again, thank you for trusting myself and council to lead this City forward.

Mayor Abdella thanked everyone that participated in Arbor Day/Earth Day and the Tree Commission for everything they have done. There are white pine saplings back by the door if anyone of you would like to take with you and plant a tree. Don't plant near a power line as they grow tall. However they do help with storm water.

On May 2nd, 2024, the chief is going to participate with the county for the National Day of Prayer at the National Guard Armory in Marietta. He is actually going to be leading the prayer for our first responders. We thank him for participating. Anyone that would like to join us we will be at the Armory at noon.

This evening the Street Forman came to join us; the chief is here. Our Public Works Superintendent is out on the streets. We are currently having some issues with some brown water. There is some suspicion as to how it came about from changing filters. Citizens have been experiencing some brown water for the last couple of days. We finally tracked it down. Tonight, there is a crew out flushing hydrants. They will be flushing hydrants again tomorrow and tomorrow night. We are in hopes of having it done before Wednesday because we don't usually flush hydrants during the day because it does affect water pressure but we want to get rid of all that brown water from around town.

Safety-Service Director reported that she would be giving a report for the Safety-Service Director from the Code Enforcement Officer. I wanted to share with you that the properties of 306 and 3006 ½ Main Street, the demolitions is complete. There is a permit in process for the Old Elementary Junior High on the high school property. The next list of homes that are due for demolition are at 515 and 605 Main Street, 813 Carlisle, 721 Ohio Avenue and 502 Walnut Street. The properties have been identified, worked through and are at the county getting them ready for the process. Mr. Wiggins has issued seven permits over the last week. Several are for solar panels, roofing, fence and to re-roof homes. Dominion is working in the right-of-way. There is a variance meeting on April 24th, 2024, being three things on that process currently. Mowing notices have gone out. Four at this time. The Ordinance has been hand delivered to the property owners. We've also had issues with bulk pick-up. He has handed out five fliers regarding Bulk pick-up. He has done some storm water training with us as well as training on the new software. Cashland has asked for a permit to add a new development.

City Auditor Mrs. Nolan announced that to date we have processed two payment batches and ran one payroll from VIP Software Solutions. We had a few issues that were easily corrected. One of the payroll issues being that pay stubs were not directed to emails. They were printed and distributed. This has been corrected for next payroll.

The March Utility Adjustment Report was emailed to Council Thursday, April 18, 2024, and needs Councils approval.

Mrs. Dennis made a motion to accept the March 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 was absent. City Auditor Mrs. Nolan stated that before you this evening is a copy of the March 2024 Treasurers Report that needs approved by council. E-mails were sent out to all members of council and copies are in the back for your review. Mr. Ferguson made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Communication and Petitions:

Council President Mr. Martin expressed his gratitude to the mayor for the nice report she presented this evening on the City of Belpre, 100 Day State of the City.

Reports of Standing Committee

Mr. Ferguson Finance/Audit Committee reported that his committee met tonight at 6:00 pm for the purpose of discussing the Invoice Cloud Project. I would like to continue that discussion on May 1st at 6:00 pm on the Invoice Cloud Project and Financial Reports of the city. Ms. Abdella stated that the new software has a report that shows cash positions. I think it would be very interesting to council. I would like for Mr. Ferguson to allow us to explain it to you, how to understand it and give you more information as to how the city actually functions.

Mrs. Dennis, Police and Fire Committee reported that she continues to be active in committee and communication with department heads

behind the scene. There is a lot of things coming our way soon. I will be meeting with the chief to get specifics at which time I will request that you add to my list of responsibilities.

Mr. Locke, Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewer Committee presented the following before council:

On Monday April 15, 2024 at 6:00 pm I attended the Finance Committee meeting.

On Thursday, April 18, 2024 at 9:30 am I met with Street Supervisor Chris Barringer about signage for truck routing etc. He has been overwhelmed lately with the high water and local flooding. I think we have a good plan for keeping large trucks off of streets that aren't intended for heavy trucks. Please be patient while details are worked out and the proper signage is purchased.

Also, on Thursday April 18, 2024 at 4:30pm I attended a committee meeting pertaining to Side by Sides. There were many local citizens in attendance. Also, Chief Stump was in attendance. He explained his opinion on Side by Sides and his concerns. A lot of interaction with the public ensued.

On Friday, April 19, 2024 I attended the Marietta/Belpre City Health Board Meeting.

Mr. Ambrozy Utilities Committee reported that since our last meeting Leonard Wiggins and I have completed the gathering of our canvassing data that will be used for the water and sewer rates study. The mayor is having the data entered into a spreadsheet. There is lots of data. I was invited to participate in a meeting with another engineering firm that we are screening and we may use in the future. It was a very productive meeting and good options for us in the future.

Mr. Seebaugh Parks and Recreation Committee had no report. I will mention in the mayors report she was putting together an alacart to improve our parks with grant money. Once I receive, I will call a

committee meeting for that purpose. I also have one of my constituents working on ways to obtain a pool grant.

Mr. Godfrey, Planning and Zoning Committee reported that his committee has met several times regarding the ATV Ordinance. I have a couple more finishing touches on it before I pass on to the law director.

I was at the track today at the high school for a track meet. The track looks great!

There has been a lot of conversation lately on social media concerning Walnut Street with vehicles flying through. I wanted to make sure the chief is aware of it.

I'm requesting that issues of funding be clearly stated in all spending legislation so that everyone understands how money is being spent.

Ms. Riffle Rules Committee reported that she attended the Finance Committee meeting on April 15th and learned some interesting information at the Side-by-Side meetings. I would like to thank Mr. Godfrey for the amount of research effort he has put into that. Regardless of how it goes he has done an amazing job on everything he has brought forth.

On Friday morning I went to the health board meeting regarding the merge process and I think the citizens would get more from what we provide than what the county would provide. It also comes down to the accreditation issues that might take a while as far as a merge.

I also had my own meeting on the posting of political signs on city property. There was a lot of good discussion. The consensus is that we don't want it especially around the city building, parks, fire department, sewer plant etc. The majority of the folks feels that it is okay to have the signs down around the bridges with restrictions. Many communities have this so I'm working on drafting the information to forward to Mr. Webster. Other signs were also brought up that will be addressed at a later meeting. Further research is needed.

I went to Athens with the mayor to purchase shelves for the police department. I can't wait to see what they do with their organizational skills. Mrs. Dennis to assist!

I did attend the Earth Day activities on Saturday morning with the Mayor and Mr. Ambrozy at Bob's Market. There wasn't a great turn out perhaps because of the weather and opening day for soccer and some other things going on in town. I would like to thank Kathy Davis and Maxine Hobb for their efforts. I would like to encourage everyone that if you have the time to consider helping out the tree commission.

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL - AGENDA items only -

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Mr. Ambrozy brought before council for second reading **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF BELPRE TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH WIRT COUNTY 911 TO USE THE BELPRE RADIO TOWER TO REPAIR AND INSTALL A RADIO REPEATER SITE ON THE TOWER.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ambrozy moved to suspend the rule of council on three different days to allow for the third reading of **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF BELPRE TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH WIRT COUNTY 911 TO USE THE BELPRE RADIO TOWER TO REPAIR AND INSTALL A RADIO REPEATER SITE ON THE TOWER.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ambrozy brought before council for third reading **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF BELPRE TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH WIRT COUNTY 911 TO USE THE BELPRE RADIO TOWER TO REPAIR AND INSTALL A RADIO REPEATER SITE ON THE TOWER.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ambrozy moved this be **Resolution #3, 2024-2025** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Locke brought before council for first reading **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF BELPRE AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE BELPRE CITY COUNCIL TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH WASHINGTON COUNTY ENGINEER FOR THE REPAVING OF A PORTION OF ROCKLAND AVENUE.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Locke moved to suspend the rule of council on three different days to allow for the second and third readings of **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF BELPRE AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE BELPRE CITY COUNCIL TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH WASHINGTON COUNTY ENGINEER FOR THE REPAVING OF A PORTION OF ROCKLAND AVENUE.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Locke brought before council for the second and third readings **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF BELPRE AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE BELPRE CITY COUNCIL TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH WASHINGTON COUNTY ENGINEER FOR THE REPAVING OF A PORTION OF ROCKLAND AVENUE.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Locke moved this be **Resolution #4, 2024-2025** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

PERSON APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL:

Kenneth Cobb 1011 Florence Street, Belpre, Ohio addressed a letter in reference to Union Alley which runs north and south. Union Alley intersects with Matheny Avenue and Matheny Avenue Extension. Union

Alley travels north from Matheny Avenue to the rear of 1007 Florence Street, Belpre.

The letter is to inform anyone and everyone in the city works of Belpre Ohio that closing Union Alley would be **DETRIMENTAL** to this lot as it is the only public access to said lot. Therefore, we are asking the following:

We are aware of the proper process of getting an alley/street closed. As that all adjacent property owner must be notified by mail and if they do not reply within 30 days the process can continue.

We are letting you know immediately that we never want Union Alley closed which would be detrimental to this lot. Union Alley is never to be closed without a signature from the **PROPERTY OWNER** stating that closure is ok with the current property owner at said time. Reason for this is that we travel abroad yearly and may be gone for several months at a time. If we are out of the country, we would not be present to sign or contest the closure.

This will void any and all normal procedures required in closing Union Alley at this location.

With this letter we are letting you know in full that Union Alley is never to be closed without the owner of said property located behind 1007 Florence Street parcel #080039191001 signing a paper that he or she is **AGREEING** to the closure. If such signature is not obtained Union Alley will remain open to public access.

Mayor Abdella asked Mr. Cobb if he received his letter. Mr. Cobb stated that he did but it had the incorrect address. Mayor Abdella to get address corrected. This matter is on the agenda for the 24th of this month because you said you were leaving on the 28th. We made sure this would happen prior to your departure so that you have say.

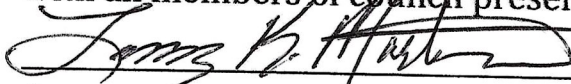
Mr. Cobb stated that he wanted this for future reference to be sure they are contacted.

Mr. Seebaugh asked what alley this was. He was informed Union Alley. Mr. Seebaugh asked if this ran along the river side or street side. He was informed that it goes behind 1001, 1003, 1005 Florence Street.

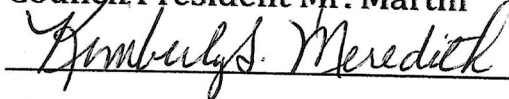
Mr. Locke asked if it was okay to contact him in the future. Mr. Cobb agreed.

ADJOURN:

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to adjourn at 8:05pm. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.



Council President Mr. Martin



Clerk of Belpre City Council Mrs. Meredith