

May 13, 2024

Council President Mr. Martin called the May 13, 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, Treasurer Mrs. Cassady and Clerk of Council Mrs. Meredith. 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 22, 2024 minutes. Mrs. Dennis made a motion to accept the minutes of April 22, 2024 and by-pass the reading. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

**Reports of City Officials:**

Mayor Abdella presented her report before council. It is as follows:

**Congratulation:**

- Gunner Smith for being recognized by Muskingum Valley Chamber of Commerce. He wasn't nominated by the Chief nor was he nominated by me. He was nominated by his peers.

- The Belpre Woman's Club would like to make a presentation at this time.

Karen Locke on behalf of the Belpre Women's Club introduced Janet Gilbert, Judy Drake and Joyce Jones who was also present from the Belpre Women's Club. I would ask Mason Matheny to come up and accept a coffee pot for the volunteerism that is going on throughout our country and in the City of Belpre. Mason is a third-generation volunteer for the Belpre Volunteer Fire Department. It is a great honor that his grandfather, father and now Mason were all volunteers. Mason is a lieutenant in the fire department. We want to present to them this evening a coffee pot that they can have coffee brought to them at the scene if they need coffee.

Mason explained hearing the tone anytime throughout the day. He said that at any given time the tones will go off, multiple volunteers come to the station. Some volunteers can leave work while others can't. We actually have an app on our phone that tells us who is available and will be coming along.

Mrs. Locke stated that these folks are a very important part of Belpre. They give because they love the city. There are other groups that volunteer in the city that I would like to recognize at this time: The Belpre Women's Club, the Civitan Club, Belpre Alumni, Lions Club that does the Apple Butter Stir-Off down at the park, Rotary Club, Belpre Historical Society, Belpre Farmers Market, Holiday Lights, Belpre Masonic Lodge, Belpre Shrine, etc. We need to show thanks and support for all they do.

Mayor Abdella stated that we will be celebrating the Police Department on Thursday. I have ordered a sheet cake in celebration.

Also, I would like to recognize the EMS for their 50 Years of Service. Thank them and recognize them.

- The Street Department, Chris and his team for being recognized by Belpre Baseball.

A huge thank you to Chris Barringer for allowing me to use some of the mulch for my project on one of the fields located at Civitan Park. I still have more

grass to remove, more mulch to haul over, and then to level it out. Plans to do this for both dugout areas on the field.

I'd also like to take the time to thank him along with his workers for everything they do to keep everything looking the best that they can to their abilities.

I know that this isn't a normal email for most of you but I just wanted to take the time to showcase Chris's kindness, and so on!

Thank you, Chris, and the rest of your workers for all that you do!

### **Communications:**

- Mr. President: I am requesting a voice vote to allow Council Person Lyndsay Dennis to sit on the 911 review committee. This was a request of the 911 Director that Belpre have a representative at the committee.
- Mr. President: there is legislation tonight to be able to spend the 100K DOD Community Development grant. These funds will be utilized to repair the pond. This work will be complete by the end of June.
- I will be attending training on Tuesday and Wednesday 101 Utility Management and 201 Financial Management for Governing boards. This will help us going forward when looking for Principal forgiveness loans.
- The work on the pond will begin in the next two weeks.
- We are also looking for opportunities to replace the fountain that use to be in the middle.
- On April 29<sup>th</sup> the Auditor, John Ambrozy and I attended Fiscal Boot Camp to learn utility proformas and benchmarks for utility billing. It was a very good class and provided a great amount of knowledge.
- We will be attending Classes by RCAP on Tuesday and Wednesday in an effort to qualify for Principal forgiveness financing in the future.

City Building – We are back to issues with heat and cooling. Main Power switch off for Air, Breaker blown in panel, Electrical switch froze and ruined the compressor. Working on pricing.

## **Capital Improvement Planning for Water and Sewer**

### **Water Rate Analysis:**

- A rate analysis presentation will occur at the beginning of June.

### **Water Tower:**

- We are working with RCAP to complete the proforma's for financing.

**Lead Service Lines** – The QR Code and the site to do the survey will be coming out in the water bill this month. We need to encourage all citizens to do this survey to help us meet the EPA requirements. The Water Department will also be working to do some Hydro excavation and meter inspections. They are working hard to meet the October deadline.

### **Other Info:**

- ARC – Precheck list due May 31<sup>st</sup>. We will submit for the sewer plant project.

I would request that the Utility Chairman call a Utilities Committee meeting to discuss the Capital Plans for Water and Sewer. We spent a lot of time analyzing everything. Now it is time to prioritize.

Safety-Service Director – no report as there has not been one hired at this time.

City Auditor Mrs. Nolan announced Wednesday, May 1 along with Mayor Abdella and John Ambrozy, I attended an all-day Fiscal Officer Utility Boot Camp in Zanesville, OH. This free Boot Camp was provided by RCAP (Rural Community Assistance Partnership) and I was awarded with 6 hours of Auditor of State credits. A wealth of information was provided including forecasting for our Water and Sewer over the next 5 years.

The annual ARPA reporting was due April 30, and was issued Friday, April 26. Our scheduled training with SSI has now been completed, however, we continue to work together on the bank reconciliation for April and updating assets. The emailing of the pay stubs has been resolved. When you receive your next pay via email you will be asked for a security code. This code is the last four digits of your social.

Law Director Mr. Webster had no report.

City Treasurer Mrs. Cassady had no report. Mrs. Cassady thanked the City Auditor for taking care of the Treasurers Report in her absence.

### **Communication and Petitions:**

Council President Mr. Martin stated that we have a request for a voice vote to allow Mrs. Dennis to sit on the 911 review committee. Ms. Riffle made a motion to approve Mrs. Dennis to sit on the 911 review committee. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Council President Mr. Martin assigned to the following committee:

Mr. Seebaugh, Parks and Recreation Committee was assigned **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MOTION TO ACCEPT A GRANT FROM THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR \$100,000 DOLLARS AND TO INSTRUCT THE AUDITOR TO CREATE A NEW ACCOUNT FOR SAID FUNDS.**

Mr. Godfrey Planning and Zoning Committee was assigned **AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT CHAPTER 345 TO BE ADDED TO THE BELPRE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES TO REGULATE UTILITY VEHICLES.**

Mr. Ferguson Finance Audit Committee was assigned **A RESOLUTION SUPPLEMENTING YEAR 2024 APPROPRIATIONS.**

### **Reports of Standing Committee**

Mr. Ferguson Finance/Audit Committee reported that his committee met on May 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 pm to discuss the Invoice Cloud Project. Mr. Ferguson made a motion to add to tonight's agenda for first reading **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BELPRE MAYOR AND AUDITOR TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH INVOICE CLOUD INC., TO PROVIDE BILLING SERVICES FOR MONTHLY WATER/SEWER BILLS FOR THE CITY OF BELPRE.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mrs. Dennis, Police and Fire Committee reported that she attended the Pancake Breakfast at the fire house. It was very well attended and was put together for Mother's Day. Flowers were given to local mothers. After their meeting they voted to have two members added to their roster for training. They are Noah VanMeter and Jonathan Carter. Belpre EMS Bryan \_\_\_\_\_ was nominated as the Golden Shield Award Winner for EMS provider. All members of council should have received their monthly EMS Report.

Mrs. Dennis made a motion for a voice vote to add two members to the Belpre Volunteer Fire Department roster. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Locke, Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewer Committee had no report.

Mr. Ambrozy Utilities Committee reported that since our last meeting as the Mayor and Auditor mentioned I attended the Utility Boot Camp in Zanesville. He expressed that it was a very good learning opportunity. I think it will help us in the future. I have also dealt with different issues from three different constituents in my ward. I would like to call a Utilities Committee meeting for Monday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 4:30pm for the purpose of discussing the Utility Capital Projects.

Mr. Seebaugh Parks and Recreation Committee had no report. Mr. Seebaugh was assigned legislation this evening however he was informed by Mr. Webster that it needs acted upon this evening. This has already been put in place. Mr. Seebaugh made a motion to by pass committee and add to tonight's agenda for first, second and third readings **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MOTION TO ACCEPT A GRANT FROM THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR \$100,000.00 DOLLARS AND TO INSTRUCT THE AUDITOR TO CREATE A NEW ACCOUNT FOR SAID FUNDS.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. I will be calling a meeting sometime within the next couple of weeks to discuss the pool.

Mr. Godfrey, Planning and Zoning and Economic Development Committee made a motion to add to tonight's agenda for first reading **AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT CHAPTER 345 TO BE ADDED TO THE BELPRE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES TO REGULATE UTILITY VEHICLES.** A vote was taken with all

members of council present voting aye except for Mrs. Dennis and Mr. Ferguson voting nay. Mr. Godfrey thanked all those in attendance for his committee meetings. I have put a lot of research into this. If I didn't think it would be good, I wouldn't try to get it through.

Ms. Riffle Rules Committee had no report but had a few questions. Ms. Riffle asked if Washington Boulevard would be concreted where they had a water leak. According to the Mayor it would be concreted. The Farmers Market looked to be a success. I would like to congratulate NFL Football. They had another outstanding season. I will be getting with Mr. Godfrey before the next meeting to discuss our next steps on the Moratorium. A lot of it has to do with the zoning. Ms. Riffle asked that her email address be corrected in the law director's office as she is not getting material that is sent from his office. Ms. Riffle asked if we had a park worker yet. According to Mayor Abdella they had hired one this morning.

**PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL - AGENDA items only -**

Jesse Wonycott 805 Main Street addressed the UTV Legislation and is in favor of the legislation.

Phyllis Romine 819 Belrock Avenue also addressed the UTV Legislation and stated that she was against the Side by Sides. She doesn't feel that they are safe.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for first reading **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BELPRE MAYOR AND AUDITOR TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH INVOICE CLOUD INC. TO PROVIDE BILLING SERVICE FOR MONTHLY WATER/SEWER BILLS FOR THE CITY OF BELPRE.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Seebaugh brought before council for first reading **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MOTION TO ACCEPT A GRANT FROM THE OHIO**

**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR \$100,000.00 DOLLARS AND TO INSTRUCT THE AUDITOR TO CREATE A NEW ACCOUNT FOR SAID FUNDS.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Seebaugh moved to suspend the rule of council on three different days to allow for the second and third readings of **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MOTION TO ACCEPT A GRANT FROM THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR \$100,000.00 DOLLARS AND TO INSTRUCT THE AUDITOR TO CREATE A NEW ACCOUNT FOR SAID FUNDS.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Seebaugh brought before council for the second and third readings **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MOTION TO ACCEPT A GRANT FROM THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR \$100,000.00 DOLLARS AND TO INSTRUCT THE AUDITOR TO CREATE A NEW ACCOUNT FOR SAID FUNDS.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Seebaugh moved this be **Resolution #5, 2024-2025** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Godfrey brought before council for first reading **AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT CHAPTER 345 TO BE ADDED TO THE BELPRE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES TO REGULATE UTILITY VEHICLES.** Discussion followed by Mr. Godfrey and said that he would love to go over the resolution with Mrs. Romine. Mrs. Romine was against the legislation. Mr. Godfrey stated that this would only be for first reading. Chief Stump talked briefly about the inspections. There was further discussion on the inspections. The fastest they can go is 35mph. Mrs. Drake asked if there would be restrictions on streets they are allowed to be on. Mr. Godfrey stated that they could not be on highways. A vote was taken with Mr. Godfrey and Mr. Locke voting aye, Mr. Ambrozy, Mrs. Dennis, Mr. Ferguson, Ms. Riffle and Mr. Seebaugh voting nay. The motion failed with 2 for and 5 against.

**PERSON APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL:**



Jackie Cassady announced that Beautify Belpre would be planting on Wednesday morning beginning at 10am.

Ms. Riffle asked if there would be a rain date should it rain. She was informed that they would have a rain date. Mrs. Cassady also stated that she has forms if anyone would like to have one to purchase flowers.

Terry Velligan, General Manager of the Parkersburg Bridge Partners. spoke in regards to the transponders used on the toll bridge and how you should pay. A lot of good information was given.

Ms. Riffle told Mr. Velligan that she was told that you can't pay your bill with cash. According to Mr. Velligan this is correct. Ms. Riffle suggested that it might be helpful if you all can get this information out so patrons have the form of payment that is required to pay their bill. She also stated that in the past there was a contract set up that ambulances or other emergency vehicles could cross the bridge. Do you have a contract with the hospitals with the same type of set-up? According to Mr. Velligan there is a contract that is in place.

Jesse Wonycott 805 Main Street addressed council regarding the Utilities meeting. I just wanted to say that I'm glad that the meeting is being recorded because those that work and can't be present can miss out on valuable information regarding our water bills. I don't like the idea of having to use a credit card to pay my bills and then get a fee for using a credit card. Also, I was out getting signatures on a petition and I went to a gentleman's place of business that would not sign the petition because he was not willing to give his address. When I asked why, I was informed that he does not pay City Income Tax, he never has. I would like to know how you catch up with these kinds of people?

Mayor Abdella informed Mrs. Wonycott that we can contact RITA and get a list of everyone that files Ohio Income Tax and then we can compare the list of those filing Belpre City Income Tax. This will be for those living within the city.

Mrs. Wonycott also asked when we are going to get a Safety-Service Director and also when will the new cities website be available?

Mayor Abdella stated that the bill has been paid and we are updating the website now. Everything has been downloaded from the old one. We are uploading documents that were lost under the old site. When the old system goes down, I have to have the ability when the current website goes down to be able to collect payment for the Utility bills, water survey and water confidence report. As far as the SSD position, I hope to have one soon however there were a lot of unpaid invoices left behind and I'm using that salary to pay the unpaid bills.

Chief Stump announced that it is National Police Week. I would like to mention our Reserve Police Officers that does a lot in our community and the Belpre Volunteer Fire Department. We participated in Operation Blue Sky the other evening. There was a ton of people in attendance. What a feeling it was seeing our Nations Flag flying as we traveled down Lee Street Hill. We took four cruisers up to the parade. It is a time to see those who sacrifice their lives every day and those who have sacrificed and lost their lives in the line of duty. If you see any of these folks this week, give them a hand shake, a hug or whatever and thank them for their services.

Mr. Ferguson made a motion for a voice vote to cancel the May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024 meeting due to it being Memorial Day. Mr. Webster stated that he is not opposed to canceling the meeting however there is legislation that needs passed. Should something happen that everyone can't be in attendance at the next meeting, please get in contact with Council President Mr. Martin so a Special Committee meeting can be called. Our mayor needs this legislation passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

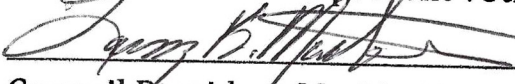
Mr. Ferguson called a Finance/Audit Committee meeting for May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 5:30pm for the purpose of discussing the Supplemental Appropriations. We will need to review the exhibit. There are no new dollars coming in, it is just a shuffle of money.

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Economic Development/Real Estate at 8:49PM. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

President of Council Mr. Martin stated there would be no further action taken once council convenes from the Executive Session.

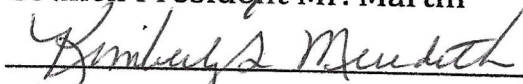
**ADJOURN:**

A motion was made to adjourn ~~at 11:11pm~~ A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.



---

Council President Mr. Martin



---

Clerk of Belpre City Council Mrs. Meredith