

December 11, 2023

Council President Mr. Martin called the December 11, 2023 Belpre City Council meeting to order at 7:31pm. 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, City Auditor Mrs. Nolan, City Law Director Mr. Webster, Treasurer Mrs. Cassady and Clerk of Council Mrs. Meredith. Absent from the December 11, 2023 meeting was Safety-Service Director Mrs. Hoblitzell.

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.

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 rise, 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 for the November 13, 2023 minutes. Ms. Abdella made a motion to accept the November 13, 2023 minutes as presented and by-pass the reading. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

President of Council Mr. Martin asked for a motion for the November 27, 2023 minutes. Mr. Ferguson made a motion to accept the November 27, 2023 minutes 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 announced to council that we have two recruits for the Volunteer Fire Department. I will need a voice approval to add them to our roster. Thomas Price and James Mason III are the two to be approved.

Last Thursday we met on the hill to do a walk through with the tank people. No issues at this time were noted.

This Thursday we meet with the Commissioners to discuss the PFAS Settlement and what it means to Washington County.

On Thursday, the Chamber of Commerce and I held a ribbon cutting for a new business. New Way Flooring is now open on Washington Boulevard and Middle Street.

Last Friday afternoon I received a call from ODOD stating that we were successful in acquiring the \$100,000.00 I had asked for to refurbish Civitan Park Pond. Today we received word that \$850,000.00 additional was also in play.

Chief Stump is with us tonight with his yearly report from the Police Department. Chief Stump gave his report and upon completion introduced the newest canine to the department. Officer Campbell brought Kuley to the front and introduced him to all present. Kuley is from Germany and is 2 ½ years old.

It has been my privilege and honor to have served as Mayor for these past years. My hope is that my wife Joyce and I have made some small difference in our hometown. We both love where we live and all the people that call Belpre home. As we enter a new chapter in life, please know that we are still here to serve if called but, we have four Grandchildren that are going to get a lot of spoiling in the next few years.

I will leave the incoming administration 3 times the carryover we started with. The city has the strongest leadership team ever, not only to maintain the city but to keep us safe.

Again, thank you Belpre for your support and with Gods help we can continue to grow and be an even more successful than ever.

Erin Stevens from SOPEC congratulated and thanked the City of Belpre with a check for the pool. It has been estimated that there has been a quarter of a million dollars savings.

Safety-Service Director Mrs. Hoblitzell was absent. No report was given in her absence.

City Auditor Mrs. Nolan announced that the President of Council Mr. Martin reviewed and signed August, September, October, and November bank reconciliations Friday, December 8, 2023.

The 2022 Audit remains under review. Wednesday, December 6, I received a request for additional information from the State Auditor. We have been gathering and sending via PDF. She will be on site, December 19 to finish up pending items.

The November Utility Adjustment Report was emailed to Council Thursday, December 7, copies are on the back table and needs Councils approval.

Ms. Abdella made a motion to accept the November Utility Adjustment Report as presented. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

City Law Director had no report however he stated that the Urban Forestry Grant is before you tonight and deadlines must be met. Mr. Webster also announced that his State of the City Address would be presented the second meeting in January.

City Treasurer Mrs. Cassady announced that before you this evening is the October and November Treasurers Report that needs council approval. Copies are online and on the back table for review. Mr. Ferguson made a motion to accept the October's Treasurer's Report as presented. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. Mr. Ferguson made a motion to accept the November's Treasurer's Report as presented. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Communication and Petitions:

At this time, Ms. Abdella made a motion to go into Executive Session at 7:57pm for the purpose of discussing pending litigation. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. Mr. Martin stated that once council resumes from Executive Session the regular council meeting would continue.

Ms. Abdella made a motion to resume to the regular council meeting at 8:33pm. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Reports of Standing Committee

Mr. Ferguson Finance/Audit Committee made a motion to add to tonight's agenda for first reading **AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE PLAN OF OPERATION AND GOVERNANCE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL ("SOPEC") NATURAL GAS AGGREGATION PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF JOINTLY ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING A NATURAL GAS AGGREGATION PROGRAM, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** Per Erin Stevens you must shop the price to save money. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mrs. Dennis, Police and Fire Committee had no report. Mrs. Dennis stated that at this time Mario Coon is present to give the EMS Report. Mr. Coon stated that in the month of November we answered and responded to 117 calls. He is looking forward to the end of year metrics.

Ms. Abdella, Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewer Committee addressed and explained the **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPLICATION TO THE INFLATION REDUCING ACT (IRA) URBAN FORESTRY GRANT THROUGH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to add to tonight's agenda for first reading **A RESOLUTION SUPPLEMENTING 2023 APPROPRIATIONS.** Discussion followed. A vote was taken with Mrs. Dennis and Mr. Ferguson voting for the supplemental and

Mr. McClead, Mr. Millhone, Mr. Null, Ms. Abdella, and Mr. Wallace voting nay. The motion failed 2-5.

Mr. Millhone Utilities Committee addressed the SOPEC Aggregation and how much it saves. He was informed that it has saved a quarter of a million dollars. Mr. Millhone also stated that the curb cut where Spires Car Lot was located has finally been completed however it should have been completed in July.

Mr. McClead Parks and Recreation Committee had no report.

Mr. Wallace Planning and Zoning /Economic Development committee had no report.

Mr. Null Rules Committee spoke about Save the Kitty Program.

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL – AGENDA items only: none

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Ms. Abdella brought before council for third reading **AN ORDINANCE PROHIBITING CAMPING AND CREATING BELPRE CODE ORDINANCE SECTION 541.12.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Ms. Abdella moved this be **Ordinance #16, 2022-2023** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Wallace brought before council for third reading **AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE A 4.05 ACRE TRACT ON LEE STREET OWNED BY DAVID D JOHNSON FROM R-2 TO C-2.** Discussion followed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye except for Mr. Millhone who voted nay.

Mr. Wallace moved this be **Ordinance #17, 2022-2023** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye except for Mr. Millhone who voted nay.

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for third reading **TEMPORARY APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR CALENDAR AND FISCAL YEAR 2024.** Mr. Ferguson thanked Mrs. Nolan for providing him with a clean copy of the Temporary Appropriations. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson moved this be **Ordinance #18, 2022-2023** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for first reading **AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE PLAN OF OPERATION AND GOVERNANCE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL ("SOPEC") NATURAL GAS AGGREGATION PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF JOINTLY ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING A NATURAL GAS AGGREGATION PROGRAM, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to suspend the rule of council on three different days to allow for the second and third readings of **AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE PLAN OF OPERATION AND GOVERNANCE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL ("SOPEC") NATURAL GAS AGGREGATION PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF JOINTLY ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING A NATURAL GAS AGGREGATION PROGRAM, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

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Mr. Ferguson moved this be **Ordinance #19, 2022-2023** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Ms. Abdella brought before council for first reading **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPLICATION TO THE INFLATION REDUCING ACT (IRA) URBAN FORESTRY GRANT THROUGH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES.**

Ms. Abdella made a motion to amend the Urban Forestry Grant to change visitors of Stockport to visitors of Belpre. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Ms. Abdella brought before council for first reading **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPLICATION TO THE INFLATION REDUCING ACT (IRA) URBAN FORESTRY GRANT THROUGH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES as amended.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Ms. Abdella made a motion to suspend the rule of council on three different days to allow for the second and third readings of **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPLICATION TO THE INFLATION REDUCING ACT (IRA) URBAN FORESTRY GRANT THROUGH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES as amended.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Ms. Abdella made a motion for the second and third readings of **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPLICATION TO THE INFLATION REDUCING ACT (IRA) URBAN FORESTRY GRANT THROUGH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES as amended**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye except for Mr. Null who voted nay.

Ms. Abdella moved this be **Resolution #41, 2022-2023** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

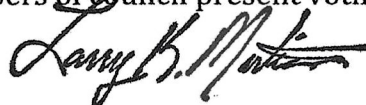
PERSON APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL:

Josh Merrill 620 Phillips Street, Belpre addressed council regarding the use of cellphones while driving, cats scratching vehicles, speed limit signs and he would like to see curfews for children within the city.

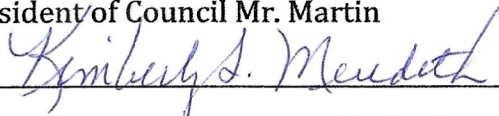
Jesse Wonycott 805 Main Street, Belpre asked that the citizens to be provided with a copy of what the different funds on the Treasurer's Report are used for. She also asked that the Committee Meeting be aired. Also, she mentioned before council that Amazon boxes are being stolen from people's porches after a delivery is made. She stated that there is an Enforcement Letter in the Code Book 559.01-559.05.

ADJOURN:

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to adjourn at 9:12 pm. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.



President of Council Mr. Martin



Clerk of Belpre City Council Kimberly Meredith