

August 26, 2024

Council President Mr. Martin called the August 26, 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. Locke and Mr. Seebaugh present. Also present was Mayor Abdella, Safety-Service Director Mr. Kirby, City Auditor Mrs. Nolan, City Law Director Mr. Webster, and Treasurer Mrs. Cassady. Absent from the meeting was Mr. Godfrey and Clerk of Council Mrs. Meredith.

Council President Mr. Martin asked everyone to please rise for the Prayer and remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance. Mrs. Nolan 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 August 12, 2024 minutes. Mrs. Dennis made a motion to accept the minutes of August 12, 2024 as presented 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:

Communications:

• Please Welcome Joe Kirby as the Temporary SSD, he has hit the ground running this past week. Please try and support him.

- We have a retirement this week: Leonard Wiggins will be retiring after 32 years with the city. Please wish him well when you see him. We will be celebrating with Leonard at lunchtime on Friday if you would like to stop by and wish him well.

- We have 3 new hires two at the sewer plant and one in street dept.

 - o Sewer - Andrew Haynes and Scott Cogar

 - o Street – Tyler Mollendick

- We received the checks from the Belpre Area Community Foundation.

- Please complete the auditor of state training before Sept 1, 2024 All City employees and volunteers must complete the Fraud Training.

- You will start to see marketing materials very soon for the new Utility billing module that is going live in October. This information will be posted on the website, Facebook and here at the city building.

- Please be extremely cautious with flames in this very dry weather. We are seeing an increase in brush fires.

Well 2 Rehab - Engineering on this project is about complete and the bidding process will begin.

Water Tower: We are starting the loan documents this week for the completion of the tower.

Park Plan – Structure Point - We have had 228 responses to the online survey. We have had some really great ideas to incorporate into the plan. We will be holding focus groups with the firm that we contracted with to complete the plan. If anyone would like to participate in any of the focus groups please contact us through the Facebook page direct messenger. We will have 4 times to meet with the team and one is in the evening. These meetings will be taking place September 5, 2024

Street: Tonight, you will be reviewing the roads that we would like to repave in 2025, the cost and funding structure.

Water: The water dept continues to work to meet the needs of the community while being short staffed.

Lead Service Lines – The water department continues to work on the exploration of the lines to determine materials in the areas. We are focused on Lee Street east to Florence. Trying to meet the deadline for the EPA.

Ms. Riffle asked if the new employees for the sewer department were certified. Ms. Abdella stated that they were all new and they have up to 18 months to become certified. We asked them to participate up to Level 2 so that we will have Class II operators. We will still have the Class III operator.

President of Council Mr. Martin asked how the Lead Line Survey was coming. According to Mayor Abdella it was very poor.

Safety-Service Director Kirby announced that I have been observing Code Enforcement Officer Leonard Wiggins for the past week, August 19th – 23rd to learn the process of his job duties. We responded to a few different locations on complaints and additional follow-up on some of his prior calls.

Street Department Foreman, Chris Barringer, took me to see where the new water tower will be constructed. He took me to the wastewater pond and explained how the process works.

I met with Water Department Foreman, Clint Sayre along with Sewer Department Senior Operator, Craig Barker to have introduction conversation.

On Friday August 23rd, Mayor Abdella, Street Department Foreman, Chris Barringer, Councilman Bill Locke, Mrs. Nolan and myself had a zoom meeting with the Ohio Public Works Commission via zoom, in reference to discussion about the streets.

On Monday August 26th, Mayor Abdella, Code Enforcement Officer Leonard Wiggins, Street Department Foreman, Chris Barringer, and myself met with the Variance Committee about the new hospital expansion.

City Auditor Mrs. Nolan reported that on Wednesday, August 14, was spent with the traveling Clerk, Melanie. We worked on reviewing the multiple pages within the Water Tank Loan application. She will be returning Thursday, August 29 to review our Accounts Payable's. Tuesday, August 20, 2024 we received the \$10,000.00 H2O Grant. A thank you to the Belpre Area Community Development for two checks received Wednesday, August 21, 2024. \$10,694.00 for the Police Departments Armory and Tasers and \$10,000.00 for our Comprehensive Park Plan. Friday AM, August 23, I was included in the meeting with EDG regarding the Street Paving projects. The Asset tagging project will be completed as soon as I receive 3 tags from the Fire Dept. I will provide a list to Council for review once those are received and entered into VIP. The July Utility Adjustment Report was emailed to Council Thursday, August 22, 2024, and needs Councils approval. President of Council asked for discussion.

Mr. Locke counted 111 water shut off's this month. Mr. Locke stated that last month there were 90 shut offs. Mr. Ferguson made a motion to accept the Utility Adjustment Report for July 2024. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

City Law Director Mr. Webster stated that I just got back from vacation and I have been reviewing emails. There were several emails from the Auditor's Office especially one that has been raised by the Police Retirement Program and the different ways that pensions have been reported for employees over the years. I'm preparing legislation for the first meeting in September to correct that situation. The auditor advised me today that it was due to the way the numbers were computed. The State never picked up on it because they only received the Annual Report at the end of the year. We have to be sure that it is correctly credited per pay for bookkeeping purposes. The State has dispositions for not fining us because of this. There's going to be a request from the Treasurer for a correction on the June Treasurer's Report on the reconciliation.

Ms. Riffle stated that the correction is more of an administration issue rather than financial. According to Mr. Webster she was correct. The amount has been correct all along but it has not been shown that way. Our last legislation was in 2002. There is no more annual input.

City Treasurer Mrs. Cassady has a copy of the amended June's Treasurer's Report. Mr. Ferguson stated that the increases of year to date are not the same. According to Mrs. Nolan the last report sent to council was the correct report. There was no motion to accept the June 2024 amended report. Council has also received the July Treasurer's Report that needs approved. Mr. Ferguson asked if we are going to get a standardized report soon. We have been working with three different reports for several months. Mrs. Nolan stated that the one you have in your hand is the VIP analectic portion that we just finished the training. This is the one that is most like the one that we have used in the past. Mr. Ferguson asked about the Union Dues. Is this still hanging out there? Mrs. Nolan stated that it was and she was in hopes it would be okay when the next report was run.

Mayor Abdella suggested that the Finance Committee schedule a time that we can sit down together in the conference room where we can look at the screen and develop the report so we can get the final report the way we want it so we all know where the figures are coming from. President of Council Mr. Martin stated that this would have to be called as a committee meeting. One or two would be great to be up to speed. Mr. Ferguson called a committee meeting for September 3rd, 2024 at 6:30pm to review the Treasurer's Report to try and condense the report.

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to table the June 2024 and the July 2024 Treasurer's Report until after the September 3rd committee meeting. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Communication and Petitions:

President of Council Mr. Martin went over the committee referral list to see what needed to be removed from the list and what needed to remain.

President of Council Mr. Martin stated that when he came in this evening the Marietta/Belpre Health Board was set up over in the city office and they were set up to do inoculations for the school children. I asked them how many they had come through and they said none. We need to do better as a city to get the information out so if citizens want to use this service they can. Mayor Abdella stated that the schools were notified. According to the Ohio Revised Code we are required to offer to the citizens. If they want to participate, they can but are not required to. Mr. Webster stated that last September they had a

drive through influenza shot and I believe they are planning to have it again this fall. Ms. Riffle stated that they had a flyer sent out about that also. It was available at the Senior Center. Carl Nelson 115 Elm Street, Mike Aquino 119 Elm Street, Karen Locke 726 Tuttle Street gave their opinion about the inoculations.

Mr. Locke stated that they will give you a shot on a golf cart.

Reports of Standing Committee

Mr. Ferguson Finance/Audit Committee reported that his committee met this evening to review the tax budget. **RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE AMOUNTS AND RATES AS DETERMINED BY THE BUDGET COMMISSION AND AUTHORIZING THE NECESSARY TAX LEVIES AND CERTIFYING THEM TO THE COUNTY AUDITOR** does appear on this evening's agenda. Mr. Ferguson called a committee meeting for September 3rd, at 6:30pm for the purpose of reviewing the Treasurer's Report for June and July.

Mrs. Dennis, Police and Fire Committee had no report. Mrs. Dennis stated that she has been working on the website and all agendas, minutes, resolutions and ordinances have been updated on the city's website for 2022-2023 and 2024-2025. Mrs. Dennis stated that any events within the city can be shared on the city's website.

Mr. Locke, Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewer Committee announced that his committee met prior to council meeting at 6:45 pm August 26, 2024 to discuss paving in the city.

Information was shared with committee members & other council members pertaining to funding/financing of selected streets in Belpre.

I met with Mayor Abdella, SSD Joe Kirby, Street supervisor Chris Barrenger August 23, 2024 & Jeff Carr & Mike Spade [with EDG] with information on grants & loans available to Belpre for funding on paving. Considerable discussion about the availability of this funding. Belpre hasn't much money available to pave very much. Generally, we use the permissive funds available to us [approx. \$25,000 a year] there are several streets in Belpre in serious need of repair.

Committee approved advancing a resolution permitting the mayor to move forward & participate in applying to OPWC seeking funding for these projects.

Mr. Locke stated that **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF BELPRE TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND/OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM(S) AND TO EXECUTE CONTRACTS AS REQUIRED** does appear on the agenda this evening.

Mr. Ambrozy Utilities Committee reported that his committee met on August 19th, 2024 at 7:00pm for the purpose of first reading on **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING WATER RATES** and **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING SEWER RATES**. Mr. Abrozy called another Special Council Meeting on September 3rd, 2024 at 6pm for the third reading of both **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING WATER RATES** and **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING SEWER RATES**.

Mr. Seebaugh Parks and Recreation Committee had no report. Mr. Seebaugh said he was down at the park walking around and there was a young boy who caught a catfish and he was so excited. He was so happy beyond belief.

Mr. Godfrey, Planning and Zoning and Economic Development Committee was absent. No report was given in his absence.

Ms. Riffle Rules Committee had no report. I hope to bring before council at the next meeting the Codified Ordinances as well as the Policy Manual.

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL - AGENDA items only -

Jesse Wyncott wanted to be sure we are all on the same page regarding water and sewer rates.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Mr. Seebaugh brought before council for third reading **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING BELPRE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTIONS 541.10(a), 7431.03 and 961.08 IN REGARD TO THE DISPLAY OF SIGNS ON PUBLIC**

AND PRIVATE PROPERTY WITHIN THE CITY OF BELPRE, OHIO. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Seebaugh moved this be **Ordinance #7, 2024-2025** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ambrozy brought before council for second reading **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING WATER RATES.** However, Mr. Ambrozy made a motion to amend the exhibit because the initial exhibit increased the base rate and not the consumption rate. The new exhibit increases both the base rate and the consumption rate. This does not change the residential customers inside the city. It just changes the consumption rate for the other three categories: Residential outside and commercial inside and outside. Mr. Locke stated that it was \$2.32, would that take it to \$2.39? Depends on the percent increase. The residential customer outside their base rate increased by 100% therefore their consumption rate would go from \$2.32 to \$4.64. Commercial inside only increases by 50%. It was \$3.48 and commercial outside would go to \$3.48. A vote was taken to amend the legislation with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ambrozy brought before council for second reading **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING WATER RATES** as amended. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. This will lie over until the next meeting of council. Mr. Ambrozy announced that the third reading would be held on September 3, 2024 at 6pm in a Special Council meeting.

Mr. Webster stated that these two pieces of legislation for water and sewer rates can only be discussed at that meeting.

Mr. Ambrozy brought before council for second reading **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING SEWER RATES.** Mr. Ferguson stated that the water rates would change October 1, 2024 and the sewer rates would change in 2025. This will lie over until the September 3, 2024 Special Council meeting at 6pm.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for first reading **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF BELPRE TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT AND ENTER INTO A WATER SUPPLY REVOLVING LOAN ACCOUNT (WSRLA) AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF BELPRE, OHIO, FOR PLANNING DESIGN AND/OR CONSTRUCTION OF WATER FACILITIES AND DESIGNATING A DEDICATED REPAYMENT SOURCE FOR THE LOAN.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson 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 TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT AND ENTER INTO A WATER SUPPLY REVOLVING LOAN ACCOUNT (WSRLA) AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF BELPRE, OHIO, FOR PLANNING DESIGN AND/OR CONSTRUCTION OF WATER FACILITIES AND DESIGNATING A DEDICATED REPAYMENT SOURCE FOR THE LOAN.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for second and third reading of **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF BELPRE TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT AND ENTER INTO A WATER SUPPLY REVOLVING LOAN ACCOUNT (WSRLA) AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF BELPRE, OHIO, FOR PLANNING DESIGN AND/OR CONSTRUCTION OF WATER FACILITIES AND DESIGNATING A DEDICATED REPAYMENT SOURCE FOR THE LOAN.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson moved this be **Resolution 12, 2024-2025** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Locke brought before council for first reading **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF BELPRE TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND/OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM(S) AND TO EXECUTE**

CONTRACTS AS REQUIRED. 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 TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND/OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM(S) AND TO EXECUTE CONTRACTS AS REQUIRED.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Locke brought before council for second and third readings of **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF BELPRE TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND/OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM(S) AND TO EXECUTE CONTRACTS AS REQUIRED.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Locke moved this be **Resolution 13, 2024-2025** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for first reading **RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE AMOUNTS AND RATES AS DETERMINED BY THE BUDGET COMMISSION AND AUTHORIZING THE NECESSARY TAX LEVIES AND CERTIFYING THEM TO THE COUNTY AUDITOR.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. This will lie over until the next meeting of council when our clerk returns.

President of Council Mr. Martin reminded council that when legislation is added it must go through the committee before being added to the agenda. If the committee chooses to add to the agenda, they can at that evening's meeting.

PERSON APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL:

Mike Aquino 119 Elm Street addressed two vehicles parked in front of our home. One vehicle hasn't been moved in two years and the other one in a year. I'm assuming they are inoperable since they haven't been moved. Mr. Aquino was informed by the gentleman owning the vehicles that he is not moving them because he knows it pisses him off.

President of Council Mr. Martin stated that this is an administrative issue.

Mayor Abdella stated that Mr. Wiggins has been down there. Both vehicles have updated license, tires are not flat therefore I assume they are operable. The city ordinance states they have to be inoperable vehicles in order to move. Mr. Aquino stated that this is why we are here. The question came up as to how we can change the ordinance that the vehicle has to be moved every 72 hours. We are talking about it and what we can do. We don't have a meter made that goes around. Our challenge is how do we enforce it. Mr. Locke stated that the City of Marietta has legislation in place but I don't know how they enforce it and how many tickets they write. I can call an inquire about it. Our property value is going down.

Mr. Webster stated that if you put in a 72-hour provision then you are going to have to prove that the vehicle was or was not moved within that time. You have to have proof. There might be legislation from other jurisdictions that we can take a look at.

Mr. Aquino stated that it is leaking oil in the storm sewers. Mr. Aquino to give the Safety Service Director a photo showing the oil leak.

Carl Nelson 115 Elm Street also addressed the park car issue on Elm Street. Mrs. Aquino has bad knees and is unable to park in the handicap spot. I'm disturbed with our police department for not enforcing the law.

Mr. Locke asked Mr. Nelson if someone can park a car between the two parked cars. Mr. Nelson stated that someone can park a car between it.

Mr. Ambrozy stated that this isn't right. We need to change the ordinance so we can deal with the legislation.

President of Council Mr. Martin stated that if you change the ordinance then you better have the manpower to enforce it.

Mr. Webster stated that you can't have 100% enforcement when we don't have the manpower. They have to decide what should be enforced for the safety of the citizens. I'm not opposed to taking a look at legislation. Mr. Ambrozy stated that why put the legislation in place if we're not going to enforce it.

Mary Kay Aquino 119 Elm Street stated that 2 years ago I was here for the same thing. I was back 6 months ago and nothing has been done. The gentleman has a garage that he could put the vehicles in. I parked to close to a fire hydrant, boom I got a ticket. Also, the police were called on me because of parking to close to the sidewalk. Mrs. Aquino stated that she is just frustrated with the situation.

Jesse Wonycott 805 Main Street discussed ~~SCATA~~^{SCADA} on the Budget. The 2023 money did not get spent. Mayor Abdella stated they ordered parts in 2023 but they didn't come in until 2024 and had to be paid. When the two board comes in we must get them up and running because we are running them manually. We have to get them up and running in the sewer plant. Mrs. Wonycott asked what a water model is. Mayor Abdella stated that a water model is something that goes out, checks all the lines and determines the highs and lows. Mrs. Wonycott addressed grants that are available and she is willing to pass them along. There was a committee assignment assigned in June 2024 regarding where funding is coming from. Mrs. Wonycott asked about the moratorium legislation. Ms. Riffle stated that she has the paperwork and as soon as she gets the legislation, she will probably have to run for all three readings.

Bob Rauch addressed grass fires by the railroad. Mayor Abdella stated that they have talked to VIP, requesting spraying earlier in the season. We are trying to mitigate the problem. Gentleman at the last meeting brought up the integrity of the zoning board. I wanted to state that I do not tell people how to vote, they make their own decision.

Mr. Locke stated that VIP is starting to trim the trees from Maple Street to Campus Drive.

Lynn Nelson 115 Elm Street asked what the next steps are in regards to these cars. President of Council Mr. Martin stated at this time it is an administrative issue. There isn't anything that can be done until they take a look at it. If they decide to change it then they will bring before council. Mrs. Nelson asked who should I follow-up within the administration. Google Search stated that if it is in plain site someone needs to do something about it. Mayor Abdella stated that she can take out the handicap sign. I'm not sure why it was put there in the first place. Ms. Riffle stated that it is going to take some time. Mr. Webster stated that he will ask his son who is the City Prosecutor to research inoperable vehicles. We may have to get a court order to get them to turn it on, then it become operable. She wanted to know when she should follow-up. Mr. Webster told her he couldn't answer that question because he didn't know how long it would take to research. Can you not ask him to move his vehicle to the garage? I can ask the police officer to do that but I can't tell him how to do his job.

Safety-Service Director Mr. Kirby stated that I'm not saying you are asking to much however if there are other vehicles on other streets what do we do then?

Mrs. Aquino stated that this is why we are asking for this to be changed.

Mr. Webster presented a hypothetical question to her. How do you monitor the situation?

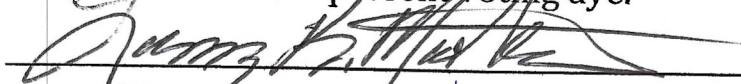
Carl Nelson 115 Elm Street stated that asking someone to turn on a vehicle is not much to ask. What you are saying to us is that if you have 3 vehicles speeding down Washington Boulevard how do you know who to pull over?

Mr. Locke made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Locke resent his motion.

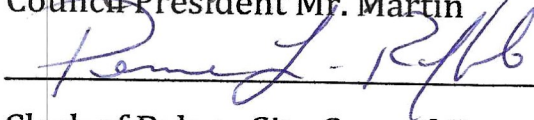
Mr. Locke made a motion to excuse Mr. Godfrey from this evening's meeting. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye

Adjourn:

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to adjourn at 8:39pm. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.



Council President Mr. Martin



Clerk of Belpre City Council Protem Ms. Riffle