

November 11, 2024

Council President Mr. Martin called the November 11, 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 was Mayor Abdella, City Auditor Mrs. Nolan, City Law Director Mr. Webster, Treasurer Mrs. Cassady and Clerk of Council Mrs. Meredith. Absent from the November 11, 2024 meeting was Safety-Service Director Kirby.

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 rise, 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 October 28, 2024 minutes. Mr. Ferguson made a motion to accept the minutes of October 28, 2024 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 Abdella presented her report before council. It is as follows:

On the back of my report is a Veterans Day 2024 Proclamation signed this November 11, 2024, by Thomas T. Joyce, Mayor City of Parkersburg, Paul Jordan, Mayor City of Williamstown, Susan Abdella, Mayor City of Belpre, Josh Schlicher, Mayor City of Marietta and Randall C. Rapp, Mayor City of Vienna.

Communications:

This has been a very busy two weeks. We continue to work on the 2025 Budget as well as the supplemental appropriations you will be receiving this evening.

I attended the ODOT Ohio Local Public Agency Day in Athens that discussed Road and various projects. This included time lines, opportunities and resources available. I know why we pay engineers and attorneys.

The Safety Service Director and I attended the Funding Conference at Salt Fork to learn about grant opportunities that may be beneficial to the community.

I attended the County OPWC meeting where our paving project was awarded enough points to move to the next round of selection. This is very exciting to us. Points are given to communities. If the communities are below 455, they did not get funded. We received 75 points for our projects.

As a Board member of the Washington Morgan County Community Action, I attended the board training to learn more about all the wonderful projects occurring in our area. Community Action is having trouble getting birth certificates.

On Friday Jeff Carr was here for our monthly meeting and we discussed the status of our outstanding projects:

- SCADA System for all Lift and Booster Stations to communicate with the plants.
- OPWC Road Paving
- Lead Service Line Inventory
- 10" Water Main Extension
- WWTP project – Discussion of needs. Waste Water Treatment Project
- Well 2 Rehab
 - Survey Complete
- Water Tank Bidding and Construction
 - Bidding Jan 1 to February 1
 - Loan Award March 2025
 - Construction March 2025 to March 2026

Staff have been having some lamGIS training in an effort to better utilize our mapping software.

The SSD and Police Chief have been meeting with Centralized 911 consultants to answer their final questions.

Our First shipment of trees has arrived from the ODNR grant. We will be having a planting day soon. We will be needing all the help we can get.

Also, the City Surplus auction is tomorrow at 1pm at the impound yard.

We are very excited that we have chosen some accessible/inclusive items for the park from a partnership with the Washington County Board of Developmental Disabilities. There is a musical area for children with disabilities. This is not the Hattie Fund.

We had a Ribbon Cutting at the DIVA Sisters Holiday Shop. What a wonderful destination store. If you get the opportunity to stop in this season DO IT!!

The City Christmas Dinner will be on December 14th. We will provide you more details as time approaches.

Mr. Locke stated that he saw where the county is passing out monies to demolish vacant structures. Mayor Abdella stated that it is actually the Port Authority that is going to be overseeing this round of blighted properties. We have two or three properties that they are looking at. Mr. Webster stated that the article wasn't completely informative in that the applications are there and being considered for which ones they are going to actually fund. After the first of the year the money will be distributed. After the first of the year if all the money is distributed the one on the top of list will get funded however there are two others that are lower on the list, that will eventually get funded, if all of it gets approved after another round of it being examined by the Department of Development. Mayor Abdella stated that she has another citizen that has property that needs to be demolished. They have to have a clear title and must be vacant for 90 days. Mr. Webster stated that the three properties were published in the paper however one of the properties was already demolished and the property is for sale. Mr. Webster stated that there may be some additional monies for additional demolition.

Safety-Service Director was absent. Mayor Abdella stated that the Safety-Service Director and the Code Enforcement Officer will be spending two days at Hocking College with the Southeastern Ohio Code Enforcement Officers. They are working on some regional legislation and different things for some overall changes. They are making some impact at the State level. Mr. Kirby and Brandon will be part of the group to help move the Appalachians forward.

City Auditor Mrs. Nolan reported that on Tuesday, November 5, 2024 President Martin reviewed and approved Bank Reconciliations for January 2024 – September 2024. Per the State Auditor's 2022 audit recommendation, Finance Chairman Ferguson, also, reviewed and approved bank reconciliations for January 2024 – September 2024 on Wednesday, November 6. Mayor and I continue working the 2025 Budget. June 25, 2024 a Request for Fund Approval was sent to the Auditor of State along with Resolution #9 to create funds for Water Storage Tank Facility \$4.00 fee and Water Supply System \$2.00 fee. On September 13, 2024 we received approval from AOS to create both funds. Funds 5605 \$4.00 fee and 5606 \$2.00 were established. A transfer from 5602 to 5605 and 5606 are on the November 2024 Supplemental. A voice vote from Council is being requested to transfer \$422,761.12 out of 5602 to 5605 and \$211,169.62 out of 5602 to 5606. These were the totals from January 1, 2022 beginning date thru the end of September 2024 as reflected on the monthly Treasurer's Reports.

Mr. Ferguson made a motion for a voice vote to move the transfer of \$422,761.12 out of 5602 to 5605 and \$211,169.62 out of 5602 to 5606. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Council President Mr. Martin reminded everyone that if you are giving a report to be sure the clerk gets a copy of the report.

City Law Director Mr. Webster had no report.

City Treasurer Mrs. Cassady had no report.

Communication and Petitions: -

Council President Mr. Martin assigned the following legislation to committee:

Mr. Godfrey – Planning & Zoning Committee was assigned vacating alley east of the intersection of Washington Boulevard and Walnut Street.

Mr. Locke – Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewer was assigned Preliminary Legislation regarding sign repair on Rt. 7.

Mr. Ferguson – Finance/Audit Committee was assigned 2024 Supplemental Appropriations and Temporary Appropriations.

Ms. Riffle – Rules Committee was assigned Belpre City Code of Ordinance.

Reports of Standing Committee

Mr. Ferguson Finance/Audit Committee cancelled the following Finance/Audit Committee meetings that were scheduled: November 18, 2024 at 4:30pm; November 25, 2024 at 6:15pm; December 02, 2024 at 4:30pm; December 09, 2024 at 6:15pm; and December 16, 2024 at 6:15pm to review the 2025 Budget. Mr. Ferguson reported that his committee met at 6:15pm prior to this evening's meeting to review the Temporary Appropriations for Calendar and Fiscal Year 2025. Mr. Ferguson made a motion to add this to

tonight's agenda for first reading **TEMPORARY APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR CALENDAR AND FISCAL YEAR 2025**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. Mr. Ferguson also made a motion to add to tonight's agenda for first reading **RESOLUTION SUPPLEMENTING YEAR 2024 APPROPRIATION**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Council President Mr. Martin thanked Mr. Ferguson and all those involved for getting the Temporary Appropriation Ordinance for 2025 completed in a timely manner.

Mrs. Dennis, Police and Fire *Committee had no report. Mrs. Dennis extended an invite to all members of council. Artsbridge was recognized for being the Chamber of Commerce Non-profit for the Year winner and also the Grand Opening of Artsbridge new location. The Grand Opening is from 4-6pm tomorrow evening.*

Mr. Locke, Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewer Committee had no report. Mr. Locke made a motion to by-pass committee and add to tonight's agenda for first reading **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BELPRE TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH MATHENY MOTOR TRUCK TO PURCHASE A 2024-2025 HINO L7 TRUCK ALLISON 3500 RDS**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ambrozy Utilities Committee had no report. Mr. Ambrozy stated that he was contacted by a constitute on Elizabeth Street with a concern that the person had. I spoke with the individual today. It looks like it will be resolved soon but we will continue to monitor.

Mr. Seebaugh Parks and Recreation Committee had no report. Belpre Soccer Club has finished up for the season so if anyone wants to go to Wendy's or Burger King on Saturday, please feel free to do as they are open for business. Also, the Youth Baseball League at Civitan Park reached out to the club because they saw our success so they are wanting to jump on board. I will be looking at that as well. I will be looking at their operations and acting as a consultant. We are going to try and revive their league a little better.

Mr. Godfrey, Planning and Zoning and Economic Development Committee announced that we are going to have a public meeting prior to the next council meeting November 25th, at 7:00pm for the purpose of **AN ORDINANCE PARTIALLY VACATING AN ALLEY LOCATED TO THE EAST OF THE INTERSECTION OF WASHINGTON BOULEVARD AND WALNUT STREET**. The public is invited to attend. Other than that I have no report.

Ms. Riffle Rules Committee had no report. Ms. Riffle asked to take a look at the Council Committee Referrals Awaiting Action. Ms. Riffle requested that under the Rules Committee Transition for City Officials be tabled until next year, Belpre Policy Manual had a few changes. I'm in hopes of getting that tomorrow and ask that it be ready for the next meeting of council. Mr. Webster stated that it has already been drafted. She also asked that the Codified Ordinance legislation be drafted. Ms. Riffle made a motion to by-pass committee and add to this evening's meeting **AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND BELPRE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTIONS 131.01©, 133.01(d), 137.01©139.01©, 141.01(d), 121.02(a)(2) and 121.02(b)(2) for calendar year 2025**. This is to initiate a wage freeze on elected officials. Mayor Abdella asked if this needed to be added to each section. According to Mr. Webster it did need to be added to each section. Mr. Webster stated that this is only effective until December 31, 2025. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL – AGENDA items only - none

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for second reading **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING AUTHORIZED MANPOWER FOR CALENDAR YEARS 2024-2025**. 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 third reading of **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING AUTHORIZED MANPOWER FOR CALENDAR YEARS 2024-2025**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson placed before council for the third reading **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING AUTHORIZED MANPOWER FOR CALENDAR YEARS 2024-2025**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson moved this be **Ordinance 13, 2024-2025** 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 **TEMPORARY APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR CALENDAR AND FISCAL YEAR 2025**. 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 **TEMPORARY APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR CALENDAR AND FISCAL YEAR 2025**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson placed before council for the second and third readings **TEMPORARY APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR CALENDAR AND FISCAL YEAR 2025**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson moved this be **Ordinance #14, 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 SUPPLEMENTING YEAR 2024 APPROPRIATIONS**. Mr. Ferguson explained the funding. 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 **RESOLUTION SUPPLEMENTING YEAR 2024 APPROPRIATIONS**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson placed before council for the second and third readings **RESOLUTION SUPPLEMENTING YEAR 2024 APPROPRIATIONS**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson moved this be **Resolution 17, 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 **RESOLUTION FOR SIGN REPAIR ON ROUTE 7**. Ms. Riffle noted that the legislation didn't have a title, and the body of the legislation referred to State Route 32, not Rt. 7, was that okay? Per Mr. Webster the legislation came to us from ODOT with no title other than Preliminary Legislation. We titled it **RESOLUTION FOR SIGN REPAIR ON ROUTE 7**, which is fine.

Mayor Abdella stated that this piece of legislation came to her last week from ODOT. They want to do overhead signs and support poles going to Marietta and at the split as you are coming down to the pay bridge. The work will not happen until February however they need legislation in order to get it on their books. 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 **RESOLUTION FOR SIGN REPAIR ON ROUTE 7**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Locke placed before council for second and third readings **RESOLUTION FOR SIGN REPAIR ON ROUTE 7**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Locke moved this be **Resolution 18, 2024-2025** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Ms. Riffle brought before council for first reading **AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND BELPRE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTIONS 131.01©, 133.01(d), 137.01©139.01©, 141.01(d), 121.02(a)(2) and 121.02(b)(2) for calendar year 2025**. Ms. Riffle stated that the Mayor, Auditor, Treasurer, Law Director, Safety-Service Director and Belpre City Council have determined that it is in the best interest of the citizens of Belpre for the administration officials to waive any increases in their 2025 salaries based upon the increase in pay for Belpre City union employees. Below it does say for the calendar year 2025, January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Ms. Riffle moved to suspend the rule of council on three different days to allow for the second and third readings of **AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND BELPRE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTIONS 131.01©, 133.01(d), 137.01©139.01©, 141.01(d), 121.02(a)(2) and 121.02(b)(2) for calendar year 2025**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Ms. Riffle placed before council for the second and third readings **AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND BELPRE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTIONS 131.01©, 133.01(d), 137.01©139.01©, 141.01(d), 121.02(a)(2) and 121.02(b)(2) for calendar year 2025**. Mr. Godfrey asked what the savings would be to the city. Mayor Abdella stated that she did do the math however she didn't have it with her tonight but she could get that information. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Ms. Riffle moved this be **Ordinance 15, 2024-2025** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

PERSON APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL:

Jesse Wonycott 805 Main Street addressed council regarding where we are on the new sewer plant. Mayor Abdella stated that the legislation has not yet been prepared. I'm waiting for the proposal from the engineering firm. We had a staff meeting with them on Friday with a discussion on the building and elevation and how to make it work without a lot of grading. They thought the building was going to run north to south but I think it will run from east to west. That way we can use the current grading the way it is so we can have a ramp up to it and not worry about having lifts and elevators. We are looking for the best design before getting the proposal. Mrs. Wonycott stated that we haven't had a Grant Committee meeting since October 7, 2024 and in order to be successful on getting grants, finding grants,

applying for grants we need to have a meeting once a month. We need to have a committee appointed, a commission appointed, a member of council so we can move forward. If I find a grant, who do I go to. We don't have a grant writer. There is quite a bit of money out there for water and sewer projects. I have done a little bit of research on grant writing and there is a company called Ohio Grant Watch and for \$85 you can run an ad for a month. You can also apply for a grant writer position to write grants. They will send you grants and for \$45 they will send grants that are available to municipalities.

I would also like to see the service fee split out from the water bill.

Mayor Abdella stated that the Sewer Plant grant isn't due until March. This is when we have to apply.

Where does the city stand upon the sale of Angel's Harbor? Mayor Abdella stated that the business has been sold and they have yet to come for licensing. I'm assuming they are operating under the old license. Are they going to have to apply for license for the moratorium? Mr. Webster stated that they don't know what they are going to use the business for until they apply.

Ms. Riffle thanked all fellow Veterans for their service to our great country and for all those who were left behind. She also extended her appreciation for the prayers, cards, phone calls, etc. from her surgery.

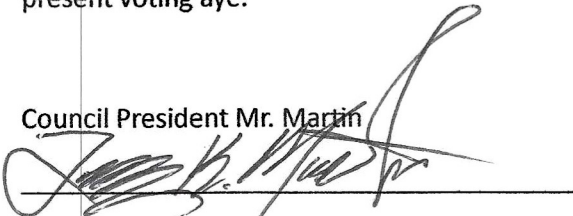
Mr. Locke asked about the EMS ambulance. He was informed that the document stating that we all agreed to the purchase as long as it was handled by the end of the year has been signed. Our goal is to get it by the end of the year so it means we will have to have legislation.

Mr. Locke also asked about the police cruisers. Mayor Abdella informed council that there are three available at Matheny's in St. Mary's, WV. We are checking about the warranty, when the warranty would begin and cost difference should we apply for a new vehicle. I have asked the chief to get information from Statewide to see what a new vehicle would cost fully outfitted. I'm in a holding pattern until I get the Statewide price. Mr. Locke wanted to know what the time line is for a new one. Mayor Abdella stated that at this time she doesn't know.

Adjourn:

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

Council President Mr. Martin



Clerk of Belpre City Council Kimberly Meredith

