

January 13, 2025

Council President Mr. Martin called the January 13, 2025 Belpre City Council meeting to order at 7:42 pm. The roll was called with the following members present: Mr. Ambrozy, Mrs. Dennis Mr. Ferguson, Ms. Riffle and Mr. Seebaugh. Also present was Mayor Abdella, Safety-Service Director Mr. Kirby, City Auditor Mrs. Nolan, City Law Director Mr. Webster, Treasurer Mrs. Cassady and Clerk of Council Mrs. Meredith. Absent from the meeting was First Ward Councilperson Mr. Locke.

Council President Mr. Martin asked everyone to please rise for the Prayer and remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance. 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 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 December 9, 2024 minutes. Mr. Ferguson made a motion to accept the minutes of December 9, 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:

Mayor Abdella and Chief Stump presented the key and title for a 2014 Ford Explorer police vehicle to Dr. Sarah Parker, 8th President at WSCO and Dr. Jona Rinard, Dean of Tech & Transfer. The Ford Explorer was a donation from the City of Belpre to the college for the Criminal Justice Class. It was also announced that Chief Stump has joined the Advisory Committee at WSCO.

Communications:

City Projects:

- Thank you to our SNOW WARRIORS!! The Street Department and the Police Department have been busy dealing with the snow situation and they have done an outstanding job. Our Water department has been working on Water leaks caused by the freezing temperatures. These poor guys even had icicles hanging off them while working. All our workers are a dedicated group and doing great work within our city.

- 911- On December 17th the county wide, geo-fence went into place. So that is if a citizen calls 911, they will automatically be directed to the City of Belpre dispatch and not the County Sheriff Office. With this implementation we will still be servicing Barlow Fire and EMS. The citizens within the city limits that are township have been fenced out and will go to Sherriff office for service.
- We have determined that some key components of the communication tower involving the city and the school are not on emergency power. We are working in collaboration with the school to make modification. However the lights on the tower will be required to be changed. The cost of the new lights and the tower climbing will be approximately 30K.
- Law Director – Is there anything else to be done with the GO MART alley closure. Per Mr. Webster he will have to do the additional work. He informed the mayor she could give permit to move forward now.
- SCADA System for all Lift and Booster Stations to communicated with the plants.
 - Proposal to be reviewed and approved
- Trash Contract – Southeastern Ohio joint Solid Waste Management. We have been working on bid document.
- Lead Service Line Inventory Second Phase to occur in 2025 – Complete the door-to-door canvas.
 - Systems must then repeat the notification on an annual basis until the entire service connection is no longer a lead galvanized requiring replacement, or lead status unknown (unknown) service line. Project to last for the next 12 years.
- Communication tower – Parts being ordered
- WWTP project – beginning process for RFQ Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Well 2 Rehab
 - Survey Complete
 - Awaiting Next Steps – Decisions have been made and we are ready to move forward with the project.
- Water Tank and 10" Water Main Extension
 - Bidding and Construction
 - Bidding and runs Jan 24 and Jan 31
 - Pre-Bid February 4 at 1pm
 - Bid Opening February 20 at 1pm
 - Loan Award March 2025
 - Construction March 2025 to March 2026

Legislation Pending

- Washington County Water and Soil Conservation District. Well field for generator.
- O'Neil Center – Slight Increase
- America 250 – Ohio – Grant period closed at this time
- Trash Contract – to bid

Grants Pending

- EPA Drinking Water Grant – Filed: Generator and Signage for area of well field
- VFA Grant Due Jan. 15, 2024 – 10K matching grant – blanket to smother fire

Grants to be submitted:

- Marietta Community Foundation
- Belpre Community Foundation
- United Way
- State Farm – 10K Police and Fire

Department year End Reviews:

- Street Department
- Police Department

Safety Service Director and the Head of EMS will be traveling tomorrow to pick up new ambulance for the city.

Liz Morrison, Junior at Belpre High School will be with us for the next six months receiving opportunities and training here at the city building. She will be working with the two Kim's on Retention Record.

Safety-Service Director Mr. Kirby reported that on Sunday, January 5th, the street department, was called into action around 4pm for the snowstorm. Street department Forman Chris Barringer coordinated his department to start plowing the main roadways, such as Washington Boulevard, Farson Street, Main Street, and the highways. After addressing those routes, they worked on the secondary roads and then alleyways. The street department has some newer employees that don't have a lot of experience with plowing the amount of snow we have got. With that being said, I feel they did a great job with their efforts. They did have some obstacles to overcome, whether it be vehicles parking in areas that made it difficult for them to plow or the vehicles continuing to be on the roadways.

On January 6th and 7th, due to the road conditions, the city building was closed. During those two days, I met with police Sgt. Fields and checked on the street department to see if they were having any issues. I was advised that as of that time, the police department had a report of one

vehicle accident and approximately 15 vehicles that had to be assisted that were either stuck on the side of the road or in intersections.

I strongly encourage everyone to understand that while the county is under a level 2 snow emergency, please check with your employer to see if you must report to work. If you do have to go, plan accordingly. Give yourself extra time and be cautious.

Several phone calls were returned concerning the roads and had conversations with people applauding the efforts of our street crews clearing the roads.

On January 9th, Select Office Services came to Belpre PD and installed four computer desks for the patrolman's room. The desks were donated by a local business, which we would like to extend our appreciation. The extra desks give them more space to do their jobs. It went from having two workstations to now having four. The patrol office has now been re-painted and ready for use, giving it a newer feel. We have heard nothing but positive reviews. We have two more desks coming in the next few weeks to revamp one of the Sgt. Office. While not overly excited to do additional painting, we are excited to see the end results.

On Friday the 10th, the Street Department geared up for round two with the snowfall. They were prepared and got most of the roadways finished up Saturday afternoon. Thankfully the 2nd round of snow wasn't as bad as the first.

City Auditor Mrs. Nolan began her report by saying Happy New Year Mr. President and Council,

The 2022 Audit Findings were provided to Council/Admin on May 20, 2024. It was suggested by Councilman Ambrozy that a report of adjustments from the Auditor be provided to Council. The following are corrections that have been made to the following Findings:

2022-003 City inventory, maintaining tagging and Asset numbering had not been updated.

Assets were tagged by each dept head and this information was entered into VIP in 2024.

2022-004 IT Security and Operations were not in place.

An IT Policy was written and included in the Personnel Policy Manual in 2024.

Keep in mind the 2023 audit is going to contain the same findings as 2022 due to the State's delay of our 2022 Audit.

The Noncompliance findings will be reported next Council meeting, January 27, 2025.

The State Auditors returned Wednesday, January 8, 2025 to review their work for 2023. They requested me to remind each of you to complete the Fraud Risk Assessment Interview emailed Wednesday, January 8, 2025. They cannot release the 2023 audit until these forms are received back.

A different report "Bill Adjustments" for November 2024 was emailed to Council Friday, January 3, 2025. This report represents information of the Utility Adjustment Report we provided to Council out of our old system and will need Councils approval.

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

City Law Director Mr. Webster announced that all requested legislation has been prepared and presented to council.

City Treasurer Mrs. Cassidy had no report.

Communication and Petitions:

President of Council Mr. Martin stated that he hopes that everyone had a Great Holiday Season and a great start to the New Year.

Mr. Martin assigned the following legislation to committee:

Washington, Soil and Water – Mr. Ambrozy, Senior Center – Mr. Ferguson, BVFD Taxation – Mrs. Dennis, AT&T Tariff – Mrs. Ambrozy. Mr. Martin stated that Mr. Godfrey's official resignation letter was accepted the date he turned it into the Board of Elections.

Grant dollars are being offered for the America 250-OH but according to Mayor Abdella we do not qualify.

Discussed also was **A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BELPRE, SUPPORTING THE OHIO MUNICIPAL LEAGUE'S CHALLENGE OF AT&T'S TARIFF APPLICATION AT THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSIN OF OHIO.** The discussion was in regards to municipalities in which AT&T is located in the municipality's public right-of-way to pay the full cost of any relocation or undergrounding of AT&T's facilities, regardless of the reason for the relocation.

President of Council Mr. Martin assigned the AT&T Tariff to Mr. Ambrozy's committee.

Reports of Standing Committee

Mr. Ferguson Finance/Audit Committee reported that Finance/Audit Committee met prior to this evening's meeting at 6:30pm for the purpose of discussing the 2025 Budget. Mr. Ferguson called a Finance/Audit Committee meeting for Wednesday, January 15, 2025 at 6pm to further discuss the 2025 Budget.

Mrs. Dennis, Police and Fire Committee had no report. Mrs. Dennis called a Police and Fire Committee meeting for January 27, 2025 at 7:00 to discuss the BVFD taxation. This will allow her time to research. Mrs. Dennis also stated that Mr. Greenley was present this evening to present his EMS Report. It is as follows:

Dear Council Members,

We have had another productive month in Belpre. Last month, we received 135 total calls. We transported 106 of them to the ER, had 29 refuses, and had 2 patients deceased when we arrived. We did not do any transports last month to or from Marietta Memorial Belpre campus or the Marietta Memorial Marietta campus. Our average time from dispatch to scene was 6 minutes and 24 seconds.

We continue to work through minor mechanical issues on the ambulances; nothing major but we continue to see consistent small issues which we resolve as they arise. We express gratitude for the new ambulance which we will be picking up later this week. This equipment will allow us to better serve the people of Belpre.

As always, please let us know if you have any questions. It is our honor to be able to serve the people of Belpre.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Greenley

Chairman

City of Belpre EMS, Inc.

Mr. Locke, Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewer Committee was absent. No report was given in his absence.

Mr. Ambrozy Utilities Committee announced that he attended the Grant Committee meeting on December 12, 2024. At this time, Mr. Ambrozy made a motion to add to tonight's agenda for first reading **A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BELPRE, SUPPORTING THE OHIO MUNICIPAL LEAGUE'S CHALLENGE OF AT&T'S TARIFF APPLICATION AT THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Seebaugh Parks and Recreation Committee had no report. Mr. Seebaugh made a motion to excuse Mr. Locke from this evening's meeting. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. Mr. Seebaugh made a motion to add to tonight's agenda for first reading **A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BELPRE, OHIO, SUPPORTING THE OHIO COMMISSION FOR THE UNITED STATES SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL (AMERICA250-OH)**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Godfrey, Planning and Zoning and Economic Development Committee position has not yet been filled. There was no report given by any of the committee members.

Ms. Riffle Rules Committee had no report. Ms. Riffle commented on the great job the city had done in regards to snow removal. Ms. Riffle also stated that Lowell will not be opening their pool this year.

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL – AGENDA items only - none

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: - none

New Business:

Mr. Ambrozy brought before council for first reading **A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BELPRE, SUPPORTING THE OHIO MUNICIPAL LEAGUE’S CHALLENGE OF AT&T’S TARIFF APPLICATION AT THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. This will lie over until the Special Meetings that are being called for January 15, 2025 at 6:45pm and January 16, 2025 at 5:00pm.

Mr. Seebaugh brought before council for first reading **RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BELPRE, OHIO, SUPPORTING THE OHIO COMMISSION FOR THE UNITED STATES SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL (AMERICA250-OH).** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. This will also lie over until the Special Meetings that are being called for January 15, 2025 at 6:45pm and January 16, 2025 at 5:00pm.

PERSON APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL:

Jeff Greenley 930 Pine Street thanked the city for the snow removal on campus.

Mr. Greenley also showed his appreciation to the city for taking on a Junior student at Belpre High School for 6 months receiving opportunities and training here at the city building. Mr. Greenley stated that she was on his Mock Trial Team and showed much enthusiasm. She comes highly recommended.

Mr. Greenley thanked Chief Stump for being at the Elementary School’s in the morning as student’s are dropped off. Much appreciation shown by the parents.

Mr. Greenley stated that once again the School Levy will be on the ballot for the fifth time in a row. I wouldn’t be convinced that this should go on the ballot for the fifth time however it is a must. We have no other choice.

Ms. Riffle stated that the OML funding may change for Ohio. Mr. Greenley responded on the topic.

Mayor Abdella spoke briefly about the Tree Orchard on Boulevard Drive. Pastor Gary Webb made a graphic design relating to the planted trees. His diagram can be found behind the sign.

Ms. Riffle asked about how we could go about the bid processes and guarantee warranties on purchases by the city to prevent future expenditures. Per Mayor Abdella there should be a follow up on performance contracts.

Ms. Riffle also asked about warming stations within the city. According to Mayor Abdella they are looking at using the fire stations as warming stations since they already have generator back up.

Mr. Ferguson asked about the bidding for the 10" water line and the water tank. According to the mayor they would be bid simultaneously.

Adjourn:

Ms. Riffle made a motion to adjourn at 8:48pm. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Council President Mr. Martin

Wendy Dennis Pro Tem

Clerk of Belpre City Council Mrs. Meredith

Kimberly A. Meredith