

The Strasburg Village Council met in regular session on Wednesday, January 4, 2023 at 6:00 pm. Mayor Steve Smith presided over the meeting. Pastor Jason Rissler led the prayer.

Members answering roll call were Kathy Burrier, Jeff Smith, Liz Dreher, Dustin Briggs, Don Wallick, and Martin Zehnder. Other's present were Legal Counsel Terry Seeberger, Village Administrator Ron Lambert, Fire Chief Steve Laskey, Zoning Inspector Ted Foster, Press Representative Barb Limbacher, Chase Willis, Jesse Stalling, Michael Rosenberry, Jerry Schultz, Brandon Baker, Brent Metzger, Mary Hunter, and Pastor Jason Rissler.

A motion was made by Don Wallick, seconded by Kathy Burrier, to nominate and appoint Jeff Smith for council president for 2023. At roll call, the vote was as follows: Zehnder, no; Wallick, yes; Smith, yes; Dreher, yes; Burrier, yes; and Briggs, yes.

A motion was made by Kathy Burrier, seconded by Don Wallick, to approve the minutes from the December 20, 2022 council meeting. At roll call, all members voted approval.

Mayor Steve Smith read committee information with the only change of Dustin Briggs being moved to the Finance Committee and Don Wallick to the Safety Committee for 2023. Mayor Smith read a recap of 2022 projects including street improvements of Maple Avenue, Fernsell Avenue, and 8th Street SW, the waterline replacement project on Wooster Avenue and adopting the third lane for Wooster Avenue. Mayor Smith noted that we are currently upgrading to fiber optic, completed the first phase of the safe routes to school with sidewalk on the west side of Bodmer Avenue, installed a crosswalk with safety signage on Wooster Avenue at 4th Street South. Mayor Smith reported that \$ 699,029.00 has been spent in park improvements since 2016 and we are adopting WIFI for cameras for park for safety. Mayor Smith reported that the fire department now has 24/7 coverage with a full-time fire chief to better serve the village and the township and will be implementing fire inspections of businesses for the safety of the community. Mayor Smith reported that the police department currently has five fulltime officers, they are seeking a sixth officer for the department and that they are currently operating on an equipment levy from 1994 and will be placing on the ballot a new levy to cover payroll and equipment for the department. Mayor Smith noted that currently their payroll comes out of the General fund and that with the new levy those funds could then be used for village improvements. Mayor Smith noted that proposed projects for 2023 include a pickle ball court in the park, green space improvements, the Tuscarawas sculpture project, working with OMEGA for the TAP grant for downtown improvements, the second phase of safe routes to school, the community grant program for the extension of the current walking trail, and miscellaneous paving projects. Mayor Smith noted that two issues to be resolved are the fire contract with the Franklin Township and discussion with the school regarding the past contract of the bus garage. Mayor Smith noted that the school board has been invited for a meeting on Tuesday, January 12, 2023 at 6 pm. Mayor Smith noted that he is very grateful for council and all of the progress made for our village.

Jeff Smith noted that a public meeting with OMEGA will be held on Tuesday, January 17, 2023 at 1 pm and thanked council for their support as council president and will work to move this village forward. Smith asked committees to meet and get projects for 2023.

Village Administrator Ron Lambert noted that Legal Counsel Terry Seeberger has advised on the need for a preliminary engineering report for the WWTP expansion. Lambert noted that engineer Don Dummermuth could prepare the report for an estimated cost of \$ 15,000 to \$ 20,000. Lambert noted that the report will include a cost estimate and parameters for the expansion project to then be presented to qualifying engineering firms for the potential designing of the expansion. Legal Counsel Terry Seeberger noted that it will be very similar to what Navarre did for their project. Seeberger will contact Don Dummermuth. Lambert noted that land constraint is an issue for our expansion and the study will include replacing worn out equipment at the current plant. A motion was made by Jeff Smith, seconded by Don Wallick, to authorize George Fielder & Associates to prepare a preliminary engineering report for the WWTP expansion project. At roll call, all members voted approval.

Zoning Inspector Ted Foster, Legal Counsel Terry Seeberger, and council held a brief discussion regarding the Warehime property on 3rd Street NW and estimates for replacing the retainage wall on the property. Foster noted that the property owner has not responded to letters and phone calls. Seeberger will review the documentation that declared the property a nuisance and will advise on how the village can proceed. A discussion was held on the need to replace the sidewalk at the property. Foster noted that the estimates did not include sidewalk replacement at this property. Seeberger noted that the resolution only covers the retaining wall and does not include the sidewalk but it would be cost effective to have the same contractor do the sidewalk at the same time. Seeberger noted that the sidewalk could be sought through a lien on the property. Seeberger will look to see if the sidewalk in the current condition violates the villages ordinance.

Fire Chief Steve Laskey provided mayor and council with a 2022 annual report, current roster of the fire department, breakdown of calls, and promotions in the department.

Finance – Chairman Jeff Smith reported that Ordinance O-15-2021 provided a stipend for Nathan Kanouff and Neal Dickerhoof for the years 2021 and 2022 and explained that Village Administrator Ron Lambert has expressed the need for a new ordinance to make the stipend ongoing for Nathan Kanouff for the updating and ongoing work for the GIS data base for mapping of the utilities and ongoing work for the EPA mandated asset management plan. Lambert noted that RCAP works with Kanouff and that the stipend should be a continuation to keep this contingency program ongoing. Lambert noted that we have made great strides with the program and that council could meet with Kanouff to see what has been completed with the GIS. Mayor Smith recommended that we revisit the ordinance and have as an ongoing stipend. Lambert would like to have the second position available in the ordinance as well. Legal Counsel Seeberger noted that he can prepare an ordinance to include with the pay ordinance. Smith asked Seeberger to prepare an ordinance for the finance committee to review.

Street – Chairwoman Liz Dreher thanked Village Administrator Ron Lambert and Street Superintendent Matt Miller and village employees for all of their hard work in 2022 taking care of the streets.

RESOLUTION 2023-1

Resolution 2023-1 was given its first reading by title only. A motion was made by Jeff Smith, seconded by Kathy Burrier, to suspend the rules of the mandatory three readings. At roll call, all members voted approval. A motion was made by Jeff Smith, seconded by Kathy Burrier, to approve Resolution 2023-1, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE VILLAGE OF STRASBURG TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO THE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS) PROGRAM AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. At roll call, all members voted approval and this resolution shall take effect immediately.

RESOLUTION 2023-2

Resolution 2023-2, A Resolution declaring the intent and authorizing the sale of municipally owned personal property, including motor vehicles, road machinery, equipment, tools or supplies, which are not needed for public use, or are obsolete or unfit for the use for which they were acquired, during the calendar year 2023 by internet auction, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code, Sec.721.15(D), was given its first reading only.

RESOLUTION 2023-3

Resolution 2023-3, A Resolution to proceed with election, approving submission of 3.7 mill levy to the voters within the Village of Strasburg, Ohio for a five-year term (being the tax years 2023 through 2027), was given its first reading by title only.

Chase Willis addressed council regarding the proposal of fire inspections of businesses by Fire Chief Steve Laskey. Mayor Smith noted that he will go through and point out potential hazards and give timeframes on repairs of these hazards. Mayor Smith noted that council passed Ordinance O-19-22 adopting the Ohio Fire Code of the villages codified code to enforce the State Fire Code Compliance and enforcement of the fire code. Brent Metzger noted that as an ex-fire chief he went with the state fire marshal through village owned properties and the school and that there were several things that needed to be addressed and that the village should take their own properties before going into businesses. Metzger noted that yes, the fire chief does have the authority and once you start and start putting on paper, he will need to enforce the issues. Metzger noted that we went into an executive session years ago and there were two council members that said no. Zehnder noted that he said it twenty years ago, 12 years ago, and now I still say no. Mayor Smith noted that the fire chief is for the safety of the community. Mary Hunter noted that she appreciates the quick response of the police and fire department with the fire at the restaurant. Willis noted that he was very impressed with his knowledge regarding the fire, but there will still needs to be checks and balances with the investigations of businesses and that it will create problems with the businesses. Willis noted that insurance companies review the businesses. A brief discussion was held on the concerns and will be discussed with Fire Chief Laskey. Brandon Baker made a recommendation that council hire an outside inspector to inspect the village owned properties. Metzger noted that he could contact the state fire marshal to come and inspect the village owned properties first. Mayor Smith noted that he will discuss with Laskey to inspect our buildings first. Dustin Briggs noted that the safety committee will sit down and discuss with Laskey so we know what his plans are with this fire inspection process. Mary Hunter noted that she met with him today and he was not polite but he did say that he is going to work on his approach with people.

A motion was made by Kathy Burrier, seconded by Jeff Smith, at 8:20 pm. At roll call, all members voted approval.