

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
AMBERLEY VILLAGE COUNCIL  
MONDAY, AUGUST 11, 2014**

The Council of Amberley Village, Ohio met in regular session at the Amberley Village Municipal Building, 7149 Ridge Road on Monday, August 11, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. Mayor Muething called the meeting to order. The following roll call was taken:

**PRESENT:**

Richard Bardach  
Peg Conway  
Bill Doering  
Ed Hattenbach  
Thomas C. Muething  
Ray Warren  
Natalie Wolf

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Rich Wallace, Police/Fire Chief  
Rick Kay, Treasurer  
Kevin Frank, Village Solicitor  
Nicole Browder, Clerk of Council

Mayor Muething welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Amberley Village Council. He then led those in attendance through the pledge of allegiance.

**MINUTES**

Mayor Muething presented the minutes of the July 14, 2014 regular meeting minutes and asked if there were any corrections or additions. Since there were none, Mayor Muething stated that the minutes were approved.

**FINANCE REPORT**

Village Manager Scot Lahrmer presented the June, 2014, Finance Report (a copy of which is attached to these minutes). Mr. Lahrmer reported a summary of this report noted total tax collections for the month of June totaled \$172,721. The total general fund revenue for the month of June was \$247,481 while expenses equaled 309,744. At the end of June, the unencumbered General Fund balance was \$3,107,809. The report was accepted as submitted.

**GUEST SPEAKER**

Principal Jennifer Mauch from the Pleasant Ridge Montessori School introduced herself to Council and offered partnership opportunities as well as school statistics. She stated that the school has grown to 640 students and 70 staff members. She noted the school is the community learning center which supports residents and their children. She stated Pleasant Ridge Montessori is considered the Village's neighborhood school and encouraged families to visit. Tours are given the first Tuesday each month.

Principal Mauch shared a folder of information handed out to each council member, which contained an introduction letter, program details and an invitation to the 'state of the school' event. She encouraged people who don't have children at the school to attend the event to learn about the school and how the various community counterparts can partner together. It was noted that as a community learning center, various events are held in the building (space rental) and there is a community garden on location in addition to many other programs available to residents and their families.

### **SWEARING-IN**

Mayor Muething conducted the swearing-in of new officer/firefighter Brandon Gehring. The Mayor administered the oath of office and Officer Gehring's family was also present to observe the pinning of his badge.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Mr. Hattenbach presented, read and moved to approve Ordinance 2014-10, Ordinance Amending Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2014. He commented that this action would establish an escrow fund for any refunds of the Joint Economic Development Zone tax. Seconded by Mr. Conway and the roll call showed the following vote:

AYE: Bardach, Conway, Doering, Hattenbach, Muething, Warren, Wolf (7)  
NAY: (0)

Mayor Muething noted that the Joint Economic Development Zone agreement has been going better than initially expected and part of the process includes the handling refunds to businesses in Sycamore Township, if needed.

#### **COMPENSATION & BENEFITS COMMITTEE**

Mr. Warren presented, read and moved to approve Ordinance 2014-11, Ordinance Establishing Position of Zoning and Project Administrator and Fixing Compensation. He commented that with Mr. Lahrmer's advice and input the committee reviewed and made a proposal for a change to the position of Zoning and Project Administrator. Several changes made in the current description were to bring it up-to-date with current duties of that administrator. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Conway and the roll call showed the following vote:

AYE: Bardach, Conway, Doering, Hattenbach, Muething, Warren, Wolf (7)  
NAY: (0)

Mr. Warren moved to waive the three readings and approve Ordinance 2014-11, seconded by Mrs. Conway and the roll call showed the following vote:

AYE: Bardach, Conway, Doering, Hattenbach, Muething, Warren, Wolf (7)  
NAY: (0)

Mr. Warren stated that there were questions at the committee meeting regarding whether this position represents a new position and it is not a new position. It is anticipated to be cost neutral to village.

Mr. Hattenbach moved Ordinance 2014-11 be passed by emergency measure for the reason of creating a new title for the position of Zoning and Project Administrator and to hire an employee into that position as soon as possible to help ensure continued and efficient operation of the Village and provision of services to Village residents. Seconded by Mrs. Conway and the roll call showed the following vote:

AYE: Bardach, Conway, Doering, Hattenbach, Muething, Warren, Wolf (7)  
NAY: (0)

### **STREETS, PUBLIC UTILITIES & SEWERS COMMITTEE**

Mr. Doering presented, read and moved to approve Resolution 2014-21, Resolution Authorizing Village Manager to Enter into Agreement with the Ohio Department of Transportation to Consent to Sign Upgrades Along SR 126. He noted that all communities along Cross County Highway are being asked to process this resolution. Seconded by Mrs. Conway and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Doering presented, read and moved to approve Resolution 2014-22, Resolution Authorizing the Village Manager to Enter into a Contract to Purchase Back Hoe. He reported that the committee had quite a bit of discussion on equipment. The current back hoe is 15 years old with low hours, but after time was spent analyzing the numbers, the repair costs were estimated at \$19,000 to rehabilitate it, and when compared to life expectancy, it was best to replace the equipment. Use of the back hoe for salt loading in its earlier years was a contributing factor to its deterioration. The cost of the new backhoe, after \$20,000 trade-in value, will net a purchase price of \$71,449, which is budgeted in capital fund at \$80,000. Seconded by Mr. Hattenbach and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Doering presented, read and moved to approve Resolution 2014-23, Resolution Authorizing the Village Manager to Enter into a Contract with the City of Cincinnati for Furnishing Salt for Snow and Ice Control Purposes. He reported that the Village uses Cincinnati's buying power to get salt and the bad news is the cost of salt has gone up and the Village still owes other communities for borrowed salt from the last winter season. Upon review of the prices, Cincinnati has a better deal than going to the market on our own. Last year the Village used 940 tons during the winter season. The winning bid was North American Salt at \$75.86/ton with the guarantee of 80% of 480 tons and a maximum delivery of 680 tons for the year. The total cost is approximately \$122,000 with part of that amount being deferred to the 2015 budget. Seconded by Mr. Hattenbach and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Warren thanked Village Manager Lahrmer and staff for going out and getting bids from other sources and procuring the best price.

Mr. Doering presented, read and moved to approve Resolution 2014-24, Resolution Authorizing the Village Manager to Enter into a Contract with IGS to Provide Natural Gas to Village Residents Under the Energy Aggregation Program. He reported that although the contract for gas aggregation expires in October, residents do not need to act. Another 2 year program is being finalized. Gas prices peaked earlier this summer and is now down, possibly impacted by a cooler summer. The committee recommended authorization to enter into a master service agreement with IGS energy. Seconded by Mrs. Conway and the motion passed unanimously.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**

Mayor Muething reported that the committee met on July 28, 2014 and discussed the upcoming Ice Cream Social. The committee will have a table at the event with valuable information and a representative from Green Umbrella which is an environmental group.

The next item discussed was the Dam Tour scheduled for September 11. Work started late last week and is continuing this week to repair the dam at Amberley Green and this tour is an opportunity for residents to come out and see the work site.

The next item discussed was the Taking Root Campaign. This is a city and county-wide program to promote planting trees to help replace the many trees lost due to disease like the

Emerald Ash Borer. The campaign is hoping to achieve a planting of 2 million trees over the next 8-10 years. Residents can register online as they plant trees. Amberley Village is participating and has arranged for discount coupons through the Natorp's Nursery which provides \$25 off a tree purchase.

Also discussed was the One Stop Drop recycling event for 2015. Again the event will be in early April and the date will be announced in the next month or two. This is an opportunity to recycle unwanted electronics or paper and also a good event for the village because all of the recycling tonnage is credited toward the Village's recycling grant and avoids waste going to the landfill.

#### **HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE COMMITTEE**

Ms. Wolf reported that the committee met twice this month to discuss the Village's recommitment to the WeThrive! Program and how to improve pedestrian safety.

Ms. Wolf presented, read and moved to approve Resolution 2014-25, Resolution to Re-Commit Amberley Village to the WeThrive! Initiative and the Goals of this Initiative. She stated the Village was the first community to receive a mini-grant of \$24,000 which developed the community garden at Amberley Green and improved the walking track with exercise equipment. Additionally, the process of evaluating the health and welfare of the Village identified a crosswalk area which resulted in its upgrade along with the light traffic system at Section Road. The recommitment asks the Village to pass a resolution and designate a WeThrive! task force to select a pathway to improve the community. Seconded by Mrs. Conway and the motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Conway commented that last week she parked in the lot and walked the track, and used the exercise equipment then took the crosswalk across Ridge and over to the park. She had her 4 year old niece with her and felt very comfortable and stated it was nice to have the addition--it made a difference and was fun.

Ms. Wolf reported that the committee also discussed pedestrian safety. She stated she continually hears streets are unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. When the Village was developed it was a time with less cars and traffic. Residents today walk for and to fitness destinations and children are again walking to school. Many prefer to use bikes instead of cars. The committee tried to focus on street safety and identified that a first step would be slowing down speeders. Chief Wallace presented options for slowing traffic. The committee agreed to meet quarterly to remedy this ongoing concern.

#### **LAND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Mayor Muething reported that the committee has been meeting over last few months to get greater clarity of the potential for development at the North Site and Amberley Green and identify actions to take if any to move forward. At the last meeting, it was recommended to take following actions: North Site—additional insights are needed. The committee, over last few months heard from market experts that provided a wide range of opinion as to whether or not the site had development potential. The Village Manager is in the process of bringing in at least one additional expert. A meeting will be scheduled in the coming weeks. The committee felt it was worthwhile to gain a better understanding of the parcels which are owned by individual property owners that reside in Reading, adjacent to the North Site. The Village Manager will be meeting with the planning director of Reading for those insights.

The first action for Amberley Green was identified in the Long Range Plan for the property which approved mixed use on the land, one of which was residential. The committee felt it was worthwhile to get additional insights from similar developments in Madeira and Mariemont where different types of housing is being developed that may provide for smaller residences for downsizing. The committee will bring in people that have been involved in those developments, one of which is Sibcy Cline who was involved in the Mariemont development.

Additionally, the committee is looking at the cost of a slope study for Amberley Green. The purpose would be to better understand the stream and topography and how much of the site is developable or not. First the cost is to be identified. The committee is going to continue to pursue conversations with parties, especially residents of Amberley and the JCC who might have an interest in doing something. Over next month or so the Village will meet with the JCC.

Mayor Muething commented that it is important to continue to provide feedback to residents. There will be a meeting scheduled in September to provide feedback on a range of subjects, including development of Amberley Green and the North Site. Those will be next steps for committee.

#### **PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE**

Ms. Wolf reported that the Village will conduct a town hall meeting where one of topics will be land use at Amberley Green and North Site. The date is September 29 at the JCC at 1:30 p.m. or 7 p.m. There will be two opportunities to hear the presentation, no need to attend both.

#### **MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mr. Lahrmer reported that the dam tour will be an opportunity to observe the work of the contractor Ford Development and Ford is on-site doing modifications to bring the dam into compliance so it is no longer regulated by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). The modifications are required by ODNR and the Village is currently able to meet those requirements. The project work is to conclude mid-October and ODNR's deadline is January 2015. The project is on target to meet the state deadline. The construction may impact walkers at Amberley Green and may temporarily be inconvenienced.

Mr. Lahrmer reported that the Village has discontinued dispatching for Silverton. The original agreement was embarked upon 2 years ago and was a collaboration plan to provide dispatch. Circumstances have changed in Silverton. They have moved from a police department to the Sheriff's office for law enforcement. That necessitated discussion regarding future dispatching. Council passed, last month, a resolution authorizing early termination of the agreement which took place July 31<sup>st</sup> and Silverton dispatching has been switched to Hamilton County.

Mr. Lahrmer reported on electric aggregation. He stated that the aggregation program stopped in May this year based on the contract. There was not a competitive rate at that time. Eagle Energy went back out for proposals and received competitive rates. Residents will receive notification within 3 weeks about entering into electric aggregation. It is anticipated that the rate will be better than what residents are currently paying with Duke. The likely vendor will be IGS Energy which is also the gas provider. The rate is anticipated to be 8 to 8.5 percent lower than the Duke price to compare. The program is intended to take effect with the October meter read. The program has saved \$55,000 this year during the 5 months it was in place.

### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Muething commented on another indication of how lucky we are at Amberley Village and the very good quality of staff. He congratulated the Village Manager who recently became the President of the city manager's association. Mayor Muething stated that for a community this size to have its Chief, maintenance staff and Village Manager in leadership roles is a great indication of how lucky the Village is--congratulations.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Wolf shared that the Village had good publicity on a wcpo.com program called 'Meet the Mayor' and Mayor Muething was featured in July. The video can be found at wcpo.com—you have to pay to see what the residents say. Mayor Muething stated he was sent a copy of the article and will have it posted to the Village website.

Ms. Wolf also shared a write up in the August issue of Cincinnati magazine written by Amberley Village resident Lisa Murtha. The article says that Amberley is a location within 275 where you can get a lot of house for a good price on large wooded lots. Read article for free at cincinnati magazine.com. Thanks to Lisa Murtha for including Amberley in this issue.

There being no further business, the Mayor adjourned the meeting.

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Nicole Browder, Clerk of Council

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Mayor Thomas C. Muething