

**Village of Higginsport  
Village Council Meeting  
August 12, 2024**

The Council of the Village of Higginsport met in regular session at the Village Municipal Building on Monday, August 12 2024 at 6:00 p.m. with all members present.

Also, present were: Police Chief Shawn Elliott, Fire Chief Rob Starrett, Dean Miracle, Curt Henderson, Chassity Fender, Tina Germann, Duane Germann, Tricia Wood, Peggy Wood, Diane Weaver, Scott Wilburn, Cindy Brown, Sandy Bear, Linda Fester, Dona Starrett and Sue McKinely.

Mayor Bear called the meeting to order and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Motion by: Mr. Smith, seconded by: Ms. Wills** to approve the July 8, 2024 meeting minutes.  
**Motion passed unanimously.**

**Police Department Report**

Chief Elliott reported on the following:

- An on-site LEADS audit has been performed with department to be found in compliance.
- Brown County Communication Center has a new director.
- Felony arrest made in the village.
- He and Dylan Branham will be assisting the mayor and administrator with installing the locks on the sewer pump and electrical boxes.

**Mayor's Report**

Mayor Bear reported that he had been contacted by Brown County Rural Water regarding a major water leak at a hydrant and that he was currently looking into purchasing parts for the necessary repairs.

**Administrator's Report**

Mr. Miracle expressed his appreciation to all those that worked on the Community Days event and all those that attended as it was a success for the first time holding the event.

Mr. Miracle expressed his appreciation to Mr. Duane Germann for installing the water line at the village park.

Mr. Miracle reported that the village solicitor was preparing the proposed golf cart ordinance for the first reading at the September council meeting.

Mr. Miracle reported that there had been several inquiries regarding parking or blocking the village sidewalks. He had directed Chief Elliott to issue written and verbal warnings for first offenses.

Mr. Miracle requested Council approve a petty cash fund of \$500.00 for incidental village purchases. A brief discussion ensued regarding his request with Fiscal Officer Dufau requesting Council table the matter until she contacted the state auditor's office regarding the matter.

### **Old Business**

Mr. Null inquired the status of the sewer installation at the campground at the west end of the village. Mayor Bear reported that the village solicitor is working on the matter and had been speaking to the property owner's attorney.

Mr. Null inquired if the village was still paying the sewer maintenance contractor \$2,000.00 per month. Mayor Bear confirmed that would be the monthly cost moving forward. A discussion ensued with Mr. Null inquiring if Council should check into getting someone else to perform the duties. Mayor Bear expressed that it could be checked into but that the current contractor does building and grounds maintenance such as mowing the yard. It was general consensus of Council to investigate other possible vendors for performing the sewer plant duties.

Mr. Miracle expressed his appreciation to Mr. Null for handling the nuisance problem (i.e. groundhogs) in the village.

Ms. Wills inquired if the water at the village park would be locked. Mr. Miracle confirmed that it would be.

Mrs. Adams inquired if anything had been decided as to what the village was going to do with the modular (doublewide) office. Mr. Miracle expressed that he had hopes that the construction company for the ballfield renovations will be interested in leasing it for a construction office.

Mr. Fester reported that a quote had been received from Strand for the sewer engineering with a cost of \$10,000.00 for the engineering report. Another company had provided and estimated cost of \$470,000.00 for sewer repairs. Mr. Fester expressed he was not sure it was prudent to continue to pursue it but recommend council go ahead with the engineering study in order to be able to apply for grants. He expressed that the current sewer maintenance contractor, Greg Wilson had reported that he did not see any urgent sewer repairs at the present time.

Mr. Fester reported he is continuing to work on getting additional members for the grant committee.

Mrs. Adams requested an executive session to discuss a personnel matter. Mayor Bear requested that the executive session be held near the end of the regular meeting.

### **Fire Department Report**

Chief Starrett reported on the following:

- Department did not receive the grant for new pagers. New pagers have been purchased from DKC Radio at a cost of \$5,880.00. The new pagers will enable quicker dispatching.
- ProAir has completed the annual compressor testing.
- Preventative maintenance is scheduled to be completed by Vogelpohl on August 13, 2024.
- Worked with the county communications center regarding department coverage territory.
- Contacted the Army Corp of Engineers to define area at the White Oak boat ramp.
- Truck maintenance is only completed every two years as the trucks are not used a lot which provides a cost savings.

- Hose 18 was damaged at a structure fire recently and needs to be taken out of service.
- Lieutenant Drew Smith and Lieutenant Curtis Henderson have been promoted to department captains.

Chief Starrett expressed he would like to see the fire department records the mayor and administrator had copied. Mayor expressed he would show him.

Chief Starrett stated that he had reviewed the list of information and records that the mayor had given him at the last council meeting that the mayor had stated the Council had requested. Chief Starrett expressed Council had not requested any records from him. Mayor Bear stated that he was just trying to clear up things from the complaint he had received. Mr. Smith inquired if any other fire chiefs in the county had to provide copies of all the fire department to their councils. Chief Starrett confirmed they did not. Chief Starrett asked the mayor if the complaints against him had been resolved to which the mayor replied “mostly”. He asked what the mayor meant by “mostly” but the mayor did not respond.

Chief Starrett expressed that it needed to be determined as to whom they wanted to be the village fire chief. He expressed since some thought they knew more about running the fire department than he did, he was going to make them honorary fire chiefs and presented a white fire helmet to the mayor and village administrator. Mayor Bear rose to his feet and stated Chief Starrett was “fired” to which Chief Starrett replied that the mayor did not have the authority to fire him. Chief Starrett presented an envelope to the mayor stating that the mayor could not fire him as he was resigning.

#### **New Business**

Mr. Null reported that a committee meeting was held to discuss proposed golf cart regulations and that he had obtained pricing for decals for the golf cart permits. A brief discussion ensued regarding the proposed golf cart ordinance and permit decals.

**Motion by: Mr. Fester, seconded by: Ms. Wills to approve and pay the bills. Motion passed unanimously**

#### **Public Participation**

Ms. Sue McKinley addressed Council and provided an update on the America 250 Celebration. She invited everyone to attend the next event meeting on August 31, 2024.

Mr. Fester inquired if the village fire department could pass out something at the county fair as other departments do. Mr. Smith reported the fire department usually passes at candy at the fair parade.

Mrs. Bear reported that Derrick Chanler, Liasson to Lt. Governor, John Husted had extended an invitation to the mayor and other interested individuals to attend a meeting on Thursday.

Mrs. Bear reported that she had contacted Odyssey Canvas regarding the veteran’s flags. The cost of each flag would be \$105.00. She requested permission from Council to handle the veteran flag program for the village. It was general consensus of Council to permit her to do so.

Mr. Scott Wilburn reported that he had received a lot of feedback from the vendors that participated in the recent community event and all want to come back next year.

Mr. Duane Germann reported that he had sawed up the cedar wood from the trees in the park into boards that could be used for benches or flower boxes.

Mr. Miracle reported that residents have been inquiring about trees in the village right-of-way.

**Motion by: Mr. Fester, seconded by: Mr. Adams,** to go into executive session to discuss a fire department personnel matter.

**Vote: Mrs. Adams, Yes; Mr. Adams, Yes; Mr. Fester, Yes; Mr. Null, Yes; Mr. Smith, Yes; Ms. Wills, Yes**

**Time Out: 7:15 p.m.**

**Motion by: Mr. Adams, seconded by: Ms. Wills,** to return to regular session.

**Vote: Mrs. Adams, Yes; Mr. Adams, Yes; Mr. Fester, Yes; Mr. Null, Yes; Mr. Smith, Yes; Ms. Wills, Yes**

**Time In: 7:36 p.m.**

**Motion by: Mr. Adams, seconded by: Mr. Null,** to adjourn the meeting. **Motion passed unanimously.**

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Lester Beair, Mayor

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Sheila G. Dufau, Fiscal Officer

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Kathy Adams, Council Member

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Matt Adams, Council Member

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Linda Wills, Council Member

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Scott Null, Council Member

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Mark Fester, Council Member

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Drew Smith, Council Member