

Pledge and Prayer – Mayor Jim Schroeder

Roll Call – Bill North-present Anna Turner-present Dusty Puckett-present Peggy Vance-present
Ashley Webster- present Angela Lyons -present

Also, in attendance – Mayor Jim Schroeder; Amy Mason, Administrator; Bob Feinen; Brian Perry

Absent – Tom Mayes, solicitor; Jayme Eldridge, fiscal officer

Council reviewed meeting minutes from July 11, 2023, regular meeting. *Motion to accept minutes as read by Peggy Vance, second by Bill North. Roll call all yes. Motion passed.*

Finances from July, 2023, reviewed. Question regarding postal fees for 20 rolls of stamps. Ms. Vance asked about postage cost. Ms. Mason answered with change to full statement billing we use about 500 stamps a month so that is why the larger quantity. Mr. Puckett questioned if a postal meter would be more efficient. Ms. Mason answered the cost of a postal meter had been looked at but was not cost efficient. *Motion to accept financials made by Dusty Puckett, second by Ashley Webster. Roll call all yes. Motion passed.*

ADMINISTRATOR

Staffing updates

- Matt Newman has resigned from Public Works Director and Operator of Sewer plant.
- Nicholas Manning has been hired at \$16.00/hour as a temporary position, graduate student of Brown County CTC helping with mowing and other needed services for the Village.
- Will be requesting a committee meeting this month for Public Works to discuss plan for sewer operator, water distribution operator, and just general laborer
- Interim Contractor covering water/sewer plant to comply with EPA standards
- David Dyer, six-month anniversary was yesterday, August 13, 2023, been with the Village the entire six months passed an excellent evaluation, Matt Newman made a recommendation about that we bring him up \$1.00 at his six-month evaluation which was taken to the Finance Committee and they did not have a problem with the increase

EMERGENCY PAY ORDINANCE: Showing an increase of \$1.00 per hour for David Dyer and temporary rate of pay of \$16.00/hour for Nicholas Manning. *Need to have 2/3rds of the vote to have an emergency ordinance per Mayor. Motion to move ordinance under emergency made by Peggy Vance, second by Anna Turner. Roll call all yes. Motion passed.*

Motion of majority rule to pass the ordinance made by Angela Lyons, second by Peggy Vance. Roll call all yes. Motion passed. Signatures received from both Mayor Schroeder and Bill North

Financials from previous month which were approved but not signed, council members signed these financials.

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ORDINANCES (NEED FOR THREE):

These will be between the State of Ohio and the Village of Sardinia for the certain portion of Hwy 32 that they maintain for maintenance and/or repair of this portion of 32 that is in the Village limits. This is a permissive ordinance no charge.

Motion for ordinance to be considered as an emergency ordinance for the Village of Sardinia and the State of Ohio Department of Transportation to maintain the certain portion of 32 in the Village limits. Motion made by Dusty Puckett. Second by Ashley Webster. Roll call all yes. Motion passed.

Motion to adopt the ordinance as an emergency ordinance so the Mayor can sign a contract with the State of Ohio Department of Transportation. *Motion made by Angela Lyons, second by Anna Turner. Roll call all yes. Motion passed.*

To adopt on emergency basis for the Ohio Department of Transportation to maintain safety of roads with control of snow and ice removal. *Motion made by Dusty Puckett, second by Angela Lyons. Roll call all yes. Motion passed. Motion made to adopt ordinance as stated – motion made by Peggy Vance, second by Dustin Puckett. Roll call all yes. Motion passed*

Motion to adopt ordinance as an emergency giving the Ohio Department of Transportation the authority to apply, maintain, or repair standard pavement markings and erect regulatory warning signs on state highways within the Village of Sardinia. *Motion made by Anna Turner. Second by Peggy Vance. Roll call all yes. Motion passed. Motion made to pass ordinance – Ashley Webster, second by Peggy Vance. Roll call all yes. Motion passed.*

UPDATE ON GRIT PROJECT

Renovation upstairs is getting very close main contractor has one or two more days. Flooring is all in, trim is almost complete, added all the new doors, electrician should be here this week to hang all the lights. You are welcome to see it tonight as long as there is enough daylight as there are no lights currently.

Front of the building is looking a little different. The electric sign is to be installed this week. The electrician will be here to get that connected, foundation for the sign has been poured. The flag pole will be moved sometime this week to the left side will have grass and flower beds around the electric sign and the flag pole.

Parking lot will be repaved. Waiting on the schedule but should be within the month.

Question by Ms. Turner on the steps in the front. Ms. Mason spoke to Dean Vaughn who had drawings for steps to be done in 2019 but was not done at that time. Need to find the original plans so that those steps/ramp going in will be according to state regulations.

Doors are in but they are waiting on some extra parts that are needed. The doors will be going in for the three main entrances. AE Glass has assured Ms. Mason they will be in end of month.

Thank you to Abby, intern we had through the summer who's last was Friday. She scanned 1000's of documents. She scanned all the ordinances, the resolutions, the cemetery deeds, and some of the minutes from council meetings. It will take us some time to sort through them. Her salary was paid for by a grant so we did not even have to reimburse her pay through the project.

Questions for Administration

Ms. Vance asked about the tornado sirens. Ms. Mason stated there was some confusion about what the problem was, confirmed that it was not because we did not pay a bill. Ms. Mason contacted the company, Mobile Comm in Cincinnati, who put in the system and maintains the system. They are to come out to come out and look at it. As of this time there is no working tornado sirens. Ms. Mason contacted the fire chief to inquire about a back up plan and there is no plan in place. There is no public system other than the sirens. The fire department did put on their Facebook page that the sirens were not working correctly. Ms. Mason will follow up with Mobile Comm to see when they will be out to check the sirens. We will post when we have it repaired.

Ms. Vance questioned about the Village group insurance policy due to what happened with the police department and other village workers. She inquired about joining a consortium to reduce cost. Ms. Mason stated that the Village has been denied insurance from three of those groups. Challenge that the Village has in when looking into insurance there were only three employees that needed insurance at that time and unfortunately, they look at the health background of the employees that are requesting insurance and we do not have the best health backgrounds. Tried again when we had four employees which was denied again. At one point we got up to six employees before the Chief and Matt left and still could not get into one of those groups. I check with the City of Milford which we could have gotten in to but the Village would have to take what they choose or pay \$1500.00 for the quote. Ms. Mason stated that she was not willing to pay \$1500.00 for a quote.

The ordinance that covers employee insurance goes back to 1995 which says that the Village will pay 75% and the employee will pay 25%. So, all employees have access to health care it is just very expensive. Just for the police chief for a full year the cost is \$24,500 for the Village cost.

Mayor Schroeder did state that Administration has talked to the broker that handles the trustees, the Mayor has called around to other counties regarding insurance. As far as the Chief and others who have left the Village they left because they got poached by other higher paying jobs. We hired good employees but they left due to money but we are still going to continue to work on this to retain good employees. Everyone did what they had to do to raise money to hire a chief but unfortunately it was still not enough.

Ms. Mason stated that she needs to schedule three committee meetings.

- 1) Public Safety – Bob Feinen needs to discuss a few things.
Scheduled for Monday, August 21, 2023 @ 5:00 p.m.
- 2) Finance Committee – reviewing the budget, so three readings to be done Oct, Nov, Dec. Also address insurance *Scheduled for Tuesday, August 22, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.*
- 3) Public Works – will need to address how the sewer plant will be running moving forward to keep the EPA standards. *Scheduled for Monday, August 21, 2023 @ 6:00 p.m.*

No other questions for Administrator.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Report from Director of Public Safety, Bob Feinen

Mr. Feinen stated that he had originally planned on being at this meeting to say thank you that he was moving on as he had completed his goals but unfortunately that is not the case due to the Mayor and Administrator's request to stay on to help with the police department due to the moving on of Chief Pangalo outside of Brown County. If you had not heard, Chief Pangalo moved on for higher paying job.

Since the resignation of Chief Pangalo job descriptions were created all positions that the Department did not have for Chief of Police, Police Captain (who acts as assistant to the Chief), Police Sargent, and a Police Officer. Not that all these positions are going to be filled but so that these will be available.

If you are not aware since the last meeting Tony Peters has resigned and is now working for the Village of Ripley. Currently is Bob Feinen and Officer Brian Perry. Before requesting executive session, Officer Perry worked on a report for council, not your usual report, but we will address as we move forward.

First page, of what looks like PowerPoint presentation, we have the two positions of Police Chief and Patrol officer. We are actively trying to put on some part time officer. Logistics of this – we have three vehicles with one the computer has not been updated, (computer has but software has not) this will get done this week. The Tahoe is the only vehicle available since I received a call last night from Officer Perry that the radiator blew up in the other patrol car, fan had actually broken and went through the radiator, parts have been ordered and will be repaired. Hopefully, by next week all three vehicles will be up and running.

Strengths of the Police Department

Preventing crime and protect
Drug intervention
Collaborating with other agencies
Traffic safety and enforcement

Weaknesses of the Police Department

Personnel shortages
Updating police administration

It is August and in November we will reassess again and see where we are but anticipating we will be back where we were just a few short months ago.

K9 has been out of service due to an injury at another location, not here in the Village. He will be up and running soon. I did locate a kennel that will fit in the Tahoe for free and will be getting a fan set up for free also. The kennel will be picked up tomorrow.

Mr. Feinen stated that we went from a low producing type police department to a department with activity and I will say that Officer Perry has been very instrumental in getting the drugs off the streets. The photographs that I get that I can't share with council but have shared with the mayor. It is unbelievable the drugs that are not just being found in the village but also in people just passing through. There is quite a bit going on.

Officer Perry addressed the council regarding the report that he has presented to the council.

Regarding the K9 certifications: Ghost, is certified in drug detect, article search and recovery certified. He is going to be certified on August 30 for tracking.

Officer Perry referenced page 3 of the report, operational portion. Just some highlights but the significant piece in the statistics checks that was done for the last six months which showed 370 citations in the Village, 356 traffic citations, 21 drug/narcotics arrests, and 3 weapons seized. In July alone, there were 93 traffic with 117 violations (if stopped may have two violations that is why numbers don't match), these were 6 drug/narcotic arrests, 3 weapons seized, 1 OVI, and 1 Domestic violence (these last two had to go to Brown County because this was their third offenses for the OVI and Domestic violence). The OVI was arrested and charged by Officer Perry

Officer Perry then referenced page 4 of the report, the numbers on the left side with each month which says appeared paid for citations – this is the docket. The numbers look high because they come to court, can't pay, so they come back the next month this is called show cause then they continue to come each month until the citation is paid. If you look at August 10 the big take away is the warrant blocks. This number is 184 who have not paid which go all the way back to 2007. Which mean the Village is losing money on these not being paid. Bob Feinen stated that the warrant blocks go against a driver's registration which has to be paid before they can renew a registration. License forfeiture just from the court August 10 there were 22 licenses electronically sent because of non-payment so that was 22 that did not pay or did not show up for court.

Last page of the report is all the violations information for July it is not just speeding, driving under suspension, expired license, fictitious tags, one gentleman pulled over did not have any eye cover on – State of Ohio states you must have eye covering and helmet, had suspended license, so that was double violation. If you commit a violation, I am going to stop you.

Officer Perry stated that he does spend a lot of time in the Village not just sitting on 32. I am actively in the Village as I have heard from other officers that there are a lot of drugs passing through the Village.

Mayor Schroeder stated that with a police philosophy we want the officers on our public streets. We have a problem in the Village so if we want people to make investments in the community, they need know that those investments will be respected. When they want to renovate a building, they want to know that when they leave that there will not be broken glass in the morning, people loitering in front of their buildings, not drug activity. This is the foundational peace, with the taxes and water so high this is how we combat those things. When we have people come and invest in real estate and improve real estate to put businesses in, that will spread the cost out. Public safety is the base foundation of the entire process that we all need to understand.

Ms. Webster did state she believes the drug activity had decreased as she lives in an area where there were a lot of drug activity.

Mayor Schroeder stated that the five-year plan has begun which Matt was instrumental in getting started for the sewer plant. The investment in the police department is how we try to sell this Village. People want to feel safe to walk in the Village. This is such a walkable Village it can be a great place for people to be out in the evening.

Mr. Feinen did address the council about the fact that they cannot give out information sometimes but will relay to the Mayor at the appropriate time that he needs to know. The recent drug bust that was in the paper recently they did use our department and our resources that helped with a very significant drug bust that cannot be discussed at length because of the ongoing investigation with the Fentanyl.

Mayor Schroeder stated if people want to be engaged in criminal activity let this be the least attractive place to do that then let them find someplace else to do it and let that place figure it out. He stated he does not wish ill on other villages but our responsibility is to this Village and to clean up our own backyard which is what we are doing. Mayor Schroeder thanked Officer Perry.

Mr. Feinen requested an executive session for some personnel issues. Mayor Schroeder requested that executive session wait until the remainder on the agenda and after the audience requests (found to be none).

Mayor Schroeder asked should Trick or Treat be on Tuesday, October 31 or on Saturday, October 28. The Saturday works for the first responders and the PTA. Time will be 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm. Ms. Dotson, in the audience, asked if anyone had checked about the time for Lake Waynoka trick or treat so no conflict – that date was being verified. *Motion for Saturday, October 28 by Ashley Webster, second by Peggy Vance. Roll Call: Ms. Vance abstained, Ms. Lyons no, all others yes.*

Mayor Schroeder shared a couple updates:

The train tracks – several council members spoke up to thank the Village for some of the patch updates to the tracks. Mayor and Administrator met with the state with the Department of Railroad Safety and the railroad folks they were great to deal with. In the next 18 months the railroad will take the crossing on Tri-County at the east end, the hump will be redone so it will be lower, take out all the crossing safety crossings will add new equipment with gates, the small shed will be taken out, the electrical equipment will be moved to the right side. They will also take out the King crossing. The

two dead head crossings will be taken out – we will need to sign to state that if these are ever needed (i.e., a business moves in that needs the tracks there) the tracks will be put back in. The intersection by Dusty's Mayor would like to suggest when the public safety committee meets that discussion be the possibility of closing Highland Avenue right at Tri-County the intersection there is not safe. No signage for *no left turn* currently to discuss how that closing would happen and improve that crossing, the one over on South Main. This would be looking into the future of more rail traffic. Ms. Mason did mention some of what the railroad funding does not cover which is some of the side roads at this time including the rail tracks on Fairview.

Mayor stated that he was at a dinner with Lt. Governor Husted who stated that the next super development sight for the State of Ohio was going to be Mt. Orab. Next development site it will draw more train traffic. This is a good time to start planning and to create for the future of the railroad.

Creamery demolishing will happen in the next week. Contracts have been approved; money has been allocated; everything is done. Contractors were thought to be here today but due to the rain may have been delayed.

EVENTS

Tomorrow night at the Elementary school Open house will be from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. – churches to meet at playground at 7:00 p.m. for a brief time of prayer for teachers, students, administrators, bus drivers. Kona Ice will be there so Sardinia Hope and Promise is going to pay for Kona Ice to stay from 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. About getting together with the community for fellowship.

Saturday is Car Show downtown. Registration from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Awards presented at 4:00 p.m. At 4:00 p.m. there will be a bounce house at the Methodist Church now known as Sardinia Hope Church and fellowship hall will be open (for cooling and water).

Ms. Vance noted that there will be a levy for the Fire/EMS on the ballot this year and there is a fundraising going on for that levy.

Mayor Schroeder noted that there was no one in the audience signed up to speak. To move to executive session. Informed audience they would be called back in after the executive session.

Motion to move to executive session made by Ms. Webster, second Ms. Vance. Roll call all yes.

Executive session began at 8:05 p.m.

Executive session ended at 8:23 p.m.

Motion made by Ms. Lyons, second Ms. Vance

Mayor Schroeder stated that there are four job descriptions, duties, and wages presented to the council for Police Chief, Police Captain, Police Sargent, and Police Officer. *Motion to accept Ms. Webster, Ms. Lyons. Roll Call all yes.*

Mayor Schroeder asked if there was a motion to name Police Chief. *Motion made to hire Brian Perry as Police Chief by Ms. Lyons, second Mr. North. Roll call all yes.*

Mayor Schroeder addressed the council and residents of the Village: Thank you for allowing me to serve the Village and alongside of you and to lead you as the Mayor for the past year. It has been a wonderful experience for me and I hope you enjoy the good that you have been doing for the people of the community during this time as well. My family and I are in the process of building a home on a property that we own that is outside of the Village. We intend to move to this property soon. For this reason, I am resigning my position as the Mayor of Village of Sardinia. I will add to that I did not

put in a petition to run for Mayor because while not knowing the times or dates the house may be completed, it may be before this new term as it would not be fair that I would not sit for even one day. I will continue to be involved as much as you will let me and probably more involved than that because I will maintain my law practice here, will be a resident here, and will continue to support you in many other capacities including being the pastor of Sardinia Hope Church. I am here to serve and assist you as I am able. Dated August 14, 2023.

With my resignation the president pro temp takes my seat as Mayor so I am very proud to ask Bill North to come forward to give him the oath of office.

President pro temp Bill North sworn in as Mayor of Sardinia by Mr. Schroeder for the term ending December 31, 2023.

Administrator stated the need to appoint a new president pro temp which will be done at next council meeting. Asked council to think about who they would like to appoint for the remainder of this term.

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Webster, second Ms. Vance. Roll call all yes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Bill North
Mayor

10-16-23
Date passed

Ashie Webster
President of Council