

SARDINIA COUNCIL MEETING

APRIL 14, 2025 7:00 P.M.

Prayer Mayor Bill North

Pledge Mayor Bill North

Roll Call: Gary Troutman, Anna Turner, Angela Lyons, Peggy Vance, Ashlie Webster, Dustin Puckett

Also in Attendance: Amy Mason, Administrator, Tom Mays, Solicitor, Venita Milburn, Clerk

COUNCIL NOTES

Council reviewed meeting minutes from March 10, 2025, regular meeting. Name left out of minutes in March under Ms. Vance's round table comment regarding who donated Tahoe to the fire department, which Ms. Vance informed was Dr. Charleton, added to official minutes. *Motion to approve by Peggy Vance, second by Ashlie Webster. Roll call all yes.*

Attachments: Meeting minutes from March 2025

AUDIENCE

Ryan Craig – Adams Brown Mobility Management – wanted to discuss one of the new projects which is a walk audit for all of Brown County Mr. Craig distributed flyer with QR code for a walk audit collection data for the residents. This project is collecting data for sidewalks and non-vehicular modes of transportation within the eight villages of Brown County. Will have the ability to contract with consulting firms then ODOT or FTA (Federal Transit Administration) then they come in and prioritize the projects. Works with the county engineer and local municipalities to get shovel ready for the project. The plan is to do a couple of designated days in each village so would like to come to any event to gather information from residents. Ms. Mason did mention that Village Sardinia had been awarded a grant from ODOT for \$115,000 for planning the sidewalk project so asked if this was different. Mr. Craig stated that they would still like to get county-wide data to help get more funding for everyone. The reason for working with County is so that County can do the administration of the roads especially when connecting counties with bike paths or other connections. Ms. Webster asked about the organized walk through the village for a walk audit which Mr. Craig explained the ways to do this as self-audit or a guided group. Also working with the Board of DD to see if a couple of their individuals would come out to the villages to walk the sidewalks. Mr. Mayes mentioned that working with ABMM would help us to get more points for future grants. Noted that the commissioners are very interested in this project.

Peggy Vance - Asked if the Adams Brown Mobility project was different than the grant for Graham Street. Ms. Mason answered that this was different, and the Graham Street grant that is from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) should be bid out this summer.

Ms. Vance also reported that Hope and Promise will have the first Farmer's Market on May 3, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Set up time will be 9:00 a.m. There is no charge for vendors. The road has been approved for closure.

Tristian Green – Informed council he had recently purchased the house at 101 Sardinia-Mowrytown Road. There was a misunderstanding with the water bill. Did not realize that the sewer would still be charged since there was no water to the residence at this time. Did not have mailbox at the location so did not receive statements so the billing has gotten

out of hand. Requesting that council provide some assistance in reduction if possible. It was believed that there was a sewer cap but there is not per the Village workers. Ms. Mason the amount of the bill which was \$686.99 with additional charge for the month of April. Mr. Green stated he realized that through the winter he could see that the dollars were needed for the roads which Ms. Mason explained water/sewer money cannot be used for roads that is a different category. Mr. Mayes stated that these decisions to remove sewer charges have been waived once on a case-by-case basis within reason in the past. Ms. Mason explained to Mr. Green that he would have to purchase a sewer cap either from the Village or from a local plumber. The cost for sewer cap from the Village is \$100 and with installation by the Village would be \$550. If Mr. Green installs himself then he would need to have the Village workers check it after it is installed. Mr. Mayes stated that a one-time abatement would need a motion from council. Ms. Mason stated that the abatement would include the billing through April 9th and if sewer cap was not in by the next month billing the charges would stay. Ms. Lyons wanted to make clear that if the sewer cap was not in by the next billing, then the entire bill would be due, which Ms. Mason thought should not be included because this will be a livable residence soon and the understanding is that if the sewer cap is not installed then the charge for sewer will continue. Mr. Mayes stated several ways the motion can be made. *Motion is made to give Mr. Green the abatement from the time Mr. Green purchased the house through April 9th with sewer cap installed by the next billing date or sewer charges will be billed by Ashlie Webster, second by Anna Turner. Roll call all yes.*

FINANCIALS

Council reviewed the financials for March, 2025. Ms. Mason stated that there wasn't anything significant to have Maria Palm, Fiscal Officer, to come in. First is listed the monthly statement, next page is the bank reconciliation statement, bank balances. Ms. Mason did want to reiterate, as she informed Mr. Green, each category within the budget is spent. Money for streets can cover money for streets, money in general, we can take money from general because this is where a lot of the tax money falls into. We cannot take money from sewer to pay for streets, we cannot take money from police to pay for streets. When you see there is 1.8 million combined that is from every category. There are 20 categories that we must bill out of and this is what is reconciled every month. This is NOT the available balance.

Entry for check to Danny Mason will be covered a little bit later in this meeting but wanted council to know that there was an amount turned over the auditor's office. This was found to be an error on our part that he had to pay so we refunded Mr. Mason the amount of \$1754. He is the property owner of 111 Charolette. Other than this entry everything is pretty much routine.

Mr. Troutman asked some questions about line items that did not seem to match. Ms. Mason thought this was not very clear so suggested a finance committee meeting to review. Mr. Mayes mentioned that this page is more complicated because the transactions come from different categories. Suggestion to table the financial report approval for the month of March to the next council meeting to get some more clarity after the finance reports from the fiscal officer. Next council meeting will be approving March and April finances.

Ms. Mason asked for approval to accept resolution from Jill Hall for our taxes which she sends every year." *Resolution Accepting The Amounts and Rates As Determined By The Budget Commission and Authorizing The Necessary Tax Levies and Certifying Them To The County Auditor"* the council of the Village of Sardinia met on April 14 in a regular meeting at the office of Council 151 Maple Avenue with the following members present, Peggy Vance, Gary Troutman, Ashlie Webster, Dusty Puckett, Anna Turner, Angela Lyons. General fund the Village would receive \$13,054 and the police fund, which is from the levy passed in 2013, would receive \$44,279. *Ashlie Webster moved to adopt the resolution, with a second by Peggy Vance. Roll call all yes.*

Ms. Mason stated that the personnel manual does need some updates that the personnel committee has been working through but has not met recently. Ms. Mason does meet with the public works department every week where there have been some suggested updates. Currently, we do not have to call the department in very often but did so during the winter when they were called in to turn off water for residents for a leak which they receive a two hour minimum. After some research of some other villages of similar size, call out times are usually three to four hours. Ms. Mason is requesting that council change the call out time to three hour minimum. Not a significant cost as in the two years have probably called them in four times while this winter was probably 5-6 times. *Anna Turner made a motion to change the call out time from two hours to three hours, second by Dusty Puckett. Roll call all yes.*

Ms. Mason discussed the property at 111 Charolette. Debbie Sullivan's sister has called the office to ask about the trailer on the property which is owned by Danny Mason. Ms. Sullivan is no longer able to stay in the trailer as she is in a long-term care facility. Her sister called the office to state that a council member had informed them of a grant that was available to remove the trailer from the property. Angela Lyons did admit she was the council member she was talking to which she informed council that she had told the sister that the Village did not have the money to remove the trailer. There was a sewer charge was getting charged to Ms. Sullivan so these charges were turned into the auditor office to the property owner. This is why the check was sent to Mr. Mason after we found that we had inspected the sewer cap back a year ago. Ms. Sullivan's sister was informed that the only program known was the Land Bank. Ms. Vance also mentioned that Senior Pro can help with a free attorney to create will and executor of estate. Mr. Mayes did inform council that mobile homes are usually not considered for the Land Bank.

Ms. Mason wanted to address some inaccurate information about the police fleet that is on social media. Ms. Mason would like this information in the minutes for accuracy:

On February 6, 2024, the Dodge Cruiser was sold to Manchester for \$3,500.00 which on the same day, February 6, 2024, we cut a check to Chicago Motors for \$12,495.00 and traded the second Dodge Cruiser for credit towards the gray 2018 Tahoe which Sgt. Ingle uses daily.

Prior to Ms. Mason coming to the Village in 2019 Chief Lewis had purchased a new 2019 Tahoe which was paid off in 2022. This was a four-year finance and paid interest on.

So, there were three cars in the fleet. We got rid of two Cruisers and got one Tahoe until which time we could save up enough money to purchase a third cruiser.

On December 16, 2024, from Chiefs Uplifting Solutions, we purchased a used 2023 Chevy truck with approximately 22,000 miles for \$50,183.10.

So, we have returned to three functional vehicles. The reason you have not seen the truck is because it must be fitted with equipment to make it functional. Things have been on back order which is why you have not seen it yet.

During the time we were down to two cruisers, the white Tahoe, which is a 2019, the transmission went out which was replaced under warranty. At the same time as the 2019 Tahoe was getting the new transmission, the gray Tahoe went down. So, there was a day that the department had no vehicles. It is not unusual for a department our size to have three vehicles for this reason.

The 2011 Crown Vic which is sitting out back was donated to the department. We have invested zero dollars in this car and adding this vehicle did not increase the insurance costs with liability only.

We did look at a new vehicle when prior to purchasing the 2023 Truck but a new one was \$80,000 to \$90,000 which would have to be financed at 6.00% interest rate. Ms. Mason did not feel this was the best deal because we did not want to pay interest.

Another thing that is mentioned in social media is that the Village paid \$10,000 for a Ghost, drug dog. This, also, is not true. Ghost was purchased by Chief Brian Perry, by a grant that he received for \$7,000 and Chief Perry paid the remaining \$3,000 out of his own pocket. When he came to the department, we added liability insurance and insurance on Ghost that if he gets injured or killed in the line of duty with the Sardinia Police, the insurance will pay \$10,000 for a new dog and \$7,000 for the new dog's training. We do pay for his food, which is about \$50.00 a month, because he is part of the police department.

The other thing that is out on social media is that Ghost is not certified. Chief Perry and Ghost were just recertified last Wednesday. Ghost is certified in drug detection, tracking and article search through 2026. They also have a patrol certification through August 2026 at which time they will be recertified by the end of this year. Every K9 officer in the State of Ohio must have a home cruiser because they are on call for any agency that may require a K9 which Ghost has assisted several agencies. Every time Chief Perry mentions in his reports that they have provided mutual aid this is assisting other agencies. Because of we have taken on the liability for Ghost, he has to be transported in a K9 cage. We do pay for any additional training, which is about \$100 a month.

Ms. Mason wanted to make a record of this information for the people who do not want to come to the council meetings, so it is clear in council minutes recording of the description of the police fleet and Certifications of Ghost, the K9.

Ms. Webster stated that we have a great police department and a police dog.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Sergeant Curry Ingle provided the report in Chief Perry's place.

The department hired a new part time officer, Michael Meyer, who does have plenty of police experience and recently worked in Northern Kentucky and previously worked in Ripley.

Sergeant Ingle did reiterate that there is an Ohio Revised Code that states all K9 officers must have a take home vehicle. The department will make that Ohio Revised Code available for anyone that is interested in reading that.

Ms. Lyons asked how many police officers are in the department currently. Ms. Mason responded on the roster currently is Chief Brian Perry who is salary, Sergeant Ingle who is full time, Officer Dakotah Brown who works part time usually every other weekend, Brandon Copley who is on administrative duty until he recertifies, Michael Meyer who can't work until recertified in Ohio needing 24 hours of continuing education. The idea is that Officer Meyer will work the opposite weekend than Dakotah Brown. We also have Shawn Elliott and James Lee who can be used for special events or court coverage if needed. And of course, K9 Captain Ghost.

Sargeant Ingle did inform council that Michael Meyer had completed his recertification this past weekend.

COMMITTEES

Economic Development – Ms. Webster stated that the committee had met where there was agreement to hire a zoning officer as the strategic plan for 2025. There are three missions that are being worked on that are zoning, beautification, and infrastructure. Hope and Promise will be involved in the beautification along with the community. Amy and Ms. Webster interviewed two candidates for the zoning position, one of which was the Washington Township zoning officer and the other individual we would like to make an offer to. His name is Andrew Harding who lives outside the Village. Mr. Harding is ex-military, ex-police, a great character. Mr. Harding used to live here, has family here now, and is invested in making a difference. Ms. Mason did mention other qualifications for Mr. Harding, which is 22 plus years engineering in the military and 29 plus years in construction fields. Ms. Mason would like to recommend that Mr. Harding go on a monthly salary, he would be available at the beginning of the month at \$500 per month. This is Ms. Mason's proposal to approve the hiring of Andrew Harding as of May 1 with a salary of \$500 per month, he will track his hours so if it seems that he is getting more hours than this would be brought back to council. When he is in town, he will have the availability to drive the small truck so that residents in the community will recognize he is with the Village.

Motion to hire Andrew Harding at a salary of \$500 per month starting May 1 made by Angela Lyons, second by Gary Troutman. Ms. Webster did abstain because of interviewing Mr. Harding. Roll all others all yes.

Ms. Webster said the next Economic Development meeting would be on April 28, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

Finance Committee – Gary Troutman would like to schedule the next finance meeting to go through the reports. Will schedule for May 2, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

Executive Session

Ms. Mason then requested a motion for an Executive Session for 121.22G1 Personnel Matters.

Motion to enter an executive session made by Dustin Puckett, second by Ann Turner. Roll call all yes.

Executive Session Begins at 8:04 p.m.

Motion to come out of executive session made by Angela Lyons, second by Peggy Vance. Roll call all yes.

Executive Session Ends at 8:20 p.m.

Action taken from Executive Session

Motion to suspend the rules for Ordinance Amending and Confirming The Rate of Pay for David Dyer. Seconded by Anna Turner. Roll call all yes.

Motion to approve the Ordinance amending the rate of pay for David Dyer for an hourly rate of \$25.00 per hour with an active license for Water Distribution beginning April 24, 2025, with the new pay period. Motion made by Peggy Vance, seconded by Ashlie Webster. Roll call all yes.

Ms. Mason wanted to go on record to applaud David Dyer for the initiative to go on his own and pass the class for the Ohio EPA Water Distribution Class I. Ms. Mason appreciates the council recognizing him with the new rate of pay.

Attachments: Ordinance No 138-25
Sewer adjustment for Tristan Green
ABBM flyer

ROUND TABLE

Peggy Vance - Ms. Vance stated that she had been approached by members of the American Legion being able to put up some signage at the entrances of the Village letting people know that there is an American Legion here in the Village. This brought up the discussion of the community fence with signage that blew down which listed the churches. Would like to discuss with council but the Village would not own this but who would own it. Mr. Mayes stated that the Lions Club owned it but would need to check with the property owners of those spaces. Ms. Mason does not want to have to mow around signs if there are multiple signs. If the American Legion wants to put a sign up on the Sardinia sign for now, then look at the bigger project later. Ms. Vance asked if they would need to bring this back to the council where Ms. Mason stated it would be up to the property owners.

Motion to adjourn is made by *Dustin Puckett*, second by *Ashlie Webster*. Roll call *all yes*.

NEXT MEETING MAY 12, 2025, AT 7:00 P.M.
MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:35 P.M.

May 12, 2025
Date Approved

Bill Good
Mayor

Ashlie Webster
President of Council