

Village of St. Paris
January 13, 2025
Council Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll call was taken by Mayor Susan Prince. Frank Blair, Joe Curran, Terry Ervin II, Tony Hoyt, Linda Julien and Steve Lett were present. Village Administrator Spencer Mitchell was also present. Fiscal Officer Marc McGuire was absent.

Motion was made by Councilor Hoyt and seconded by Councilor Lett to approve the council agenda, as amended. Motion passed.

Public Comments on Agenda Items:

- Eric Smith, 6532 N. State Route 235, inquired about the decision regarding the police levy and why the levy was not discussed prior to the police department being dissolved. Council Ervin stated that he asked Mr. Smith to gather information about putting a police levy on the ballot, such as millage required to maintain a police department, and bring it to council and Mr. Smith did not follow thru with the request.
- Tony Whitman, 340 E. Main Street and downtown business owner, asked how long until after an ordinance is passed until it becomes effective. Mayor Prince responded that council is following the advice of the village solicitor with Mr. Whitman responding that maybe the village needs a new solicitor.

Elect Council President Pro-Temp:

- Mayor Prince asked for Council President Pro-Tempore to be elected. **Motion** was made by Councilor Lett and seconded by Councilor Curran to appoint Councilor Hoyt as Council President Pro-Tempore. Motion passed.

Motion was made by Councilor Ervin and seconded by Councilor Lett to approve the council meeting minutes dated December 16, 2024. Motion passed.

Mayor's Notes:

- The community pancake breakfast is January 18, 2025 from 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM in the municipal garage.
- Mayor Prince noted that the referendum petition (regarding Ordinance 2024-10) is being reviewed by the village solicitor.

Committee Appointments:

- Council appointed Councilor Hoyt and Councilor Julien to the Budget Committee, Councilor Ervin to the JSP Fire Board, Councilor Curran and Councilor Lett to the Park, Land and Buildings Committee, Councilor Ervin to the Planning Commission, Councilor Blair and Councilor Curran to the Safety Committee, Councilor Blair and Councilor Hoyt to the Street Committee and Councilor Julien and Councilor Lett to the Zoning Enforcement Committee.
- **Motion** was made by Councilor Ervin and seconded by Councilor Lett to approve the Johnson Township Trustee nomination of Mark Traylor to the JSP Fire Board and serving a 2-year term. Motion passed. The next JSP Fire Board meeting is scheduled for January 14, 2025 at 7:00 PM at the firehouse.
- The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2025 at 7:30 PM in the council room.
- The next Street Committee meeting is scheduled for January 14, 2025 at 5:30 PM in the council room. Administrator Mitchell added that Christmas trees will be picked up by the Street Department.

Old Business: none

New Business:

- Council agreed to conduct council meetings on the first and third Monday of each month at 7:00 PM in the council room. Due to the Martin Luther King holiday on January 20, 2025, **Motion** was made by Councilor Lett and seconded by Councilor Blair to move the regularly scheduled council meeting, scheduled for January 20th, to January 21, 2025 at 7:00 PM. Motion passed.

- Mayor Prince introduced the Village Council Meeting Policies and Procedures. Councilor Ervin suggested that the invocation prayer be included in the council agenda and council agreed. The invocation prayer will be added to the agenda prior to the Call of Order. Councilor Hoyt noted that the agenda should read accurately as reflected in the Council Meeting Policies and Procedures. An updated revision of the policies and procedures will be distributed at the next council meeting.
- Council discussed placing the failed street levy renewal back on the ballot. Councilor Ervin noted that having a renewed levy increases the chances to secure available grant money. Councilor Lett stated that with all the progress made on the streets the last few years, the street renewal levy needs to be on the ballot. Councilor Hoyt agreed that a renewal would help secure grant money and the Street Committee has discussed the renewal and suggested that since the village is at the end of the 5-year street program, the Street Committee should develop a new street plan. Councilor Blair discussed having a public meeting with village residents to share the street plan and noted the Street Committee will determine the date and time of a public meeting. Administrator Mitchell will prepare a presentation in regards to the new street plan. Councilor Lett noted that the failed street levy renewal generates approximately \$126,000 and the renewal is not a new tax. Councilor Lett stated that if the renewal levy fails 3 times, then it cannot be put back on the ballot as a renewal. **Motion** was made by Councilor Blair and seconded by Councilor Julien to place the street levy renewal back on the ballot and have the Fiscal Officer draft a resolution to certify the current tax valuation with the county auditor. Councilor Ervin stated that council should consider a police levy and if the petition referendum passes, there is still a funding issue. Councilor Ervin asked the Safety Committee to discuss a police levy and funding. Councilor Ervin noted that it is a council decision on whether a police levy will be put on the ballot and it would be up to the residents on whether or not a police levy would be supported.
- Council was informed that Fiscal Officer McGuire will begin village record destruction according to the village's record retention schedule as approved by the Ohio History Connection.

Public Comments:

- Tony Whitman, 340 E. Main Street and downtown business owner, asked why the Police Chief was terminated and noted that there is a pattern established between the Mayor and Police Chiefs. Mayor Prince read Ohio Revised Code 731.29 to the public. Mr. Whitman stated that council is not listening to the citizens of the village.
- Eric Smith, 6532 N. State Route 235, said a thank you for rescinding his termination and inquired about his outstanding record requests. Mr. Smith commented that foul language in the municipal building is a crime and thinks council should resign. Mr. Smith also presented FaceBook screenshots of Councilor Letts posts.
- Betty Smith, 127 S. High Street, thanked the Street Department for snow removal during the last few snowfalls. Ms. Smith asked council what their plans are to make the village a better place in the next 5 to 10 years.
- Charlene Hess, 240 W. Troy Street, thanked whoever picked up trash along the street and noted that her household and other neighbors have been picking up the blowing trash. Ms. Hess stated that council works for us and the citizens currently tolerate council and they will not be reelected. Ms. Hess noted that the village issues are of the fault of council and the mayor and Ms. Hess was critical of how Councilor Hoyt handled the letters requesting the resignation of council members.

There being no further business, **motion** was made by Councilor Lett and seconded by Councilor Ervin to adjourn at 7:41 PM. Motion passed.

Marc McGuire, Fiscal Officer

Susan Prince, Mayor

Date