

**EP VILLAGE COUNCIL 2/12/24 85 N. MARKET ST. 7:00 PM**

Mayor Conaway called the meeting to order. Present was Mr. Blythe, Mr. Glavan, Ms. May, and Mr. Simpson. Dr. Rocco and Mr. Povenski were not present, their absences were excused on a motion by Mr. Simpson seconded by Mr. Glavan. Also present was Village Manager Chad Edwards, Finance Director's Traci Spratt and Melissa Hiner, Fire Chief Keith Drabick, W/WW Superintendent Scott Wolfe, Clerk Misti Martin and BZ Inspector CH McCutcheon. The minutes from the 1/22/24 meeting were approved on a motion by Ms. May, seconded by Mr. Glavan. The January 2024 department reports were approved on a motion by Ms. May seconded by Mr. Blythe. There were no clerk's, law directors, or park/rec/cem reports.

**AGENDA: DR. ERIN HAYNES-UNIVERSITY OF KY.** Dr. Haynes stated she is an environmental health scientist originally from Appalachia and that her work has primarily focused on issues that residents have faced including the hazardous waste incinerator in East Liverpool, the refinery in Marietta as well as fracking. She began by launching a health tracking survey that ended up with 380 participants with the majority of those participants living within East Palestine, of the participants 3 out of every 4 reported experiencing at least one new health symptom since the derailment with half of them indicating them being upper airway and over 80% of the participants who live within one mile reported new upper respiratory symptoms. Over half of the participants reported that the symptoms remained through fall of 2023. A stress/ptsd screening found that in fall 2023 half continued to experience elevated levels of stress with a third having symptoms of ptsd. Half of participants stated they still rely on bottled water and a third continue to report odors related to the derailment. She said they will look into long term tracking and will be re-launching the survey and hopefully get many more participants. Resident and survey participant asked if she would be reaching out to those who had already participated to continue tracking, Dr. Haynes said those who began the study will remain in. Resident Micki Labate asked how many participants were removed from the study for whatever reason, Dr. Haynes stated they started out at well over 400 participants and ended with 380. Ms. Labate asked if the liver can be tested for dioxins, Dr. Haynes said no but you can have your blood tested for liver function. In reference to dioxins Dr. Haynes said they occur when any burning occurs; they invited 20 participants to give blood and urine samples (4 vials of blood are required to have enough serum to measure for dioxins). They ended with 18 usable samples drawn in July 2023 which were tested by the CDC (for the blood study smokers we not accepted and participants must live within one mile from the site.) Dr. Haynes stated everyone in America has a dioxin level in their body (normally comes from high fat foods), there are 20 measurable dioxins and they can all be summed up in one value (TEQ) and then compared to others in the U.S. These levels were compared to a 2011 CDC study (N. Haynes Study) and found that all 18 samples were within/below the comparison value of the U.S. She said yes there was most likely dioxins in the air but they were not enough to raise levels above what is typical in the U.S. Urine samples were also collected from those same 18 participants, with the goal being to check all of the other chemicals (vinyl chloride, acrylates). She noted that she saw in the news and social media people going to lab corp and getting tested for vinyl chloride and it showing up in their systems. She said she questioned this because there is not, to the scientific community's knowledge, a good measure of these chemical metabolizing. Any time we are exposed to chemicals our body processes them and those small process pieces are called metabolites. There is no off the shelf method for analyzing any of these metabolites. A chemist at Wayne State University is working to figure the best metabolites to measure vinyl chloride, acrolein, acrylates. Mayor Conaway stated that people who state that they have vinyl chloride in their urine, it's impossible for them to know because there is no test for that. Dr. Haynes said there is in fact a pathway of vinyl chloride metabolites, one of them at the very end of the pathway is what Lab Corp was measuring, unfortunately this chemical metabolite can also be found from other exposures, it's not specific to vinyl chloride. In reference to dioxins, Mayor Conaway said there is much talk about one group testing for them and they are within normal range and another group will test and they will be very high, he said while dioxins may be in the ground he asked if her study found there was there was not a rise in dioxin levels in her participants within the village, Dr. Haynes said that was correct. They found dioxin in the body but it was within typical U.S. levels. Ms. May asked if there is any way to help those with respiratory issues identify if the issue is something that was already there or if it's new, she said no one is saying people are not having issues but more what are we looking at and how do people get help. Dr. Haynes said she phrased her questions about symptoms to ask about NEW symptoms. Finally, Dr. Haynes said they did indoor air sampling by placing a VOC badge in their homes for a week and it would measure all VOC's. The badges were sent to Wayne State and were analyzed for

acrylates and btex which is commonly found in gasoline and solvents; none of the homes that were tested had any acrylates related to the derailment. Two homes out of the 15 tested had levels that were uncommonly high for btex which means there is some sort of gasoline exposure in the home. Btex can cause dizziness, headaches, rashes. There was a lot of truck traffic during that time, and also if a home is closed up the air stays in and can raise levels of anything that is there. The home that was evacuated and closed up for a month had the highest level, she feels they should probably do more with indoor air. Mayor Conaway stated Dr. Haynes was totally independent and was not working with any Village administration or NS, Dr. Haynes said that is correct. She uses her own money as well as grants from NIEHS. She said they also had 85 participants in the survey to wear silicone wrist bands for a week that would then be tested at Duke University, they are still being analyzed. An audience member asked about the synergistic impact of compounded chemicals, Dr. Haynes said that is a good question but it will be very challenging to put all of that information together. Resident John Davis asked how they could help her with funding to expand the study. Mr. Simpson asked if there was link to microplastics in bottled water to elevated level (chemical leaching from the bottles after they sit in the sun) Dr. Haynes said in reference to vinyl chloride she did not think so. **ANDY MCGUIRE-USEPA REGION 5** gave a slide presentation concerning the qualitative sheen survey that was done last November in Sulphur and Leslie Run. The sheen survey was done every 25 feet, the various types of sheen were categorized as follows: no sheen, light sheen, medium and heavy sheen. In November 2023 they saw much more light sheen than heavy sheen, they also did background testing up stream above where the contamination entered the creeks. These assessments are available for viewing online and the link will be in the newsletter. Resident John Davis asked if they went downstream and worked their way up and Mr. McGuire said yes. Resident Bennet Bruno asked how they did the agitation for the sheen assessment, if they just stuck a stick in the ground or how they did it. McGuire said they used a shovel or pole to agitate the rocks and liberate the sheen, and that they also had containment in place so as not to send it further downstream. Resident Peggy Caratelli asked if any of the staff performing the survey had issues with illness afterwards, Mr. McGuire said they did not, additionally they had air monitoring while they were testing and found no issues. They are currently developing a work plan to go the areas of medium/heavy sheen for clean-up. They use methods such as flushing/washing and air knifing as well as sediment removal, after the next round of cleanup another sheen assessment will be done. A resident asked these projects would be funded by federal or state epa, Mr. Hunsicker said it is being funded by NS but OEPA and USEPA has direct oversight. Mr. Simpson about the effect of the chemicals have had on the flora/fauna of the stream. Bill Zewisky of OEPA stated a complete survey of Little Beaver Creek was completed in 2022 and in 2023 a biologic survey was done of the flow path; in 2022 Leslie Run was meeting EPA's biologic standards and Sulphur has been so impacted by culverting that it doesn't have biologic expectations. There was a complete fish kill after the spill and six months later it scored higher than it did in 2022 which is a testament to mother natures resilience. He said the site they wanted to do the most was downstream where the bridge was replaced but when the dropped the bridge into the water that made it impossible to do a biologic survey there. They tested the creek in Negley and it also scored higher than it did in 2022. He said he is comfortable that biologically the creeks have completely recovered and that they will be doing biology again this year to confirm. **CHRIS HUNTSIGER-NS ENVIRONMENTAL OPERATIONS** Mr. Huntsiger stated so far all areas where they were expecting contamination at the site have been dug out and water being collected has not come back as hazardous with over 80 sample results to prove it. Any water collected is still being treated as hazardous waste as a precaution, the water is either stored in the blue tanks or ran through the treatment system and tested again. They are now working on a plan as to how non-hazardous waste will be handled, it will still be collected and tested to confirm it is non hazardous waste and it can then be shipped to a non-hazardous facility. Resident David Peters stated the site area used to be a heavy equipment boneyard years ago and asked if there was any indication of contamination from that in addition to the derailment chemicals, Mr. Huntsiger said they are seeing some remnants of that.

**MAYOR:** Mayor Conaway stated President Biden would be coming to the Village of Friday February 16 for a visit.

**MANAGER:** Manager Edwards stated he met with Columbiana County Port Authority as an introductory meeting as well as discussed various tools for economic development. One of the condemned properties is in the process of being demolished with hopefully more in the near future. He said a dilapidated building inventory is being created to prioritize the order that the properties will be handled. Dog Days will be on May 18 and the February newsletter is out and it

looks good. Mayor Conaway asked about local contractors being contacted to do the demo work, Manager Edwards said BZ Inspector McCutcheon is to have that information to him by Friday.

**STREET:** Mr. Glavan stated the South Market portion of the waterline project is now complete and in reference to issues with the streets (potholes, gravel, etc.) Mr. Glavan said to let him know the issues and he would get them to the appropriate parties, and that repairs needed from the waterline project will begin when the weather breaks.

**DEVELOPMENT/FINANCE:** Ms. May stated the RCAP Think Tank group is still meeting and finalizing some plans for potential future projects with more information to come. Roberta Streiffert from RCAP is working the officers from the Chamber of Commerce and helping them develop plans and ideas to help with economic development. Ms. May congratulated Terry Keresty and Threshold for demolishing two dilapidated buildings downtown; she added Threshold will also be revitalizing the exterior of their workshop and thrift store.

**UTILITY:** Mr. Blythe stated both the waterline replacement project and the filter project at the water plant are still ongoing. He added the water and wastewater plants are operating as they should.

**SAFETY:** Fire Chief Drabick stated they have started the "Sound the Alarm Smoke Detector" blitz in conjunction with the Red Cross and will take place on April 20, forms are available online and at the Municipal Building and Fire Station. Finally said there was in fact a fire at the Elementary School in a mechanical room on the second floor and was contained to that room. He thanked the staff and teachers for getting the students to safe area so quickly. They did a great job. In reference to Finance Director Traci Spratt retiring Ms. May asked new Finance Director Melissa Hiner to speak on the transition. Ms. Hiner stated she's been working with Traci since mid-October and everything is going well and that she is comfortable with the day-to-day operations. She added they are looking into different investment opportunities as Huntington has come out with a new ICS Sweep account with an interest rate of 4.85%, she stated we currently have a money market with them with an interest rate of 3.7% so the funds will be transferred to the sweep account. She said she will also take some funds from the General Fund and add to the sweep account since it currently doesn't accrue any interest. She added funds can be transferred at any time so if something needs paid, she can transfer in the needed funds but in the mean time some extra revenue can be gained. Mayor Conaway asked Atty. Powers if a condemned home can be sold, Atty. Powers said it can be sold but its still condemned. In reference to the waterline project Mr. Blythe added the construction on Market would not affect the bussing for students

#### **THERE WERE NO VISITORS COMMENTS ON CURRENT LEGISLATION**

**VISITORS:** Carol Cope, Mark Rhodes, Frank Zingales, Bill Zawiski, Andy McGuire, Micki Labate, Jon Varley, Dave Biggins, Jerry Coblenz, Kent & Darlene Chapman, David Peters, Dan Sebrell, Dan McKinstry, Barb Kliner, Randy Sachet, Bennet Bruno, Misti Allison, Dr. Erin Haynes, Fritz Nelson, Steph Elverd, Tim Fisher, Ron & Peggy Caratelli, Geraldine Moore, John Davis, Timothea Deeter, Officer Chris Weingart, Jenn Drabick, Nicole Drabick.

**LEGISLATION:** Mr. Simpson introduced Ord. 1-2024 for a first reading and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Mr. Blythe. **An ordinance adopting a negotiated contract modification between the Village of East Palestine (employer) and the Teamsters (union) and declaring an emergency.** Mr. Simpson introduced Res.3-2024 and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Ms. May. **A resolution authorizing participation in the ODOT road salt contracts in 2024.** Mr. Simpson called for a vote on Res. 3-2024. Passed unanimously. Mr. Simpson introduced Res.4-2024 and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Ms. May. **A resolution designating East Palestine Community Improvement Corporation as the agency of the Village of East Palestine for its industrial, commercial, distribution and research development.** Mr. Simpson called for a vote on Res.4-2024. Passed unanimously. Mr. Simpson made a motion to table Res.5-2024 (appointing board members to the CIC) until all council members were present. The motion was seconded by Mr. Blythe and passed unanimously. Mr. Simpson introduced Res. 6-2024 and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Ms. May. **A resolution requesting the County Auditor to certify certain tax valuation information in anticipation of levying a tax in excess of the ten-mill limitation.** Mr. Simpson called for a vote on Res.6-2024. Passed unanimously. At this point Mr. Simpson made a motion to go into executive session per ORC 121.22 to discuss personal, board appointments and potential employment inviting in Finance

Director Spratt, Atty. Powers and Manager Edwards, with no further action to be taken. The motion was seconded by Ms. May and passed unanimously.

**ADJOURN:** At approximately 9:30 Ms. May made a motion to return to regular session seconded by Mr. Blythe. Mr. Simpson then made a motion to adjourn seconded by Mr. Glavan. All in favor, meeting adjourned.

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**MISTI J. MARTIN CLERK**

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**MAYOR TRENT CONAWAY**