

## **EP COUNCIL 8/25/25 85 N. MARKET ST. 7:00 PM**

Mayor Conaway called the meeting to order. Present was Mr. Blythe, Mr. Glavan, Ms. Herriott, Mr. Povenski, Mr. Simon and Ms. Stauffer. Also present was Village Manager Antonio Diaz-Guy, Finance Director Melissa Hiner, Law Director David Powers, Police Chief Jim Brown, Officer Chris Weingart and Clerk Misti Martin. The minutes of the 8/11 meeting were approved on a motion by Mr. Povenski seconded by Mr. Glavan. There were no agenda items, monthly reports, safety, Law Director's, or water/wastewater reports.

**CLERK:** Clerk Misti Martin stated there are two new options under services requests on the website to allow for the reporting of needed park/playground maintenance as well as any needed maintenance on the walking trail. A reminder was also given for the community calendar on the website and that offices will be closed on Monday September 1 for Labor Day.

**MAYOR:** Mayor Conaway stated he would like to appoint Joseph Della Volle to the vacant Planning Commission seat and asked for a motion from Council to approve the appointment. Ms. Stauffer made the motion to approve Della Volle seconded by Mr. Povenski. Passed unanimously. Additionally, it was noted the park is open for business but we ask that everyone be extra careful due to the construction.

**MANAGER:** Manager Diaz-Guy stated the Back to School Bash was a great event and it was nice to see everyone involved. The 2025 paving preconstruction meeting is Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> and the sign on Rt. 14 is moving forward. He attended the Opportunity Appalachia Investor Convening in Ashville NC; the big take away was that EP as a community is still in a great spot even after covid and the manufacturing exodus. He also learned of new opportunities such as historic tax credits and new market tax credits. In reference to legislation specifically Ord. 17 in ref to BZ hours, the position was originally capped at twenty hours per week; the issue is that BZ Officer Rube Ginder is working that and much more and we need to make sure he is compensated properly and this will let him work up to 29 hours. Ord. 18 is in reference to establishing a rate structure for work that is done on private property. Normally we do not work on private property however when it connects to public infrastructure, we have an incentive to make sure the work is done correctly and to our specs. For example, if a resident needs to connect to the stormwater system the village could do the digging and placement and the resident would reimburse the village for the expenses. These things would have to have a connection to infrastructure and be tracked by agreements specific to each situation. The rate structure is based on our labor costs and equipment costs are based on FEMA rates, materials will be provided at 10% over cost. Once the project is completed the agreement will clearly state the project now belongs to the property owner and they are responsible for any future maintenance or service. In reference to payment the expectation is that it is paid up front. Res. 16 is in reference to authorizing a \$500,000 (0% interest) loan to EPCIC; two projects are currently under way with original plan being to grant fund them but the issue then becomes timelines. The current projects are ready to move forward but the new grant cycles are not yet opened; in order to keep the projects from stalling his proposal is to provide the CIC with the loan for economic development repayable on demand. The CIC will continue to fundraise as well as seek grants in addition to the Village loan. In reference to a business plan for the funds it was stated the funds would stay in the village coffers until requested on a per project basis; in reference to the current projects the funds would pay construction and the other would pay for final design. The funds could also be used for land acquisition for future projects.

This loan is currently for CIC only and not private investors but he is working with the Port Authority on a potential business grant loan. The Train Depot is currently under CIC control and is being built out into a commercial facility and it has a tenant signed letter of interest. The EPCIC Plaza is the second project with a plan to expand the building for a retail location as well as a community plaza. In reference to repayment, it is written as a demand loan the Village can ask for the funds back at any time in part or in full as suitable and there is no authority to write it off, it must be paid back. The CIC would also provide a monthly report as to how the funds are being spent. During settlement negotiations it was noted that a portion of the funds was allocated for economic development and recovery of local economy. There would be immediate equity in the buildings, cash flow from leases as well as funds from fundraising, grants and sale of property that has previously been conveyed to them that would go towards repayment. Council stated that while they support the CIC, a \$500,000 is a large sum of money they would like to see more on paper in reference to project specifics/business plans prior to voting on the loan and verify what is in the best interest of the Village. It was stated that one of the projects is a dining establishment that has five other locations specifically set to help establish Nite life in EP, the second is an established business with one other location with plans to expand whether it be in town or not, and the third project is the acquisition cost for an option payment for the business park location that will require grant funding associated with infrastructure expansion. Res. 17 is appointing the CIC as agent of parcel #68-04212.000, the vacant lot adjacent to Clark St. fire station. The Village is sometimes behind on our ability to capitalize on opportunities because things are not set up structurally so we can take action, as part of that vacant parcels owned by the Village should be put under the agency of the CIC so if someone wants to buy or lease them for retail space, we have the ability to do that. Res. 18 is the annexation petition on behalf of the Village and BF LTD for parcels immediately north of the new Municipal complex on N. Market St.; this is a type 2 annexation so it doesn't damage the tax base of the township but allows us to include this in our municipal border. Ordinances 19, 20 & 21 are to establish the East Palestine Commercial Building department, sign an agreement with Elevate Building Solutions as our primary contractor for that department. The purpose is to expedite the process in which commercial buildings can be modified/built; this will help bring development to the Village and is also why larger cities get looked at more frequently and also help move along the park project and the government service complex. This is an established company from the Salem SOD Center, they currently work with Salem, Columbiana and Leetonia. In reference to fees, it was stated after creating our own commercial building department we then outsource it to Elevate, those fees are set by Elevate and are split 95%/5% Elevate to Village. Their cost of operations is lower than the actual cost and the permit fees make up the difference and this could save the Village potentially double the cost of the actual program in year one. Their website states the turn around time could be as long as six months going through the State of Ohio and they could get it done in as short as six weeks. The cost for Elevate to operate in the Village is \$25,000 per year and the net permit fees are split 95% to them and 5% to the Village. Members asked for a representative from Elevate to speak to Council about the program.

**STREET:** Mr. Simon stated the Street Dept. painted all crosswalks around the school campus prior to the Back to School Bash.

**PARK/REC/CEM:** Ms. Stauffer stated a disc golf tournament will be held in the park on 10/25. Summer help is done for the year, park reports continue to be posted on FB and the

Village website with Phase 3 advancing to 60% design. Repointing at the cemetery has begun and floors in the chapel will soon be replaced; the replacement mausoleum door has been ordered. Mr. Glavan added they have been approached about holding a fishing tournament at City Lake or the Duck Pond; they are moving forward on this and have reached out to ODNR in reference to locating grants to help utilize the areas more. Additionally, it was noted that the park project will require two of the disc golf holes to be moved; they are working on locations for the new holes. In reference to pool progress, it is dug to depth on the far west side and they will begin grading it outwards; they will be working the weekend to stay on pace. The grass in the infield was planted and then washed away with the spring rains, it was then hydroseeded but it didn't so they will now wait until fall to replant.

**DEV/FINANCE:** Ms. Herriott stated the EP Act group (formerly Think Tank) met; the amenities group is working with local churches to bring back a "meals on wheels" program that is grant funded. It will run out of the Centenary United Methodist Church here in town with a target start date of mid-October. The education group held "The Path to Bulldog Pride" for the Back to School Bash with over 50 local businesses participating. The Learn to Teach, Teach to Learn program will continue in mid-September. The EP Highschool has agreed to send a student representative to council meetings also in September; this will be a member of student council and the idea is for them share what is going on at school and for them to share with the school what is going on with the Village. Ms. Herriot made a motion to allow a student council representative attend/participate in council meetings. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stauffer and passed unanimously.

**VISITORS:** Dot Herbert, Jerry Coblentz, John Davis, Joseph Della Volle, Ron & Peggy Caratelli, Brenda Povenski, Carol Harvey, Dave Kibler, Dave Biggins, Ben Ratner, Nick Hamilton, Steph Elverd, Barb Kliner

**LEGISLATION:** Mr. Glavan made a motion to amend the agenda to table Res. 16-2025 EPCIC Loan as well as add Ordinances 19, 20, & 21 (all in reference to establishing a commercial building department with Elevate Building Solutions) for first readings instead of emergencies. The motion was seconded by Mr. Simon. Passed unanimously. Mr. Glavan introduced Ord. 17-2025 and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Mr. Povenski. **An ordinance to repeal/replace Ordinance 24-2019 setting allotted hours for the Building/Zoning Inspector and declaring an emergency.** Mr. Glavan made a motion to suspend the rules and declare an emergency seconded by Mr. Povenski. Passed unanimously. Mr. Glavan called for a vote on Ord. 17-2025 seconded by Mr. Povenski. Passed unanimously. Mr. Glavan introduced Ord. 18-2025 and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Mr. Povenski. **An ordinance to amend Chapter 24 Rate Structure to establish new rates for the Street Department.** Mr. Glavan made a motion to suspend the rules and declare an emergency seconded by Mr. Blythe. Passed unanimously. Mr. Glavan called for a vote on Ord. 18-2025 seconded by Mr. Simon. Passed unanimously. Mr. Glavan introduced Ord. 19-2025 for a first reading and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Mr. Blythe. **An ordinance requesting certification to enforce Ohio State Building codes with the Village of East Palestine, Ohio, and declaring an emergency.** Mr. Glavan introduced Ord. 20-2025 for a first reading and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Mr. Simon. **An ordinance to establish the East Palestine Building Department and declaring an emergency.** Mr. Glavan introduced Ord. 21-2025 and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Mr. Simon. **An ordinance authorizing the Village Manager, on behalf of the Village of East Palestine, Ohio to enter into a contract**

with Elevate Building Solutions LLC, and execute all required documents required by the State of Ohio to establish and implement the Village of East Palestine, Ohio, commercial building department and declaring an emergency. Mr. Glavan introduced Res.17-2025 and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Mr. Blythe. **A resolution designating the East Palestine Community Improvement Corporation as agenda, for the purpose of developing, leasing, selling or otherwise encouraging economic development on specified real estate owned by the Village of East Palestine, Ohio.** Mr. Glavan introduced Res. 18-2025 and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Ms. Stauffer. **A resolution authorizing the signing and filing of an annexation petition for a proposed annexation of 22.729 acres, more or less, from Unity Township, Columbiana County to the Village of East Palestine.** Mr. Glavan called for a vote on Res. 18-2025. Mr. Blythe-y, Mr. Glavan-y, Ms. Herriott-y, Ms. Stauffer-y. Mr. Simon-n, Mr. Povenski-n. 4 yes to pass. At this time Mr. Povenski made a motion to go into executive session per ORC 121.22 G 1 to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion of compensation of a public employee/official inviting in Manager Diaz-Guy. The motion was seconded by Mr. Glavan and passed unanimously. There would be no further business afterwards.

**ADJOURN:** Mr. Simon made a motion to return to regular session seconded by Mr. Blythe. Mr. Glavan made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Ms. Herriott. All in favor, meeting adjourned.

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MISTI J. MARTIN CLERK

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MAYOR TRENT CONAWAY