

## **EP COUNCIL 12/11/23 85 N. MARKET ST. 7:00 PM**

Mayor Conaway called the meeting to order. Present was Ms. May, Mr. Povenski, Dr. Rocco, Mr. Runnion, Mr. Simpson and Mr. Walker. Also, present was Manager Chad Edwards, Chief Jim Brown, Finance Director Melissa Hiner, W/WW Superintendent Scott Wolfe, Clerk Misti Martin. The minutes of the regular and special meetings of 11/27/23 were approved on a motion by Dr. Rocco seconded by Mr. Runnion. The November department reports were approved on a motion by Dr. Rocco seconded by Ms. May. There were no agenda items or clerks report, or law directors report.

**MAYOR:** Mayor Conaway thanked everyone who attended the special meeting prior to this meeting. He also thanked everyone who worked on the Snowflake Festival.

**MANAGER:** Manager Edwards stated we have began working with WRL which is the new marketing/advertising firm. A webinar was held on Dec 4 based on the data collected by the EPA from the derailment to the end of November and the info can be found on our website. He said waterline replacement will begin on Market St this week and should last around two weeks, traffic will at some point be down to one lane. He stated he will begin having department head meetings starting Jan 11, he will evaluation forms for them. Finally, he said Village offices will be closed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> at noon and all day the 25<sup>th</sup> for Christmas. Mayor Conaway stated the issue with traffic control with the waterline contractors needs addressed. W/WW Superintendent Scott Wolfe stated that he, Manager Edwards, the contractors, the inspector and MS Consultants met and stated the is an M.O.T (maintenance of traffic) plan in the contract and they are to absolutely follow it. Mr. Simpson said the planning by the contractors to do the downtown area during the holiday season was very poor planning on their part. Manager Edwards added it will be done in bits at a time meaning no business is going to be completely blocked off for two weeks at a time.

**STREET:** Mr. Walker stated the Park Drive Bridge project is complete and is open.

**PARK/REC/CEM:** Dr. Rocco stated the Park Board has hosted a special meeting for the park renovation project, she said it was very productive and positive. She noted some of the biggest requests was an indoor pool, the dog park and maintaining four tennis courts and not combining pickle ball on the tennis courts. She added that a lot of the input they received were things that had already been heard and finally she stated they would like to bring sports back to the park so they will also make sure the ball fields are adequate. Dr. Rocco and Mayor Conaway stated they both have been hearing feedback about the park project since day one. Dr. Rocco stated she confident that the current plan is encompassing, the decisions on the specific details will come at a later date. There also needs to be discussion about what NS can take care and what the village can do in house. Another big concern was sustainability; the current pool costs a lot of money to operate including chemicals, lost water, and utilities and it was important that the new pool be easily sustainable. She stated that everyone is very aware that we need to make sure we are not taking on a shiny new object that we can't care for and is a top priority. At this point a special meeting was called for Monday December 18<sup>th</sup> to review the park project input and get back to NS so as to continue moving forward. Mayor Conaway stated one of the biggest wants was an indoor pool and that is just not feasible with the budget which is around roughly \$25,000,000; to add a building around the potential new pool as drawn would cost around \$30,000,000.

**DEV/FIN:** Ms. May stated they have received word from the Port Authority that portions of the streetscapes project has been approved and will get the specifics the first of the year. She said the information from the Envision project has been collated and they will be working on that in the near future.

**UTILTIY:** Mr. Simpson thanked W/WW Superintendent Wolfe as well as the residents who attended the prior special council meeting to hear details on what the proposed derailment water project would entail. He stated council will make informed decisions and do what is best for the citizens.

**SAFETY:** Mr. Povenski thanked the police and fire departments for their participation in the Christmas Parade, it was very well attended. He added the fill a fire truck sponsored by the Fireman's Association and the Gorby family had a great turnout. Mr. Povenski asked BZ Inspector

McCutcheon where things stood with contractor registration and permitting; McCutcheon said there is a good start on the contractor registration for 2024, he said a permit has been issued for the renovation of the old Brittain building. He said he working with Manager Edwards on vacant structure registration/invoicing. He said there are issues with handicapped access during the winter months and reminded residents and businesses that it is their responsibility to maintain sidewalks in front of their property during snow events.

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

**VISITORS:** Jon Varley, Rich Spratt, Missy Smith, Tom Brittain, Bennet Bruno, Jerry Coblenz, Michael Figley, Austin Huffman, Ron & Peggy Caratelli, Kent & Darlene Chapman, Rick & Karen Gorby, John Jurjavcic, Dave Biggins, Zach Gorby, Tim Blythe, Cory Brittain, Lenny Glavan, John Davis, Dan McKinstry, Nicole Johannes, Jen Drabick, Robbi Hill, Abbey Palmer, Steph Elverd.

**LEGISLATION:** At this point Mr. Simpson made a motion to go into executive session per ORC 121.22 to discuss wages inviting in Manager Edwards and Finance Director Melissa Hiner, the motion was passed unanimously. Approximately 10 minutes later Mr. Runnion mad the motion to return to regular session seconded by Mr. Walker. Mr. Runnion made a motion to include the amended versions of Ord. 24 & 25-2023 to the agenda, seconded by Mr. Walker. Passed unanimously. Mr. Runnion called for a vote on Ord. 20-2023. Passed unanimously. Mr. Runnion introduced Ord. 22-2023 for a third reading and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Mr. Walker. **An ordinance authorizing the village manager to enter into a contract with David P. Powers to serve as the municipal attorney for a one-year term commencing January 1, 2024 in accordance with the terms of the previous contract which is hereby incorporated by reference.** Mr. Runnion called for a vote on Ord. 22-2023. Passed unanimously. Mr. Runnion introduced Ord. 23-2023 for a third reading and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Mr. Walker. **An ordinance adopting the negotiated pay increase between the Village of East Palestine (employer) and the Fraternal Order of Police, Ohio Labor Council, Inc. (Union).** Mr. Runnion called for a vote on Ord. 23-2023. Passed unanimously. Mr. Runnion introduced Ord. 24-2023 for a third reading seconded by Dr. Rocco and made a motion that it be read by title only. **An ordinance adopting a wage scale and other updates to be incorporated into the personnel policy handbook (white book).** Mr. Runnion called for a vote on Ord. 24-2023. Passed unanimously. Mr. Runnion introduced Ord. 25-2023 for a third reading and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Mr. Walker. **An ordinance adopting the appropriation for the current expenses and other expenditures of the Village of East Palestine, Ohio, during the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2024 and adopting estimated resources and declaring an emergency.** Mr. Runnion called for a vote on Ord. 25-2023. Passed unanimously. Mr. Runnion introduced Ord. 26-2023 for a second reading and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded Mr. Walker. **An ordinance to amend Chapter 882 of the Codified Ordinances of The Village of East Palestine regarding municipal income tax.**

**ADJORN:** Mr. Walker made a motion to adjourn seconded by Dr. Rocco. All in favor, meeting adjourned.

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**MISTI J. MARTIN CLERK**

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**MAYOR TRENT CONAWAY**