

EP COUNCIL MEETING 5/22/23 85 N. MARKET ST. 7:00 PM

Mayor Pro Tem Doug Simpson called the meeting order. Present was Ms. May, Mr. Povenski, Dr. Rocco, Mr. Runnion and Mr. Walker. Mayor Conaway was unable to attend due to work, Mr. Simpson made a motion to excuse him, seconded by Mr. Walker. Also present was Interim Mgr./Finance Director Traci Spratt, Chief Jim Brown, Chief Keith Drabick, Str. Superintendent Steve Baird, Clerk Misti Martin, and BZ Insp. Ch McCutcheon. The minutes of the 5/8/23 meeting were approved on a motion by Dr. Rocco seconded by Mr. Walker. There were no department reports, clerks, mayors, law director's, street, park/rec/cem, utility or safety committee reports.

AGENDA: Jeremy Vranesevich NS- Mr. Vranesevich stated that residents had brought to his attention that the Welcome to EP sign on RT 14 needs be updated as it has been there for some time; he said it is in very rough shape with the wood actually rotting. The design they have come up with will basically be the same size but will be a digital marquis, 8ft tall and 16 ft wide which is the current size. The sign will be able to display events in the Village which will hopefully create more traffic in the area. At the top there will be a stationary sign that says "East Palestine". He stated that ODOT owns the area the sign is on and they said under normal circumstances they would not approve this plan but due to the circumstances they advised to file for the permit and to do that NS needs council's approval for the sign. Vranesevich noted there will be two digital signs that can run independent or the same as each other, the third side (the side that will be seen as you are leaving) will be stationary that says something like "come back soon" or "see you soon". Discussion followed as to the timing of the wording on the signs and how the sign is controlled. It was noted that Dynamic Structures would be doing the construction in the area. He also stated that because that is ODOT property the sign cannot be used to advertise businesses only community related events. Mr. Runnion made a motion to allow Mr. Vranesevich and NS to apply for the permit to ODOT for the sign renovations, the motion was seconded by Dr. Rocco, passed unanimously. **Jeremy Vranesevich NS- Day of Giving.** Mr. Vranesevich stated after his presentation at the last meeting some members of the community have expressed interest in helping with the event including Marty Grim of the Community Foundation, they are in the process of forming a committee to help organize the event and that NS will be funding the event. He presented a list of projects they hope to complete and that what they actually get done will be based on the number of volunteers they get. Marty Grim stated she would like to see the day of service come back to yearly event and next year they will bring back the official DOG Days and do things by the ordinance that was established a few years ago that's requires a specific committee. **Abbey Palmer NS- Train Depot Donation Project.** Ms. Palmer stated that NS would like to completely update the exterior of the building as well as cleaning the interior and leaving it as a blank canvas future development of the property. She stated the most time efficient option to get the renovations done is to sell the building to the Village for \$1.00 and then lease the land to the Village for \$1.00 per year moving forward, she added that after receiving additional feedback that NS would like to a \$100,000 grant (donation) to the Village to help with the interior of the building. Upon approval the renovations would start in two to three months, construction would take approximately six to eight months. Interim Mgr./Finance Director Spratt stated she and Mayor Conaway met with Ms. Gorby about this project and they both feel this is a good thing for us and the upgrade would be a very good start to rebuilding the downtown. Mr. Runnion stated that a takeaway from the Development Committee meeting of 5/11 and suggestion from Columbiana Manager Lance Willard that ADA accessible public restrooms might be a good use for the train depot. Dr. Rocco asked how the \$100,000 donation came about. Ms. Palmer stated that in a meeting with Mayor Conaway and Mgr. Spratt it was discussed about adding the public restrooms in the train depot into the new contract. Instead of adding that into the contract she said the monetary grant would be a better way to go that way if there are funds leftover that money could be put towards another aspect of the interior of the building. Mr. Walker made a motion to approve the NS Train Depot project, Mr. Runnion seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

MANAGER: Mgr. Spratt stated there is a preconstruction meeting for Park Drive Bridge project in New Philadelphia on May 30. She also stated on May 18 Congressman Johnson introduced legislation to exempt from federal income tax any funds that EP residents have received as a result of the train derailment, this includes payments from NS that were not a reimbursement. Spratt stated she would like Council's permission to explore this option on a state/local level, to see what we would have to do legislation wise for state and local income tax. Mr. Runnion made a motion to

grant the approval to Mgr. Spratt. Mr. Walker seconded the motion, passed unanimously. At this time Spratt introduced Marcy Patton of Columbiana County Mental Health and Recover Services Board to talk about services provided by Ohio Coaching and Mentoring Network. She said this is a statewide initiative that is funded entirely through the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, it is a consulting option to provide customized coalition technical assistance to any groups within the state of Ohio and there is no cost to it. They are able to provide training, consultation, coaching, community assessments, work with the community to develop marketing/branding plan, as well as strategic action plans. This would be a partnership with the community that would help village administration while they are dealing with so many different entities. In reference to some available grants through the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration called the Surge Grant. They applied for and received the immediate grant within the first few weeks of the derailment and received \$209,000.00 which is a 90 day grant the provided funding for counseling covering co-pays/deductibles, transportation assistance, additional counselors, stress managements groups and support activities for first responders and their families. She stated she just applied for the intermediate grant that is good for 12 months and the grant amount is \$974,000.00 and is specifically for EP. There are multiple components including additional access to behavioral health services and community resiliency as well as creation of the resilience center. Ms. Patton stated they are looking to purchase Dr. Rich's building in Unity, NS will assist in that purchase as well as the renovation of the space. The building will have counseling services, peer support, yoga, chair massage, art/music therapy, mindfulness/meditation, animal therapy, classes/training as well as a community navigator who will assist those who don't know what they need. She said Ohio State University will also be doing some summer programming, family classes and after school programs. Another component will be mental health first aid and suicide risk training. Finally, she said they have a program at the county called the Mobile Crisis Response Team for law enforcement where they have a trained crisis peer supporter; these individuals work with law enforcement to reach out to people who are having difficulties. Mgr. Spratt moved on to say she has been approached by the Garden Club asking permission for them to use a modified golf cart that was donated to them to water the summer flowers in the downtown; she asked council's opinion on that. Mr. Walker said he didn't see a problem with it as the Leake family already does it. Discussion followed in reference to the previous golf cart ordinance that was voted down. Chief Brown stated he didn't want hinder the operations of the Garden Club but that he agreed with Mgr. Spratt that he didn't want to have to tell certain people/groups that they can use a golf cart and then tell others they can't which is why they decided to bring it to Council. Mr. Runnion said he is not opposed to re-introducing the golf cart legislation. Dr. Rocco added this would be highly advantageous to these ladies. Mr. Simpson said we should try to work with the Garden Club. Chief Drabick stated he would support whatever is decided but that did spend 13 years in S. Carolina where golf carts are legal; they have to be made street legal and meet the same requirements as cars, if we don't, we will have a mess on our hands. Chief Brown stated the previous ordinance required all ORC guidelines be followed as well as additional criteria including seatbelts, headlights, hours of operation, etc. Mr. Povenski asked how a golf cart differs from a backhoe with SMV sign, Chief Brown stated there are many different categories and definitions. Chief Brown stated Atty. Powers should review everything and make sure the definitions are parallel with the ORC, Council agreed directing Mgr. Spratt to discuss with Atty. Powers. Dr. Rocco noted she was concerned this will take too long and the Garden Club will miss out on this opportunity to which Mgr. Spratt stated our current laws do not allow them and there is nothing that can be done until an ordinance is in place.

DEV/FINANCE: Ms. May stated she attended a round table with Senator Sherrod Brown at Lampost Farms to address concerns in reference to soil and water, those issues continue to be monitored. They are in the process of working on the downtown façade grant as well as the street lights. The issue they are having is nailing down the owners of the properties to sign on. She said they are also continuing to work with RCAP as well as the Port Authority and will provide updates to Council.

VISITORS: Ron & Peggy Caratelli, Jerry Coblenz, Nicole Johannes, Jenn Drabick, Darlene Chapman, Rick & Karen Gorby, Amanda Smith, Steph Elverd, Lonnie Miller, John Davis, Dave Biggins, Marty Grim, Scott McCrae, Janie & Bill Strohecker, Officer Anthony Monteleone.

LEGISLATION: Mr. Runnion introduced Ord. 10-2023 for a third reading and made a motion that it be read by title only seconded by Mr. Walker. **An ordinance authorizing the Municipal Manager to advertise for public bids for the construction/paving to be known as the 2023 Street Resurfacing Project and to further award and enter into a contract with the lowest and best bidder as relates to the contract, pursuant to the specifications and bidding requirements as determined by the Municipal Manager and in compliance with law.** Mr. Runnion made a motion to suspend the rules and declare an emergency seconded by Mr. Walker. 6 yes to pass. Mr. Runnion called for a vote on Ord.10-2023. 6 yes to pass. Mr. Runnion introduced Ord. 13-2023 for a third reading and made a motion that it be read by title only, seconded by Mr. Walker. **An ordinance amending Chapter 832 of the Codified Ordinances of East Palestine, Ohio related to licensing of solicitors, peddlers and door to door sales persons.** Mr. Runnion called for a vote on Ord. 13-2023. Mr. Povenski-y, Dr. Rocco-y, Mr. Runnion-y, Mr. Simpson-y, Mr. Walker-N. 5-1 to pass. Mr. Simpson made a motion to go into executive session per ORC 121.22 to discuss the manager and finance clerk positions inviting in Mgr. Spratt. There would be no further business afterword's. Mr. Runnion seconded the motion. 6 yes to pass.

ADJOURN: Dr. Rocco made a motion to return to regular session and adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Simpson. All in favor, meeting adjourned.

MISTI J. MARTIN CLERK

MAYOR PRO TEM DOUG SIMPSON