

# **COVINGTON VILLAGE COUNCIL**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**January 9, 2023**

Mayor Ed McCord called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following roll call was taken for council:

### **Council Members Present:**

- Keith Warner
- Derrick Canan
- Julie Blumenstock
- Dawn Duff
- Jesse Reynolds
- Amy Welborn

### **Non-member Staff participating:**

- Frank Patrizio – Legal Counsel
- Rhonda Gill - Fiscal Officer
- Kyle Hinkelman - Village Administrator
- Tim Cline – Police Sergeant

### **Council President Nominations**

Ms. Duff nominated Mr. Reynolds as Council President for the 2023 Council year. There were no other nominations. Ms. Welborn made a motion for Mr. Reynolds to be the Council President, seconded by Mr. Canan. All ayes, motion carried.

### **Consent Agenda:**

The consent agenda included:

- Approval of Council Minutes (December 19, 2022)
- December Tax Report

Mr. Hinkelman noted that the end of year budget numbers from the tax report show income tax collection of roughly \$1.6 million, which is split into the General Fund and Street Fund. He noted that it is good that tax collections continue to be strong, as the

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Street Fund is heavily dependent on these funds. A motion was made to approve the consent agenda as it stands with no modifications by Ms. Welborn and seconded by Mr. Warner. All ayes, motion carried.

### **Mayor's Report**

Mayor McCord publicly commended the Street and Police Department employees for their great work handling the winter storm around Christmas. He noted his thanks for their efforts to keep the roads clean in a very difficult environment.

### **Administrator's Report**

Mr. Hinkelman reminded everyone that the State of Village will be held at the January 23 Council Meeting. He also provided updates on the timeline and progress at the Old Rudy Elevator demolition project.

Mr. Hinkelman asked if there were any additional questions about any other projects going in the Village, and there were none.

### **Old Business**

#### Ordinance 23-22 – Amending the Employee Manual.

Mr. Hinkelman discussed the sections that were being amended within the Village Employee Manual which includes changes to Section 4.07, 5.03, and 5.17.

Mr. Hinkelman asked if there were any questions about the proposed Ordinance and there were none.

A motion to approve Ordinance 23-22 was made by Mr. Warner, seconded by Mr. Reynolds. All ayes, motion carried.

### **New Business**

#### Resolution R01-23 – Authorizing the Village Administrator to go out for RFQ related to the Government Center Addition and Remodel

Mr. Hinkelman discussed Resolution R01-23, which would authorize the Village Administrator to go out for a Request for Qualifications for a firm to design improvements to the Government Center. Mr. Hinkelman noted that over the last nine months the Village has been undertaking a review of buildings and facilities, and is

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working on a Facilities Management Plan that will be adopted in 2023. He noted as part of that review, it was clear that the Government Center does not meet the needs of the Village public or the Village staff. He noted that the Village hired Candace Goodall to help review the building issues and potential ways for the Village to improve the building. She has provided a very rough plan for what needs to occur in the building based on feedback from Village staff. He also reminded Council that the Government Center has not had substantial investment since 2006, when a million dollars were put into the building to move interior spaces and improve some exterior elements of the building.

Mr. Hinkelman noted that the primary focus for the project would be three main improvements. The first would be to create a Council Chambers that allows for more public involvement, meaning that it is able to seat more than 14 people comfortably. This chambers would also allow for new technology to be incorporated such as cameras to allow for streaming of the meetings, TV screens to allow PowerPoint presentations, and other technological advancements. He noted that the current chamber is not suitable for large meetings and is unable to be rented out or shared by the community because of its location in the center of the building.

He noted the second focus would be on the exterior of the building, including the roof, windows, and walls. This would seal the building and replace all of the elements that are failing, have already failed, or need to be upgraded.

Mr. Hinkelman stated the third focus would be on the interior of the building, to create spaces that are more efficient for the current workforce, to make the building safer for everyone who visits, and to improve the technology and mechanical systems within the building.

Mr. Hinkelman noted that Ms. Goodall estimated that the cost to complete the project would be roughly \$1.5 to \$2 million with 10% of those costs to design the building. He noted that this RFQ would allow him to move forward with hiring a company to design the building improvements, and does not obligate the Village to actually building them at this time. He estimated the design timeline to be 4-8 months for completion after which the Village will then need to decide how to fund the improvements.

Ms. Blumenstock asked Mr. Hinkelman if the improvements would include investments into the camera and phone systems of the building. Mr. Hinkelman noted that the internet and phone systems in the building were being upgraded now, and that project would be completed in February. He noted though that the infrastructure for more cameras and other technology would be included in the design.

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Mr. Hinkelman asked if there were any additional questions, and there were none.

A motion to waive the three-reading rule for Resolution R01-23 was made by Mr. Canan, seconded by Ms. Welborn. All ayes, motion carried.

A motion to approve Resolution R01-23 was made by Mr. Canan, seconded by Ms. Welborn. All ayes, motion carried.

Resolution R02-23 – Authorizing the Village Administrator to submit an Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Public Water System Equipment Grant Application

Mr. Hinkelman discussed this resolution noting that the OEPA has a grant of up to \$10,000 for specific items. He worked with Water Supervisor Ray Kimmel to get a list of items that would qualify and they will be applying prior to the deadline if approved.

Mr. Hinkelman asked if there were any questions, and there were none.

A motion to waive the three-reading rule for Resolution R02-23 was made by Ms. Welborn, seconded by Mr. Canan. All ayes, motion carried.

A motion to approve Resolution R02-23 was made by Mr. Reynolds, seconded by Ms. Duff. All ayes, motion carried.

Ordinance 01-23 – Updating various fees and applicable to the provision of certain water / sewer services being provided by the Village of Covington and to adopt formal rules and regulations for those services

Mr. Hinkelman discussed Ordinance 01-23, which is in regards to the rates for sewer and water services in the Village. He noted that this Ordinance was last passed in 2019 and approves the rates for general services related to water and sewer as well as more specialized services that are also provided. He continued that this new ordinance would also formalize many of the rules and regulations around the services within the Village to make it easier for anyone who receives services from the Village to know what is expected and required of them and what the Village will guarantee.

Mr. Hinkelman stated that the Ordinance has many components within it, so he would prefer to focus on parts of it over the next three readings. He noted that he would go through all of the rules and regulations within the Ordinance at this meeting, and would discuss the proposed rates at the meeting on January 23, and if there are no questions or concerns, the Ordinance would be adopted on February 6.

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Mr. Hinkelman went into detail into the rules and regulations regarding receiving services from the Village. He specifically noted that all customers will be required to complete an application for service that will include providing identification to when applying. He also noted several other sections of the rules and regulations that were being clarified or clearly stated for the first time.

Ms. Blumenstock asked if this Ordinance would cover all residents. Mr. Hinkelman responded that it would cover all users of water and sewer services provided by the Village including residential and commercial properties.

Mr. Hinkelman noted that he would like to specifically discuss the rates at the next meeting, since they will have to be raised to cover the cost of the new wastewater treatment plant. He stated that the estimate for the construction of the plant is now \$18 million with inflation adjustments. He continued that the Village has been very fortunate to receive \$4 million in loan forgiveness and continues to work with OEPA to determine the final rate for the plant. Even with those great wins for the community, Mr. Hinkelman reiterated that it will be necessary to raise rates on the sewer collection to cover the large debt obligation each year.

Mr. Hinkelman asked if there were any additional questions and there were none.

The second reading of this Ordinance will occur on January 23, 2023.

### **Executive Session**

A motion was made at 7:30PM to enter into Executive Session to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of public employees as permitted under ORC 121.22.G.1 by Mr. Canan, seconded by Mr. Reynolds. All ayes, motion carried.

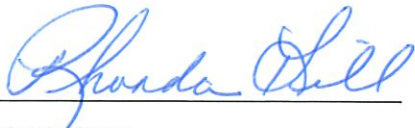
A motion to leave executive session was made by Mr. Warner at 8:28PM, seconded by Mr. Reynolds. All ayes, motion carried.

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Mr. Warner, seconded by Ms. Duff to adjourn. All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:29 PM.

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Rhonda Hill", written over a horizontal line.

Fiscal Officer

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Edward L. McGee", written over a horizontal line.

Mayor

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