

COVINGTON VILLAGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

July 18, 2022

Council President, Jesse Reynolds 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
- Amy Welborn
- Julie Blumenstock
- Dawn Duff
- Jesse Reynolds

Non-member Staff participating:

- Rhonda Gill - Fiscal Officer
- Kyle Hinkelman - Village Administrator
- Lee Harmon – Police Chief
- Tim Cline – Police Sergeant

Consent Agenda:

The consent agenda included:

- Approval of Council Minutes (June 28, 2022)
- June Tax Report
- May Check Run Report
- May Fund Balance Report

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda as it stands with no modifications by Mr. Derrick Canon and seconded by Ms. Dawn Duff. All ayes. Motion carried.

Visitors – Public Comment

Ms. Linda Williams, 196 N. High Street, owner of Y'all's Country Club, expressed concerns pertaining to how patrons are able to enter her building due to the construction

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of the High Street road project and the upcoming demolition project to adjoining buildings. Her concerns included lighting, possible trip hazards, and attitude of workers she had spoken to pertaining to her concerns. Ms. Williams also shared photos with council. Mr. Kyle Hinkelman reiterated that the High Street road project is an ODOT project, not a Village project, but that he would reach out to ODOT to see what the Village could do to help her.

Mr. Hinkelman also noted that he was made aware of additional questions about the design of the project and the Village's ability to change that design now. Mr. Hinkelman stated that the project was designed, bid, and accepted already, so changes to those plans will not be happening now, without substantial cost and additional time added to the project. He noted that as issues are brought to his attention, as a Village representative, he can reach out to ODOT, but generally speaking, if a property owner has an issue, they should reach out to ODOT to get it rectified, as the contractors work for ODOT, not the Village. Mr. Hinkelman again confirmed though that he would reach out to ODOT to ask to have contractors address issues with Ms. Williams.

Mr. Hinkelman also clarified that the county received money for the demolition project which is adjacent to Ms. Williams property, not the Village, and that project will be managed by Miami County. The Village is working towards closing on the property next door, but there is no timeline currently for completion of the demolition or the full project.

Councilwoman Amy Welborn thanked Ms. Williams for attending the meeting and sharing the photos and information.

Ms. Joyce Robertson, 201 E. Lindsay, asked whether a portable light could be rented or borrowed to place at Ms. Williams establishment. Mr. Hinkelman stated that he didn't believe any lighting was owned by the Village, and it would be challenging to provide lighting in one area, without providing it in all locations. Mr. Hinkelman asked Chief Lee Harmon if he was aware of any options, and Chief Harmon stated he wasn't aware of any lighting available to the Village. Mr. Hinkelman noted that Ms. Williams, like all business owners on High Street, was permitted to put lighting on her building to provide whatever lighting she felt necessary for her business. Ms. Williams stated she was not aware of that and would look into putting such lighting on her building.

Councilman Derrick Canan questioned Ms. Williams if the ODOT workers or subcontractor crews Ms. Williams had talked with were rude, to which she responded in general that they have been wonderful, but there was one individual who was very rude.

Mayor's Report

None.

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Administrator's Report

Mr. Hinkelman shared High Street project is finishing phase two. Local traffic will be able to get around, but the roads will still be closed to truck traffic at Bridge and High Street throughout the whole project.

He also noted that controller boxes are being put in for lights along High Street. These boxes are generally very visible and unattractive. He noted that there are wraps to make them look nicer, that are being investigated for the boxes that are most visible. Mr. Hinkelman stated there are various companies who wrap the boxes, or a professional can be hired to design and put on a custom wrap. Councilwoman Julie Blumenstock suggested looking into the school art department to design the wrap. Ms. Robertson asked about the number of boxes and cost anticipated for the wraps. Mr. Hinkelman thought it would most likely be four of the boxes would be covered but did not have an exact cost without knowing how Council wanted to proceed with design and wrapping.

Mr. Hinkelman noted that Schoolhouse Park continues to be designed and will have formal plans done in a couple weeks.

He also noted that the High Street demolition project, which is the project where the Village is purchasing one building and demolishing all three unsafe buildings was given funding through the State. The money will go to demolition, cleanup, and remediation of the property. This application was through Miami County and they will be the lead in the project and bid out the project. The Village will acquire the property for \$20,000 and money already put in for studies will be applied to be utilized as the required matching Village portion of the project.

Mr. Hinkelman reminded people that property maintenance and junk letters are going out throughout the Village. There have been several letters that have already been sent out, and some conformance.

Mr. Hinkelman stated that he has had the opportunity to work more on the economic development as he has started to prioritize it, based on the interest in the Village at this time. He noted that numerous new businesses have contacted the Village with interest related to the High Street area. He noted that Evenflo has rented the space in the old Twin Fan Company building on S. High Street, and that he will be able to make some announcements on additional buildings and expansions soon.

Mr. Hinkelman noted that with the increased interest, he is continuing to work on codes, regulations, and economic tools to help the right businesses come to Covington. He noted that the two primary drivers for the interest, when he talks with companies is the investment in the High Street improvements and the creation of Schoolhouse Park. He

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noted that companies appreciate that the Village is investing in itself, which shows it is serious about meeting the future needs of companies and their employees.

Mr. Hinkelman asked if there were any additional questions of him from the Council, and there were none.

Discussion Items

Mr. Hinkelman stated that the cities of Troy and Piqua were looking at implementing a rental property registration program and that he had attended some meetings related to these potential programs. He noted that the goal of these programs was to improve the quality of rental properties within Miami County. He said that the concept was to have similar language in each community, so landlords in multiple communities would see the shared expectations and be able to meet the requirements easily in all communities in Miami County.

Ms. Robertson questioned if it would pertain to mobile home parks. Mr. Hinkelman responded that the current proposed language does not cover them, but that the Village could look into adding that language if Council was interested in doing so and legal counsel agreed it was legal. He noted that he can also ask Piqua and Troy why mobile home parks were not part of the original discussion.

Ms. Welborn asked if the rental property registration would be for new rental property owners or existing rental property owners. Mr. Hinkelman stated that the proposed language would cover all rentals within the Village.

Ms. Dawn Duff questioned the number of rentals currently in town. Mr. Hinkelman responded it is not known, but that he is working on creating better metrics and mapping for all properties within Covington.

Mr. Hinkelman noted that this program is just being considered at this time, and he wanted to bring it up to get a conversation going, but there is no requirement to join or to continue to move forward if Council did not feel it was something the Village needed. Mr. Hinkelman said he would continue to go to the meetings and provide information for Council to consider.

The second discussion item Mr. Hinkelman talked about was related to the Village parking lot and signage. Mr. Hinkelman said that the Village is looking at updating the parking lot by putting in curbing, adding additional parking and putting in a new drop box. He noted that this project was scheduled for later in the year and already had funding budgeted in the 2022 budget, but due to the High Street project moving forward so quickly, it was imperative that this project moves forward faster to get the curb in around the light pole in the parking lot as soon as possible.

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He also noted that the current Village sign was considered end-of-life by watchfire, the company that put the sign in originally. Mr. Hinkelman stated that he was looking at options that were not LED digital copy signs and something more unique to the Village and less maintenance. He felt that unique signage could be used as a destination for photos or be used to help create the environment that the Village is looking to achieve. He noted that he would continue to work towards a plan and bring it back to the Council for review with a cost associated with the plan.

Mr. Hinkelman noted that the last item for discussion was the new Wastewater Treatment Facility plans, which were available to review in the Government Center. He also pointed to the large plans that were printed out that show 3D models of the buildings being proposed. He noted the site design which brings the buildings up the hill with an administration building along the roadway and the other buildings behind a gate north of the administration building. He continued that in August the Village will be applying for financing and he estimated that in September the Village will be going out for bids. He stated that the project has an engineer's estimate of \$14.9 million for the project at this time, which includes the design. He noted that the Village will apply for every opportunity that they can to acquire funding, but further discussions on the cost of the facility will be necessary. Mr. Hinkelman noted that the Village will be utilizing all of its ARPA money along with the sewer capital funding that has been reserved which equates to around \$500,000 to defray the cost.

Mr. Hinkelman asked if anyone had any questions on the WWTP and there were none from Council or the audience. Mr. Hinkelman noted that they would have a second public discussion about the potential WWTP at the next Council meeting on August 1st.

Third Reading Considerations

Ordinance 11-22 – Closing a Portion of Dodds Street at Pearl Street / US4.

Mr. Hinkelman discussed Ordinance 11-22, which would permanently close a portion of Dodds Street at US41/Pearl Street and create a dead-end street. Mr. Hinkelman noted that there were no changes from the previous two readings on this proposed Ordinance and the only comments he had received were in support of the closure. Mr. Hinkelman asked if there were any questions on the Ordinance and there were none.

A motion to approve Ordinance 11-22 was made by Mr. Canan, seconded by Ms. Duff. All ayes. Motion passed.

Second Reading Considerations

Ordinance 14-22 – Replat of Inlot 1205.

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Mr. Hinkelman discussed Ordinance 14-22 an ordinance to replat Inlot 1205. He noted that this is the second reading and reminded the Council that the Planning Commission had voted 4-0 to recommend approval of the case to the Council. The request was to split a portion of the northern lot and tie to the southern lot as noted in the plans. Mr. Hinkelman asked if anyone had any questions and Ms. Robertson asked who the lot owner was. Mr. Hinkelman noted that it was Covington Body Shop.

Mr. Hinkelman asked if there were any additional questions, and there were none. Mr. Hinkelman noted this was the second reading, and third and final reading would be held on August 1st.

First Reading Considerations

Ordinance 15-22 – Reappropriations.

Mr. Hinkelman asked council to approve Ordinance 15-22, which he noted is being requested due to inflationary cost increases.

Mr. Canan asked if it was mostly due to fuel and Mr. Hinkelman confirmed that it was mostly due to fuel costs.

A motion to waive the three-reading rule for ordinance 15-22 was made by Mr. Reynolds and seconded by Ms. Duff. All ayes. Motion passed.

A motion to approve Ordinance 15-22 was made by Ms. Duff and seconded by Ms. Welborn. All ayes. Motion passed.

Police Chief and Elected Officials' Comments

Ms. Welborn thanked the Police Department for watching traffic throughout the Village and she noted she had see patrol cars in various locations all around the Village.

Executive Session

None.

Adjournment

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A motion was made by Mr. Warner, seconded by Ms. Duff. Meeting adjourned at 8:13 PM.

Rhonda Giff

Fiscal Officer

Absent

Mayor

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