

**Council for the Village of Yellow Springs
Regular Session Minutes**

Virtual Meeting @ 7:00 P.M.

Monday, April 20, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

President of Council Brian Housh called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

ROLL CALL

Present via Zoom were President Housh, Vice President Marianne MacQueen and Council members Laura Curliss, Lisa Kreeger and Kevin Stokes. Also present via Zoom were Village Manager Josue Salmeron, Village Solicitor Chris Conard, Finance Director Colleen Harris, Police Chief Brian Carlson and Public Works Director Johnnie Burns.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Housh opened the meeting by noting the recent passing of Yellow Springs native Matthew Huntington due to complications from COVID-19. Housh offered condolences to friends and relatives of Mr. Huntington, and called for a moment of silence.

Salmeron reiterated support for family and friends of Mr. Huntington and urged Villagers to continue their efforts to keep each other safe in this difficult time.

Salmeron noted that Terri Holden has announced that schools will remain out of session through the end of the school year in accordance with Governor DeWine's directives. Holden will be present at the Town Hall on Wednesday with details.

Announcements regarding COVID-19 Emergency. Members of the Leadership Team who would ordinarily present information during the Town Hall gave their updates and announcements at this time as follows:

MTFR Chief Colin Altman; Police Chief Carlson; Melody Kingsley from the Greene County Health Department; Mayor Conine.

CITIZEN CONCERNS

No names were provided, and the following questions were asked:

Q: Will the Gaunt Park Pool open this year? Salmeron stated his commitment to opening the pool as soon as this is permitted by the Governor.

Q: Are employees being temperature checked if they are working at the John Bryan Center? Salmeron stated that those who are able to work from home are doing so, and those who must come in to work are self-monitoring and following safety protocols. The Police Department is conducting temperature checks on their officers and employees.

Chief Carlson reiterated that the YSPD is carefully monitoring employees and following safety procedures.

Salmeron noted that Public Works employees are on rotating shifts, and that meter readers are not entering homes at this time.

Q: Is the Village still holding Spring Clean Up? Salmeron stated that a final decision will be made at the end of the week.

Mayor Conine was asked to reiterate the times and dates for absentee ballots. She noted an extension of the deadline for submission of census data and again urged compliance.

An individual asked how to best sanitize a face mask. Kingsley responded that a thorough wash and dry cycle is best. She commented that having two masks is ideal.

Q: Will the Village ask the Xenia Municipal Judge to be lenient with eviction processes? Housh expressed support for leniency in support of housing security, stating that he would be happy to discuss this further at the May 4th meeting.

Salmeron agreed with Housh, commenting that a moratorium on evictions should be extended until the emergency situation is over. He stated that he is reaching out to the courts and the County Auditor to advocate for this position.

Kreeger commented that there are landlords who are doing all they can to support struggling tenants, noting that this is important to balance. She advocated for assurance of resources for landlords as well, in terms of loans and other options.

Conard made note of a Legal Aid website which can be of assistance. Salmeron added contact information for starting a conversation with a lawyer related to housing issues.

CONSENT AGENDA (7:15)

1. Minutes of April 6, 2020 Regular Session

Curliss MOVED and MacQueen SECONDED a MOTION TO APPROVE. The MOTION PASSED 5-0 on a ROLL CALL VOTE.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

Susan Jennings's request for a fence at the Corry Street community gardens was moved to New Business.

Kreeger asked that a plan for eventual transition to in-person meetings be added to New Business.

PETITIONS/COMMUNICATIONS

The Clerk will receive and file:

Laura Curliss re: Reentry from Stay at Home Order
Greene County Board of Health re: Cease and Desist
Susan Jennings re: Corry Street Garden Request
Brian Housh re: Census Response Rate
Denise Swinger re: Planning and Zoning Report
Ruth Peterson re: PD Stats Through March

MacQueen reviewed the communications received.

Curliss asked for input from citizens as to their ideas for safely reopening the community.

I. PUBLIC HEARINGS/LEGISLATION (7:30)

Reading of Resolution 2020-15 Declaring a State of Emergency in the Village of Yellow Springs. MacQueen MOVED and Stokes SECONDED a MOTION TO APPROVE.

Housh noted that while it may not be necessary to declare a state of emergency, it adds a layer of safety.

Housh commented that the declaration does not change Village political structure in any way and does not weaken democratic processes.

Curliss suggested addition of a Section 6, which would request the Finance Director to keep an accounting of all expenses incurred as a result of COVID-19.

Stokes asked that the first "Whereas" be amended to indicate that merely speaking can spread the virus. The Clerk suggested removal of the words "when a person coughs or sneezes" as a correction.

Salmeron noted that tracking of COVID-19 expenses by the Finance Director has been taking place.

Conard suggested specific language for the suggested Section 6 as follows: The Village Manager and Finance Director shall maintain records of revenue losses and additional expenses and costs relating to directly and indirectly to the COVID-19 State of Emergency for the purpose of having financial impact information available to seek and obtain disaster relief funds from any available sources including but not limited to county, state and federal sources.

Housh CALLED THE VOTE ON THE RESOLUTION AS AMENDED. The MOTION PASSED 5-0 ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.

Reading of Resolution 2020-16 Authorizing Transfer of Revolving Loan Fund Monies to the Yellow Springs Development Corporation. MacQueen MOVED and Curliss SECONDED a MOTION TO APPROVE.

Housh explained that this is a more inclusive version of the resolution passed on April 6th. This

version is inclusive of non-profit organizations. This is the only substantive change.

Kreeger noted her support and commented that this resolution assists the YSDC's goal of addressing a wide spectrum of needs.

Curliss commented that non-profits have many sources to go to for funding, while small businesses have fewer options. She stated that while she is not on the Board and so cannot direct its actions, she would hope that the bulk of assistance goes to small business.

Housh CALLED THE VOTE, and the MOTION PASSED 5-0 ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.

Emergency Reading of Ordinance 2020-04 Approving First Quarter Supplemental Appropriations and Declaring an Emergency. MacQueen MOVED and Stokes SECONDED a MOTION TO APPROVE.

Harris explained that the supplemental covers two expenses as follows:

\$5,000 for Toole Design to close out the Yellow Springs-Clifton Connector Design Project. This project was completed in 2019 with both grant funds and local funds. The VYS received the final invoice from the contractor in 2020 and payout of said invoice requires authorization from Council to transfer the funds allocated in 2019 for this project from the General Funds into the 2020 budget for expending.

\$35,000 for the Revolving Loan Fund project. The funds were previously allocated in the Economic Development Fund to be disbursed in 2019. The Revolving Loan program was not finalized until 2020 and the disbursement of funds for this program requires authorization from Council to transfer the funds allocated in the Economic Development Fund for this project from the Economic Development Funds into the 2020 budget for expending.

Housh stressed that these are amounts that were previously approved, and noted that the payment to Toole Design includes contributions received from Village of Clifton, Miami Township and the Yellow Springs Community Foundation as well as the Village.

Housh OPENED THE PUBLIC HEARING.

A query unrelated to the ordinance was received.

There being no further comment, Housh CLOSED THE PUBLIC HEARING and CALLED THE VOTE, and the MOTION PASSED 5-0 ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.

Housh CALLED THE VOTE, and the MOTION PASSED 5-0 ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.

II. OLD BUSINESS

Discussion of Current Village Finances and Presentation of Possible Budget Reduction Measures. Housh outlined the discussion, stating that the information is intended to provide a broad overview of the impact of COVID-19 on the Village.

Salmeron presented the overview as follows:

The VYS has been specifically affected by Governor DeWine's Stay Home Order, which has led to the closing of non-essential business and services. This order has affected employment rates in the Village's taxing district. The Regional Income Tax Agency (RITA) is anticipating a downward trend in estimated payments for 2020 as non-essential businesses were ordered to close, and many individuals were laid off or furloughed.

With forecasts and estimates provided by RITA and Greene County Auditor David Graham's Office, the Village is conducting budget contingency planning on a potential revenue loss totaling \$320,000 (from income tax, state government disbursements, rollbacks/homestead and real estate taxes). The approach is to minimize the impact to essential services and shift, where possible, some contracted services to work that can be done in-house by our current staff and reduce the amount (quantity) of certain work activities. For example, the Village regularly repairs and replaces sidewalks; in 2020, the Village will continue to conduct repairs and replacement of sidewalks, but will do less of it.

Housh commented that the Village Team has worked to address the deficits in a way that keeps Village employees working.

Curliss thanked the team for the work, noting that the first round of cuts is the easiest and that this work will continue through the duration of the crisis.

Housh asked for more information as to how Salmeron had arrived at the figure of \$320,000, noting that RITA projected about \$160,000 in revenue loss.

Salmeron responded that RITA was projecting about a 20% loss through June; 10% July through September, and a 5% loss October through December. Salmeron stated that the Village wanted to be conservative, and increased the calculations for loss across all income types, including investments, which resulted in the \$320,000 estimate.

Salmeron thanked his team for their help in making the reductions while maintaining high quality service to the Village.

Housh stated that the matter will be revisited in an ongoing fashion.

Megan Bachman, Yellow Springs News, asked whether the Village is aware of any large employers other than Antioch College who are furloughing employees. She asked whether the Village is eyeing any further cuts.

Salmeron commented that he has not heard from any employers regarding furloughing, and commented that in fact Cresco had hired a number of employees just prior to the stay at home orders, and there is no reason to think that this will not continue.

Regarding further cuts within the Village, Salmeron commented that he cut areas which were obvious such as Travel and Training and Fuel. Moving forward, Salmeron reiterated doing more work in-house rather than outsourcing.

Housh commented that with the cancellation of Street Fair and other events, there are cuts in overtime. Housh stated that he and the team are reaching out to state officials to follow up regarding CARES Act funds and any other possible recovery funding sources.

Salmeron mentioned part time staff retraining in other areas to keep operations running and to keep all Village employees working.

III. NEW BUSINESS

Quarterly Financials (for Council Approval). Harris commented that the numbers are through March, so do not reflect the impact of the pandemic. The numbers look good at this point and for that reason, she noted.

Curliss asked that utility numbers be regularly reported starting in May. Harris agreed to provide this status monthly moving forward.

Kreeger MOVED and Curliss SECONDED a MOTION TO APPROVE. The MOTION PASSED 5-0 ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.

Request for Fence at Corry Street Community Gardens. MacQueen described the request, noting that Community Solutions is seeking to reduce food insecurity and increase food production through a program called the “Generous Gardner”.

They would like to fence Village land on Corry Street to reduce the deer impact, along with supporting other gardening work. MacQueen asked for Council support of the fence.

Burns noted that the Village has to access a main sewer line and a storm line through that area, so any fence will have to be placed so as not to interfere with utility vehicles.

MacQueen stated that she will work with Burns to make sure the fence is properly placed.

Curliss commented that a formal lease should be put in place.

Salmeron commented that he is working on such a lease, and that the community gardens have been in place for some time.

MacQueen asked for Council approval, and all Council members expressed approval. Curliss did comment that a formal relationship needs to be solidified as soon as possible.

Planning for In-Person Meetings. Kreeger introduced this topic stating that she simply wants the Village to begin considering what this will look like and how to do this safely and with good access. She noted the ability provided by the gym to allow good distancing, and asked that the number of persons who could safely be in that space be calculated.

Salmeron commented that he has been looking into technology to improve sound, and that the

distancing can be addressed as well.

Housh asked that the matter be further discussed at the May 4th meeting.

IV. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS*

- Millworks Request for Extension of Preliminary Development Plan
- Finance Department Quarterly Report
- Budget Recommendations in Light of Economic Downturn
- Supplemental Ordinance
- Storm Water Management Update
- Possibilities for Donation Line (Jeannamarie Cox)
- Executive Session for the Purpose of Interviewing Solicitor Candidates
- Dog Park Plan Update (Burns/Lapedes)
- Report and Recommendations from Board/Commission Restructuring Committee
- End of Year Report: Human Relations Commission
- Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update (Sorrell)
- Treasurer’s Report
- Resolution Approving a Contract with XXX for Services as Village Solicitor

*Future Agenda items are noted for planning purposes only and are subject to change.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:44pm, Curliss MOVED and Kreeger SECONDED a MOTION TO ADJOURN. The MOTION PASSED 5-0 on a voice vote.

Brian Housh, Council President

Attest: Judy Kintner, Clerk of Council