

INDIAN LAKE, OHIO
VILLAGE OF RUSSELLS POINT
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
December 2, 2024

Mayor Huffman called the Meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. with recital of the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Ms. Joan Hinterschied, Present; Ms. Rebekah Smith, Present; Mr. Greg liams, Present; Ms. Joan Maxwell, Present; Mr. Dave Wallace, Present; Mr. Steve Reid, Present.

RECORDER: AshLee Hullinger, Administrative Assistant

GUESTS:

Dianne Gauder, Zoning Officer/ Floodplain Admin.
Nathan Stover, Russells Point
Liz Gibson, Russells Point
Sharon DeVault, Russells Point
John Henschen, Russells Point
Kim Werner, Russells Point
Eric Werner, Russells Point

MINUTES:

November 18, 2024, - Council Meeting Minutes

Greg liams made a Motion to approve November 18, 2024, Council Meeting Minutes as submitted.

Seconded by Joan Hinterschied.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Greg liams, Yea; Ms. Joan Maxwell, Yea; Mr. Dave Wallace, Yea; Mr. Steve Reid, Yea. Ms. Joan Hinterschied, Yea; Ms. Rebekah Smith, Yea.

Motion Passed 6 Yeas - 0 Nays

Reports:

Water Report:

Mayor Huffman reported that Dave Scott is currently working at the water plant and helping to keep everything in line. Mayor Huffman also reported that the Village has posted the Job Openings for the Village Water Superintendent as well as the other current available jobs. Mayor

Huffman stated that he has spoken with Dave Scott, and he is willing to help train the new Superintendent to make sure that the Village continues to move in the right direction.

Mayor's Court Report:

Mayor Huffman reported that there was a small amount in fines received from the Bellefontaine Municipal Court to the Village.

Dave Wallace made a Motion to accept the Mayor's Court Report as submitted.

Seconded by Joan Hinterschied.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Greg liams, Yea; Ms. Joan Maxwell, Yea; Mr. Dave Wallace, Yea; Mr. Steve Reid, Yea. Ms. Joan Hinterschied, Yea; Ms. Rebekah Smith, Yea.

Motion Passed 6 Yeas - 0 Nays

Records Retention Committee Minutes:

Mayor Huffman reported that the Records Retention Committee met on November 25, 2024, for their second meeting of the year. The Committee decided to wait to do a records disposal until 2025 due to short staffing and timing. There will be a records disposal to come, the date is unknown as of now.

Greg liams made a Motion to accept the minutes from the Records Retention Committee as submitted.

Seconded by Joan Maxwell

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Greg liams, Yea; Ms. Joan Maxwell, Yea; Mr. Dave Wallace, Yea; Mr. Steve Reid, Yea. Ms. Joan Hinterschied, Yea; Ms. Rebekah Smith, Yea.

Motion Passed 6 Yeas - 0 Nays

Rules and Ordinance Committee Minutes:

Mayor Huffman reported that the Rules and Ordinance Committee met on November 25, 2024, to discuss Ordinance 24-1246: An ordinance establishing the position of Village Administrator, appointing an Interim Village Administrator, and declaring an emergency.

Mayor Huffman stated that he has spoken with Village Solicitor Daniel Bey, and he is currently working on the additions and edits that need to be made to the ordinance as requested by the Council during the Rules and Ordinance Committee Meetings and hopes to have it done by the next Council meeting.

Greg liams made a Motion to accept the minutes from the Rules and Ordinance Committee Meetings as submitted.

Seconded by Joan Hinterschied.

Discussion:

Steve Reid asked if the Ordinance Solicitor Daniel Bey is working on will include the Interim as well as the Full-Time Village Administrator?

Mayor Huffman stated that Village Solicitor Daniel Bey will have both of them by next meeting so the Council can look at them together.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Greg liams, Yea; Ms. Joan Maxwell, Yea; Mr. Dave Wallace, Yea; Mr. Steve Reid, Yea. Ms. Joan Hinterschied, Yea; Ms. Rebekah Smith, Yea.

Motion Passed 6 Yeas - 0 Nays

Parks and Recs Report:

Joan Hinterschied stated the next Parks and Recs Meeting will be via Zoom since she will not be in town. If anyone is interested in attending, please send Ms. Hinterschied an email stating that you would like to attend the Parks and Recs Zoom and she will be sure to add you. Ms. Hinterschied also stated that there is another fundraiser that was offered to them to help raise money for the splash pad. It will be Paint and Sip with Artistry by Mariland. Details still to come but hope to be held in mid-February. Also, Ms. Hinterschied has looked into what needs to be done to hold a Quarter Auction for a fundraiser and she has discovered that she will need a Bingo License, which is a one-time fee of \$250, and thanked Joan Maxwell for bringing that to her attention. Ms. Hinterschied also stated that the Parks and Recs Committee has received a letter from the Department of Natural Resources regarding the Nature Works Grant. They had applied for it a few months ago. The letter states that the Splash Pad has been awarded \$50,507 from the Grant. Rebekah Smith and Joan Hinterschied updated the Fundraising sign out front of the Village Municipal Building on Saturday. This will now put the project at 73% of the way to having the funds raised and she hopes to be at 80% by the end of January. Ms. Hinterschied stated that she is very excited, pleased and grateful for the amazing opportunity to be eligible for the Nature Works Grant. Ms. Hinterschied informed Mayor Huffman that he should be receiving a letter to accept the grant, he will need to sign and submit it back, A copy is needed for Choice One Engineering as well.

Mayor Huffman asked if there is a match that is needed for the grant. Ms. Hinterschied stated that there is in fact a match and the committee has it already through the funds raised.

Mayor Huffman stated that he will be in touch with the Village Solicitor to see if there is any kind of legislation that is needed to accept the grant.

Police Department:

Chief Freyhof apologizes for not being able to attend the meeting on November 18, 2024, due to a Police Department emergency.

Chief Freyhof informed Council that Officer Puckett has turned in his resignation as Full-Time Police Officer for the Village of Russells Point but would like to stay on as Part-Time. Officer Puckett was offered a job with HSX for \$36 an hour and unfortunately the Village as well as no other Law Enforcement Department in Logan County can compete with that. Chief Freyhof stated that it is up to Council whether or not they will allow Officer Puckett to stay on and work part time, there is 2 things to consider, the first is if he stays on part time then Officer Puckett in most aspects is fulfilling his obligations to the two year contract, the other side of that is that we are not budgeted for a part time Officer in addition to the four full time Officers. Chief Freyhof suggested that Council allows Officer Puckett to work part time until the full-time position is filled and then Council can make an effective decision at that point. As of today, there has been zero applications turned in for the full time Officers Position.

Greg liams asked if this would allow Officer Puckett to keep his license active.

Chief Freyhof stated that Officer Puckett is not required to do any CPT this year since he graduated this year, but he will still be required to do Continuing Professional Training requirements, and he will drop down to PERS.

Dave Wallace asked what Officer Puckett's contract states if he doesn't fulfill the agreement, does he pay or does the Village have to cover it?

Chief Freyhof stated that Officer Puckett is required to work for the Russells Point Police Department for two years and he will not have to pay back the grant that was received since it's a reimbursement grant the Police Department paid it up front, and then they will get reimbursed if Officer Puckett fulfills the two-year agreement regardless of if he is full time or part time.

Dave Wallace asked what the pay back would be if Officer Puckett doesn't stay on for the 2 years. Chief Freyhof stated that the contract that was drawn up by the previous Village Solicitor Lynnette Dinkler states the prorated amounts, as of right now since he has less than a year with the Police Department, he would owe much of the grant back. Officer Puckett is aware of this whatever the outcome may be.

Steve Reid asked what Chief Freyhof suggestion would be.

Chief stated that he would like to keep Officer Puckett on part time and thinks that would be beneficial for Officer Puckett as well as the Village. He has already picked up some of the extra hours that have been available as well as some weekends.

Rebekah Smith stated that she thinks it is a good idea, and it may help cut back on some of the overtime. Chief Freyhof agrees.

Steve Reid made Motion to take Chief Freyhof's recommendation and allow Officer Puckett to stay on as part time Police Officer for the Village of Russells Point.

Seconded by Joan Hinterschied.

Discussion:

Greg liams stated that Council may need a resolution on it since Officer Puckett turned in his resignation letter.

Mayor Huffman stated that he will ask Village Solicitor Daniel Bey for his input and get back to everyone at the next Council meeting.

Steve Reed withdrew his motion

Joan Hinterschied withdrew her second.

Chief Freyhof went over the call for service log that was submitted stating that things are finally starting to calm down in the Village just in time for winter.

Chief Freyhof presented a Code Enforcement log as well as a Code Enforcement Spreadsheet. Chief Freyhof stated that this year has been exceptionally difficult to do any code enforcement. The priorities haven't been what they have in the past which is tall grass, refrigerators etc. After November 4, 2024, Council meeting Chief Freyhof was given the go head to start addressing the property maintenance issues that were left over from the tornado. The result was 47 property maintenance violation warnings being sent out. All of which were properties that were damaged by the tornado, and all have some type of safety, security, water damage, moisture control, erosion control, bad doors, bad windows, tarps on roofs that had been blown off which end up in the power lines. Of the 47 warnings that were sent 25 responses from the property owners have contacted AshLee or Chief Freyhof letting them know where they are with insurance, construction companies, some people just bought properties after the tornado and weren't aware of the things that needed to be done such as reseeding and erosion control or gravel. Some have reattached their tarps and made some repairs or stepped up their pace a little and started making repairs. As far as the other half has not contacted us at all, which has resulted in Notice of Violations being sent out tomorrow, prompting them that the next action will be to take them to court, which is not something we want to do. Some of the properties owners have been in contact with us and we have given extensions where they are needed with a time frame to fix the problems, that were presented in the Notices that were sent out. Chief Freyhof stated that he feels by sending out the warnings opposed to going right to giving out violations has much better compliance rates. It may take longer but he is thankful to have help from Administrative Assistant AshLee Hullinger when she has free time, which makes the process a little easier and moves along a little quicker. Chief Freyhof and AshLee have been working very hard at taking calls, issuing extensions to those in need, issuing warnings as well as violations. They have been out and about in the community taking notes of dangerous properties to help keep the Village a safe place.

Steve Reid agrees that the warnings being issued first was a good idea, and he is happy with the responses that we have gotten and stated that he does not want to see anyone taken to court if we don't have to. Mr. Reid asked how far between the initial warning letter and actual notice of Violation.

Chief Freyhof stated that the code enforcement team did inspections on November 14, 2024, and the follow up was 10 days later November 24, 2024. Anyone that contacted the office and asked for an extension, the code Enforcement team pushed the date out till January with some exceptions to be shorter or longer depending on the case specific issues.

Chief Freyhof also informed Council that the available job postings have gone up on the website, Facebook and ohio means jobs.com. the nice thing about ohio means jobs.com is if the Village still isn't getting the applicants they have hopped for there are folks that we can reach out to that have resumes already in the system that may not be actively looking for a job, but they add themselves and the Village can reach out to them. There have been three applications turned in today.

IJFD

Joan Maxwell stated that the report was submitted to Council, but she would like to add that the Indian Joint Fire District passed the 2025 Permanent Appropriations in the last meeting. Ms. Maxwell also informed Council that one of our Volunteer Firefighters, Sean Reese, passed away this week. Indian Lake Community Church will be having the viewing on Saturday, December 7, 2024, from 1:00 P.M – 3:00 P.M. The service will be at 3:00 P.M. Ms. Maxwell added that on Saturday, December,7 2024, at 4:15 P.M the Firehouse will be having a meal for everyone to come and reminisce and talk with the Firefighters. It is open to anyone who wants to attend.

Citizens' Comments:

None

Ordinances and Resolutions:

None

Old Business:

Broken Heater in Bay Area:

Greg liams asked Council when it was decided to open the back bey area again and do something with the heater? Stating that the heater has been broken since the building was purchased.

Mayor Huffman stated that since it is broken why not have it fixed. It is area that can be used for multiple uses such as storing vac systems for the maintenance team as well as the area that could serve as a workspace for the Parks and Recreation Committee as well as other Committees to store items and work on projects that they are doing for the community. Steve Reid stated that it is a safety issue having a broken heater in the building. Mr. Reid stated that the issue just needs to be sent to the Lands and Building Committee to review.

Road Work in Front of Rite Aid:

Steve Reid stated that he is not happy about the application of asphalt in front of Rite Aid and something needs to be done about it. Mr. Reid also stated that he sent an email to Tyler Thobe of Choice One Engineering about the ADA Handicap pad across from the Indian Lake Community church that was taken out and never put back in during restoration. Mr. Thobe informed Mr. Reid that it will be taken care of.

Mayor Huffman stated that he has been in touch with Tyler Thobe with Choice One Engineering about the area in front of Rite Aid. Mr. Thobe is aware of the situation and will have it taken care of.

New Business:

Office Hours:

There was talk amongst Council about the Office Hours for 12/24/24 and 12/26/24.

Steve Reid made a Motion to close the Municipal Building on Tuesday, December 24, 2024, and Thursday December 26, 2024, and employees can use appropriate leave time.

Seconded by Rebekah Smith.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Greg liams, Yea; Ms. Joan Maxwell, Yea; Mr. Dave Wallace, Yea; Mr. Steve Reid, Yea. Ms. Joan Hinterschied, Yea; Ms. Rebekah Smith, Yea.

Motion Passed 6 Yeas - 0 Nays

Jared Weeks Resignation Letter:

Mayor Huffman informed Council that Jared Weeks has turned in his resignation letter. Mayor Huffman as well as Village Maintenance Team Leader Tim Reese both spoke with Mr. Weeks to try and get him to stay but unfortunately, he was offered over \$10 more an hour at a new job and the Village can't compete with that kind of pay raise. Jared Weeks last day will be Wednesday, December 4, 2024.

Joan Hinterschied made a Motion to accept Jared Weeks Letter of resignation.

Seconded by Dave Wallace.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Greg liams, Yea; Ms. Joan Maxwell, Yea; Mr. Dave Wallace, Yea; Mr. Steve Reid, Yea. Ms. Joan Hinterschied, Yea; Ms. Rebekah Smith, Yea.

Motion Passed 6 Yeas - 0 Nays

Splash Pad:

Steve Reid stated that now that the Splash Pad funds are at 73% and Mr. Reid feels that now is a good time to start figuring out if they need an actual motion and approval to approve the Splash Pad to be built on the Village property.

Mayor Huffman stated that he has spoken to Village Solicitor Daniel Bey and Mr. Bey hopes to have the legislation to give to Council at the next Council meeting.

Steve Reid stated that now that Joan Hinterschied has the new quote for the Splash Pad to be built the Village Solicitor Daniel Bey will need to look at it.

Ms. Hinterschied informed Council that Daniel Bey has seen the proposal and is very happy with the terms and conditions that they have set.

Mr. Reid stated that there will need to be a Parks and Recs meeting to talk about the location of the splash pad as well as start taking bids from other companies for the building of the Splash Pad.

Email from All Paid:

Mayor Huffman stated that All Paid will be Raising the rates on the credit card payments and wanted to let everyone know.

AP Wireless:

Mayor Huffman stated that he would like to inform Council that the Village has received a letter from AP Wireless, and they would like to know if the Village would like to sell the lease to the Verizon cell phone tower located near Leppich Ball field.

There was discussion as to whether it would be beneficial to the Village to sell or not. All of Council agreed it is not something they feel the Village should do.

Employee Accrual of Comp Time:

Mayor Huffman stated that there are several employees accruing comp time at the end of the year. In the Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual it states basically use it or lose it. Mayor Huffman feels there is not enough time for these people to use it before time runs out and would like to know if Council is ok with the employees rolling the extra time over to the next year.

Dave Wallace stated that the employees have had the opportunity all year to use up their time.

Greg liams stated that there is a policy already in place for this.

Mayor Huffman stated that with the employees accruing the time here at the end of the year there is really no time to use it up what they are accruing.

Steve Reid asked what the policy says.

Chief Freyhof stated that in the policy it states that you can only carry over eight hours. But unfortunately, with some people working days like thanksgiving, Christmas and the Village being shortage of manpower as well as time these employees are not able to use it in time.

Steve Reid stated that this year has been different and thinks that it needs to be looked at differently given the situations that the Village has been through.

Joan Hinterschied asked if it can be paid out. Ms. Hinterschied stated that the employee should be able to carry over the eight hours that is stated in the Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual but then be paid out for what is left since it is hours they have already worked.

Rebekah Smith stated that since the last day is December 31, and someone accruals days on December 25, they only have five days to use it and don't agree that is fair.

Liz Gibson Resident of Russells Point, asked to speak on the subject stating that maybe Council should extend the end date of usage to maybe march of the following year to give more time to the employee to use the time they have earned.

Joan Hinterschied asked Chief Freyhof if there is a preferred method for employees to use the time they have accrued?

Chief Joe Freyhof suggested that paying the employees out would be the best method.

Joan Hinterschied agreed that it would be the best method and cleanest way to solve the problem.

Rebekah Smith suggested a 60 or 90 day to use it or lose it extension, so the employees don't end up in the same situation next year.

Steve Reid stated that there will be a review of the policy manual and feels that this is an issue that will need to be addressed when that time comes.

Rebekah Smith stated that there is nothing in the current Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual that covers this situation, and she is ok with some kind of combination. Ms. Smith stated that it does seem a little unfair that the employees can accrue it and have to use it within so many days especially since the Village is already short staffed.

Greg liams stated that the issue is that there is currently a policy set in the Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual.

Steve Reid stated that an override can be done to the current Policy if Council wishes to do so, it has been done in the past.

Chief Freyhof stated that there was a suggestion made by Interim Fiscal Officer Rich Ford that all Holidays that Council approves for the year to go into a bucket per say and the employee has the whole year to use it as they please, if that person leaves for some reason that person only gets paid for the Holidays they served on. That will give you all year to use your Holiday opposed to trying to figure out how to use it at the end of the year causing this issue. Chief Freyhof feels to continue to require the employees to use it or lose it is troubling given the fact that the Village can't keep employees as it is. Chief Freyhof stated that the Village has the worse Vacation policy in the county, himself as well as a few other long-time employees end up donating majority of their time back to the village due to the short staffing or needs of the Village.

Rebekah Smith stated that she feels that Council shouldn't punish people for being dedicated to the Village and willing to work all the hours they do just to not be able to use the time they have accrued.

Ms. Smith also stated that if the Village wants to attract women of child baring age, unfortunately allowing them to only carry over eight hours of accrual to the next year doesn't seem to be a family friendly policy due to the fact that most will add their accrual time on to their FMLA when going on maternity leave. Ms. Smith stated that we as a Village have a problem right now keeping employees and feels like any little thing that Council can do to make it better without having to increase their pay is easy stuff to do to help be more competitive in the job marketplace.

Greg liams suggested speaking with Interim Fiscal Officer Richard Ford before making any decisions.

Mayor Huffman made the decision to table the discussion until there is more information for the Council to go from. The issue will be brought to the next Council meeting.

Dave Wallace asked if there was an update on the health insurance for the employees.

Ashlee Hullinger stated that she has talked with Interim Fiscal Officer Rich Ford, and he is still looking into whether or not we are locked into a multiyear and hopes to have an update by next Council meeting.

Dave Wallace would also like to see the breakdown for what was litigated and billed to the Village by both Village Solicitors Dinkler and Daniel Bey.

Mayor Huffman stated that he will get in touch with Interim Fiscal Officer Rich Ford and have him get it to Council.

Executive Session:

Rebekah Smith made a motion to go into executive session at 8:03 P.M. to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official.

Seconded by Joan Hinterschied.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Greg liams, Yea; Ms. Joan Maxwell, Yea; Mr. Dave Wallace, Yea; Mr. Steve Reid, Yea. Ms. Joan Hinterschied, Yea; Ms. Rebekah Smith, Yea.

Motion Passed 6 Yeas - 0 Nays

Greg liams made a Motion to exit executive session.

Seconded by Rebekah Smith.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Greg liams, Yea; Ms. Joan Maxwell, Yea; Mr. Dave Wallace, Yea; Mr. Steve Reid, Yea. Ms. Joan Hinterschied, Yea; Ms. Rebekah Smith, Yea.

Motion Passed 6 Yeas - 0 Nays

Executive session was ended at 8:07 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT:

Joan Maxwell made a motion to adjourn the meeting.


Joan Hinterschied seconded the motion.

All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:08 P.M.

Next Council meeting: Monday, December 16, 2024, at 7:00 P.M.

Next Ordinance-24-1247

Next resolution 24-1046

Mayor John Huffman  Date Passed 12-16-24

Recorder: AshLee Hullinger, Administrative Assistant _____