

**On April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020 the Village of Milan received a letter from an anonymous person. Please see the questions with our answers.**

**Anonymous Question 1:** Can someone please explain the village's thought process to pay village employees for not working during this virus pandemic?

**Answer:** During this unprecedented time of uncertainty there were many variables that the village had to take into account. First and foremost, the health and wellbeing of our employees is paramount. We also had to think about our critical infrastructure (i.e. water, sewer, electric, utilities). On March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the village council unanimously passed a resolution to tackle these especially important issues. Until the severity of this virus was truly understood, the best course of action was to put some employees from each department on work from home status to keep our critical infrastructure from having any possible lapses in service. The water/sewer, electricity, street, and utilities billing departments only have two employees per department, if one member of the department possibly came down with the virus and had even minimal contact through shared areas, equipment, etc. with the other and both were required to go into mandatory 14 day quarantine it would have catastrophic results. Employees in each department hold special certifications and knowledge in that particular area of infrastructure and as stated, any possibility of both members of the department going down would be catastrophic and with every village and municipality going through the same thing, any calls of mutual aid might not be able to be filled.

During work from home status, our employees were (and are) on call 24 hours a day but keeping some completely away from the job site would allow the possibility of cross contact at zero. The shifts were changed each week and we had strict cleaning and disinfecting protocol for all of their areas. All our policies are in line with other local municipalities in our area and across the state. Our village administrator was in constant contact with our solicitor and other municipalities, making sure we were doing everything properly and to the highest standards.

**Anonymous Question 2:** From what I have heard each employee within a particular department was working one week and not working for the next week but getting paid for not working.

**Answer:** On the evening of March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020 after the council meeting, Mayor Smith was very transparent in a video post what the plans of the village were, including how some employees from each department would be placed on work from home status to keep critical infrastructure in place. Also, the next day, in another act of transparency we posted in full text of the emergency ordinance on our website ([www.milanoio.gov](http://www.milanoio.gov)) so that citizens would be able to view what our policies were. Again, these policies in many ways mirrored other local municipalities. As stated in the first answer, our employees were (and are) on call 24 hours a day and so far with our policies in place there has been no lapse in critical infrastructure or services.

**Anonymous Question 3:** Why not just separate the employees within the same department and have them perform different jobs?

**Answer:** Please reference the answer in the first question, with only two people in each department any possibility of cross infection would have catastrophic results and not a risk the village was willing to take.

**Anonymous Question 4:** Or, why not utilize a two week rotation policy to follow some type of quarantine effect?

**Answer:** We chose to switch employees out weekly.

**Anonymous Question 5:** Is it really legal to pay Government employees for not working?

**Answer:** First, please reference the answer in the first question. Our employees were (and are) on call 24 hours a day. On March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Village Council unanimously passed an emergency resolution allowing us to continue to pay employees while on work from home status. The ordinance followed all applicable laws and guidance from the State of Ohio. Every decision we have made thus far has been carefully thought out with direct input of our solicitor and the policies handed down by the state. The policy of having certain people on work from home status and paying them not only closely aligns with local municipalities in the surrounding counties but across the state. From other villages, cities, schools, governmental agencies, etc., across the state, countless are having certain staff on work from home status to keep the spread of the virus down and keep agencies with staff available to continue to perform duties when called upon.

**Anonymous Question 6:** Did the village employees who did work take their temperature before coming to work each day?

**Answer:** Since this unknown with the virus has begun, the village has had policies in place to make sure that our employees stay safe, our critical infrastructure has no interruptions and that we stop the spread of the virus. That being said, when the state mandated all temperatures be taken we have had every employee that is physically at work take and send their temperature and answer questions about how they are feeling to our administrator each morning before work. The administrator has been keeping a log of all this information. We even took this a step further and have made employees on work from home status also send this information in to the administrator each morning which is also contained on his log.

**Anonymous Question 7:** How many total weeks were employees given off with pay and what is that cost to the village?

**Answer:** Please reference the answer to question 5.

**CONCLUSION:** We have followed all our ordinances and the laws of the State of Ohio. Every decision we have made in the Village of Milan has been carefully thought out and followed the guidance of our solicitor and the state. While we have no obligation to answer correspondence from an anonymous

person, nor is there a law that states we must answer questions from an anonymous person we have decided to answer these questions as a courtesy. We at the Village of Milan have prided ourselves on our transparency during this unprecedented situation. PLEASE NOTE AS OF 4/22/2020 WE WILL NO LONGER BE RESPONDING TO ANONYMOUS MAILING OR CORRESPONDENCE IN ANY CAPACITY BY VOTE OF THE VILLAGE OF MILAN, OHIO COUNCIL.