

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF SMITHVILLE VILLAGE COUNCIL
MARCH 15, 2022

The Council of the Village of Smithville met in regular session on Tuesday, March 15, 2022 in the Village Hall. Mayor Tom Poulson called the meeting to order. Members present at roll call were Larry Allen, Matt Haas, John Heitger, Tricia Mullins, Joseph Reed, and Scott Thorn. Solicitor Jason Groh, Clerk of Council Becky Dannemiller, and Fiscal Officer Pam Keener were also present. Also in attendance were visitors: J. Koss, Dan Yarnell, Jen Barnett, Donna Eggleston, Melissa Stewart, S. Stewart, R. Bajalie (sp?), Warren Caskey, Darian Short, Justin Jacobs, Ron Barnett, B. Luhe (sp?).

Heitger made the motion to accept the March 1, 2022 minutes, Haas seconded, and Council unanimously approved.

Solicitor Jason Groh made a statement concerning public participation. Those addressing Council will do so with public decorum, without debate, speak on the matter they wish to address and Council may or may not respond.

Officer Dan Yarnell addressed Council and spoke as a department member and stated Chief Barnett was an asset to the community and department, she has instituted programs no one else has (Safety Town, DARE Program) and how much she was liked by the department members.

Officer Justin Jacobs addressed Council and spoke how Chief Barnett treated everyone equally, and he felt she was the best leader he'd ever had, military included. Jacobs stated previous Chief Howard Funk wanted to attend but was already committed elsewhere.

Joe Koss, a village resident, spoke to Council about the negative publicity that could come from this situation. He admitted he did not know Chief Barnett, but was concerned about the costly litigation and negative publicity in the future.

Melissa Stewart, Green Local Schools bus driver, stated she believes Chief Barnett is a big part of the community and she's always had good interaction with her. She believes Chief Barnett would always do the right thing in situations presented.

At 7:09 pm, Mullins made the motion to go into executive session pursuant to ORC 121.22 (G) (1) to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, or compensation of a public employee; Allen seconded the motion, and Council unanimously approved. Invited into this executive session were Fiscal Officer Pam Keener and Solicitor Groh.

At 8:01, Mullins made the motion to exit the executive session, Heitger seconded, and Council unanimously approved.

Thorn made the motion to terminate the employment of Chief Jen Barnett immediately. Allen seconded the motion. Council roll call: Mullins, yes; Reed, yes; Thorn, yes; Allen, yes; Haas, yes; Heitger, yes.

There was no police report submitted.

Mayor Poulson shared the insurance settlement for the wrecked police cruiser has been signed and sent to the insurance company.

Resolution #2022-3 to advertise for bids: Mayor Poulson presented Resolution 22-3 to advertise for bids for the North Mill Street waterline project. Reed made the motion to suspend rules; Mullins seconded the motion, and Council unanimously approved.

Resolution #2022-3 to advertise for bids: Mayor Poulson presented a resolution to approve C.T. Consultants advertising for bids for the North Mill Street water line project. Haas made the motion to approve Resolution #2022-3 to advertise for bids for the North Mill Street water line project; Reed seconded the motion, and Council unanimously approved.

At 8:10pm Mullins made the motion to enter into executive session pursuant to ORC 121.22(G)(1) to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, or compensation of a public employee. Allen seconded the motion, and Council unanimously approved. Invited to this executive session were: Fiscal Officer Pam Keener, Clerk of Council Becky Dannemiller, Warren Caskey, Solicitor Groh, and Matthew Turner.

At 8:40pm, Haas made the motion to exit executive session, seconded by Heitger, Council unanimously approved.

Thorn made the motion to hire Matthew Turner to fill the vacancy of Public Service Worker. Mullins seconded the motion, and Council unanimously approved. His begin date will be March 31, 2022.

Heitger made the motion to enter into a *Memorandum of Understanding* with Warren Caskey to serve as interim Police Chief to lead the department and provide oversight until a new Police Chief can be hired. Reed seconded the motion and Council unanimously approved.

In liaison reports: Thorn stated Adam is removing snow equipment and preparing for spring work. Allen had nothing for fire; Reed had nothing for the Veteran's Memorial; Haas stated Douglas Lawn Care will be doing the spring lawn treatment and NRH will be in to change light bulbs on Field #1; Heitger stated Adam is filling potholes and also there is a Planning Commission meeting on April 7th to hear the petitions to vacate alleys on North Milton Street and will make a recommendation to Council after; Mullins stated Matthew Turner is thrilled to be starting employment with the village.

Mayor Poulson updated on the following: The old tower site will be cleaned up in the near future, and water run to the park by the April 1st opening. The N Mill Street water line project will be out for bids; The BPA approved Burkey Excavating repairing the collapsed sewer line on Northeast Street at a cost of \$5,915;

Solicitor Groh stated he is having conversations with the prosecutor's office about the N Summit Street property and will be meeting with the Mayor and Sgt. Wertz about the case.

Allen made the motion to approve paying bills in the amount of \$33,661.32, Thorn seconded, Council unanimously approved.

Allen made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:53pm, Mullins seconded, Council unanimously approved.

Scheduled meetings:

Planning Commission Meeting, April 7, 2022 at 7pm

Council Meeting, April 19, 2022 @7pm

Council Meeting, May 3, 2022 @7pm

BPA Meeting, May 9, 2022 @6pm

Council Meeting, May 17, 2022 @7pm



Becky Danneville

Clerk



Tom K. Patton

Mayor