On Tuesday, February 14, 2023, at 6:00 PM, Mayor Fries-Seip opened the Council meeting with a word of prayer, and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited by those present.

The regular meeting for the Council of the Village of Monroeville was then called to order.

Present at roll call:

Chris Raftery and: Melissa Fries-Seip, Mayor

Craig Franklin Tom Gray, Village Administrator

Joe Galea Bonnie Beck, Fiscal Officer

Sue Rogers Heather Alicea, Administrative Specialist

Bob Whitacre Gary Lyons, Chief of Police

Also attending: Lieutenant Troy Kimball, Ann Beck, and Glen Opper.

The January 2023 financial reports, bank statements, balance sheets, check reports, and bank reconciliations were previously distributed to Council via e-mail.

**EXCUSAL OF COUNCIL MEMBER**

Sam Wiley had previously notified the Mayor and Bonnie Beck that he would be unable to attend the meeting. Craig Franklin made a motion, seconded by Joe Galea, to excuse Sam Wiley from tonight’s meeting. Motion carried with no discussion.

**APPROVAL OF AMENDED AGENDA**

Mayor Fries-Seip asked for Council’s approval to amend the agenda, to include Ordinance 2023-02 and Ordinance 2023-03. Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Craig Franklin, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried with no discussion.

**DISPOSITION OF MINUTES**

Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Joe Galea, to approve the minutes as presented from the January 10th, 2023, regular Council meeting. Motion carried with no discussion.

**APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to approve the January 2023 financial reports as presented. Motion carried with no discussion.

**APPROVAL OF THE MONTHLY CREDIT CARD REPORT**

Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Craig Franklin, to approve the January 2023 credit card report. Motion carried with no discussion.

**OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL**

None.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

**Administrator** - Tom presented his report that was previously submitted to Council. In his report, Tom had advised the American Legion was going to provide new flags for the downtown area. Dick Palmer had asked Tom to mention to Council that the last rounds of flags were two times more expensive than the last order. Per the supplier, it was due to increases in material and labor costs. Tom said Dick would like to respectfully ask Council to consider sharing this year’s cost at a 50% level, which would be $262.10. Tom asked Council to accept the resignation of Isaiah Scheid effective 2/23/23, in the Water and Wastewater division. Bob asked if Isaiah was starting to move up the ladder prior to his resignation. Tom confirmed Isaiah would have completed his probation now. Bob asked where Isaiah is going. Tom said he is going to the Tiffin, Ohio wastewater plant. Bob asked if this was due to the pay rate. Tom confirmed. (Glen Opper joined the meeting at 6:04 PM.)

**Fiscal Officer** - Bonnie presented her report that was previously submitted to Council. There was a water leak for account 02.185.1, due to a hot water heater. Bonnie would like to ask Council to excuse sewer charges in the amount of $145.85. Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to excuse the sewer charges for utility account 02.185.1, in the amount of $145.85. Motion carried with no discussion. Bonnie said that every year she and John Courtney talk about the financing from last year going into this year, in order to determine what can be paid off for the principal of the AMP BAN (bond anticipation note). It’s been determined that $150,000 can be paid this year, but Bonnie needs Council’s approval. Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to pay $150,000 on the AMP BAN principal. Motion carried with no discussion. Bonnie advised that will bring the balance down to $740,000 on a 1.7-million-dollar loan. Bob asked if that loan payment is ahead of schedule. Bonnie confirmed, as we were originally paying $110,000 a year for the principal, but this will be the third year we’ve paid $150,000. In her report, Bonnie shared information she received from Jeff Sopar, an attorney who specializes in zoning laws. The quote to re-do our zoning ordinance is $4000-$6000. Jim advised based on Oak Harbor and Milan, it may take a few months, but Jeff is very diligent. Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Joe Galea, to approve the quote from Jeff Sopar, in the amount of $4000-$6000, for the zoning ordinance to be redone. Motion carried with no discussion. Bonnie said Council received two lists of requisitions over $2,500 and since then, four new req’s have been added: Colton Ott has been signed up for the AMP lineman school in the amount of $3,077/$19,736 for the December order from Bonded Chemicals, which will be retroactive/$8,500 for Brownstown, for electrical supplies/the quote from Kiley’s Tree Service for tree, brush and stump removal with a quote of $35,050, which includes $7,100 for ditch clearance for three ditches, and the $35,050 also includes the shade tree portion and the electrical portion. Sue Rogers made a motion to accept the two lists of requisitions over $2,500, with the four additions, seconded by Bob Whitacre. Motion carried with no discussion. Bonnie said one of the requisitions in that list is for TrafficCalm, for the repair work on the pedestrian walkway by Clark Park across Route 20. The cost is $6,414 and Bonnie would like Council’s permission to pay for that with the Gatso funds, since it has everything to do with the safety of the pedestrians and the traffic on Route 20. Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to use Gatso funds to pay for the work that will be done by TrafficCalm, in the amount of $6,414. Motion carried with no discussion. At the January work session, the situation was discussed with the payment that Croghan is attempting to collect from the Village of Monroeville in regards to the ATM. Bonnie asked if Council wants to further discuss or act on that. Council agreed to go with what was decided in January, and have Jim send a letter to Croghan advising no further payment will be made since Croghan made decisions outside of the agreed upon contract. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Chris Raftery, for Jim Barney to send a letter to Gary Pollack/Croghan Bank, to advise the Village of Monroeville will not be making further payment regarding the invoice dispute. Motion carried with no discussion. Vince Thompson came into the Village Administrative Office on 2/10/23 to clean/clear the used Council tablets that are going up for sale. Vince recommended not selling them for more than $100.00, since they are used and more than two years old. One of them is missing a charging plug, which may result in a price negotiation. The Mayor advised that tablet may have been hers, and she will check tonight and see if she has the missing charger. Bonnie asked for a motion if Council is in agreement with the price. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Joe Galea, to sell the tablets with an asking price of $100.00 or less, if negotiation is required. Motion carried with no discussion. Bonnie advised there are six tablets, and with Council’s motion, there are three that are already sold. Bonnie would like to ask for a motion for a pay increase for the employees, retroactive to 1/1/2023. Previously, a $1.00 per hour increase was discussed, along with considering COLA (cost of living adjustment). Chris said she thinks that is fair. Chris made a motion to accept Bonnie’s proposal of the pay increase, using the 8.7% COLA, seconded by Craig Franklin. Bob asked if that is 8.7% across the board. Chris confirmed that is 8.7 percent across the board, which will vary with each employee’s pay. The highest wage increase would be $2.97 per hour and the lowest $1.33 per hour. Motion carried with no further discussion. Joe asked if Bonnie had e-mailed the interest information mentioned in her report. Bonnie confirmed and provided Joe with another copy.

**Police** – Chief presented his report that was previously submitted to Council. Chief asked everyone to reference his activity report with the prior year of 2022, instead of the 2021 that he mis-typed. Chief advised Officer Jordan Eggleston will most likely be leaving us in mid-March of 2023, and joining the police department in Elyria, Ohio. Part-time Officer Curtis Silvers has accepted a tentative offer from the Avon Lake police department, so we may be losing him as well. Everyone is stealing from everyone else at this point and the Village is at the bottom of that list. On a positive note, Jonah Mersereau has worked out as an exceptional part-time officer, so Chief would like to ask for Council’s approval to move him to a full-time position. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Chris Raftery, to hire Jonah Mersereau as a full-time police officer, at $18.80 per hour, with a possible start date of 2/20/23, pending the scheduled drug screen appointment availability at FTMC Occupational Health. Motion carried with no discussion. Glen Opper asked if Council is going to start paying the employees more money in order to keep them on staff. The Mayor advised that is part of the discussion for finance, and that is continually on the radar. Glen said that really needs to be looked at and the Mayor agreed.

**Solicitor** – No information reported.

**Mayor** - The Mayor wanted to bring up a couple of things that were touched on at the finance meeting. It was discussed extending the longevity cap and extending the earned time cap. The Mayor asked if those are things that need further discussion or need a motion. Chris advised those issues needs discussed at a finance meeting and hammered out a bit more. The Mayor attended the meeting at the H.R.J.F.D and Bonnie helped her with preparing a presentation and letter of recognition for that department. It was nice to have them receive the accolades that they deserved. The Mayor had a discussion with Jessica Wasserman from the Village Flea. Jess let the Mayor know that a special meeting will not need to be held in February, as it’s been decided to move the Flea to an “every other year” event, and 2023 would be the off year. Work can be done the following year to better prepare for the 2024 Flea. The Mayor received a recommendation to add Glen Opper to the Planning Commission and asked Glen if he is interested. Glen confirmed and introduced himself. He has lived in Monroeville for 46 years and knows everything about it. Joe Galea made a motion to have Glen Opper join the Village of Monroeville Planning Commission, seconded by Craig Franklin. Motion carried with no discussion. The Mayor referenced the flags from Tom’s report. Tom confirmed the Village is in possession of the flags. The Mayor asked if they will be up by this weekend. Tom said he reached out to Dick Palmer to see if he wanted them put up, as with the wind storm, we should error on the side of caution to avoid damaging the flags. Glen said other things can be done with the flags, like stitching the ends of the flags to make them last longer, especially since the flags are getting costly. Tom said these flags are heavier duty, but perhaps we could reach out to someone about the stitching in order to provide more durability. Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Bob Whitacre, to share 50% of this year’s costs of the flags with the American Legion, in the amount of $262.10. Motion carried with no discussion. The Mayor asked for a motion to accept Isaiah’s resignation. Joe Galea made a motion, seconded by Craig Franklin, to accept Isaiah Scheid’s resignation, effective 2/23/23. Motion carried with no discussion. The Mayor would like to congratulate Tom Gray for his recognition and appointment to the four high-level board committees, approved by the full AMP Board. It’s a prestigious recognition and the Mayor appreciates Tom and his representation of the Village of Monroeville on those committees.

**BOARD AND COMMISSION REPORTS**

Bob Whitacre reported that the H.R.J.F.D. met on 2/1/23. There were 13 calls in January. They are hoping the new pumper will arrive in late summer.

**ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS FOR PASSAGE**

The Mayor asked for a motion to suspend the rules for the following legislation. Sue Rogers made that motion, seconded by Bob Whitacre. Motion carried with no discussion.

**Ordinance 2023-02** *An Ordinance authorizing the Village’s participation in the Treasurer of Ohio’s Market Access Program in connection with the Village’s participation in the American Municipal Power, Inc. (“AMP”) “on behalf of” financing program; authorizing the preparation and filing of an application for that program and the execution and delivery of a standby note purchase agreement with the treasurer, and other necessary and appropriate documents, and declaring an emergency* was presented for passage. Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to pass Ordinance 2023-02 by title only. Motion carried with no discussion.

**Ordinance 2023-03** *An Ordinance to revise the prima facie speed limit on State Route 20 from State Route 99 to Hollister St, and declaring an emergency* was presented for passage. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Bob Whitacre, to pass Ordinance 2023-03 by title only. Motion carried with no discussion.

**Resolution 2023-01** *A Resolution authorizing the Village Administrator to enter into an agreement with the State of Ohio, Department of Transportation, for the installation and maintenance of bike route signage, and declaring an emergency* was presented for adoption. Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Joe Galea, to adopt Resolution 2023-01 by title only. Motion carried with no discussion.

**APPROVAL OF BILL SUMMARY**

Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Bob Whitacre, to approve the bill summary as presented, which included memo expenses and checks # 044763 to # 044832, for a total of $620,991.07. Motion carried with no discussion.

**COUNCIL BUSINESS**

Bob asked if anything can be done to change the speed limit of 45mph on Route 20 by Clark Park. Tom said there’s been conversation in our Administrative Office, and it was best thought for Ordinance 2023-03 to be approved first. Then the same dialogue can be continued, since there are no rules and regulations that the State has in play. Bonnie is going to send the approval down to Jeremy at ODOT for Ordinance 2023-03. Twenty-four hours later, Tom will follow-up with Jeremy to say since Jeremy has evaluated the area of Route 20 from State Route 99 to Hollister Street per Ordinance 2023-03, how about evaluating this other area of Route 20 now, and see how that discussion goes. Bob thinks it’s important since the area is by Clark Park and there is a crosswalk. Tom said Troy had just asked if the rapid rate flashing beacons could be moved back and Tom told him no, based upon ODOT’s requirement that they be between the sidewalk and the pavement in the curb lawn. Since they are now our property, we are in discussions with ODOT to see if they can sit on the other side of the sidewalk. Initially, the “sign guy” assigned to the Village said no, but Tom did go laterally from that gentleman, while keeping him in the loop, and advised we are going to pursue it. Tom said the Safe Routes to School grant is also being pursued for additional signage and possible lighting for the segment of Route 20 for St. Joe’s and Monroeville local. Bob asked when the EMS contract expires and asked if anyone has heard anything. Bonnie confirmed the contract expires 2/23/23. Jim said he hasn’t heard from anybody, not Ashley Ballah, nor the prosecutor, nor the Township. Tom confirmed the Township has been non-committal. Bob asked if the Township still has a contract with EMS. Tom confirmed, and said the Township also has our levy money, the inside millage that goes towards the EMS levy. That’s another shoe that will have to come down and we will see how that goes. Bob asked if the contract between the Township and EMS covers the Village. Jim and Tom confirmed. Joe mentioned that Bonnie had contacted him regarding a faux email had come in from someone pretending to be Joe Galea, wanting to change his payroll deposit information. Joe asked if there is a policy that addresses how a Village employee can change their payroll information. Bonnie confirmed we have an internal policy that requires employees to make any payroll changes in person, in the Administrative Office, with one of us witnessing the employee filling out the form and we sign as acknowledgment of receiving it. The employee also receives a copy of the acknowledged form. We are looking into an internal cyber security training for the employees. Chris asked if the employee in question is contacted, if someone tries to portray themselves as that employee. Bonnie confirmed. The Mayor said this happened before, and changes have been made to prevent it. Heather confirmed we have received them before from people portraying themselves as the Mayor, invalid invoices that may contain malware, etc. Bonnie confirmed if the email address appears invalid, we don’t open it and delete it. You have to pay attention to the email address, the fonts, the punctuation, etc. Joe asked if our insurance covers cyber security training and Bonnie confirmed. As soon as it quiets down in the Administrative Office and first of the year reports and budget are completed, cyber security training will be completed with the staff. Discussion between the Mayor and Jim in regards to her current Mayor@MonroevilleOhio.com emails and how future emails with a future Mayor will be addressed. Vince will need to be contacted about that process to see what can be done. Joe confirmed that the Village Flea will be every other year and during the off years it will be discussed as to how the Flea funds can be spent towards benefitting the community. The Mayor asked Council to brainstorm ideas for a mural on the Council chamber wall, so that sketches can be done and an idea agreed upon. Bob asked Tom how the solar field people and the Leber’s made out. Tom advised it’s been resolved. The drainage and the re-sloping of the land has been handled. Tom is unaware of where the discussion is with crop damage as that has not been shared with him. Bob said he hasn’t heard anything lately either. Tom said he has talked with Mr. Leber and he is satisfied with the drainage flow.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other business to come before them, Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Craig Franklin, to adjourn. Motion carried with no discussion. The meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM.

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Heather Alicea, Administrative Specialist

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Melissa M. Fries-Seip, Mayor

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