

On Tuesday, October 11, 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		Jim Barney, Solicitor
Bob Whitacre		Gary Lyons, Chief of Police
Sam Wiley		Heather Alicea, Administrative Specialist

Also attending: Andy Betschman, Tyler & Jessica Wasserman, Andrew & Elisa Brown, Dawn Franklin, Patrisha Vazquez-Botello, and Katherine Herring.

The September 2022 financial reports and bank reconciliations were previously distributed to Council via e-mail.

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mayor Fries-Seip asked for Council's approval of the agenda. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Sam Wiley, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried with no discussion.

#### **DISPOSITION OF MINUTES**

Sam Wiley made a motion, seconded by Craig Franklin, to approve the minutes as presented from the September 13, 2022, regular meeting. Motion carried with no discussion.

#### **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Joe Galea, to approve the September 2022 financial reports as presented. Motion carried with no discussion.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE MONTHLY CREDIT CARD & 3<sup>RD</sup> QTR. 2022 CREDIT CARD REPORT**

Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to approve the September 2022 credit card report and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2022 credit card report. Motion carried with no discussion.

#### **OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL**

Jessica Wasserman, founder of the Village Flea and owner of Lyn Marie's coffee shop, spoke on behalf of the Village Flea. The Village Flea was founded in 2018, to highlight, gather and grow the community of Monroeville. The Flea is a one-day festival of art, music, and food and it's meant to bring the community together in the heart of the town. The committee members consist of a group of independent business owners and community members. All donations and money that are raised is used to carry out the festival every year, and it's spent on ways that impact the community in a positive light. The Flea is most intended to inspire others and help continue to grow the community. The event was moved from summer to fall this year, and with that, the Flea was able to impact the youth. The Flea Committee consists of twelve people and it takes a year to prepare. There are thousands of hours volunteered for the event. There were over 2,500 in attendance at this year's Flea. Jessica would like to address some concerns. Jessica would like Council to listen to the concerns, to help come up with a plan to eliminate the disconnect, and move forward in a positive manner while being respectful to each other. This year, more than ever, it's been very evident that there is a disconnect between the Village Flea and the Village of Monroeville. There were a lot of hurdles and headaches and it's confusing to Jessica as to why this is occurring. The Flea should be supported by the Village the most. For example, there was confusion with a member of Council, in regards to the placement of a porta-pot. Forty-eight hours prior to the Flea taking place, a Councilman called to complain that a porta-pot was placed too close to his home and he demanded that it be moved. He took great offense to where the porta-pot was placed, in the American Legion parking lot, next to his home. He took photos and threatened the group of volunteers when they went to speak to him about it. Sue asked Jessica if the porta-pot issue was resolved. Tyler advised the porta-

pot was moved and Jessica verified, and stated they accommodated the request to move it. Jessica advised thousands of volunteer hours have been put in for the Flea, and she just doesn't understand why the need to be so fussy over the placement of a porta-pot. She had two porta-pots placed outside of her business, and they were there until Monday, but she wasn't concerned as that's a little thing compared to the bigger picture. Andrew Brown, owner of Old Soul Woodworking, introduced himself. In viewing what has gone on the last couple of years, he feels conversations between the Flea and the Village need to take place in regards to putting this event together. He feels as if things have gotten worse instead of better, since the Flea started in 2018. He doesn't want to point the finger or demand answers, he just wants to address issues that have occurred and start change to improve the situation. When he and his wife started Old Soul, he had heard that the residents wouldn't support it and that the Village was difficult to work with. Their business pulls in people from all different areas, including out of state. He said members of the Dam Festival committee had told him their frustrations in working with the Village to put together that event and, that is one of the reasons the event doesn't take place anymore. The Mayor asked Andrew for specific issues in regards to the difficulty of working with the Village. Andrew said he is getting to that. Andrew said a patron came into Old Soul before the Flea and was asking about the Flea, and she said she had heard there is someone close by that doesn't want people coming into the Village. Andrew said in speaking with someone from the County, there was a grant written for the Village of Monroeville, in the amount of \$100,000 for infrastructure and no one showed up to claim it. Andrew said he doesn't understand why the Village would be turning down money that could help with improvements. The sidewalks look terrible and need improvements. He had heard there were complaints made after last year's Flea, about how the Flea money is being spent. He doesn't understand why that would be a unilateral decision, especially when other people who have put their volunteer hours in have other ideas. One of the people who donated a check to the Flea made it clear that they didn't want to write a check to the Village and that speaks volumes to the situation. The committee also didn't understand why the lot by Old School Warehouse couldn't be mowed for the Flea, for people that were parking there. The Village maintenance staff that were helping set up for the Flea had attitude, from complaining about the extension cords to everything else. The Flea opened at 10:00 and the maintenance truck was still there until 10:30. When Andrew attempted to say thank you and goodbye, the staff ignored him. When the picnic tables were being moved by two volunteers, the Village maintenance staff stood there without helping, until Councilman Joe Galea said something to them. There were complaints from the Village maintenance staff about untangling the bunting. The Village only provided one trash bin and one trash bag for the event. Andrew knew there were concerns with charging the food vendors a fee. Elisa said the new ordinance was passed in regards to food trucks. Bonnie said the fee wasn't waived, it's in the ordinance that for festivals, the vendors don't have to pay the registration fee. Joe said he falsely raised the alarm on that and caused the miscommunication, and he apologized. Andrew said they were required to pay the police department \$25.00 an hour, to have an officer present to assist with helping people cross Route 20. Most of the time, the officer was standing in the shade while on his cell phone, and the officer commented to people that he was watching the Browns game. Andrew doesn't understand why a fee had to be paid when the officer wasn't doing his job. Tyler said he didn't understand why a fee had to be paid for that service at all, when the emblem on the police cars says "community first". Andrew said that the Thursday before the Flea, at 9:15 AM, the Village contacted Jessica to advise an insurance form was required to be turned in, in order for the Flea to be held. That left less than 48hrs. to obtain an insurance policy. If an insurance form was required, that should have been communicated much earlier. Andrew also brought prior renovations to the four corners on Route 20 and Monroe Street. The corner by Old Soul took two weeks, while the others only took one week, which effected Old Soul's business. Andrew brought up the issue of the Vintage Village Christmas not being held at the same time as Christmas in the park for 2022. Elisa Brown attended a Council meeting in April 2022 and communicated her hopes in partnering with the Village for the Village Vintage Christmas, with the date of Saturday, 12/3/22. Now the Village is hosting their Christmas in the Park on 12/11/22, with Trinity Lutheran Church, which was brought up during discussions for the Flea. The Village hosted the MMC open house shortly before the Flea was held, instead of hosting the open house on the day of the Flea. The Mayor advised those things were talked about. Council and the Mayor didn't want to hold those events simultaneously as they didn't want to take people away from the Flea. Andrew said he realizes that, and that is why he wants to have a discussion about those things instead of pointing fingers. The Mayor said she hoped those communications would have improved, being that Council member Joe Galea and Administration Specialist Heather Alicea were on the Flea Committee, but obviously there is more work to do. Andrew said he and his family have big plans for 18 and 20 S Main Street. He asked if Council would be willing to spend any amount of money to update and progress that, and get the little things done properly, like parking. If they can't get sidewalks done and lawns mowed, how can they

expect for a parking lot and sidewalks to be completed. Andrew doesn't know if it's worth holding the Flea if they can't get proper communication and a good working relationship with the Village. Andrew would like to request a special meeting with Council, in order to determine the Flea needs and the Village needs, moving forward. The Mayor said Council will get something scheduled and will let the Flea Committee know of a date, so that discussion can take place. The Mayor said rumors are just that until they're proven. The Mayor said the sidewalks have been patched for safety purposes, and it's a work in progress. Andrew said that is the kind of information they are looking for, as when they attended a prior Council meeting, they were told all sidewalk options had been exhausted and there wasn't enough money, and everything was still in the planning phase. Elisa said no one would even look at her during those meetings and answer her questions. The Mayor said she is unsure if the Village is able to make those improvements at this time, it's still in the engineering phase and there is no timeline. Andrew said it would be better to know that then being blown off. Elisa said she talked to Dick Stein last week and he had no idea of the businesses and the growth in the Village. Elisa said there are capital improvement dollars that can be used, like other communities have done. The owner of Betsey's Boutique, Katherine Herring, spoke in regards to the event planning issues. Katherine said she lives in Bellevue and she was the foundation director for the hospital for several years. Katherine said when events were planned, all the major players were at the table, in order to make sure the proper communication was held and questions were answered, whether it be the Mayor, the police department, etc. Katherine said when an event is planned, everyone has to be on board to make it happen. As a new business owner, the day was phenomenal for Katherine during the Flea event and Monroeville is becoming a destination. Tyler feels the Flea is an inconvenience for the Village. The Mayor said she is sorry he feels that way. Jessica expressed her hopes for being on the same page from here on out. She would love to see the Village offer to help more. Sam said personally, it's a surprise for him to hear about this, as he never heard of any roadblocks. Bob said the same goes for him, he doesn't remember hearing of any issues. Sam said engineering studies for the sidewalks take a lot of time and he knows Tom and Bonnie work diligently on funding for everything that the Village does. Bob said Senator Manning has been here before and inquiries were made on funding. It's not as simple as applying and then the money is here for spending. Sam said years of planning went into the waterline project and the same would have to be done for the sidewalks. Bob said the funds are not there at this time. Tyler said they were previously advised there were no funds for sidewalks, yet, this beautiful, new MMC building was done. Sam said Council is doing what they can do for now for sidewalk improvements. Heather pointed out that in regards to Council not being made aware of any issues prior to the Flea, there was an issue brought forward and discussed during an Executive Session, at a prior Council meeting, so Council was aware of that issue. Andrew again said he doesn't see the point in investing thousands of dollars into a new business and holding the Flea, if the business owners can't get clear communication on what is being done for the sidewalks. Sam said the engineering study alone is thousands of dollars. Craig asked Chief Lyons if an officer working that event is considered off duty detail. Chief Lyons verified. Craig asked if the Flea Committee expects an officer to come in and work for nothing. Bonnie advised they aren't working for nothing; they are paid \$25.00 per hour. Craig asked the Flea members if the officer was giving them attitude that day. The committee members said no, however, the officer wasn't present and doing the job he was paid to do. Sam said it's not right to be paying him if he wasn't doing his job. Elisa said the officer came in Old Soul several times to cool off instead of helping people cross the street. In response to Craig's question about expecting an officer to work for nothing, Jessica said it's only six hours. Craig said it's six hours on a Sunday as well. Jessica said she donated hundreds of hours away from her family and her business, so it would be good to feel as if others cared. Craig said he cares. Jessica responded that it doesn't feel that way, especially with how insulting Craig was in response to a porta-pot being placed in the lot next to his home and it was very embarrassing for her. The Mayor said before everyone gets too far past what the purpose of this discussion was, can an agreement be made to have a meeting with everyone present, and discuss proceeding from there. The Mayor said Council will be in touch with dates, and a meeting will be set up. Everyone confirmed that is acceptable. Sue volunteered to be on the Flea Committee. Sam thanked the Flea Committee for all their hard work. Sue and Bob added to that and Bob said he knew there were a couple of issues, but that the Flea went great.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

**Administrator** - Tom advised his report was previously submitted to Council. Council had no questions.

**Fiscal Officer** - Bonnie presented her report that was in Council's packet. Bonnie asked for Council's approval for two purchase orders. Main Lite will be here tomorrow to move the traffic box over, in order for the Village to start the beautification process of the corner on Route 20 and Monroe Street. The other is for the primary wire that is needed.

Sam Wiley made a motion to approve the PO's for Main Lite for \$8,006 and for the wire purchase from Brownstown Electric for \$7,850, seconded by Sue Rogers. Motion carried with no discussion. Ann did the annual unclaimed funds report for the state. Being submitted is \$191.59, one is for a park refund and two are for utility deposit refunds. Every effort has been made to contact the individuals and let them know about the funds. Bonnie said that during the Flea, she saw several people looking for parking spaces and drivers kept going the wrong way through the MMC drive-thru. This also happens regularly during business hours. In order to avoid an accident, she would like Council's approval to have arrows painted in the asphalt or signs placed, to show it's a one-way lane. Bob verified it's not easy to turn around in the parking lot once it's full. Council and the Mayor thanked Bonnie for the write-up she did regarding the CD investments.

**Police** – Chief Lyons presented his report that was in Council's packet. Officer Jordan Hanuscin resigned from the Village and has joined the Sheffield Village Police Department. Chief Lyons requested approval from Council to accept Officer Hanuscin's resignation, as well as approval to advertise in order to fill the vacant position. Sam Wiley made the motion to accept Officer Hanuscin's resignation, seconded by Sue Rogers. Motion carried with no discussion. Sam Wiley made a motion to approve the advertisement for the full-time Police Officer position with the MPD, seconded by Joe Galea. Motion carried with no discussion.

**Solicitor** – Jim Barney just received a new proposal from North Central EMS, late yesterday afternoon. Jim would like it added to the agenda for the November Council meeting.

**Mayor** - The Mayor said she appreciates Officer Meyer's submittance in regards to his training and education. She congratulated the MPD on the successful audit with the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation, pending the approval of the final policy. The Mayor asked Jim if he received the policy for the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway. Jim said yes and after discussion with Chief Lyons, everything looks fine. Chris Raftery made a motion to accept the new policy for the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway, seconded by Sam Wiley. Motion carried with no discussion. Chief Lyons verified MPD is current on those policies as of right now. The Mayor said as long as signage for the MMC is being discussed, there was a question that the library asked. Can signs be placed on Route 20 that references the direction of the library and how would ODOT need to be involved. The Mayor asked Tom to please research that. Council members and the Mayor will be at the MMC during trick-or-treat. For Christmas in the Park, Santa is arranged. TLC may have their new pastor by then and if so, the Mayor would like to invite him to give the blessing. Both schools are interested in sending their choirs.

#### **BOARD AND COMMISSION REPORTS**

Bob reported that the HRJFD met on 10/5/22. There were ten calls in September, three were in the Village. There was an open house 10/10/22 for Fire Prevention week.

#### **ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS FOR PASSAGE**

The Mayor asked for a motion to suspend the rules for the following legislation. Sam Wiley made that motion, seconded by Chris Raftery. Motion carried with no discussion.

**Ordinance 2022-18** *An Ordinance amending, reducing, or supplementing certain funds for appropriations Ordinance No. 2022-06 and declaring an emergency* was presented for passage. Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to pass Ordinance 2022-18 by title only. Motion carried with no discussion.

**Resolution 2022-29** *A Resolution authorizing the Fiscal Officer to repay the General Fund a portion of the advancement of funds for the Water System Improvement Project, and declaring an emergency* was presented for adoption. Sam Wiley made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to adopt Resolution 2022-29 by title only. Motion carried with no discussion.

#### **APPROVAL OF BILL SUMMARY**

Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Joe Galea, to pay the bills as presented on the bill summary, which included memo expenses and check # 044479 to # 044539 for a total of \$480,279.67. Motion carried with no discussion.

#### **COUNCIL BUSINESS**

Chris Raftery asked Council for approval to close the offices for Village employees on the day after Thanksgiving, Friday, 11/25/22. She would like employees to enjoy an extended vacation, with pay. This is for recognition of all the work the employees do and their commitment to their jobs. Tom, Bonnie and Chief verified it will work. Bonnie verified it wouldn't be considered a holiday; it would just be a paid day. Craig Franklin made a motion to accept granting Friday, 11/25/22, as a paid day off for employees, seconded by Sue Rogers. Motion carried with no discussion. Joe asked if that has any impact on utility bills. Bonnie advised no, as the payment due date is the 10<sup>th</sup>, the shut-offs are mailed by the 20<sup>th</sup>, so there wouldn't be an issue. Shutoffs would be done the following Monday, as shutoffs aren't done on Fridays. Bob asked if the encoder for HRJFD is taken care of. Tom confirmed and Heather verified that the HRJFD communicated with her in regards to the invoice. Joe asked Tom about the signal light at Route 20 and Route 99. The traffic on 99 has a queue up for a very long time, up to four minutes at times. Tom said the signal responsibility is the Village's. The traffic warrant is issued by ODOT. The loop in one section of Route 99 is shorted and has to be replaced. The Village doesn't have the cable yet, due to supply issues, and temporary repairs were made the week before last to improve the approach and the loop trigger. The equipment is working but the sensor needs to be fixed.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Joe Galea made a motion, seconded by Sam Wiley, to adjourn to executive session for the purpose of considering the investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee. The meeting adjourned to executive session at 7:08 PM and reconvened at 8:24 PM. Council excused everyone except Jim Barney. Joe Galea left the Council Meeting during executive session, at 7:50 PM.

When the Council meeting reconvened, the Mayor asked Council if they want to set up a meeting with the Flea Committee, and if so, it has to be publicized if everyone is in attendance. Jim said this is none of his business, this is not a legal thing, but wouldn't it be smarter for the Mayor and a member of Council to meet with the Flea Committee and talk about all of the issues, so as to not face tonight's situation again. Address the issues, address the rumors, find out what the committee wants to talk about it and then schedule a meeting. Chris said once this meeting's minutes are complete, Council can reflect on the minutes and move forward from there. Jim said that it's just his suggestion. Jim said watching tonight as an outsider, the Flea Committee was nice about it, but it's human nature to get defensive. The Mayor said it will then be twelve of them on her if it's done in the way Jim is suggesting. Jim said the Mayor can pick a Council member or two, so that it's not a public meeting, then sit down and talk about stuff. Then, it can be brought to the bigger body. Heather said she doesn't think the Flea Committee wants it to be an argument going forward. The last Flea meeting that she attended was after the Flea, and Councilman Joe Galea was at that meeting as well. Heather suggested that the Flea could attend a Council meeting, address the situation with Craig, request a special meeting with Council and move forward, having better communication between the Village and the Flea. The Mayor said to Heather that if both Heather and Joe were at the Flea meetings, she doesn't understand why issues weren't being communicated to Council. The Mayor said Joe brought back the piece about the food trucks, but the Mayor wasn't made aware there were other communication issues. Heather advised she was on the committee and was almost working as a liaison between the Flea and the Village, in regards to things that the Flea requested and that the Village could or couldn't do for the Flea. The committee feels as if Village Administration is telling them no on their requests. Heather said with this special meeting that the Flea is requesting, the committee wants to meet with all of Council and the committee doesn't want it to be an argument or an attack, they want to move forward positively, which is exactly what Jess said earlier in the meeting. Sam asked if the committee would be willing to give Council an agenda of topics and Heather advised they would be willing to do that. Sam said he was blindsided by tonight and Bob said he had heard the major points of things that had occurred, as his daughter is on the committee. Sam had said when committee members had attended meetings previously, Council thought prior questions were addressed at the level they could be addressed. Chris said Council's answers to prior questions should have sufficed. The Mayor said they look to Tom for responses, as he has the information they need. Heather said Elisa previously stated that she feels Tom doesn't respond to her and feels there is a disconnect. Heather said the Flea wants to move forward and partner with the Village and make the best of this from now on without having negative circumstances...the insurance form, the issue that was discussed in executive session, etc. The Mayor said she didn't remember anything from a prior executive session. Heather reminded her about what was discussed previously in executive session. Heather also advised that in regards to Tyler's complaint about a lot not being mowed for parking, she isn't sure if the Village is even permitted to mow that area at this point.



Heather said another issue was Christmas. Elisa had attended a Council meeting earlier in the year and asked Council that the Village partner with the businesses, by doing the holiday celebration together with a tentative date of 12/3/22. No one from Council responded to confirm that date with Elisa. Then, at the September 2022 meeting, the Mayor advised Christmas in the Park would be on 12/11/22. Heather had to pass that information along to the Flea committee, which obviously caused frustration. The committee didn't understand why the Village wouldn't want to partner with the Flea and make it all on the same day, for the community. The Mayor said this is all news to her and doesn't understand why someone didn't come to her when she was at the Flea and this was happening. Heather said the Flea committee was frustrated with Craig regarding the porta-pot, the Village maintenance staff were frustrated when yelled at by Joe, who is a Councilman and not their supervisor, and there was frustration all around. Craig said no one asked him anything, the committee members just put the porta-pot there. Sue asked about the map that was discussed earlier. Heather said in regards to that map, there was never a need for Council approval. Tom needed to see that map for the electric hook-up only, for the food trucks. It was not up to Tom to sign off on porta-pots, that was not his responsibility. After the last Flea meeting, Heather said she suggested to the Flea committee to attend a Council meeting and address the issue about the porta-pots, and to request a special meeting with Council, in regards to partnering with the Village in the future, to move forward in the best way possible. Heather said that is why the Village has a Council to begin with. Heather advised Jess did a nice job tonight and was very respectful in her approach. Heather said the last week of the Flea just snowballed, Bob and Sam agreed. Tom asked for durable bunting to hang between the buildings, and Jess worked hard to make sure the bunting was durable. The durability needs to be there so that the Electric Department can get it hung as quickly as possible, as fuel is used from the Electric Departments bucket truck, when the bucket is in the air to hang the bunting. The Mayor said she will set up a meeting and see where it's going from there. Sue said that is good, so that issues can be addressed before the Flea. Bonnie said she understands that the insurance form request wasn't timely, but it is possible to get insurance for these events, as it was done for the Dam Festival. However, the Village waived it for the Flea this year, since it was last minute and the Flea committee wasn't asked previously to provide it. Jim suggested getting in touch with the folks who handle the Milan Melon Festival to see how they do things. Everyone agreed on that.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other business to come before them, Sam Wiley made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to adjourn. Motion carried with no discussion. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

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Heather Alicea, Administrative Specialist

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Melissa M. Fries-Seip, Mayor

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