

VILLAGE OF CRIDERSVILLE COUNCIL MINUTES

Regular Meeting – May 13, 2013

Mayor Lorali Myers called the regular Council meeting to order and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Mayor Lorali Myers, Council members Rick Walls, Shirley Anderson, Tony Zuppardo, Eric West, Paul Lynch, and Stacey Cook; Clerk-Treasurer Candace Stevely, and Solicitor Angela Elliott.

The Mayor recognized Mr. Dave Tester, who has served for 17 years as the Principal of the Cridersville Elementary School and will be retiring at the end of this school year. A proclamation was read proclaiming May 31, 2013, Dave Tester Day in the Village of Cridersville.

It was moved by Walls, seconded by West to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2013 Regular Council meeting. Motion passed 6-0.

The public was invited to tonight's meeting to learn more about and ask questions concerning the water and sewer rates. The Mayor asked that those wishing to ask questions concerning the water and sewer rate topic first state their name and address. Village Administrator, Jarid Kohlrieser, was introduced. In the past the Village had worked with RPAC, a company which evaluates rates and usage. He recently contacted Julie Ward with RPAC, who evaluated the current Village rates at no cost. Her recommendation was that in order to keep up with inflation and understanding where the funds are at this time, there should probably be an increase to the water and sewer rates. The last evaluation was 2009, which resulted in a \$4 sewer increase and \$1 water increase. Currently basic water is \$10 and sewer is \$15.23, for a total base cost within the Village of \$25.23. After researching our records, we found that in the last 62 years water rates have only increased \$7.25.

Councilman West gave facts and figures related to the costs and revenues for the Water and Sewer funds. The RCAP study showed current water rates are at 1.69% of median household income. In order to receive some of the grants from the Ohio EPA, CDBG, OWDA and OPWC all federally funded grants used for sewer, water and related projects, or to qualify for low interest loans, the lowest percentage they require is a 2.3% median household income average. With current rates the Village does not qualify for any type of that funding.

Also, we are not preparing our funds, particularly the water fund, for any type of infrastructure repairs. Our infrastructure is approximately 60 years old and will need to be updated, repaired, or replaced. If we do nothing with our current rates, with inflation alone, and the cost of doing business, there will be a negative account balance within two years. The first quarter of this year there has been a \$1,200 increase for water operation and a \$3,200 increase for sewer operation. These are primarily for utility expenses -gas, electric-the everyday costs of doing business.

Mayor Myers stated that the expenditures for the 1st quarter of 2013 compared to the 1st quarter of 2012 are down about \$27,000. We cut \$1,000 out of the Water Fund budget in the 1st quarter of 2013, and \$26,000 out of the Sewer Fund.

Receipts for 2012 in the Water Fund were \$252,384.74 and disbursements were \$277,223.28, an approximate \$25,000 difference. Sanitary Sewer Fund 2012 receipts were \$367,374.65, disbursements were \$408,775.64. It is clear to see that revenue coming in is not covering the costs and we are not keeping up with inflation.

Councilman West stated that the Village has done upwards to \$2 million dollars of improvements to our water and sewer systems since the year 2000: major improvements to the Water Plant, a new water tower, major renovation to the sewer plant to keep up with EPA standards.

Currently year-to-date Water receipts are \$80,696.12 and expenditures are \$71,380.73. Year-to-date Sewer receipts are \$120,352.12; the funds spent are \$91,436.46. Tonight a resolution will be presented for payment on loans. Tomorrow \$31,325.81 will be taken out of the Water Fund to make the semi-annual payment of \$5,186.10 on the Water Plant Improvement Loan which is due to expire in 2025, and \$26,139.81 for the Water Tower Loan due to expire in 2026. A total of \$52,542.58 will be taken out of the Sanitary Sewer to make semi-annual payments of \$2,829.38 on the Sanitary Sewer Rehab Loan and \$49,713.20 on the Wastewater Improvement Loan.

Positive comments: In the last pay ordinance Village Council cut three paid holidays from our crew, also cut into the vacation package of new hires, took away personal days from our part time staff, no pay raises have been given, other than the 10-cent longevity, for the last four years. The Administrator has negotiated a new agreement with Shawnee Oaks subdivision where the Village will get a \$600 tap fee on all new homes and will get a \$4,777 increase in the Sewer Fund per quarter.

This summer we are doing a cleaning project to the old water tower, which includes putting in a new line to bypass that tower while it is being cleaned. The project costs will run between \$25,000-30,000. It was re-quoted to save the Village \$3,200. These are expenses we must incur to insure that when we wake up in the morning our sinks turn on and our toilets flush.

We are looking at a potential increase of \$2.50 to both the water and sewer base rate. This would be for residents only, not Shawnee Oaks, or the part of Meadowbrook not in the Village, or Summer Chase.

Residents were invited to ask questions or voice concerns regarding the water and sewer rates.

Diana Morris, 305 Wyandot, asked who would be voting on the increase.

The Mayor explained it would come before Council as an ordinance to be voted on at three meetings, allowing Council to vote if the increase would be put into effect by September 1.

Mrs. Morris is concerned about those living on fixed incomes and asked how the income tax funds were allocated. The Clerk-Treasurer explained that those funds go into the General Fund and the type of expenditures covered by the fund.

Darrel Chapman, 318 W. Main, asked why wasn't this problem wasn't addressed sooner, and he asked for clarification on what customers will be affected by the increase. The Mayor advised that those customers outside the Village usually pay 1.5% more. Shawnee Oaks receives only sewer from the Village. Mr. Chapman also asked if those with a flat rate meter, such as mobile home parks, would receive a flat \$5 increase for each unit. The Administrator said that they will receive the increase per unit.

Mr. West: We watch the funds yearly. We like to keep the Water Fund around \$100,000. In 2012 the fund had a loss of \$25,000 between receipts and disbursements that dropped it below the thresh hold. The new Administrator has made cuts this year, but we aren't able to bring it back up.

Dorance Thompson, 500 Clayton Drive, stated that when he was on Council, it was felt that the increase passed in 2009 would last longer than four years. Prices aren't going down, and even though no one wants to pay more, it is the cost of doing business.

Bob Connor, Oak Street, wondered how many water accounts are delinquent and the amount. The Administrator stated that delinquent accounts are shut off. Did not have an amount. He asked how many employees are being paid out of the Water Fund. West indicated that one employee is paid 50% from both Water and Sewer; three employees are paid roughly 38 hrs a week from Water. The Village Administrator is paid 50% out of Water Fund. Councilwoman Cook advised that the proposed increase would be based on 1,087 users at \$2.50 for Water, an additional \$2,717.50 a month or \$32,610 a year, up 2.8%. The Sewer would use the same figures, up 2.5%. Mr. Conner asked if a 5-year plan has been put together so that if the increase is approved, the Village will have plans to begin improvements to the old water system. When the system was originally installed there were only 53 customers. The Mayor advised that one of the RCAP proposals suggested the Village put in place an automatic 3% increase each year not only to take care of inflation but also to be prepared for improvements. The 3% increase was not discussed, but it will be revisited. West informed residents that the RCAP study showed the Village's water and sewer rates are substantially lower than surrounding municipalities, the same size as Cridersville, smaller and larger. They could not believe our rate structure, how low our debt/income ratio is and how well we are keeping things maintained. The only reason there was an increase in the sewer rate in 2009 was because of the \$1.5 million dollar sewer project at that time. We have done our best to keep our rates as low as possible but now the time how come to raise them.

Jim Lucas, 325 W. Main Street, asked if the Village pays overtime for weekend coverage, and if so, would it be possible to schedule employees for 36 hours during the week with the four hours on the weekend. The Mayor stated that presently there is a three-man rotation for weekend coverage, 3 hours on Saturday and 3 hours on Sunday. The Council has talked about the weekly hours with the Administrator and he is evaluating it at this time, because he must consider if all the necessary projects could be completed if this was implemented. West mentioned that there were 12 hours of overtime duty for the month of April.

Darrel Chapman, 318 W. Main asked if the total users of 1,087 includes Shawnee Oaks. The Administrator advised that it does include them.

Jim Lucas, 325 W. Main Street, has a well on his property. What if he wanted to begin using it? There is legislation that addresses this subject. It has to do with cross connection and backflow. If he is interested in seeing a copy, he can contact the Clerk's office.

Councilman Zuppardo talked about overtime hours. The Administrator had told him that one employee would be at \$30/hour for time and a half, another over \$20. The part-time is less. If it is averaged out it would be approximately \$20 or \$120 a week or \$6,240 a year. He doesn't agree with raising water rates as long as there are this many overtime hours, and would like to see rearranging of hours. He knows that there are a lot of people on fixed incomes.

Darrel Chapman, 318 W. Main Street, feels that when people from outside the Village do these studies they may be comparing with rates nationwide, and the Village is in an area of lower cost of living. His company is run on a business basis, not based on what other companies do. He hopes the Village will run their utilities on a good business basis - income versus expenses.

Bob Conner, Oak Street, asked when the water people plow snow, from which fund are they paid. It is paid from the Street Fund. He appreciates that the water and sewer are taken care of, and are reliable.

Assistant Clerk, Sue Bassitt, advised that the weekend overtime hours are paid 50% from Water and 50% from Sewer.

Councilman Walls addressed Mr. Chapman's comments, stating that the communities in the study were all local communities.

Jim Lucas, 325 W. Main Street, did have a question not related to the water and sewer rates. He wondered why we send our income tax money to Cleveland. The Mayor advised that we have terminated our agreement with CCA and will be going into an agreement with the City of St. Marys beginning January 1, 2014. He asked what rate we pay. The Solicitor advised the Village will pay St. Mary's a collection fee of 4.5% of collections.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee of the Whole: There was no meeting in April.

Utilities & Surface Water: No report.

Planning: The Planning Committee and Park Committee met with contractors from Ohio Power on April 25th regarding a lease agreement for Delong-Pioneer Park, and discussed the terms of the lease. An updated lease agreement from Ohio Power has been received for review. Zuppardo gave information regarding the lease. The Ohio Power contractors want to use the land beside the elementary school, known as Delong-Pioneer Park, for one year. They will be replacing existing poles with metal ones from Apollo Career Center to Wapakoneta. In return they are willing to put in a large parking lot. They will leave the fence and approximately \$80,000 of stone. During the year, the area will be used to store materials for their project. As long as they are working in the Village, they will pay the 1% income tax. The Solicitor explained that the lease only addresses the property. They will first need to have an environmental study done. They will repair any damage to the roads. The Village Administrator reviewed the current contract and felt that some things are not in there that Council had talked about. Council can counter if they wish to do so.

Finance: No report.

Park: The Committee met with the Planning Committee on April 25th. The details are covered under Planning above.

Streets: Completed a walk around with our Village Engineer regarding the Reichelderfer Road project in preparation for the bidding process. Discussed other repairs we want to do along with the parking lot. It is a \$125,000 project, with approximately a 16% match for the Village to pay. The funds will be released in July, so we are looking at August or September. The funding comes through OPWC. We can apply for these funds every three years. The County will pay for the small section from the Village limits to the railroad tracks so the road will be completely paved. From Main Street to the end of Lavina will be overlaid, Otterbein drive widened and overlaid. The concrete driveways will have the asphalt brought up to the driveway. The asphalt will be feathered in on asphalt driveways.

Jim Baughman asked why there are no curbs on Reichelderfer Road. The Mayor advised that the sidewalks were 100% funded by a ODOT program and the Village decided not to put curbs in at that time.

Streets & Sidewalks Committee will meet May 29th at 7 p.m.

Properties: The Dilapidated Buildings Program through the county will tentatively be bid out towards the end of the month. Asbestos must be removed from two of the three properties scheduled to be demolished (105 W. Main, 283 E. Sugar, 304 W. Sugar). It was explained that the funding for the project originates from a large settlement on foreclosures that was received by the Attorney General. It was dispersed to help with dilapidated buildings around the State of Ohio, through the counties.

Safety:

Police - Chief Drake distributed reports for April. There were 162 calls for service during April. A total of \$6,695 was received through Mayor's Court. The Chief reminded residents to mow their grass regularly, and not to blow it into the street. This year he is taking the personal approach and having face-to-face visits to address the issues and it seems to be working out better than letters.

Chief Drake answered a question from Bill Dickerson, 204 W. North Street, about fines for continuing to blow grass into the street

Fire Department – Chief Miller distributed reports, which showed 49 calls for April: 37 EMS and 12 Fire; the total of runs through April 30th is 182. The Jamboree preparations are in place. The Family Fun events will be on Main Street and the entertainment tent at the back of the lot, as well as the corn hole tournament. The rides will be on the blacktop and around the building. The list of events can be found on the Village website.

The Department will recognize their firemen on Saturday, May 11th with a dinner.. There is one fireman who has been with the department for 36 years.

Safety Committee will meet May 29th at 7:45 p.m. to go over Jamboree planning.

OLD BUSINESS: No old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

It was moved by West, seconded by Cook to pay the necessary bills for the month of May, 2013. The motion passed 6-0.

Council reviewed the lease agreement with AEP to utilize the Delong-Pioneer Park property for one year. It was moved by Walls, seconded by Lynch to read Resolution #2208 by title only. The motion passed 6-0. **RESOLUTION #2208** – A Resolution authorizing the Village Mayor to enter into a contract with American Electric Power regarding lease of property known as Delong-Pioneer Park, was read by Mayor Myers by title only. It was moved by Cook, seconded by Walls to accept Resolution #2208 as read by title only. Motion passed 6-0.

The Clerk introduced Resolution #2209 for transfer of funds to allow for the semi-annual payment on loans: \$7,188.79 from General Fund to the street paving loan funds; from the Water Fund to Water Plant Improvement Loan \$5,186.10 and \$26,139.81 to the Water Tower Construction OWDA Loan; from Sanitary Sewer to Sanitary Sewer Rehab OPWC Loan \$2,829.38, and \$49,713.20 to the 2009 Wastewater Improvement OWDA Loan. It was moved by West, seconded by Walls to read Resolution #2209 by title only. Motion passed 6-0. **RESOLUTION #2209** – A Resolution to approve the necessary transfer of funds for the Village of Cridersville and declaring an emergency for the year 2013 as follows, was read by title only by Mayor Myers. It was moved by Walls, seconded by Cook to accept Resolution #2209 as read by title only. Motion passed 6-0.

It was moved by Zuppardo, seconded by West to read Resolution #2210 by title only. Motion passed 6-0. **RESOLUTION #2210 – A Resolution authorizing an auction of Village owned property not needed or unfit for public use**, was read by Mayor Myers by title only. It was moved by West, seconded by Zuppardo to accept Resolution #2210 as read by title only. Motion passed 6-0. The auction will be held on Wednesday, May 15th at 6:00 p.m. at the fire house.

Lynch reported that on April 15th he attended the Auglaize County Regional Planning Commission meeting. Everything passed. They were primarily addressing a variance so a couple family members could sell off some land.

The Village Administrator, Jarid Kohlrieser, requested a Planning and Parks meeting. **Planning Committee and Park Committee will meet May 29th after the 7:45 p.m. scheduled Safety Committee meeting.**

He reminded residents that they need to check into whether they need a zoning permit application for any projects they are planning, such as structural changes, garages, sheds, fencing, etc.

The Planning Committee will bring up reviewing of the zoning ordinance on May 29th.

The community was reminded that Village Clean-up Day will be May 18th. You need to be a current resident of the Village, and should bring a photo I.D. with you. Items accepted: home and construction materials, batteries, oil, furniture, appliances, TVs, swing sets, etc. Trash, yard waste and paint will not be accepted.

Jim Lucas, 325 W. Main Street, asked when someone is hired, who okays that, and when someone is let go, what is the procedure. The Mayor informed him that the applicants are interviewed by Council. They give their recommendation to the Village Administrator. If an employee is not meeting standards, then the Administrator will ask Council to go into Executive Session, and we discuss the personnel matter. We hear his recommendations and we go from there. The Solicitor advised that Ohio is an At Will State, which means that any person can be terminated at any time for any reason or no reason. The law does not require any employer to give a reason for termination to an employee, unless a person has an employment contract.

Bob Conners, Oak Street, is concerned about the appearance of properties in the Village.

Mayor Myers presented three Boy Scouts who have been working with her to finish requirements for their Merit Budge for Citizenship. They meet with the Mayor three times to cover community, world and nation. Each scout asked a question.

Corey Spees, Troop 162: Is there a fine if someone refuses to mow their grass?

Answer: \$125 if it not mowed after 5 days of notification. If the Village must mow, the cost is \$100 per hour.

Ethan DeLeon, Troop 162: Why do we have a roll call of Council?

Answer: We need a record of Council members present. If someone is not present, Council must approve their absence. If everyone is not present, it has to be determined if there are enough to act on resolutions or ordinances.

Landon Lightel, 508 Thomas Drive, Troop 162: What happens if water bills are not paid?

Answer: They are sent a notice. Then if the bill is not paid, their water is shut off.

Brian Musselman, Troop Leader of Troop 162: How is the President of Council chosen?

Answer: Each year Council nominates people to serve as President and then they vote.

Jim Lucas congratulated the leaders of Boy Scout Troop 162 because their troop has a large percentage of Eagle Scouts. The Mayor expressed appreciation for the Boy Scout Troop's involvement in the community.

Police Chief Drake thanked the Fire Department, School Board and Village employees for their actions when there was a recent bomb threat at the elementary school.

Cook advised that the first Rally Round the Cabin event will be held this Thursday evening. This is one of four events during the summer. These are possible due to funds that the Cridersville Health Care Center has available to use in the community. There are posters around town with details.

It was moved by West, seconded by Lynch to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters, with action to be taken afterward. Motion passed 6-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Council discussed personnel matters.

It was moved by Cook, seconded by Zuppardo to go out of Executive Session. Motion passed 6-0.

It was moved by West, seconded by Lynch to adjourn the May 13th regular Council meeting. The motion passed 6-0.

Candace Stevely, Clerk-Treasurer

Loralie Myers, Mayor