

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
VILLAGE OF MANTUA, OHIO

January 4th, 2016 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Linda Clark called the meeting to order at 6pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL: Giles Seith, Paula Tubalkain, Ben Prescott, Marty Hura, Paul Janson, John Clark

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor Linda Clark, Village Administrator Kate Rogers, Police Chief Harry Buchert, Assistant Clerk-Treasurer Ashlee Hawkins,

CITIZENS: Carole Pollard, Terri Vechery, Renée Henry

DISCUSSION:

Mayor Clark said that they were going to start off with talking about the Historic Landmarks Committee hiring an intern from Hiram College. Mayor Clark said that Hiram College has a grant and we can hire one of the students to do some work for us. She said that she talked with and emailed Heather Balis from Hiram College to get clarification. Heather wrote and said that if the Village were to get an intern from Hiram College using their grant, the student would be paid through Hiram's student payroll and summer positions would have a FICA tax requirement. Heather also wrote that there would need to be a person to be an internship supervisor, this person would sign the learning agreement and fill out the evaluations on the students' performance and that the student would not be considered an employee.

Mayor Clark said that the Historic Landmarks Committee did write up an ad that explains what they are looking for. Mayor Clark said that there is no budget and if someone is taking pictures, she is not sure how they would get them on a flash drive. Paula said that the pictures could be downloaded to a computer, put onto a CD and don't have to be printed out until they are ready for use. Only the ones they want to use need to be printed. Renee said that when she talked to someone from Aurora, he said that they used the information that they received and made a map. Terri said that she feels that it's important to do some research to see if there are old photographs of the properties since it is history that they are after. Mayor Clark said that after the database is done, then people will be asked if they want to join the registry.

John Clark asked if the intern does not get everything done in the spring semester, are they just going to have them come back in the fall and Renee Henry said that is correct. Paul asked if they have come up with anyone to be the supervisor yet. John asked that at what point we have to have this information available to the public. Michele said that as soon as it's done and turned into a public record. Mayor Clark said that she still had a question about the photography and Paul said that everyone now has a camera that they can just plug into the computer and get the pictures off. Mayor Clark said that she feels that if the intern is working with all 7 people of the Committee as explained in the ad, that it would be too many people for them to have to work with. Carole Pollard said that she was not thinking about the supervisor position when she wrote that, but that the student would have access to all of them for questions and knowledge. Mayor Clark said that the supervisor for the intern should be someone on the Landmarks Committee. Paul asked if they had anyone in mind yet. Renee Henry said that they had to present it to Council first and then they are going to be talking about it at their meeting on Saturday. Carole asked if Council is okay with knowing that someone is going to be selected on Saturday and John Clark said that he feels that it's the Landmarks Committee work and that the Council doesn't need to be involved.

❖ Motion to get an intern from Hiram College made by Paul Janson, 2nd by Ben Prescott-**All Ayes**

Mayor Clark said that whoever is selected on Saturday should reach out to her and then they will reach out to Heather at Hiram College to get everything started.

Council President:

- ❖ Motion to nominate Marty Hura for Council President made by Paul Janson, 2nd by John Clark.
- ❖ Motion to nominate Ben Prescott for Council President made by Giles Seith, 2nd by Paula Tubalkain-**Marty voted for himself, Ben voted for himself, Paula voted for Ben, Giles voted for Ben, John voted for Marty, Paul voted for Marty. Since the vote was tied, Mayor Clark was to be a tie-breaking vote, and she voted for Marty.**

Marty Hura was voted in for Council President.

Enforcement of the Zoning Code:

Mayor Clark said that there have been some issues and one of the biggest ones is how to handle zoning issues. Mayor Clark said that if someone calls into the Clerk's office and get to Jenny or Ashlee instead of Jason's voicemail for their questions, they should not be burdened with handling zoning issues, they should take a message. She said that they should not be answering questions about the zoning regulations and she thinks that there needs to be a protocol that the Clerk's office should not be offering advice and Giles said that he doesn't think there needs to be a protocol, just to tell them not to answer questions. Mayor Clark said that all the Clerk's office should be doing is taking messages, not talking about zoning regulations or offer opinions. Ashlee said that they usually just transfer right into Jason's voicemail instead of having the person call back and get into his voicemail.

Mayor Clark said that with maintenance code issues, she is being told that the Village is not addressing them. She said that Jason Gary is a part time person and doesn't always have time to drive around the Village and look for violations. Mayor Clark said that Council needs to decide if they want to start to address these issues. She also said that she is not sure if Council wants to have Chief Buchert and Kate tell Jason if they see an issue when they are out and about in the Village. Ben said to let it just be a reactionary thing, unless it's a major problem. If someone has a problem, to take a message and give it to Jason to deal with it. Giles said that he feels that some of the zoning codes are contradictory to themselves. John Clark said that if anyone notices an issue, they should report it, not just Kate or Chief. Chief Buchert said that he feels that if someone sees something, it would be on behalf of Jason and that is his job and we (other departments) shouldn't have to say something to Jason do to his job. Ben and Giles said that they agree with what the Chief said. Chief said that it's always been the policy that unless a complaint is filed on a maintenance issue, no action was taken and Mayor Clark said that is the way it has always been handled. Chief said that when a complaint is filed, people usually want a quick response but that usually is not going to be able to happen because there is a process that has to be followed. John Clark asked if there is a problem right now that is prompting this discussion and Mayor Clark said only that people are calling the Clerk's office about zoning issues that they try to handle instead of passing the message on to Jason. Chief Buchert said that a few years ago there was an issue with a sign in front of a property and that person asked why other zoning issues were not taken care of and they were told that it is all complaint driven and then that person went around and noted all of the violations. Mayor Clark said that she will go back to Jason and let him know to keep doing what he is doing but to try and spend a few hours a week driving around and looking for any issues.

Employee Handbook:

Mayor Clark said that she has talked to Kate and Chief Buchert about several issues that have been brought to her attention. Mayor Clark said that texting or leaving a voicemail will not work to call off. The police would call dispatch to make sure the shift is covered and for the service department, they need to talk to Kate, not call another employee if Kate is not in. Giles asked if that is practical. Kate said that she would like to request that the employee handbook be changed to contact by a method acceptable by the department head because to her, texting is a very valid form of communication and it would also be in writing at that point. Harry said that it would not be acceptable for the police department. John Clark said that if Kate is off, it would not do the Village any good if she got a text. Kate said that at that point, she would call one of the other employees to let them know that person was not going to be there. Chief Buchert said that he has no problem changing it if it works for the service department. Giles said that it should be handled by the department head. Paul asked how everyone felt about texting and Ben said to let

them do it if Kate is ok with it. Mayor Clark said that they would have to change the Employee Handbook because right now, it says no texting. Ben said that they should just amend to allow texting. Michele said that she can change it to say that all reporting is to be made in the manner prescribed by the employee's department head. She said that there will be legislation at the next Council meeting. John Clark asked if the department head should have something down in writing stating what method is acceptable since the next department head may have a different method. Chief Buchert said that they have an operational manual that would have that information in it. Kate said that she doesn't have anything written down but she could let her supervisor know what she finds acceptable. Michele asked if it should say "a manner prescribed by the employee's department head in writing so that way there would be a record of the policy". Chief Buchert said that he feels that it should just be in the Employee Handbook and if another department head comes in and wants to change it, then they can do it at that time. Michele said that she will put a separate line in for the service department. She also asked Ashlee how she notified Jenny and what she thought that she would want. Ashlee said that she has texted Jenny and that she said that was ok to do, but didn't want to speak for her. She also said that if she does not hear back from Jenny, she will give her a call to make sure she knows. Chief Buchert said that Ashlee made a good point about calling if there is no response back to the text that was sent. Michele said that not everyone may be able to respond to the text or answer a phone call.

- ❖ Motion to change the Employee Handbook to allow texting for the Service Department and the Clerk's Office made by Marty Hura, 2nd by Paul Janson- **All Ayes**

Mayor Clark said that it is in the Employee Handbook that says that there is no smoking in government vehicles or buildings. She said that we don't need to change it. She just needs everyone to enforce it. Mayor Clark said that it has been brought to her attention that there are some employees that do not wear their seatbelts in both departments. She said that she could not find it in the handbook, but it is Ohio law to wear them. She said that she is telling everyone to tell their employees to wear their seatbelts. Giles asked if there are exceptions and Chief Buchert said that there are, but the Village does not fall into any of them.

Rules of Council:

Mayor Clark said that she is asking Council to consider coming up with a protocol for when the elected officials (Council and herself), report off for any meeting that they are on committees for and who they should report too. Ben said that he doesn't think that is right. Mayor Clark said that she understands that they basically volunteer their time but when people get to a meeting and you expect everyone to be there, someone may say that someone called them to say that they weren't going to be there. Ben said that he doesn't feel like they have to report to someone. Giles said that it's a courtesy as an elected official to let someone know that they are not going to be there. Mayor Clark said that for committees, there are alternates but if they are not notified early enough, they might not be able to attend. Ben said that as long as there is a quorum, they would be ok. John Clark said that Council should contact the Council president if they will not be at the Council meeting and the committee head if it's for a committee meeting and Ben said that is what they do. Paul asked if that is stated anywhere. Mayor Clark said no, and she thinks it should be. Paula Tubalkain asked if that is what always been done, does it need to be put down in writing. Ben said no.

Office Hours for the Service Department:

Mayor Clark said that she and Kate sat down and talked about this because there have been two related concerns where people have come in to see the Village Administrator and they were not there. Mayor Clark said that the Clerk's office should not be answering Service Department questions. She said that it was discussed that Kate establish set hours that someone is here to answer questions. Ashlee said that being at the window as well, it sometimes is easier to just let the resident sound off even knowing that she can't help them. She said that Kate has little slips of paper that has her contact information that she gives out and advises them to give her a call and leave a message if she is not available. Kate said that when she took her job, she took on the job of two full time positions and there was an office down by the service dept. that had a person doing the administrator part. She said that she knew that by closing that

office, it was closing off a way for people to contact them. She said that she thinks that most of the questions are water and sewer related so it doesn't need to be the Village Administrator in the office but someone who can answer their questions about that. Ben asked Kate if she has enough employees to have someone in the office permanently. Kate said that if they were to have one more permanent person, it should be a service person. Ben asked Kate if she gets most of the calls already and Kate said that she does but it's the people who want an answer right now is why this is coming up. Kate said that she can have the office covered from 10am-2pm most of the time. She said that the person she has now can be here 4 days a week and she can try to be here when she can't. Michele asked Kate if she will have productive work for someone to do for 20 hours a week. Kate said that she won't always have 20 hours of work for that person. Mayor Clark asked if that person is going to do the billing. Kate said that she does it already. Chief Buchert said that they get a lot of phone calls when people can't get a hold of Kate. John Clark said that the residents need to understand that if Kate is sitting in the office, she is not out doing her job and not everything can get answered right away. Mayor Clark asked if everyone is ok with trying it out this way. Paul asked which days. Kate said that Randi can be here Monday-Thursday 10-2 right now.

Mayors Position:

Mayor Clark said that she would like to talk about section 131.01 monies for marriage services. She said that she was always under the impression that if it was under \$600 and she did not get a 1099 that she did not have to report it to anyone. Mayor Clark said that her tax preparer told her that no matter the amount, it has to be reported on her taxes and she has to pay the taxes. Michele said that she believes that is correct. Mayor Clark said that when she marries someone, she usually gets that money quarterly. She said that her tax preparer said that the money should be coming to her in a paycheck and not included in her mileage reimbursement. Mayor Clark said that she is paying taxes on something that the Village is not paying taxes on. Paula asked if there is a set fee. Mayor Clark said that the person getting married pays a \$100 donation which the Village gives back to her as compensation. Ben said that she should just have Jenny give her a check in the month that the marriage was performed and Mayor Clark said that is not how it is written. Mayor Clark said that she would prefer that she get paid for the marriage in her monthly check. Michele said that she could get a separate check that would not be pensionable and Mayor Clark said that at least it won't be coming with her mileage reimbursement so taxes will be taken out. Chief Buchert asked where the \$100 donation came from and Mayor Clark said that it is in the Codified Ordinances.

Committee Appointments:

As the new Council President, Marty said he was prepared to appoint Council members to committees. For Finance; Jenny August, non-voting member, John Clark, Paul Janson, and Paula Tubalkain, and Marty Hura as alternate. For Service; John Clark, Paul Janson, and Marty Hura, with Giles Seith as alternate, and . For Safety; Ben Prescott, Giles Seith, Paula Tubalkain, with John Clark as alternate. The Representative to the Fire Board is John Clark, with Giles Seith for an alternate. The Hiram and Fire District will make their own appointments.

Mayor Clark said the appointments for Parks, Shade Tree and Planning will not change. Paula said it seems like we are not making many changes. She questioned if we shouldn't mix some things up. Ben will remain Village Delegate to Portage County Regional Planning Commission, with Paul as alternate.

❖ Motion to adjourn at 7:52 by Paula Tubalkain with a second by Paul Janson.