

Special Council Meeting October 4, 2022

Call to order at 6:38 p.m. by Mayor Linda Clark

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Scott Weaver, Marty Hura, Steve Thorn, Nina Schroeder, Heather Paisley, Tammy Meyer, Marty Hura

Others present: Mayor Linda Clark, Solicitor Michele Stuck, Chief Joe Urso, Village Administrator Greg Thomas, Fiscal Officer Maryann Fabian

Citizens present: Paul Maroni, Vickie Wilcox, Miranda Brothers, Sarah Harper, Anthony Vicich, Ashlee Hawkins, Matthew Roosa, Sabastian Paratore, Wendy Davis, John Clark, Martin Fergus, Marty Toukonen and Al Gilbert.

Mayor Clark explained what the increase loan/match for W Franklin, and the options that Gene Arters, village engineer, presented. She asked for a discussion. Steve said that he would like to stay where they are and not increase, he feels more comfortable with that. Tammy agreed with Steve. Nina mentioned that the village is operating at a loss. Maryann explained that we are not operating at a loss, and tried to explain the fund accounting.

❖ Tammy made a motion to leave the W Franklin funding as it is, and not increase it. Steve second. All ayes.

Nina said the amendments to the Mantua Village Employee Handbook the Village Council talked about, was to incorporate language to better specify what relationships are allowable and whether or not they should be disclosed. She said that this comes on the heels of allegations being made, and we (Village Council) need to incorporate this into the employee handbook. Nina said that the council should discuss whether to prohibit romantic relationships altogether, between a subordinate and a superior employee or just to disclose the relationship. Much discussion ensued about what changes they want to possibly make. Mayor Clark asked Michele for clarification if new policies in the employee handbook could take affect retroactively. Michele said that it could not be retroactive. Nina clarified why the council felt it was necessary to address and read the Fraternalization Policy from the Department of Justice. Chief Urso asked the council members if they feel the morale of his department has changed in any way in the last year. Marty and Steve said it had not. Steve said that we should be focusing on policy and not a single incidence. Chief felt that the single incidence should be discussed and to get it out in the open, because that is what is bringing about the change in the employee handbook. Steve asked if he felt this policy was a good one to have in place going forward. From there the conversation went into the single alleged incidence. Nina and Scott said that the Village Council is trying to protect the village from misuse of resources, and for transparency they want to prove that nothing has been done wrong. Scott said that the meeting was to be a workshop to discuss they employee handbook, he wanted clarification on how appointment of an investigator ended up on the agenda. Michele explained to him that at the last Council meeting it was clear that the Council wanted to move without any undo delay, so she added it to the agenda in case they had someone that could be appointed as investigator. John Clark, Marty Fergus, Sabastian Paratore, Wendy Davis, and Miranda Brothers, expressed their opinions. Paul Maroni stated he was the most senior employee of the department and in all his years that he has worked here and in his other job, if there is a problem with an employee, the only person that should know about this problem their superior officer or somebody in charge of them, nobody else should know about them. It is none of the business of the others, and it should only be done between the people in charge and that employee, and that is the only way it should be done. Steve asked if the members of the audience would like to see this investigation go away and the audience responded in agreement that they would like to see it go away. He also asked if any of them had read the employee handbook and Sam said that he did not care about it.

This discussion then went to what the Village Council wants to amend in the Mantua Village Employee Handbook. The following are the suggested changes:

- ♦ Remove Section 4.5.
- ♦ Section 4.7 A. change \$400 to \$600.
- ♦ Section 4.7 B. change \$200 to \$300.
- ♦ Section 4.7 C. Remove the first sentence, and add part-time service employees and change \$300 to \$400.
- ♦ Section 4.7 F. In the first sentence replace “Fiscal Officer for reimbursement” with “Department Head for approval”. For the second sentence, “The Department Head will submit approved invoices to the Fiscal Officer for reimbursement.”
- ♦ Section 4.9.C.2. Remove store credit cards from the narrative, all reward points will go towards paying the bill.
- ♦ Section 4.9.H. Remove Compliance Officer. Council will review all credit card accounts and expenses on a monthly basis.

- ♦ Add Section 7.5.E. Passwords and PINs stored on the Village Telecommunications equipment and laptops shall, on an ongoing bases, be reported to the Department Head, who shall convey the information to the Police Chief for secure maintenance. This does not apply to the UAN computer maintained by the Fiscal Officer.
- ♦ Section 7.11.A. Add “It is the preference of Council that media contact with Council members shall be referred to the Mayor.”
- ♦ Section 7.11.B. replace Mayor with Department Head. Strike the second sentence.
- ♦ Section 7.17.B. Change “All other copies (photos, etc.)” to “All other media (Photos, flash drives, etc.)”
- ♦ Section 7.18.C. Update to comply with current law.

The next Village Council workshop to work on amendments to the employee handbook will be after Finance Meeting on 10.12.2022 at 6:30 p.m.

Adjournment

- ❖ Scott made a motion to adjourn at 9:10 p.m. Marty second. All ayes.