

VILLAGE OF MANTUA
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
August 15, 2023

Call to Order at 6:30PM by Mayor Linda Clark

Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence for Giles Seith

Roll Call: Marty Hura, Kevin Maloney, Nina Schroeder, Tammy Meyer, Steve Thorn

❖ Marty made a motion to excuse Chuck Peterson. Steve second. All ayes.

Others present: Mayor Linda Clark, Solicitor Michele Stuck, Police Chief Joe Urso, Fiscal Officer Maryann Fabian, Village Administrator Ryan Klemm

Citizens present: Linda Shilling, David Pifer, Mike Tinlin, Sue Tinlin, Roseanne Maloney, Tia Rutledge, Jill Peterson, John Clark, Lauren Weaver, Corey Turnbull, Miranda Brothers, Vickie Wilcox, Riley Meyer, Wendy Davis, Sam Paratore, Nancy Whaley, Tom Aldrich, Patrick Frost

Mayors Report

Tia Rutledge gave the annual summary, and said there was no increase in the surcharge this year. It will take 4 years to replace the water mains. Kevin asked if there was a published plan, and Tia replied it was on the PCWR website.

The mayor read from a statement she had prepared concerning her relationship with CT Consultants, and the inaccurate reporting of The Portager. This statement is turned in and on file.

Citizens

Linda Shilling stated when the council talks to the papers it makes the residents look like idiots because they voted them in. She said that council needs to get along, and the way to go about getting elected is not putting the mayor's name in the paper. She requested that everyone sit down and work it out.

Mike Tinlin, the county commissioner, said the commissioners looked at the water issue, and it is big, and thought it was not right to increase the surcharge yet. The project is a 4-5-year process and they do not know how much it will cost. Dann the director, is a good guy. He was asked in his meeting if PCWR contacted Mantua to tell them what they were doing. PCWR had not, but he will fix it. If anyone has questions or concerns they can reach out to Mike.

John Clark stated he was the mayor's husband. He said the mayor has been accused of micro managing. When people think it's micro managing it is usually far from that. He would like to think that council and the mayor empower the employees to do their job. When the employees don't do their job, someone has to step in and make them do their job 8 hours per day. It is watching our tax dollars wisely and making sure we get what we expect out of our employees, not micromanaging.

Nancy Whaley asked if paving the streets would be coordinated with PCWR. Mayor Clark replied yes, we are coordinating with them. Tentatively Phase 1 is the main line which goes up SR 44 and up High Street to Reservoir. The village does not have any control of the paving on SR44, but said that ODOT would probably step in. The Village will be very cautious on what streets they pave next.

Lauren Weaver asked if there were ordinance's for homelessness or vagrancy, there is a vehicle on Prospect Street with someone living in it. Chief Joe Urso said he was no longer living in that vehicle. Lauren replied that he returned on Sunday. Chief replied that they are doing their due diligence and are trying to get him housing and the help that he needed. There are agencies involved trying to get him housing. We do have an ordinance, and Chief Urso gave him a copy of it. Lauren asked if we have an ordinance about vehicles that do not work, and Chief Urso replied the vehicle has valid plates, and they are trying to work with the people. Lauren said what about sitting and smoking marijuana. Chief Urso replied to have her call the police if that happens.

Dave Pifer said the village is doing a great job, and to keep up the good work.

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Patrick Frost said he has never been to a meeting before. He is telling relatives to move to Mantua. He thinks there is a lot of promise for the Village, and he complimented the emergency responders. He appreciates the events for the children.

Vicki Wilcox dispatcher for Mantua for 12 or 13 years. It has come to her attention that there are plans to outsource dispatch. Vicki has been in this situation before with Garrettsville in 2016. They pulled the rug out from their dispatch and outsourced it in Mantua. They did not stay long here and they have switched three times to get a good price. She hates to see Mantua go down that path. You lose your small-town community, phones are now answer by large departments that have no idea what is going on in your village. She also heard rumors of disbanding the police department, and the Portage County Sheriff department would take over patrols. The residents would no longer have house checks, community policing, patrol in our village or community outreach programs. The Sheriff department is spread thin now and would only be here when they need to be here. The community is behind the police department and voted for the last levy. This department has been drug through the mud, and this council has lost respect from surrounding communities. Our tax dollars have been wasted on investigations that had led nowhere. That money could have been used to make the village a better place instead of pushing a personal agenda.

Wendy Davis said she has been in Mantua 2 years and is a partner with Sam in the Main Street Sub Shop. She listens to customers. Her and Sam do not have a vote, but can come to meetings. She became friends with the Mantua Police Department because the police department made a choice to come to every business to show support. It is sad to see the way people treated and spoke to each other. It is hard to be a business owner in Mantua. Stop the bickering. The village is working together to continue growing, but no businesses want to come here or stay here because everyone is fighting. Wendy said that she has worked with Tammy personally and that she (Wendy) took Alex under her wing at the Potato Festival. Wendy said that Miranda is a single mom working by herself. When the incident happened at the sandbox, Wendy was watching Alex. Miranda did not do anything wrong. Wendy said if you want to blame someone for the Potato Fest, it should be her.

Linda Shilling asked if we are talking about getting rid of the police department. Marty and Mayor Clark said not to their knowledge. Tammy said that we got a correspondence this week that was the first time she heard about disbanding the police department, and Tammy responded to the correspondence that the council had not talked about it in meetings, so she does not know where the rumor is coming from.

Miranda Brothers said the rumors started because dispatchers of the sheriff's office said a council person had come in and inquired about dispatch services. Nina said it was her that went in and she was not collecting numbers, that she was actually contacted. She heard them out and asked them to give us a presentation like she would anything else. For them to give us facts and figures and make a logical decision based on facts and figures. Miranda asked Nina if she was the council person that voted no on the raises. Nina replied that as a councilperson they have to make decisions based on full transparency and accountability and we still do not have that. Nina was contacted. She is not after the police department, she voted for the police levy and has commended them at every turn. Nina pointed to three people and said they act unethically and that they are the wrong people for their positions. Eric Dunn interjected and said that last year we were approached by the Sheriff's department in regards to the Sheriff's department to come in here, and take it over. They had a proposal at that time. So that has been out there for a year and the fact that it came up with council now; they should not have even entertained it. It should be done. Unless the Sheriff's department comes back and makes a proposal that council has to consider, it is not in front of council. Nina said she ceased the conversation and had not had interaction since, however when things are running poorly, overt lack of accountability, unlawfulness, ethics. She said you have voted or appointed or sworn me in to do my due diligence, which is fact finding, and when you read something like the statement read at this meeting, that was the most information ever presented. Nina stated mostly the person obfuscates, obscures, or hides or omits.

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Nina thinks that is what was done for the investigation. She feels the investigation was interfered and intervened. Chief Joe Urso said that council is the one that hired the investigator, and the council had a week to email back and forth to make corrections to the report. Tammy stated they did not, and that Michele and the mayor had changes. Nina said she did not know what he was talking about. Chief asked, so the email did not go back and forth for corrections on dates before it was submitted? Nina said she could not speak to that and the Chief said he could because he did a records request on their emails. He said the council passed it back and forth before the final was submitted. If he does an investigation on somebody he does not get to go back to the suspect or the victim to say, can you look into this or this. The investigation is the 29 bulleted items council gave for the investigator to look into, he did that and he should submit the final report. That's it. Kevin said he wants to stay above the fray, and admits he does not know everything that is going on, but this is not doing anybody any good. The issue of dissolving the police department he wants to state publicly, and he thinks everyone on council agrees with him, he is opposed to this. The voters went to the polls last year and said they want to pony up and pay out of their pockets and they want the police department. It would be a disservice to the community to outsource the police department. He feels the we are going at each other's throats, and it is not getting us anywhere. In doing so, we are doing a disservice to the community.

Financial Reports

Maryann summarized the financial reports, and mentioned that we changed the summary at the finance committee. She asked if there were any questions. No questions were asked.

- ❖ Steve made a motion to approve the financial reports. Nina second. All ayes.

Correspondence

Tammy Meyer had correspondence that she already talked about. She had an email that asked the opinion about dissolving the police department. It was sent to most of council. Tammy read the email. Kevin read his response and said he was opposed to disbanding the police department. Tammy and Steve said they opposed to disbanding the police department. Tammy read her response and gave the email and the responses to Maryann

Approval of Minutes

Tammy requested that on the second page of the minutes from 6.20.2023, at the bottom, she wanted a verb changed from "discussed" to "read".

- ❖ Steve made a motion to amend the minutes. Marty second. All ayes.
- ❖ Kevin made a motion to approve as amended. Marty second. All ayes.

Tammy requested that on page 2 of the 7.18.2023 minutes she would like the verb changed from pressing to questioning. She would like the spelling corrected on page 3 Samansky to Cymanski. She also said on page 1, it states twice March of 2021, and she would like that changed to March of 2023. Maryann said that she said March of 2021. Mayor Clark said to relisten to the tape.

- ❖ Kevin made a motion to table the minutes. Marty second. All ayes.

Legislation:

ORD 2023-32 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 159.03 AND 159.05 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE VILLAGE OF MANTUA, RELATING TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE MANTUA VILLAGE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION. 2nd Reading. Kevin asked that if there were no objections he would like to suspend the rules. The mayor replied that is what she was going to ask for because they have a meeting next month.

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- ❖ Tammy made a motion to suspend the rules. Steve second. All ayes.
- ❖ Tammy made a motion to approve. Steve second. All ayes.

ORD 2023-35 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 121 OF THE MANTUA VILLAGE CODIFIED ORDINANCES CONCERNING THE RULES OF COUNCIL OF THE VILLAGE OF MANTUA. 1st Reading. Tammy requested that Michele remove the comment at the bottom, and Michele said yes that was only there for their benefit. Tammy said they talked about it at finance and said once a term.

ORD 2023-36 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 121.02 AND 133.02 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE VILLAGE OF MANTUA REGARDING COMPETITIVE BIDDING THRESHOLDS. 1st Reading. No discussion.

ORD 2023-37 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 123.01 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE VILLAGE OF MANTUA REGARDING POSTING OF LEGISLATION, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. 1st Reading. Solicitor Michele Stuck explained that we will no longer be able to publish approved legislation by posting in five places around the village, but must choose one of the three options listed in the legislation. She is still waiting to hear back from the Ohio News Media Association about having direct access to their website. We have to physically post in one location near the Clerk's office, other places are optional. It was decided that “foyer of the Fiscal Officer's office” should be amended to the “lobby of the police department” as the location in closest proximity to the clerk's office, but which the public could access at any time without being buzzed into the secure part of the building. Steve asked the citizens where they want it posted. They felt the website was the best option, and the police lobby.

- ❖ Tammy made a motion to amend as stated. Kevin second. All ayes.

ORD 2023-38 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF RAVENNA FOR THE PURCHASE OF ROAD SALT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. 1st Reading.

- ❖ Steve made a motion to suspend the rules. Marty second. All ayes.
- ❖ Tammy made a motion to approve. Marty second. All ayes.

ORD 2023-39 AN ORDINANCE ENACTING SECTION 440.17 OF THE ZONING ORDINANCES OF THE VILLAGE OF MANTUA RELATING TO ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS. 1st Reading. No discussion.

ORD 2023-40 AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE RECODIFICATION, EDITING AND INCLUSION OF CERTAIN ORDINANCES AS PARTS OF THE VARIOUS COMPONENT CODES OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF MANTUA, OHIO AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. 1st Reading. Mayor Clark explained that this was updating our codified ordinances which happens once a year.

- ❖ Steve made a motion to suspend the rules. Kevin second. All ayes.
- ❖ Steve made a motion to approve. Nina second. All ayes.

ORD 2023-41 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING CERTAIN ADJUSTMENTS TO THE 2023 APPROPRIATIONS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. 1st Reading. Maryann explained the money for the general fund was the money that was discussed at the Budget Workshop. The money for the cemetery fund was the money that had to go to the KIA, because Maryann did not notice in the previous legislation it had the money go to the KIA in the general fund. The KIA is not in the general fund. Tammy asked if the \$1000 for the general fund was going back. Maryann said that she had a call into the auditor's office to find out what to do,

- ❖ Steve made a motion to suspend the rules. Kevin second. All ayes.

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- ❖ Kevin made a motion to approve. Steve second. All ayes.

Department Heads

Police Chief Joe Urso said there was no safety meeting. Next safety meeting is scheduled for September 6th. This Saturday Crestwood is having a community gathering. Trick or Treat is going to be October 31st from 6-8PM, and they are going to continue with the parking lot bash out front at 5:30 PM. He requested that people do not call the police department looking for updates on the PCWR projects. The police department is always flooded with calls when a big project starts in the village. He encourages people to sign up for the alerts with PCWR, and if PCWR puts up an update he will copy and paste it to the police departments website. He said the cruisers are getting retro fitted, and the new cruiser is stuck between the car factory and the fit factory. Chief Urso needed approval for the Lexipol renewal that cost \$3936.61

- ❖ Tammy made a motion to approve. Kevin second. All ayes.

Tammy asked how the redesign of the police vehicles came about. He said they started looking into what was more modern. They knew they wanted a blue flag and faded. The white vinyl is susceptible to nicks, dings and scratches, so they wanted something darker. There are reflective elements to make it safer, and you can see it better at night.

Village Administrator Ryan Klemm said that Pavilion 1 and the sidewalk is completed. Basketball courts are underway. They are cleaning up around the lodge and will be landscaping. Mowing is going fine. Cleaning is going well with the police department and service working together. Ryan picked up the last utility vehicle. He made an agreement with the car wash for 30% off for village vehicles. The DMRC meeting went well. Next project is Oak Street drainage issue. Ryan said that he needed council to decide about the equipment he is asking for the Service Department, Tammy asked Michele if funds need to be approved. Michele said each individual purchase should be approved.

Ryan asked for the following to be approved:

Not to exceed \$49,999.99 for a tractor.

- ♦ Tammy made the motion to approve. Kevin second. All ayes

Not to exceed \$15,000.00 for a snow plow

- ♦ Tammy made the motion to approve. Marty second. All ayes.

Not to exceed \$12,000 for a salt spreader

- ♦ Tammy made a motion to approve. Kevin second. All ayes.

Not to exceed \$8000.00 for a zero-turn mower.

- ♦ Kevin made a motion to approve. Steve second. All ayes.

Kevin asked if it had a warranty, and what the life expectancy was. Ryan replied that it did not, and the expected life is 5000 hours.

Committees:

Steve Thorn for Finance said that they made changes to the financial reports. He talked about the 2023 Paving Program and that Benedetti charged more. Ryan is disputing the cost. The committee talked about how to pay for equipment, and worked mostly on wages at the budget workshop.

Tammy Meyer for Service said that they discussed where the service department wants to go, new equipment and personnel. They also need to look at allocating funds for projects. Cushman, white truck and tractor are up for sale. They are looking for grants to fund projects, they talked about softball bleachers, the MOU, and they have been busy in the cemetery cleaning debris, filling holes, fixing drainage, etc.

Tammy Meyer for Planning said they discussed electric vehicle charging stations. Next month they will be looking into Village Center zoning to see if adjustments can be made to make more sense.

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Tammy Meyer for PCRCP said they had replats in Ravenna, Deerfield and Rootstown Township. "Turnpike Commerce Center" she has not seen it, but they are asking for an extension of time for the approval because they are doing something with lots on the Geis property.

Tammy Meyer for Fire Board said the fire department swore in a new full-timer, Julie Ann Strenk. They had bought a new life pack in January for \$30,000 and they just received it. EMS billing change is possible. Capital Equipment Levy replacement on March Ballot, it has not been replaced since 1999. We will have numbers later.

Nina Schroeder for Parks asked and answered prompts from a draft MOU. They are hoping that those prompts illuminated criteria that we would require future project proposals or presentations, to set mutual expectations to consider, rationalize and plan for shared projects more efficiently. Using that same MOU and prompts we were able to rationalize and justify the construction of restrooms at Buchert Park and why the Village has an obligation to facilitate the project. It also allowed them to weigh possible outcomes versus costs, revenue streams, community engagement opportunities. Tomorrow night we will continue our discussion about restrooms, landscaping and other ideas for park improvement.

Nina Schroeder for Shade Tree said that they are revamping the schedule to collaborate with service department to be more effective.

Mayor Clark for Cemetery said they have been doing lots of trimming at the cemetery, and Board of Zoning Appeals there is nothing to report.

Steve Thorn said there was no safety meeting.

Any Other Business

Cory Turnbull said he voted yes for the police levy and asked if we have 24/7 police coverage. Chief Joe Urso said he would not discuss anything to do with scheduling in an open meeting for the safety of the residents and the police department. Chief said if Cory would like to discuss out of an open meeting he would be happy to discuss it. Cory said wouldn't it be in the interest of the community to know. Chief Urso replied that this was already discussed at a meeting and it was decided it was in the best interest not to discuss any scheduling in an open meeting. Chief Urso said that Mantua Police Department covers its calls 24/7.

Executive Session

Mayor Clark asked for an executive session to discuss employee discipline and to discuss a complaint against an employee.

- ❖ Tammy made a motion to go into executive session at 8:03PM. Marty second. Roll call vote: Steve – aye, Nina – aye, Kevin – aye, Marty – aye, Tammy – aye.
- ❖ Nina made a motion to come out of executive session at 8:29PM. Steve second. Roll call vote: Steve – aye, Nina – aye, Kevin – aye, Marty – aye, Tammy – aye.

Adjournment

- ❖ Tammy made a motion to adjourn at 8:30PM. Nina second. All ayes.