

August 21, 2023 Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting Summary

This provides a summary of the September 25, 2023 Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting. The meeting started at 4:40 p.m. and ended at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Councilman Dennis Dalton, Mary Allen, Councilwoman and Committee Chair, Fire/EMS Chief Tim Feldkamp, Police Chief Eric Williams, Fiscal Officer, Joel Gilpin, and Interim Administrator, Bob Lindhorst

Absent: Mayor Glenn Ewing and Councilman Larry Prues

Guests: None

Discussion Topics:

This meeting was an additional meeting this month to discuss and continue planning for the upcoming tax levies.

We review our Task List and the status of each. We are on track for the steps we need to complete.

Task List - 2023 Police & Fire/EMS Levy

1. Insert the letter (Joel's version) that's on the website into the utility bill envelopes (Joel talk to Bobby) **(on track for next mailing)**
2. Yard Signs **(in progress – ready next week)**
 - a. Create the content (Joel and Tim)
 - b. Identify the best supplier (Joel and Glenn)
3. Town Hall Meetings **(scheduled)**
 - a. Create list of potential questions and answers (Mary) **(near final)**
 - b. Prepare handouts for attendees (Larry, Joel, and others) **(TBD)**
 - c. Create Agenda (drafted during 8/21/23 meeting by all attendees) **(in progress)**
 - i. Welcome and introductory comments (include limit on the number of questions per participant) **(in progress)**
 - ii. Key points we want to share with the audience
 - iii. Q&A
 - d. Ask Kelley to communicate a Public Town Hall Meeting to discuss the levy for 6:00 – 6:45 p.m. prior to the two October Council Meetings **(complete)**
 - e. Conduct the Town Hall Meetings (All – Planned)
4. Web site creation – Matt Carey (Tim and Eric) **(in progress)**
5. Create election day handouts or something that can be handed out whenever **(In progress)**
6. Prepare a personal note and send it along with our letter on the website **(Near final – will be complete and sent first week of October)**

Matt Carey's suggestions during the August 7, 2023 Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting:

1. Establish a group of community influencers (in progress)
2. Make sure our communications (in progress)
 - a. Justify the need
 - b. Advise where all the money goes
 - c. Depicts breakdown of the taxes on the property tax bill and point out just what the Village receives from the individual tax bills
 - d. Highlight they pay property tax on the assessed value, not actual value, of their homes
3. We should create a website and a Facebook page and we should all point to that vs. trying to educate everyone on the message to be shared. (in progress)
4. We should use "Facebook live" (ask Kelley - TBD)
5. Reminded us that the Village can't pay for promotional material. Individual residents and councilman, as residents, can
6. We should consider placing inserts in resident's doors
7. We should consider creating a polling handout for use on election day in November (near final)
8. We should review Monroelevy.com and springfieldlevy.com to insights into what they did
9. We should be clear in our message who our Police, Fire and EMS Departments provide services to and emphasize there isn't much mutual aid readily available, should we not have adequate services

Mary's initial list of potential Town Hall audience questions

(list was revised and questions answered)

1. What do you do with all the money you already have in the budget?
2. Why don't you cut costs vs. just ask for more money?
3. I thought we already have a police and fire levy? What's that money being used for?
4. What do you do with the RITA money?
5. If you're short of money, why did you give raises?
6. Why can't you use the money you're spending on Liberty Landing?
7. Why can't you just get more grants?
8. According to the news, Clermont Co. property taxes will increase with the upcoming assessment. Won't you get more money with that?
9. What are you going to use the additional money for?
10. If passed, how long will it be before you ask for more money?
11. If passed, how long will it be before you ask for more money?
12. Why can't you outsource the Police Department and use other community emergency service organizations?

List of potential Town Hall audience questions

1. What do you do with all the money you already have in the budget?

We use our revenue for operations. This includes:

- Street repair and maintenance
- Storm water infrastructure maintenance
- Salaries, benefits
- Maintenance on all Village owned buildings, equipment, and property
- Grass cutting and park maintenance
- Cemetery maintenance

2. Why don't you cut costs vs. just ask for more money?

Our employees and Council have spent the last 4-5 years looking for every possible cost savings and cost avoidance opportunity.

3. I thought we already have a police and fire levy? What's that money being used for?

The last approved levies for the Police Dept and Fire/EMS Dept were passed in 2003.

- Salaries, training, and benefits
- Equipment
- Vehicle maintenance and increased fuel costs
- Fire/EMS also has two buildings to maintain
- Emergency Medical Services' supplies

4. What do you do with the RITA money?

The local income tax revenue goes into the General Fund for operations.

5. What have you done to bring in more revenue?

Over the last 5-6 years Council and the Mayor have met with various developers to finish the housing developments and to bring in more business.

We now have about 600 new residents and at least five new businesses

6. If you're short of money, why did you give raises?

Raises from ARPA funds in an effort to hire and appropriately staff key positions.

7. Why can't you use the money you're spending on Liberty Landing?

Money on Liberty Landing is grants that must be used for the intended grant application stated.

8. Why can't you just get more grants?

Grants are not for general operations and all grants are highly competitive. Grants usually require a match.

9. According to the news, Clermont Co. property taxes will increase with the upcoming assessment. Won't you get more money with that?

The levy millage will be against the current stated value vs. the re-assessed value, per a discussion with the Clermont Co. Auditor's Office.

10. What are you going to use the additional money for?

The levy will not fund an optimal 5-year plan, it will reduce the amount of money we transfer from the general fund to the two departments. This will allow us to spend more money on proactive street repair and maintenance.

11. If passed, how long will it be before you ask for more money?

Probably 5-10 years

12. Why can't you outsource the Police Department and use other community emergency service organizations

- All communities in Ohio are having staffing issues. There is limited mutual aid available.
- The Sheriff's Office will cost us more than we are currently paying for Police protection for the same level of service.
- If we outsource emergency services or police services, there will be a time delay in getting those resources to our community.

Mary Allen

Dear Neighbors and Friends,

Thanks for your support over my three terms on Village Council. As always, I'm very thankful and appreciative for it. This letter provides a quick update on the state of business in New Richmond.

It's a great time to live in New Richmond!

- In the past four years, we've attracted over 600 new residents and they're really engaged in the community!
- The US 52 business corridor is awesome. Front Street is busier than ever; there's activities down there all the time. And the Sunday Farmer's Market is wonderful.
- Our DORA (designated outdoor refreshment area) is attracting more festivals and visitors to our community, fueling growth and economic development.

Upcoming Election

I have two years remaining in my 3rd term, but the mayor and two other council members are up for re-election. We currently have a great team. We don't always agree, but we get things done! I encourage each of you to vote on November 7th and I hope you will consider giving the following individuals a second chance:

Glenn Ewing for Mayor	Richard Feldkamp for Council	Larry Prues for Council
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With a consistent team we will continue to accomplish great things in New Richmond.

Village Finances

The Village of New Richmond is experiencing budget issues. You may know that there will be two tax levies on the Ballot in November; one for the Police Department and one for the Fire/Emergency Medical Services Department. With the current level of inflation and the recent property reassessments, I know this is not a good time to ask you to consider approving two tax levies. Per a discussion with the Clermont County Auditor's Office, the millage in the tax levy will be on the current valuation of your home vs. the new assessment. This comes to \$140 per year on each \$100,000.

Why we need the tax increases:

- We receive significantly less tax revenue from the Beckjord Power Plant than we did ten years ago.
- The State of Ohio has reduced the amount of money in the Local Government Fund. All municipalities are receiving about 50% less tax revenue from the state than they did 5-6 years ago.
- We've been operating off of tax levies that were passed in 2003. We have had to use the General Fund to supplement the levies we've been working with for both the Police Department and the Fire/EMS Department for a number of years. Using the money from the General Fund reduces the amount of money we have for road repairs, water and sewer, and miscellaneous other things.

Our employees, along with Council, have spent the last 4-5 years looking for every possible cost savings and cost avoidance opportunity. Further cuts will result in fewer services. I don't know about you, but I don't want to live in a community without adequate emergency services personnel (police, fire, and emergency medical services). As a fellow resident, I ask you to strongly consider voting "Yes" for the two tax levies.

The following pages provide a little more background. We will have town hall meetings in Council Chambers at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 10th and 24th for Council to answer any questions you have. We also have a website for you to view. We've tried to provide as much information as possible on that site.

Most sincerely,

Mary Allen

HELP US HELP YOU

**VOTE
YES!**



FOR FIRE & EMS

www.monroetwplevy.com

Monroe Township Fire & EMS

- 1.5-mill continuous levy would generate up to \$220,248
- For a home valued at \$150,000, the levy would cost \$78.75 a year
- Call volume from 2018 to 2021 increased by 277 runs
- MTFD Firefighter/Paramedic pay is \$15.89/hour
- Clermont Co. Firefighter/Paramedic average pay is \$22.35/hour
- Staffing issues all across Ohio due to lack of certified personnel
- Continued rising costs of medical supplies, fuel & electricity

**LEVY MONEY GENERATED WILL GO TO
DAILY OPERATIONS COST & COMPETITIVE PAY**

HELP US HELP YOU
✓ VOTE YES!
For Police/Fire/EMS

Village of New Richmond Police / Fire & EMS

POLICE DEPARTMENT

- Responds to approximately 3,800 calls per year
- For a home valued at \$150,000, each levy will cost \$210 per year
- There are staffing issues across Ohio due to lack of certified personnel
- There are continued rising costs of medical supplies, equipment, and fuel

Levy money generated will go to daily operations costs and competitive pay.

FIRE/EMS DEPARTMENT

- Responds to approximately 800 calls per year
- For a home valued at \$150,000, each levy will cost \$210 \$210 per year
- There are staffing issues across Ohio due to lack of certified personnel
- There are continued rising costs of medical supplies, equipment, and fuel

Levy money generated will go to daily operations costs and competitive pay.

	Clermont County	New Richmond
Police Officer Pay Rate	\$36.00	\$21.54
Firefighter/Paramedic Pay Rate	\$30.00	\$20.50

