

May 12th, 2020

COUNCIL MEETING

New Richmond Village Council met in Council Chambers and via Zoom teleconference in regular session on Tuesday, May 12th, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting followed rules and guidelines established by the Ohio General Assembly for public meetings established in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and state and federal restrictions for public gatherings.

Present in Council Chambers:

Council Members: Larry Prues and Gary Skeene Administration: Mayor, Glenn Ewing; Village Administrator, Greg Roberts and Clerk of Council, Theresa Leigh
Department Heads: Police Chief Mike Couch

Present via Zoom teleconference:

Council Members: Mary Allen, Melanie Slade, Jonathan Millhouse and Becky Ploucha Administration: Village Planning & Zoning Administrator, Andrew Gephardt and Solicitor, Scott Sollmann Department Heads: Fire/EMS Chief Vince Bee and Sgt. Jason Mallott

Visitors (via Zoom teleconference):

Joby Houck
Ryan Woodruff
Taylor Kenney
Marsha Delaney
Richard Feldkamp
Pam Schreiner

Mayor Ewing opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of the April 28th, 2020 Regular Council meeting were presented for approval.

Councilmember Allen motioned to approve Minutes of the April 28th, 2020 regular Council meeting; seconded by Councilmember Prues.

Mrs. Slade: yes

Mr. Prues: yes

Mr. Millhouse: yes

Ms. Ploucha: yes

Mr. Skeene: yes

Ms. Allen: yes

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT - Greg Roberts, Village Administrator:

2020 Events & COVID-19: As Administrator, he (Greg) does not have the authority to cancel private events or deny the use of Village property for legal and legitimate purposes. Neither he, nor anyone else in Village government, know what restrictions will be in place at any given time in response to the changing COVID-19 situation. At this time, the event organizer and/or their participants must decide for themselves whether to go forward with their event and assume any risk associated with their decision.

Councilmember Allen agreed this is the correct way to respond to such inquiries.

DORA: Communities with a Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area received positive press for the economic benefits provided to their liquor permit holders during this time of social distancing and carry-out-only restrictions.

Duke Energy Revitalization Grant: Legislation will be proposed tonight authorizing a grant application to Duke Energy for financing an engineering plan for the much-discussed bike trail loop through the Village and tying in to the current and future U.S. 52 trail. Solicitor Sollmann does not think a resolution is needed; a motion would suffice. Planning & Zoning Administrator Gephardt stated all that is needed is a “letter of support”. Administrator Roberts asked for a motion to apply for the grant.

Councilmember Skeene motioned to approve Administrator Roberts applying for the Duke Energy Revitalization grant; seconded by Councilmember Pruess.

Mrs. Slade: yes	Mr. Pruess: yes
Mr. Millhouse: yes	Ms. Ploucha: yes
Mr. Skeene: yes	Ms. Allen: yes

Union Station: All 24 lots have been sold in Phase 1 over a span of 68 days – much of which was during a world-wide pandemic. HPA Development has started Phase 2.

COMMITTEE REPORTS (*Provided below is a synopsis for each report; to obtain a full copy please visit the Administrative office.*):

Personnel & Finance Committee Report from meeting held 05-11-2020

Finance/Budget - Fiscal Officer Lynn Baird

- Although the effects of the COVID-19 shut-down are uncertain, we are anticipating reductions in revenue and deferred income related to the following:
 - Local Income Tax - The extended filing date to July 15 will result in some deferred income. We are also anticipating a \$30,000 to \$50,000 reduction in local income tax revenue (our 2020 projection was \$590,000).
 - Utilities – We are looking at an approximate \$3,000. reduction in revenue per month due to the current hold on late fees for water, sewer and garbage. There will also be some deferred income because of the no-shut-off guideline currently in place.
 - Gas Tax - We are facing a possible reduction in revenue; the amount received in April was half of what is normally received. This money is used for paving.
 - State Money – There are possible changes and/or reductions in the amount of money we receive from the state.
 - Reduction in Mayor’s Court Fees – We are seeing approximately \$5,000 less revenue than this same time last year.
 - Real Estate Tax Payment Delinquencies – Some revenue will be deferred; timing is uncertain, possibly next year. We are looking

at an expected increase in tax payment delinquencies, possibly as much as \$30,000.

- \$597,000 was transferred in 2020 from the General Fund for operating as follows:
 - Street \$54,000
 - Cemetery \$40,000
 - Police \$271,000
 - Fire/EMS \$232,000
- A \$23,220 rebate from the Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation was allocated as follows (this money was not reflected in the April reports posted in May):
 - General Fund \$2,880
 - Street \$2,152
 - Police \$6,111
 - Fire/EMS \$8,668
 - Water \$1,704
 - Sewer \$1,704
- The Personnel & Finance Committee reviewed all checks and electronic payments for the month of March and April 2020; a motion is needed to pay these bills*

Police Chief Mike Couch:

- Requested Council accept the resignation of Cameron Moran effective May 12th, 2020. He leaves in good standing**
- One of our officers was involved in a car crash at US 52 and Old 52; the Ohio patrol is in the process of writing the report. The expected insurance reimbursement for the totaled vehicle will be used toward the purchase of another car.
- The canine car will need to be repaired at some point after being damaged from arcing that occurred when a hot wire hit the vehicle during a recent storm.
- Chief Couch recently submitted a grant application offered by the state for COVID-19 reimbursement. We have a good chance of getting it because so far, we are the only village who has applied for it.

Fire/EMS Chief Vince Bee:

- Chief Bee asked Council to approve the hiring Donald Hammons as a paid-per-call EMS trainee effective May 12th, 2020 with a one (1) year probation and to accept the resignation of full-time firefighter/paramedic, Beatrice Simeliunaite effective May 18th, 2020. She leaves in good standing. ***
- The department will move forward in the hiring process to replace the full-time firefighter/paramedic position vacated by Ms. Simeliunaite.
- Medical transports are down year-to-date in comparison to this same time last year, which has resulted in about \$18,000 less revenue. Non-transport billing was looked at, but it is not cost effective,
- The Fire/EMS Dept. has sent 3 batches of N95 masks for cleaning. The cost for the cleaning is covered by the FEMA agreement with Battelle.

- The department continues working with Clermont County EMA, Ohio EMA and FEMA on grants and funding opportunities to recover expenses due to COVID-19. The grants would cover PPE, medical and cleaning supplies and personnel costs.

Village Administrator Greg Roberts shared Ryan Homes sold all Phase I lots – 24 homes, attributable to Ryan Homes’ good marketing and finance plans. Drees Homes recently requested information. Also, all Street and Utility employees continue working during COVID-19; Bobbi and Lynn are working from home while Jan and Theresa work intermittently from home and in office.

Items voted on at the 5-12-2020 Council meeting, as requested during the Personnel & Finance Committee report:

* Councilmember Allen motioned to approve paying the bills of March and April 2020; seconded by Councilmember Skeene.

Mrs. Slade: yes	Mr. Prues: yes
Mr. Millhouse: yes	Ms. Ploucha: yes
Mr. Skeene: yes	Ms. Allen: yes

** Councilmember Allen motioned to accept the resignation of Cameron Moran effective May 12th, 2020; seconded by Councilmember Prues.

Mrs. Slade: yes	Mr. Prues: yes
Mr. Millhouse: yes	Ms. Ploucha: yes
Mr. Skeene: yes	Ms. Allen: yes

*** Councilmember Allen motioned to accept the resignation of full-time firefighter/paramedic Beatrice Simeliunaite, effective May 18th, 2020 and the hiring of Donald Hammons as a paid-per-call EMS trainee effective May 12th, 2020 with a one (1) year probation; seconded by Councilmember Skeene.

Mrs. Slade: yes	Mr. Prues: yes
Mr. Millhouse: yes	Ms. Ploucha: yes
Mr. Skeene: yes	Ms. Allen: yes

Safety, Laws & Rules Committee report from meeting held 05-11-2020

Administrator Greg Roberts reported the speed cameras are still operational, but no tickets are being generated. He also stated expanding Front St. to allow for outside dining is being looked at.

Fire/EMS Chief Vince Bee and Planning/Zoning Administrator Andrew Gephardt will begin rental inspections as soon as the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

Police Chief Mike Couch has been checking for expired plates.

Public Works/Parks/Recreation Committee report from meeting held 05-11-2020

Administrator Greg Roberts reported:

- Brown County Construction is working on getting the manpower needed for the Bethel New Richmond Rd. paving project.
- The cemetery issues brought to his attention have been addressed
- He and Fiscal Officer Lynn Baird are working on how to best approach the maintenance of mitigated properties in the Village.

Economic Development Committee report from meeting held 05-12-2020

- Discussion and project updates on the Live Love Visit marketing campaign.

DEPARTMENT HEADS

Police Chief Mike Couch:

- Chief Couch reported year-to-date total crime reports are down 20%, arrests are down 30% and calls for service are down 58%.
- The New Richmond Police Department was instrumental in solving a multi-jurisdictional crime spree involving a thief ring from Pierce Township selling stolen property in New Richmond. Chief Couch thanked his officers for all their hard work related to this incident which resulted in a person being charged with 5 felony counts with more charges to possibly follow.
- The New Richmond High School Class of 2020 graduation ceremony will be held May 22nd on school property. It will consist of a vehicle drive-through experience followed by a virtual graduation video presentation.
- Chief Couch has received multiple inquiries from people concerned about the crowds associated with the 4th of July and River Days. He also has reservations related to using his officers and having them potentially expose to the COVID-19 virus. Chief Couch asks Council to look at ways to address our upcoming large events. Administrator Roberts asked if we could issue permits conditional upon the state's restrictions. The solicitor stated we could and conditional upon use of the NRPD and EMTs as well.

Fire/EMS Chief Vince Bee: Chief Bee reported 41 EMS runs in April with 21 of those being transported. He went on to recognize and thank Asst. Fire Chief Tim Feldkamp for taking care of getting the ladders inspections done. Chief also reported the air pack leak was repaired; paid for as it was still under the manufacturer's warranty.

Mayor Glenn Ewing: Mayor Ewing thanked the Village's first responders and essential workers for their service during this unusual time. He asked that each accept a small gift from the Mayor and Village councilmembers in recognition of their dedication to the Village of New Richmond. Chief Bee and Chief Couch thanked them for the gift cards. (Clerk's note: No tax dollars were involved in the purchase of the gift cards; they were purchased from funds donated by Mayor Ewing and the Councilmembers.)

Solicitor, Scott Sollmann: Nothing to report

Clerk of Council, Theresa Leigh: Asked who was appointed as the new chair for the Safety, Laws and Rules Committee; Councilmember Skeene stated he was the new chair. Asked Chief Bee what Donald Hammons would be paid per call; Chief stated it would be the current \$15.00 per call.

LEGISLATION

First Reading:

Second Reading:

Third Reading:

CALL OF MEMBERS:

Larry Prues – Nothing to report

Mary Allen – Asked the Clerk to correct the spelling of Ryan and Sophie Woodruff's last name in the 4/28/2020 Minutes where it was incorrectly noted as *Woodhouse*. Councilmember Allen would like to stay remote for Council meetings; all councilmembers and the Mayor agreed they are fine with this. Solicitor Sollmann stated that, as long as the Auditor allows it, staying remote is ideal.

Becky Ploucha – Nothing to report

Gary Skeene - Nothing to report

Jonathan Millhouse – Nothing to report

Melanie Slade - Asked if Committee meetings could continue being held remotely. Greg Roberts stated he would continue setting up remote meetings for the Committees.

Comments from audience:

Richard Feldkamp reported River Days is currently scheduled for August 6,7 and 8th. He went on to say if the Ohio State Fair or the Clermont County Fair were cancelled, he's sure River Days will be cancelled.

Taylor Kenney thanked everyone for making Council available remotely and thanked the Fire Department for all their hard work.

Councilmember Skeene motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.; seconded by Councilmember Prues.

Mrs. Slade: yes

Mr. Prues: yes

Mr. Millhouse: yes

Ms. Ploucha: yes

Mr. Skeene: yes

Ms. Allen: yes

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Mayor

Clerk of Council