

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
Minutes of Bellbrook City Council Meeting
February 24, 2020

PRESENT: Ernie Havens
Dave Van Veldhuizen
Forrest Greenwood
Elaine Middlestetter
Nick Edwards
Mayor Mike Schweller

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Melissa Dodd

Mayor Schweller called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Havens, yes; Dr. Van Veldhuizen, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mrs. Middlestetter, yes; Mr. Edwards, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes.

FORMAL APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Havens requested a correction to his comments made during Open Discussion. After polling members of City Council, about regular meeting minutes of January 27, 2020 Mayor Schweller declared the minutes approved with the correction of Mr. Havens' comment.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/SPECIAL GUEST

- Mayor Schweller began by expressing his condolences on the sudden passing of Mike Sabin on February 12. Mr. Sabin was the owner of BellHOP Café and cofounder and pastor of Wings of Hope Christian Fellowship of Bellbrook. Mr. Schweller added that thoughts and prayers go out to Mike's wife Heather, his family, and friends. Mr. Greenwood added that Mr. Sabin brought everyone together. Council echoed similar thoughts.
- Bellbrook Sugarcreek School District Superintendent Dr. Doug Cozad presented information about the Bellbrook Sugarcreek School District levy that will be on the March ballot. The levy is for 5.7 mils and is critical to the school system. This works out to \$16.60 per month on a \$100,000 house. State Funding has flatlined at 27% while expenditures continue to increase. The district has already made reductions of \$2.3 million and requires this levy to pass to keep from making more drastic cuts. The Superintendent is holding community meetings leading up to election day. Some of these meetings are in the morning and some are in the evening to give plenty of opportunities for the public to hear the information and ask questions.
- Fire Department Annual Report

Chief Jim Neidhard presented the 2019 annual report. The Chief explained that the department gives a survey after every call they make. Bellbrook residents are good about completing the surveys and almost everyone added comments.

The Chief is thrilled to announce that the Department is finally fully staffed. The Department is made up of 8 career, 14 part-time, and two resource staff. The members of the department are

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hardworking and looking for ways to make a difference. One highlight is Jay Leach who came to the Bellbrook Department and made Lieutenant. Lt. Leach is good at repairing things. He even created and built a dryer that is now used to dry three sets of the firefighters' gear at once. Another new member is Renee Simmons who has taken on the CPR and car seat training and designed her own assessment tool. Fire Prevention Week took place in October and wraps up with an Open House that was well attended.

Data from 2019 was presented. Chief Neidhard commented that the department had the most runs they have had since he joined the Bellbrook Department. There was no particular reason for the increase. The number of calls was fairly evenly divided between fire and medical calls. Mutual aid was received 31 times and given 118 times. This is how the system is planned to work.

Mayor Schweller asked if the fact that the ladder truck is 22 years old is an issue and is there a plan to replace it. Chief Neidhard answered that although the vehicle does not have many miles on it, it does have a lot of years. It is something the Department will have to look at for the future. It is still necessary because Bellbrook's ladder truck is the only working one in the vicinity.

Mr. Greenwood asked if there was any program that could get the truck rebuilt. The Chief answered that it probably would not make sense to spend money on a vehicle of this age. Newer vehicles are more efficient and up to date.

PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCES Mr. Edwards read **Ordinance 2020-1 An Ordinance Amending Section 412.06 "Parades and Assemblages" of the City of Bellbrook Municipal Code.**

Mrs. Dodd explained that the changes in Section 412.06 are due to the changes created when the Special Events ordinance and permit was enacted.

Mr. Edwards made a motion to adopt **Ordinance 2020-1 An Ordinance Amending Section 412.06 "Parades and Assemblages" of the City of Bellbrook Municipal Code.** Mrs. Middlestetter seconded the motion. The Clerk called the roll. Mr. Edwards, yes; Mrs. Middlestetter, yes; Mr. Havens, yes; Dr. Van Veldhuizen, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes. The motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Havens read **Ordinance 2020-2 An Ordinance Repealing Old Section 856.03 and Enacting New Section 856.03 "License Application and Requirements" of the City of Bellbrook Municipal Code.**

Mrs. Dodd explained that this ordinance limits the number of solicitors that can be added to a permit to five. There was previously no limit.

Mr. Havens made a motion to adopt **Ordinance 2020-2 An Ordinance Repealing Old Section 856.03 and Enacting New Section 856.03 "License Application and Requirements" of the City of Bellbrook Municipal Code.** Mr. Greenwood seconded the motion. The Clerk called the roll. Mr. Havens, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Dr. Van Veldhuizen, yes; Mrs. Middlestetter, yes; Mr. Edwards, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes. The motion passed 6-0.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES - none

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RESOLUTIONS

Dr. Van Veldhuizen read **Resolution 2020-D A Resolution Declaring Specific Equipment No Longer Needed By the City of Bellbrook as Surplus Property and Authorizing the City Manager to Dispose of Said Property.**

The City Manager Mrs. Dodd explained that the vehicles listed will be put up for sale through govdeals.com.

Dr. Van Veldhuizen made a motion to adopt **Resolution 2020-D A Resolution Declaring Specific Equipment No Longer Needed By the City of Bellbrook as Surplus Property and Authorizing the City Manager to Dispose of Said Property.** The motion was seconded by Mr. Edwards. The Clerk called the roll. Dr. Van Veldhuizen, yes; Mr. Edwards, yes; Mr. Havens, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mrs. Middlestetter, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes. The motion passed 6-0

Mrs. Middlestetter read **Resolution 2020-E A Resolution to Seek Membership in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities.**

This resolution seeks membership in the network of age-friendly communities as part of the AARP. This provides a roadmap to intentionally incorporate the perspectives of the older population in our community by gathering information on their needs. This will in turn, enable us to use that information in our planning and policy development as we move forward. This will also give us access to grants and other resources for community improvements.

Mrs. Middlestetter made a motion to adopt **Resolution 2020-E A Resolution to Seek Membership in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities.** Mr. Greenwood seconded the motion. The Clerk called the roll. Mrs. Middlestetter, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mr. Havens, yes; Dr. Van Veldhuizen, yes; Mr. Edwards, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes. The resolution was adopted 6-0.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Mrs. Dodd announced that the Service Department will present their annual report at the March 9 meeting.

The City Manager updated Council on the discussion of river restoration as a way to help the Little Sugarcreek Road slippage. Mrs. Dodd has been doing more research on the topic and speaking to others about options. She spoke with John Dobney of Greene County Parks and Trails about their experience working with a different company than the one who spoke to Council in February.

Mrs. Dodd explained that after receiving a call concerning low-volume garbage collection staff looked into how this program works. In 2011 an Ordinance was passed to set up the program with Allied who was the City's contracted garbage collection service. In 2012 the City switched to Rumpke which did not include a low-volume service option. The City does not have a way to manage this program. The question for Council is should this program be changed. There are currently 22 people on the program. The Rumpke contract is in effect until 2022. Mayor Schweller explained that with Allied the price per customer was \$16.00 with low-volume at \$12.00. When the City switched to Rumpke, everyone's price went down. Mrs. Dodd recommended that the City eliminate the program but grandfather the 22 low-

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volume customers at the \$12.00 rate. The City will reevaluate the situation when the contract is being renewed at the end of 2022.

The City Manager proposed to Council the addition of a part-time Senior Secretary for the Administrative office. This person would be scheduled for 20 hours per week and the pay would be split between the Water and Administrative Funds. Mrs. Dodd will provide a job description, expected workload, and cost. Council asked to see the first quarter expenses and if there are electronic programs that could help with the workload.

Mr. Havens asked if it would be a permanent position and Mrs. Dodd explained that as far as she has seen the workload will not be going away any time soon. Mr. Greenwood added that the increase in public records requests and the state auditor's new mandates are an added work. Much of the city's records are not saved electronically. The Mayor also suggested looking into hiring a service to digitize the files and a repository for those electronic files.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Service: Mr. Greenwood reported that the Service Department Annual Report will be presented at the next Council meeting. He also reported that over the weekend the Service Department responded to a gushing water main issue that was unusual.

Safety: Mr. Greenwood stated that the annual reports presented by the Police and Fire Departments show that those departments are doing good work.

Finance/Audit: none

Community Affairs: Mrs. Middlestetter reported that the Community Affairs Committee interviewed for the business owner seat on the Village Review Board. Mrs. Middlestetter made a motion to appointing Thad Camp, owner of the State Farm office on S. Main Street, to the Village Review Board. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. The Clerk called the roll. Mrs. Middlestetter, yes; Mr. Edwards, yes; Mr. Havens, yes; Dr. Van Veldhuizen, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes. The motion passed 6-0.

Mrs. Middlestetter also reported that the Committee has interviewed 5 of the 7 applicants for the opening on the Board of Zoning Appeals/Property Review Commission.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Greenwood reported that he attended the last meeting of the Village Review Board. He explained that this board rarely met in previous years, but like all of the City's business this has picked up dramatically and they are meeting almost every month. Some of the Ordinances are being reviewed to update and make consistent and clear. The original purpose of the board was to retain the character of the Village District but make reasonable allowances since these are very old properties. The members are getting updated reference materials. Mr. Greenwood added that the VRB members and all the volunteer board members deserve the City's appreciation. He suggests adding job descriptions to the

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boards and making sure the members receive all the materials need for upcoming meetings enough in advance that they can thoroughly review them.

Mr. Greenwood referenced research what Planning and Zoning Administrator Jessica Hansen did on the amounts the city charges for different permits. Some of the fees do not even cover the expense of staff to administer. This will be an item for further discussion.

Mr. Greenwood also initiated the discussion of prohibiting truck traffic through downtown. Section 440.12 Truck Routes are spelled out and he asks that Council consider prohibiting through truck traffic on Main Street. Franklin Street is a State Route 725 so that cannot be regulated by the City. He explained that he has spoken to business owners along Franklin and Main who have complained about the noise and dust and dirt created by the truck traffic. The Mayor responded that Mr. Greenwood brought up good points. Mr. Havens agreed that the trucks are very loud and added that a business investor looking at Bellbrook asked about the truck traffic.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Mr. Havens recounted that at the last Council meeting he was taken by surprise by the comments made by Mrs. McGill of the Village Review Board and neglected to thank her and all volunteer board members. Mr. Havens commented that he agrees with the City Manager's five-year goals including moving some of the City service departments out of the downtown area. He suggests creating a CIC to facilitate the selling of those properties to encourage appropriate businesses in our downtown. He asked the City Manager to bring that goal forward. The Mayor added that maybe a work session in the near future would be appropriate.

Council Members thanked Chief Neidhard for his report, welcomed Thad Camp, and expressed sympathy on the passing of Mike Sabin.

Mayor Schweller also recounted that today was the deadline for applications for the open City Council seat. There have been seven applicants who will be interviewed.

Steve Kircher, 3695 W Franklin Street, came forward to discuss his proposal to open Bellbrook Mountain Snow Tubing Park. He explained that originally tonight had been scheduled to discuss this, but it was postponed by the City until a later date stating they need to know the amount of land being requested from the City. Mr. Kircher stated that the land requested is shown on the site plan sent to the city and admitted that it is more land than was shown on the drawing presented in June 2019. The change is due in part because he added that land containing the five abandoned wells. He reported meeting with Ohio EPA officials and a geologist to create a proposal to cap the wells. The latest plan includes land on both sides of the Little Sugarcreek so that stabilization and possible relocation of the creek might be undertaken. Mr. Kircher added that the City Manager provided him with the changes that FEMA is making to the flood plain maps which would require a change to the location of the tubing run out. Mr. Kircher explained that nothing is being built for the run out and believes FEMA will not be concerned. He closed stating that they have provided the information needed for the City to make a decision concerning the snow tubing park.

Kenny Knight and Jason Roberts, Garber Electric. They provided their proposal for the power and lighting plans for the proposed business.

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John Lafdi, Boy Scout Troop 375, explained that he was attending tonight's meeting as part of earning the Journalism merit badge.

John Stafford, 2487 Indian Wells Trail, wanted to respond to comments made by School Superintendent Cozad. He explained that the amount of the levy is not just the 5.7 mills being shown. It is completely different than the levy that was voted down in May of 2019. That one included an old levy that was going to fall off. This year's proposed levy includes 1.68 mills that stays on along with the new 5.7 mills. Mr. Stafford stated that locally the median sales price of homes is down 18.5 percent. He attributes this to the excessive property taxes. He added that teacher salaries are the biggest part of the budget including their benefits package. Mr. Stafford opined that unless the salaries are capped, the schools will need levies in 2020, 2024, and 2028. He believes that they are not addressing the ongoing issues and the cuts that have been made hurt the students and parents.

Dr. Cozad answered Mr. Stafford's comments by stating that according to the information from the state, properties in our school district have one of the lowest property tax rates in the area. Responding to the comments on teacher salaries, the state auditor's office has stated that Bellbrook Sugarcreek teacher salaries are among the lowest in the area. The state auditor's office also listed the tax burden which includes all taxes being paid by taxpayers based on income level and they found we are the lowest in the area.

ADJOURN

Being no further business to come before the Bellbrook City Council, Mayor Schweller declared the regular meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Michael W. Schweller, Mayor

Pamela Timmons, Clerk of Council