

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
Minutes of Bellbrook City Council Regular Meeting
March 22, 2021

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the March 22, 2021 City Council Meeting was conducted using Zoom's remote webinar platform.

PRESENT: TJ Hoke
Ernie Havens
Forrest Greenwood
Elaine Middlestetter
Nick Edwards
Mayor Mike Schweller

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Melissa Dodd, Planning and Zoning Administrator Jessica Hansen

REGULAR MEETING

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

ROLL CALL

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Schweller asked if anyone had any comments or corrections to the minutes of March 8. Hearing none he declared the minutes approved.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Oaths of Office

Tim Tuttle was sworn in as a member of the Planning Board for a term of five years.

- Planning and Zoning Annual Report – Jessica Hansen Planning and Zoning Assistant

Mrs. Hansen began the presentation with a chart comparing the number of permits requested for the past three years. There were 65.2 percent more permit requests in 2020 than in 2019. The increase was seen by other local municipalities. This was even more surprising since the price of

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lumber jumped in June through September. She also presented a break down of the fees collected by type of permit. The most common variance requested was for oversized garages.

The City's boards and commissions met more times in 2020 than the past two years. This is partially due to the boards review of the Zoning Code and Property Maintenance Code. It also increased due to the number of variance requests received.

Mrs. Hansen showed the break down of the types of property maintenance and grass violations. Thirty-eight of the violations were resolved but 12 which were not resolved by the end of the year. Violations were an area which did not receive as much attention due to the number of permit requests.

Review and updates to the Zoning Code have been a priority. Some of these have already completed the process of review by staff, boards, legal, and City Council. Many more are in process and will be coming to Council in 2021.

The City received four applications for special flood hazard area (SFHA) permits. The new FEMA Flood Plain maps will tentatively receive final approval June 28, 2021. FEMA will send letters to all affected property owners in the coming months.

New residential construction included six houses in Highview Terrace and two in Winterhaven. The average house size is 2,631 square feet. The number of new businesses requesting compliance permits was down with the COVID-19 pandemic likely being the cause.

Mrs. Hansen listed the other miscellaneous tasks that were completed in 2020 including organizing map files, filing permit applications, and working on the 2020 Census Complete Count Committee.

Mayor Schweller thanked Mrs. Hansen for the informative report. He asked that she track the properties in Bellbrook that will be affected by the Flood Map changes. There is a link on Bellbrook's web page to the new FEMA maps.

PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCES - none

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

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Mr. Edwards read **Ordinance 2021-4 An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 2021-3 to Adjust the City of Bellbrook Appropriations for 2021.**

The City Manager explained the two line items that were added. The first is \$12,950 for the engineering work to create the estimates for the sidewalk and cross walk connections. The second is \$18,000 under the motor vehicle fund also known as the permissive tax fund which encompasses five of Bellbrook's streets including Little Sugarcreek Road. This additional money will be used for the additional borings needed on the road to complete the study.

Mr. Edwards made a motion to introduce **Ordinance 2021-4 An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 2021-3 to Adjust the City of Bellbrook Appropriations for 2021.** Dr. Van Veldhuizen seconded the motion. The Clerk called the roll. Mr. Edwards, yes; Dr. Van Veldhuizen; Mr. Hoke, yes; Mr. Havens, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mrs. Middlestetter, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes. The motion passed 7-0.

RESOLUTIONS - none

OLD BUSINESS

- **General Fund Levy Renewal**

The City Manager presented the process and timeline for placing the 1.3 mil renewal levy on the November 2021 ballot. There are a number of resolutions that will come before Council to complete the process by the August 4 deadline for the November 2 ballot.

Mayor Schweller asked if there will be a levy committee created to facilitate communications including signage and such. Mrs. Dodd answered that she will look at the information from the last levy and reach out to those who served previously.

NEW BUSINESS

- **American Rescue Plan Funding**

Mrs. Dodd explained that we are in the very early stages of this latest governmental plan. On March 11 President Biden enacted this plan to assist Americans affected by the COVID-19 pandemic similar to the CARES Act in 2020. As with the CARES Act the details have not been supplied immediately. We will

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have to wait to learn more. The National League of Cities created a spreadsheet containing a range of how much each municipality could be eligible for. The Township has not been included at this time. According to the spreadsheet Bellbrook could receive between 1.3 and 1.6 million dollars. The money would be sent in two waves, the first of which is expected 60 days after the signing of the bill and the second would be one year after. The money must be spent by the end of 2024. The U.S. Treasury Department will be supplying the guidelines for uses of the money. The broad categories include:

1. Responding to the public health emergency.
2. Response to essential workers including premium pay and grants to employers with essential workers.
3. Revenue replacement. Bellbrook did not have any major gaps in revenue since we are not reliant on income tax.
4. Necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.

- **Bellbrook Sugarcreek Parks District Commissioner Opening**

Mrs. Dodd announced that there will be an opening on the Parks Board. This happens each year as there are three Commissioners who serve for three-year terms. One person is from the City, one from the Township, and the final person can be from either. Each year there will be one position to fill. This year the seat can be filled by either a City or a Township resident. To conduct the process the City Manager and one Council member will participate. Last year it was Mr. Havens and he shared that it is important for the person attend all of the interviews. Mrs. Middlestetter said she was interested in serving this year. Mr. Edwards nominated Mrs. Middlestetter and Mayor Schweller seconded it. There were no other nominations.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Mrs. Dodd thanked Mrs. Hansen for the Planning and Zoning Annual Report.

- City buildings will reopen to the public on Monday, April 5 at 8:30 am. City staff have largely been operating as normal with a few staff working from home part time. Those staff will all return to the office full time. We do plan to remain flexible in accommodating work from home for staff who are able at times.

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- The annual Water Quality Report is complete and on our website. It is important to note that this is the tenth straight year of no water rate increases!
- The Fire and Police Departments received Lexipol Gold level recognition for 2020. Each year the Lexipol Connect Customer Recognition Program recognizes agencies for excellence in policy maintenance and training. Both the Bellbrook Police and Fire Departments received this recognition! Congratulations to those departments!
- The April 2021 newsletter is at the printer and will hit mailboxes around April first.
- The Brook Mills 10k and Be Well Bellbrook events have set for Saturday, August 21st. We are monitoring the pandemic as it relates to events but are hopeful these will be able to happen. Registration for the Brook Mills 10k will open on April 5, 2021 at www.brookmills10k.com.
- The Farmers Market will return in June on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month from 9am-12pm at the city building parking lot again. This year it will be headed up by Bellbrook By Design.
- The 2020 financial statements are still being compiled; however, audit testing was mostly completed the week of the 8th. All went very well. The auditors will likely have to return for one more day after the financial statements are filed to test some items but the bulk of the audit is complete.

Dr. Van Veldhuizen asked when Council will return to meeting in person in the City Building. Mrs. Dodd explained that the system used to record and transmit the meetings to cable crashed in December. It has been determined that it cannot be repaired. A meeting is scheduled on April 1 to discuss the replacement plan. Council will be updated when this will be complete. In the meantime, Zoom will have to be used. Everyone expressed that they have missed Louis Schatzberg the camera operator. The state extended the allowance for virtual meetings through the end of June 2021.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Service – Mr. Greenwood reported that asphalt is now available so the Service Department has started patching holes. They are also making after-winter repairs to water mains and yards. Residents are encouraged to contact the Service Department concerning potholes.

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Safety – Mr. Hoke had no items from Safety but wanted to comment on how he received a survey after the Fire Department made a run to his house due to a possible gas leak. He thanked Chief Bizzarro for his diligence in sending these out.

Finance – none

Community Affairs – none

CLERK'S REPORT

Mrs. Timmons had no items to share. Mayor Schweller asked when the update of Article 14 will come before Council. The Clerk answered that it was sent to the Municipal Attorney on January 22. It is very lengthy, so the date is not known.

COMMENTS

Mr. Greenwood reported that at the last Regional Planning meeting there was a discussion about the dangers of texting while driving. They are looking at ways of curbing this activity. There will also be a lot of road projects taking place around the area this summer making him think that Council should consider roads in our area that could be future issues such as Wilmington Pike and Centerville Station Road. He also shared information with Council about a large solar energy project being considered in the county. Greene County Regional Planning is gathering citizen opinions. The Clerk emailed information about the project to all Council members.

Mr. Havens thanked Mrs. Hansen for the Planning and Zoning Report. He reported that Greene County Regional Planning has information about a new development in Sugarcreek Township on Clio Road across from Five Seasons. He shared with them that Bellbrook is very concerned with where runoff from the new community would be directed. Mayor Schweller agreed that the city needs to keep an eye on the plans for the development.

Mr. Hoke shared that Sugarcreek Township is hosting a community clean up day on April 10. He plans to reach out to Service Director Pasley on the topic.

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Dr. Van Veldhuizen thanked Council for excusing him from the last meeting as he was out of town for work. He watched the meeting on YouTube. He added that he found the Community Leaders Meeting that occurred before the Council meeting valuable. He also looks forward to more information on this new COVID-19 money and hopes we can create some lasting change like was done last time. He hopes that we can again support the efforts of the Community Resource Center.

Mr. Edwards congratulated the Wright State women's basketball team who just won their first ever tournament game against Arkansas.

Mayor Schweller echoed the comments about the Community Leaders Meeting being very productive as there is so much going on in our area. Mr. Greenwood asked if everyone thought it would be beneficial to meet with the Township more often. Mr. Havens agreed. He relayed that at a Chamber of Commerce meeting he discovered that the Township was considering creating a veteran's memorial. He informed them that Bellbrook already has one and suggested the Township consider adding to the existing one.

The Mayor also expressed his appreciation of Mrs. Hansen's report commenting that he had not known how much had been done in 2020.

PUBLIC COMMENT – none

ADJOURNMENTS

The Mayor announced that there was no further business and adjourned the meeting at 8:07 PM.

Michael W. Schweller, Mayor

Pamela Timmons, Clerk of Council