

**CITY OF SOUTH LEBANON
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
March 16, 2023
6:00 P.M.**

1. Mayor Smith opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge.

2. ATTENDANCE

Linda Allen – Present
Linda Burke – Present
Brenda Combs – Present

Maryan Harrison – Present
Bill Madison – Present
Rolyn Spicer – Present

3. GUESTS

Rich Bertagna, Lebanon Area Chamber of Commerce - shared about a Power Point presentation given by the City Manager of Lebanon where he had given community highlights. Bertagna would like to have something similar put together for South Lebanon highlighting what the city has been doing. He went on to state that once he has a Chamber office in South Lebanon, he would like to have an open house highlighting this presentation.

Mayor Smith stated that he and Haddix had been in contact with a new company in town that has the capabilities of helping us out in this area.

Bertagna further remarked that after he is set up in South Lebanon there could be the possibility of having the entire Chamber move their offices from Lebanon to South Lebanon as the cost in Lebanon is high.

Burke remarked that it is difficult to locate the Chamber office in Lebanon.

Mayor Smith asked for Bertagna to get a copy of the Lebanon presentation to which he stated he would.

Madison commented that we do need to promote ourselves as we migrate from a Village to a City.

Allen stated that she would like to volunteer, as a member of the Council, to assist with putting together a Power Point presentation.

4. Mayor Smith opened the floor to the public.

No public comments.

Mayor Smith closed the floor to the public.

5. COUNCIL WORKSHOP

Presentation of the 2023 Operating and Capital Budget by City's Fiscal Officer

Madison gave a very brief history of the growth of South Lebanon and stated that Williams has done a great job and propelled the city to the next step.

Council members began speaking on how impressed they are with the budget; Burke commenting that it is the most comprehensive budget she has ever seen.

Williams began her presentation by talking about a Popular Report that can be posted online and shows what the community is doing, where the money is being spent. This is easier to read than financial statements; it is a condensed version of activities. She continued stating that we will get to the point of doing this one day.

An overview of the budget was given, beginning with where we ended in 2022 and began in 2023. Explanation of funds, expenses, revenue, and projects was given.

Williams spoke on the effects of interest rates: By currently investing in Star Ohio, we are earning high interest however this is not a time to go out for debt as it is a bad time to borrow. We are taking advantage of the earnings.

Explanation of the budget regarding personnel was given. The city currently has 15 full-time positions, 14 of them are filled and 1 is currently vacant. Future personnel needs were briefly discussed.

The presentation ended with information being given on the budget in regard to capital projects.

Mayor Smith stated that he and Haddix had attended an annexation hearing in Warren County where they began speaking on grant projects. He has received a letter from the Commissioners stating that a Community Development Block Grant (CBDG) is going to the city for the Hobart Street Sidewalk Improvement Project which must be completed by December 31, 2024

Williams stated that we do try to go out for grants to fund projects because we do operate on a tight budget.

Mayor Smith stated that the Veteran's Playground project was spearheaded by Boylan. Haddix added that it was a state capital project and with the county's prioritization process it was a lengthy process to get approved.

Madison asked how the nation's aging demographics would affect the budget to which Williams stated it could affect the earnings tax revenue. Retirement earnings are not taxable by the city. Ideally, enough younger families would move in and help compensate.

Madison asked about staffing and if there was any science into if the budget is this amount of money your staffing would be this percentage. He is wanting to know if we are staffed well or do we have a shortage of staff. Williams remarked that she would need to do some research and compare the numbers with surrounding municipalities and what percentage of their budgets are payroll. This is something she can do and hopefully this summer we can look more into staffing and wages and how we compare to other municipalities our size. She will report back with what she finds out.

Burke questioned whether the city has ever thought about an intern program. Mayor Smith stated that they had done it once in the past during the summer. Williams shared her personal experiences with co-oping while in college.

Madison stated he had a very forward-thinking comment for Williams and Meier. He began talking about his history with the fire department. Further stating that he does not know if he has the demographics correct but from his observation it appears that a large part of the tax base that is taken for the expenditures of the fire department comes from the city; as the village has grown to a city, Union Township has shrunk. This could be in large part due to Mason and Lebanon. At what point is it appropriate to look at managing the fire department and bring it under our wing? He continued to state that this is nothing we should consider now, he is just thinking of the options down the road.

Williams mentioned that the portion being spent on police enforcement, we would not be able to run our own police department for the deal we get from the county Sheriff's Office.

Mayor Smith closed the workshop.

NEW BUSINESS

6. ORDINANCE 2023-07, AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND FOR THE FOREST AVENUE RECONSTRUCTION PHASE I PROJECT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

A motion to waive the three-reading rule was made by Madison, seconded by Combs, all yeas. By title only, Ordinance 2023-07, a motion to adopt was made by Madison, seconded by Combs, all yeas.

7. ORDINANCE 2023-08, AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE "PERMANENT" APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF SOUTH LEBANON, STATE OF OHIO, FOR THE PERIOD OF JANUARY 1, 2023 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2023, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

A motion to waive the three-reading rule was made by Burke, seconded by Madison, all yeas. By title only, Ordinance 2023-08, a motion to adopt was made by Combs, seconded by Madison, all yeas.

8. RESOLUTION 2023-13, A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE SUBMITTAL OF A FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY2024) COMMUNITY PROJECT APPLICATION FOR THE CITY OF SOUTH LEBANON WATER TOWER REHABILITATION PROJECT AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE ADMINISTRATOR TO PROCESS THE APPLICATION WITHOUT DELAY TO THE OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN GREG LANDSMAN, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

A motion to waive the three-reading rule was made by Combs, seconded by Madison, all yeas. By title only, Resolution 2023-13, a motion to adopt was made by Madison, seconded by Allen, all yeas.

9. RESOLUTION 2023-14, A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE SUBMITTAL OF A FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY2024) COMMUNITY PROJECT APPLICATION FOR THE CITY OF SOUTH LEBANON COMMUNITY CENTER REHABILITATION PROJECT AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE ADMINISTRATOR TO PROCESS THE APPLICATION WITHOUT DELAY TO THE OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN GREG LANDSMAN, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

A motion to waive the three-reading rule was made by Combs, seconded by Madison, all yeas. By title only, Resolution 2023-14, a motion to adopt was made by Madison, seconded by Allen, all yeas.

10. RESOLUTION 2023-15, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND FISCAL OFFICER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH VALLEY FORD FOR THE PURCHASE OF A FORD 750 DUMP AND SNOWPLOW TRUCK, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Boylan stated that the truck should be delivered in 2023.

Madison added that the larger dump truck will help with the distribution of salt with Mayor Smith adding and the removal of snow.

A motion to waive the three-reading rule was made by Madison, seconded by Allen, all yeas. By title only, Resolution 2023-15, a motion to adopt was made by Madison, seconded by Combs, all yeas.

11. RESOLUTION 2023-16, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND FISCAL OFFICER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE FLOCK GROUP INC. FOR THE INSTALLATION AND ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION OF FIVE FLOCK CAMERAS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

A motion to waive the three-reading rule was made by Burke, seconded by Madison, all yeas. By title only, Resolution 2023-16, a motion to adopt was made by Madison, seconded by Harrison, all yeas.

12. A motion to authorize the Fiscal Officer to send an Amended Certificate to the Warren County Auditor for fiscal year 2023 was made by Burke, seconded by Madison, all yeas.

13. AUTHORIZATION OF INVOICES

A motion to authorize the invoices for payment (\$58,554.89) was made by Burke, seconded by Combs, all yeas.

14. AUTHORIZATION OF SOLICITOR'S INVOICE

A motion to authorize the invoice for payment was made by Madison, seconded by Combs, all yeas.

15. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 2023 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Williams remarked that the second page of the packet will show the bank balances and investment balances.

A motion to approve the financial statements was made by Madison, seconded by Combs, all yeas.

16. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Special Meeting – February 23, 2023

A motion to adopt the minutes was made by Burke, seconded by Combs, all yeas.

OLD BUSINESS

17. ORDINANCE 2023-06, SECOND READING, AN ORDINANCE VACATING A PORTION OF AN ALLEY FROM CAVOLTS' ADDITION TO DEERFIELD

18. COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS

Mayor Smith

- a. Shared that Rhonda Ward, a former employee, has passed away.
- b. An update on the Veteran's Memorial was given by Mayor Smith, Bryan Corcoran, and Danny Phipps.

An audio presentation on Ephraim Kibbey was played by Haddix.

Mayor Smith gave a slideshow presentation displaying pictures of the Veteran's Memorial from the clearing of the land through the building of the Memorial.

Bryan Corcoran continued the presentation discussing the financial aspect of the Memorial. He remarked that all of the documents discussed are available for public review at the IRS, Ohio Secretary of State, and the Ohio Attorney General websites. It was noted that the reports will be amended as time goes on and the Memorial is expanded.

Mayor Smith read off a list of names of those who donated to the Memorial.

Danny Phipps shared that he will be donating the funds for a Vietnam Veterans granite bench at the Memorial.

Madison thanked everyone involved with the creation of the Memorial stating that it has exceeded expectations.

- c. Stated that the owner of Chubby's has bought into the business in town that does imaging and laser work. Hopefully we can do business with this local business down the road.

Fiscal Officer Tina Williams

- a. Nothing more to report.

Administrator Jerry Haddix

- a. Gave an update on the Civil Service Commission which met this past week.
- b. The Zoar Road guardrail has been completed by Security Fence.
- c. Data information has been received from the Board of Elections in regard to the Charter mailings. There are over 4,500 registered voters in South Lebanon and over 3,000 households with the population being around 7,500.00. That would be approximately 1,000 more than what we had for the census.
- d. Charter booklets are currently being printed and will be mailed out before April 2, 2023.

Assistant Administrator Jeff Boylan

- a. The playground is coming along quicker than anticipated. The pad was poured this morning, the equipment may be here tomorrow, they should begin putting the equipment together on Monday and mulch should be delivered next Friday. They may have to wait for the weather to warm up to pour the rubber pad.

Solicitor Andrew Meier

- a. We have received an estimate for an additional postcard mailer, besides the Charter booklet, that could be mailed out. The estimate is \$2,158.00 for printing,

postage, and mailing. Council would need to approve this as it is an additional piece of material. The concept is that it would contain a QR code which would contain a link to the website which would have the Charter and additional educational materials that the Charter Commission has approved and he is working on. Those should be live on the website later this month. The idea is that the educational materials will be a general 1-page flyer with bullet point information that is basic, and the second page would be more of a Q & A. Haddix has already posted a link with the actual Charter on the website; that information will also be disseminated through social media on the Facebook page and Twitter account.

Burke made a motion to spend the additional \$2,158.00 for the Charter postcard mailer, seconded by Combs, all yeas.

Meier added that the city cannot advocate one way or the other for the Charter.

Haddix commented that the mailer will be to each household while the Charter booklet will go to each registered voter.

Sgt. Corey Adams

- a. Discussed car break-ins and thefts. It is important that we lock our vehicles and remove valuables from them.
- b. Gave an update on a situation at the ballfields at Rogers Park and some damage that occurred this past evening.
- c. Thanked everyone for the Flock cameras stating that there is no timeframe for when they will be installed due to the increase in orders with the deadline approaching and an increase in pricing.
- d. Thanked everyone for their help and support.
- e. Mentioned that if the police are needed call 911 before or instead of posting it on social media.

Bill Madison

- a. Addressed an issue that came to his attention. Recently there was a public hearing that concerned remapping a parcel within the district. He thought everything went very well however there was something very unprofessional that had his name attached to it. There was an email sent to a number of Councilmen thanking them for the process and the Public Hearing. Then there was an email sent from a Councilman with a few other Councilmen's names removed from it and then it was sent back to the person in the public. The email mentioned his name along with another name; in effect the email said that we were underhanded and were possibly at cause and if it wasn't for Linda Allen and Linda Burke

saving the day and that he had participated in this as a political stunt or maneuver because he was in an election year. He felt this was unprofessional and he wanted to say a few things to set the record straight.

Several years ago, the Council voted on a Comprehensive Plan to update that parcel from residential to mixed-use; Linda Allen and Linda Burke voted for this. Linda Allen was our proxy from the Council to the Warren County Planning Commission that authored that plan and changed the parcel from residential to mixed-use and allowed it to be considered for business. Then there was a comment about Planning and his voting on it which in fact he was sick and absent from that meeting and did not vote for it. It saddens him that that was sent out. The fact is that Linda was on that Council and sat on the Planning and Zoning that changed that and then turned face and acted like it was the local Planning that did it. Planning follows suit with what our Comprehensive Plan is at the current moment. When this came before Planning, we as a Council, including myself and Linda, and Linda, voted to change that to mixed-use. So, when Planning has someone come and take advantage of that it was then the City Administrator's recommendation that we follow suite and follow what Council had voted in place to propose a business there. Why is that my fault, why am I underhanded, why was I pointed out as being at fault or something less than genuine, I'm not sure, I do not understand that. The Planning Commission did not set that in place, it was already mixed-use, it was brought for us, it is what the Council had agreed on, and so it was considered. A public meeting was held, the community had a chance to speak and in the best interest of the community he made his motion. He sees no reason why he was slandered in the manor he was in that email and also having his name removed from it is inexcusable. He further stated that he appreciated Meier reprimanding her in an email and he asked that Meier further investigate this. He feels like either ethically or a state statute was broken in the fact that this was an email sent from the city. He knows he is emotional but when his name is thrown under the bus for no reason especially when that person actually voted to have that land changed it is upsetting.

Brenda Combs

- a. Thanked Boylan for all his hard work on the new playground and for incorporating a section for children with special needs.

Linda Burke

- a. Thanked everyone for the financial and memorial updates.
- b. Wanted to speak on the rezoning of the property in debate. It says R-1 on the Comprehensive Plan with lines drawn through it that says mixed-use. We as a council, in my opinion, made a huge mistake on voting, and I'll take my part of responsibility for that, on voting that for mixed-use. Nobody did anything with any intent but to get the right information. I've been disrespected and chastised publicly by Bill Madison and have never gotten an apology and I think he owes

me one publicly. I think it is our duty to do our due diligence all the time and there were mistakes made here. Let's just admit that and not just on one part. Nobody was going after you. You are on the Planning and Zoning Committee, and we thought your name was in the minutes forgive us for any mistakes made. There was no intent to have an ethics situation here. This needs to be talked out in private and us come to a respectful conclusion to this. We literally upset 400 families with what looked like a hotel going in there and there was no developer involved in this, there was a real estate agent trying to sell this property and anything, any business could have gone in there. It was a mistake on our part to zone that mixed-use. She would like to revisit the Comprehensive Plan and change that back to R-1 for the sake of the whole community.

- c. Asked if there is a way to quit having every ordinance, that comes before the Council, presented as an emergency. Through Municipal League training she has learned that is the worst way to govern. She would like to see this happen as few times as possible. She would like for there to be more consideration with this.
- d. Thanked Boylan for the new park and asked about the park at Oeders and when it may be repaired. Boylan remarked that it had some other issues and is going to be removed.

Mayor Smith stated that the solicitor works for the Council and every ordinance or resolution is sent to the solicitor for review to be sure we are in compliance before we present something. He advises the Council, and we send everything to him and if he wants it a certain way, he would tell us. Everything tonight was under a time crunch. We will do our best going forward but ultimately it falls on the recommendation of the solicitor.

Linda Allen

- a. Nothing to report.

Maryan Harrison

- a. Stated that the Vietnam celebration at the Veteran's Memorial is going to be very emotional for a lot of people.

Mayor Smith stated that we will be getting a bench, in the future, for the Vietnam veterans. He has reached out to the veterans and one of the neighborhoods today put out on their website to any local Vietnam veterans requesting photographs from "in country" to add to a collage. He has had people dropping pictures off on his car. He added that photographs can be sent to Haddix and with today's technology old photos can be cleaned up. They will be getting the thanks that they have never gotten.

Harrison stated that this is for the families too as the families serve as well.

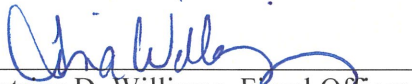
Rolin Spicer

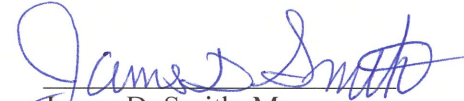
- a. Nothing to report.

Madison remarked that he wanted to address Burke's concern. He thinks that the point of contention that she mentioned was the fact that during the hearing he had mis-spoken and didn't realize it until someone brought it to his attention, the fact that she had been on Council for maybe 1 or 2 years, what he meant was 1st or 2nd election cycles, 1 or 2 terms is what he should have said, not years. So it was making that comment I think is the area of concern so I wanted to correct that.

Burke responded that he tried to diminish her in front of the public and he did that. People make mistakes and he does too. Be gracious enough to admit other Council members make mistakes as well.

19. Mayor Smith asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m. A motion was made by Burke, seconded by Allen, all yeas.


Petrina D. Williams, Fiscal Officer


James D. Smith, Mayor

For an audio copy of the Mar. 16, 2023 minutes of the City of South Lebanon Council regular meeting, please contact Fiscal Officer at twilliams@southlebanonohio.org.