

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
AMBERLEY VILLAGE COUNCIL
MONDAY, MAY 10, 2021**

The Council of Amberley Village, Ohio met in regular session online via Zoom on Monday, May 10, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. Mayor Muething called the meeting to order, and the following roll call was taken:

PRESENT

Richard Bardach
Peg Conway
Ben Hunt
Elida Kamine
Thomas C. Muething
Natalie Wolf
Ray Warren

ALSO PRESENT

Scot Lahrmer, Village Manager
Chief Richard L. Wallace, Police/Fire
Andrew Kaake, Village Solicitor
Rick Kay, Village Treasurer
Tammy Reasoner, Clerk of Council

Mayor Muething welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Amberley Village Council. He led those in attendance through the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES

Mayor Muething asked if there were any changes to the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of April 12, 2021 as distributed. There being no changes, Mayor Muething stated the minutes were approved as distributed.

FINANCE REPORT

Village Manager Scot Lahrmer reviewed the March 2021 UAN Report and stated earnings tax collections for the month of March totaled approximately \$217,961, which was up 7.45% from collections for March of 2020. He said the earnings tax estimate for the year was \$3 million. The Village collected \$535,000 in property tax during the month of March.

The Local Government Fund netted \$5,243 for March, and is projected to net \$55,882 for the year.

Mr. Lahrmer said expenses for the month of March totaled \$565,007. The total budget for 2021, he said, was set at \$5.7 million, and the unencumbered General Fund balance as of the end of March was \$5,112,516.

PRESENTATION OF JUNIOR CITIZENS AWARDS

Chief Wallace said the Amberley Village Police Department likes to recognize residents who go over and above to make Amberley Village a great place to live. He said residents Grace Cotton of Patrisal Court and Ruby Gilles of Longmeadow Drive, age 11 and 10, had been distributing hand-painted wooden signs with positive messages throughout their neighborhood since the beginning of the pandemic. A video was

shown depicting a socially-distanced presentation of awards, and the Mayor thanked Chief Wallace for taking the time to recognize the girls. Chief Wallace thanked Tammy Reasoner for creating the video, and thanked Council for the opportunity to recognize the girls in a public setting.

CITIZENS TO SPEAK

Resident Colin Driscoll of 6600 Ridge Road spoke on the topic of dogs at Amberley Green. He gave an overview of meeting minutes for the past several Public Buildings and Parks Committee meetings. He suggested an outer loop for walkers and joggers, and an inner loop for responsible dog owners, where they could walk their dogs off-leash. He said in the 10,000 dog hours he had logged at Amberley Green, he had never encountered a problem. He said the majority of outdoor spaces were open to walkers and joggers, but Amberley Green was the only space available for dogs off-leash.

Mr. Warren thanked Mr. Driscoll for his comments. He said while the Council meeting was not the appropriate forum for dialogue, he wished Mr. Driscoll to consider the cost to separate the inner and outer loops in his proposal for the property.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mayor Muething read and introduced **Resolution 2021-13**, which would establish a fund to meet the state requirements to receive federal dollars from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), which will be acquired by the Village from the U.S. Treasury through the State of Ohio. The Mayor said \$670,000 was anticipated to be received through ARPA, with half arriving later this month. Mayor Muething said eligible items are still under discussion, but our fund must be set up prior to receiving the federal funds, and the Village would have until 2024 to spend the money under the current legislation.

Ms. Wolf asked if there was a formula for determining the allocation, or if the Village had applied for the funding.

Mr. Lahrmer said the amount was determined by the federal government, and that no application had been made.

Mayor Muething then moved to adopt Resolution 2021-13. Seconded by Ms. Conway, the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND PARKS COMMITTEE

Chairperson Conway reported the committee had met on May 3, 2021 and had voted to recommend **Ordinance 2021-8**, which would establish regulations for dogs at Amberley Green. She said research conducted by staff and the committee showed Amberley Village permissions were much greater than other communities, and there were an

increasingly higher number of negative reports, including dog bites and complaints from residents living adjacent to the property. Ms. Conway said the committee had considered multiple options.

Ms. Conway reminded those in attendance that Amberley Green is not a park, and both the infrastructure and money were unavailable to run the property as such. She said there would be three readings of the ordinance before Council, and she expected the Public Buildings and Parks Committee to meet again to allow additional feedback to be heard.

Ms. Wolf stated she wasn't sure if people were aware of what goes into the preparation for council meetings, but referenced the explanatory report regarding Ordinance 2021-8 as an excellent summary of the history of the issue. She recommended all those with an interest in the issue read the report to better understand how we arrived at the current situation.

Mr. Bardach said he felt today's issue had not been well publicized, and he was confident there were others who would have wished to speak. He requested a survey be distributed via Constant Contact. Mr. Bardach stated there was no fencing required at Amberley Green, and 8 complaints in a year rendered speeding a much greater issue. He requested gathering citizen input on proposed times for when dogs could be on or off leashes.

Mayor Muething said there was still quite a bit of feedback coming in, and the issue was best worked through at the committee level.

STREETS, PUBLIC UTILITIES & SEWERS COMMITTEE

Chairperson Warren said the committee had met on April 27, which resulted in the presentation of two resolutions for the May council meeting. Mr. Warren read and introduced **Resolution 2021-14**, which would authorize the Village Manager to enter into a contract for the purchase of a brine system. He said staff had been researching replacement of the ten-year-old brine maker after years of repair and the recent discovery that some of the parts are outdated. Mr. Warren moved that Resolution 2021-14 be adopted. Seconded by Ms. Conway, the resolution passed unanimously.

Mr. Warren said the committee also discussed the purchase of rock salt, but said there would be no vote on it tonight.

Mr. Warren then introduced **Resolution 2021-15**, which would authorize utility easements for Lewis Animal Hospital and a Duke Energy electrical line burial project on Elbrook Avenue.

Ms. Wolf asked if the proposed resolution was an indication some of the electricity outages on Elbrook would be resolved. Mr. Warren said this was the goal, and that information would be sent out to residents to let them know when work was scheduled. Mr. Lahrmer reinforced the information would be made available to residents.

Mr. Warren moved to adopt Resolution 2021-15, which was seconded by Ms. Wolf. The resolution passed unanimously.

Mr. Warren reported that resident Jim Hull had initiated discussion during the committee meeting regarding sound barriers for Appleridge Lane. He said Appleridge did not meet the conditions for public funding of a sound barrier, as the homes were built after Ronald Reagan Highway had already been established.

POLICE AND FIRE COMMITTEE

Chairperson Conway said the Police and Fire Committee had met on both April 14 and April 27. She read and introduced **Resolution 2021-16**, which would proclaim May 9 – 15, 2021 as National Law Enforcement Week. She encouraged residents to show their support for the important work of our Village Law Enforcement Officers by participating in Light Ohio Blue and light up homes and businesses in blue lights and wearing blue on May 15. Ms. Conway moved to adopt Resolution 2021-16, which was seconded by Ms. Wolf and passed unanimously.

Ms. Conway said the committee also discussed the importance of replacing the current Police Department Record Management System, PAMET, which is going out of business at the end of this year. She read and introduced **Resolution 2021-17**, which would authorize the Village Manager to enter into a contract for the purchase of new Sundance software. Seconded by Ms. Wolf, the resolution passed unanimously.

Ms. Conway read and introduced **Resolution 2021-18**, which would authorize the Village Manager to enter into a contract for the purchase of three License Plate Readers (LPRs). She said while these had not been budgeted for this year, the LPRs are slated to go offline on December 31 of this year, rendering them unable to be traded in. If they are traded in this year before they are no longer of trade-in value, the Village would save \$29,325 in overall costs.

Ms. Wolf asked if the LPRs automatically activated or if an officer had to turn them on. Chief Wallace responded that officers are required to be logged into the system, which automatically tracks all license plates equally.

Ms. Conway moved to adopt Resolution 2021-18. Seconded by Ms. Wolf, the resolution passed unanimously.

Ms. Conway read, introduced and moved to adopt **Resolution 2021-19**, which would update the Memorandum of Understanding between Hamilton County and the Village regarding the Hamilton County Heroin Coalition Task Force, and authorize the Village Police Department to participate in the Hamilton County Addiction Response Coalition. Seconded by Mr. Hunt, the motion passed unanimously.

LAW COMMITTEE

Chairperson Bardach read and introduced **Resolution 2021-20**, which would refer a proposed amendment of Section 154.66 of the Amberley Village Zoning Code to the Planning Commission. He said the proposed amendment would enable the Village Manager to streamline the process for temporary event applications by permitting approval or denial of temporary events lasting 7 days or less. Procedurally, the proposed amendment is first required to be reviewed by the Planning Commission, which will be asked to provide feedback. Mr. Bardach moved to adopt Resolution 2021-20. Seconded by Ms. Kamine, the resolution passed unanimously.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Lahrmer stated **Ordinance 2021-10** was before Council to adopt and enact a supplement to the Code of Ordinances of Amberley Village. He said this was a procedural ordinance passed each year which acknowledges, approves and incorporates all of the legislation passed during the year into the Village Code.

Ms. Wolf moved to waive the three readings of Ordinance 2021-10. Seconded by Mr. Warren, the following roll call vote was taken:

AYE: Bardach, Conway, Hunt, Kamine, Muething, Warren, Wolf (7)
NAY: (0)

Mr. Warren moved to adopt Ordinance 2021-10. Seconded by Ms. Wolf, the following roll call vote was taken:

AYE: Bardach, Conway, Hunt, Kamine, Muething, Warren, Wolf (7)
NAY: (0)

Mayor Muething stated the Ordinance would take effect in 45 days.

Mr. Lahrmer stated there were a few items from the Village Manager's Report he wished to highlight. He encouraged residents to attend an upcoming Pop-Up Mobile Vaccine Clinic on Thursday, May 13 at the Amberley Village Municipal Building parking lot from 10 a.m. to noon. He said the event was open to anyone, no appointment was necessary and the vaccinations were free of charge.

He said Chief Wallace would be honored at the upcoming June 1 Reds Game during Jewish Community Night. He said there was a link in the May issue of E-News where residents could reserve tickets, and the first 700 ticket purchasers would receive a free gift.

Mr. Lahrmer said the Municipal Building would be opening back up in June, and asked Council to consider its preference for returning to Chambers for meetings. He said in-person meetings would still require mask-wearing, temperature checks and six feet of distance between people.

Ms. Kamine said she felt Zoom was safer, and with the number of people interested in the issue of dogs at Amberley Green, she suggested holding off the return to the Municipal Building until at least July.

Ms. Wolf said she would be in Chambers, as the hybrid approach utilized previously during the pandemic was too frustrating.

Mr. Bardach said he was ready to come back, as did Ms. Conway, who added she felt the interaction was higher quality in person.

Mr. Warren asked if it was legal or appropriate to ask who had been vaccinated, to which Mr. Kaake said it was not illegal to ask.

Mayor Muething said council and committees would set a July 1 date to return to the building, subject to change if needed.

Mr. Warren said the governor had set a target which had not been met yet. Mayor Muething reminded Mr. Warren that social distancing and safety protocols would still be in place.

Ms. Kamine suggested the committees would need to be held in Chambers or the Community Room due to spacing.

Mr. Lahrmer said he wished to highlight the 2021 Streets Program, which was now underway. He said the Cincinnati Water Works was working at Winding Way and Section Road beginning in May, and would be at Section and Aracoma next month.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Wallace said that Sgt. Koenig, Officer Alt and Rabbi Mendy had represented the Village at Police Memorial Week celebrations in downtown Cincinnati as he had been out for a couple of weeks.

He said the Police Department had been very active. He asked residents to keep their eyes and ears open, especially with regard to car break-ins, and reminded residents to "see something, say something."

He acknowledged supervisors from the Police Department who were in attendance online for the council meeting, including Lt. Blum, Sgt. Koenig, and Sgt. Goehring.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Muething said while the annual Tree City USA celebration wasn't held this year due to the pandemic, he wished to thank the City of Montgomery for sending the Village a gift box of items which would have been received at the event. He said the box including updated plaques and award stickers which are displayed on signage in the Village.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilmember Conway reminded everyone of the Tree Dedication Ceremony memorializing Ed Hattenbach on Sunday, May 16 at 11 a.m. at the Municipal Building.

Mayor Muething assured all those with an interest in the dog regulations at Amberley Green that all comments were being read and emails being forwarded. He said the Village was receiving many varying points of view, and that while there was no easy answer, Councilmember Conway had assured him the committee was committed to working on the topic. The Mayor reminded everyone the Village was striving to change behavior on the property.

There being no further business, Mayor Muething adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Tammy Reasoner, Clerk of Council

Thomas C. Muething, Mayor