

September 27, 2021

Council President Mr. Martin called the September 27, 2021 meeting to order at 7:36 PM. If you aren't a member of council and are on ZOOM please mute your computer so it will cut down the background noise. The roll was called with the following members present: Mrs. Drake, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Gant, Mrs. Miller, Ms. Riffle and Mr. Shutts present. Also, present was Mayor Lorentz, Safety-Service Director Mrs. Hoblitzell, City Law Director Mr. Webster City Treasurer Mrs. Copeland and Clerk of Council Mrs. Meredith. Absent from the meeting was City Auditor Miss Pittenger and Council person Mr. Locke.

Council President Mr. Martin asked that everyone please rise for the Prayer and remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance. Mrs. Drake gave the invocation and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council President Mr. Martin asked that everyone please turn off cellphones and refrain from talking in the audience unless called upon. The recorder picks up background noise making it hard for the clerk to transcribe the minutes.

Ms. Riffle made a motion to accept the minutes of September 13, 2021 as presented and by-pass the reading. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ferguson. A vote was taken with members of council present voting aye.

Reports of City Officials:

Mayor Lorentz reported that on September 14th I attended the meeting in Marietta discussing the problems with injection wells in our area. If anyone is interested, I have a handout for you to view.

September 16th, we met with United Bridge Partners to discuss the impact and schedule for the Memorial Bridge maintenance project. For the next two years there may be some one lane traffic and slowing of traffic but very little closure. Work begins in October.

Due to the Covid numbers we have stopped the meals at the Sr. Center. All visitors are required to wear masks at all times.

The Pickle Ball court is scheduled to start painting etc. on Friday and Saturday. If anyone is inclined to assist with the work, please contact me and I will get an exact time from the scout.

The Belpre Rotary is going to plant 4 memorial trees in our park. We also have a memorial tree to plant for Mrs. Collette at Depot Park.

We are in the process of getting bids and engineering justification for Braun Road and Blennerhassett. Grant funds are available and of this date are unclaimed. Hopefully we can complete the leg work and pave at months end.

On Sunday we cut the ribbon for a new Habitat Home on 110 Lockwood Street.

Mrs. Hoblitzell pointed out correction to the Mayor's Report. The paragraph should read that we are in the process of getting bids and engineering justification for Belrock and Florence Street.

Safety-Service Director Mrs. Hoblitzell announced that the drug testing facilities from Ohio Valley Health has been switched to Ohio Valley Health Care aka WVU Medicine. All drug testing will be held there.

We have started working on the budget format listing and finding out what are capital needs are.

We finally purchased a dump truck. It will go to the street department.

Mr. Wiggins has been working on the litter letters. Hopefully you have seen some clean up on Florence Street. There are some folk's that are not accepting the letters.

We have a new water department employee, Austin Ford. He started September 20th and is replacing Matt Bremer who is retiring.

We received a \$5,000 Grant that SOPEC awarded the City of Belpre for lighting at the ballfield.

All Code Enforcement Applications have gone out and are online.

City Auditor Miss Pittenger was absent. No report was given in her absence.

City Law Director Mr. Webster announced that we continue to work on all the legislation that was presented to council. Mr. Webster asked members of council if they had received two ordinances that Kim sent out this afternoon. Council stated that they did not receive. Mr. Webster stated that he would go over them with council when we get there. One piece of legislation had two blanks in the 1st paragraph. It has been completed at this point and I will go over with you when we get there. After the last meeting I addressed Mrs. Drake regarding junk car portion. I have added language for all property both residential and commercial. We haven't voted on it yet but I will also go over it as well when we get there.

I will also inform the public about multiple calls I received in regards to an incident at Belpre High School during Homecoming. Articles were in Parkersburg News and Sentinel and Marietta Times. The incident is still under investigation in which I told WTAP today. No charges have been filed and is still not complete. There are still witness statements that need to be collected by Belpre Police Department. The investigation is still ongoing in regards to the press and I will make no further statement until some action is taken or a final report is issued.

Ali was on-line to answer any questions regarding HomeServe.

Sam and Brett were both on ZOOM to speak briefly about SIXMO. They wanted to give a little update as to what is going on. This will be one of many given. We have been working with Connie and the Mayor on three projects. One being the introduction into business retention. We will meet on September 30th to give the introduction to what the program is. We are working with the roles of the city. We've done a lot of research and prep on this. Our next project is a zoning review and intervention. We will be reviewing all Codified Ordinances and looking to update the list. Last, we will be working with the code on dilapidated inventory. We have been looking at Code Enforcement on properties in the City of Belpre and looking at potential violators. We also want to identify all the Brownfield sites, gas stations, industrial sites and potential redevelopment opportunities.

City Treasurer Mrs. Copeland announced that a copy of the August Treasurer's Report has been signed and a copy has been given to the clerk. The report appears on-line and copies are on the back table for anyone wishing to review. The report needs approval of council. Ms. Riffle made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Communication and Petitions – none

Reports of Standing Committee –

Finance/Audit Committee Mr. Ferguson reported that at the last meeting he received the following legislation: **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BELPRE CITY AUDITOR TO REQUEST THE APPROVAL OF THE OHIO STATE AUDITOR TO CREATE AN IMPOUND LOT FUND.** We have worked on this for the last six months to a year. All this legislation does is gives Miss Pittenger the authority to create an impound lot fund. If my committee has no objections, I would like to make a motion to add to the agenda this evening for first reading **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BELPRE CITY AUDITOR TO REQUEST THE APPROVAL OF THE OHIO STATE AUDITOR TO CREATE AN IMPOUND LOT FUND.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Gant, Police and Fire Committee had no report.

Mr. Webster stated that he had prepared the proposed changes to the agreement for emergency medical services. After the changes have been reviewed and approved it can be added to the next agenda.

Ms. Riffle Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewer announced that her committee held a meeting prior to these evenings meeting to discuss the paving project on State Route 618. At this time, I would like to make a motion to add to tonight's agenda for first reading **AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE MAINTENANCE, RESURFACING PROJECT IN THE CITY OF BELPRE ON STATE ROUTE 618.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. Also discussed was HomeServe water and sewer line replacement insurance program. We are waiting on clarification before

moving forward. There will probably be an additional committee meeting prior to presenting to council.

Mrs. Drake, Utilities Committee had no report. Mrs. Drake stated that she was enjoying the new website. It is truly user friendly and very easy to access. I would also like to comment on the Cross-Country Race this past weekend. This is such a blessing to the community to the young people and their families. It also brings in business to our local businesses.

Mr. Shutts, Parks and Recreation Committee had no report.

Mr. Locke Planning and Zoning Committee was absent. No report was given in his absence.

Mr. Locke Economic Development Committee was absent. No report was given in his absence.

Mrs. Miller Rules Committee had no report. Mrs. Miller read 1133.02 Amending Ordinance. Under Preparation it states that all ordinances for change of zoning classification shall be prepared by the Law Director. However, no such ordinance shall be considered by City Council until first considered by the Planning Commission, until the Commission has made recommendations to Council and Council has held a public hearing. Under Notices and Public Hearings (b) it states subsequent to City Council's receipt of the Planning Commission's recommendation on a petition for change of zoning classification. Council shall set a date for a public hearing on the proposed zone change at least fourteen days prior to such hearing. Council shall not have any readings of zoning classification change ordinance until after the public hearing. Notice of time, place and purpose of such hearing, shall be given at least fourteen days prior thereto by the following methods: (1) By at least two publications on consecutive days in one newspaper of general circulation in the City; and (2) Written notice of the petition and the character of the proposed change shall be sent to the owners of record, at their addresses available in the Office of the County Auditor or Treasurer of Washington County, Ohio, of all property within the affected area and within 150 feet thereof. Similar notice shall be sent to every association of residents or owners who shall have registered an association name for this purpose with the City, and to the official clerk or secretary of any other political subdivision that is within 150 feet of the affected area. This was Ordinance 14, 1996-1997 and was passed on August 12, 1996. I don't feel we should have any readings on these ordinances as we have not had any public hearings. We have had notices of Economic Development meetings but nothing was mentioned about changing any zoning. A copy of the report was given to the clerk for her record.

Mr. Webster stated that this is what 1133.02 says. 1133.01 was ignored. It says Petition for and Action by Planning Commission. Petition for change of zoning

classification shall be on a form supplied by and prepared by the Planning Commission. We are not changing any zoning in C-3. The landowner is requesting a change on the land. Its not an individual requesting a zoning change. There has been no specific landowner that has requested a change. That is what 1133.01 refers to.

Persons Appearing Before Council – Agenda items only.

Steve Null 2321 Washington Boulevard wanted to know if the C-3 zoning was on the agenda. I live on Washington Boulevard and it is Commercial Property. Will this affect my property? Mr. Webster asked Mr. Null if he had read the legislation. According to Mr. Webster this has to do with C-3 commercial property and his property is not C-3. It will not affect his property.

William Cassady 824 Belrock Avenue stated that he has several questions about several pieces of legislation on tonight's agenda. Would it be better if I address it at the time of the ordinances? According to President of Council it probably would be. Mr. Cassady stated that he would wait.

Eric Freed, 604 and 606 Blennerhassett Avenue addressed C-3 Zoning.

Jeff Barrett 612 Blennerhassett Avenue stated that he owns farmland. Will that affect the farmland. Mrs. Hoblitzell stated that the only thing this will do will allow uses for the properties such as restaurants, housing, etc. If you want to put a restaurant in, you can put a restaurant in. If you want to build a row of houses you can build a row of houses. You can keep the farmland. It has nothing to do with taxes.

Jerry Radcliff O'Neill Street discussed usage of lesser consequence. According to Mrs. Hoblitzell we are not taking away, we are adding to the property usage. If you are in a R-2 you can build in an R-1. If you are in a commercial area its not allowing someone to build a house between a Dollar Tree and another business. There is a clause that states if you build within one year of tearing something down it can remain a resident. It is a grandfather clause.

Mr. Webster stated that legislation has to do with spot zoning. You can build anything that is in a commercial area. The added permitted uses are only to C-3.

Mr. Radcliff asked about the property where the Legion is located on Florence Street. What if I wanted to build apartments? Mr. Webster stated that he would have to check to see how it was zoned before he could give him an answer. If the soccer field is currently a C-2 and you decide someday you want to put houses on the property it may or may not have to be rezoned.

Mr. Webster stated that it all boils down to whether or not you want residential properties up against commercial properties. Mr. Webster informed Mr. Radcliffe that he would check the zoning on both of the properties mentioned and get back with him.

Steve Null 2321 Washington Boulevard asked Mr. Webster if he would get a legal notification on the zoning changes. According to Mr. Webster there is no change in the zoning. All of Washington Boulevard is zoned commercial. There are pre-existing houses zoned on Washington Boulevard however they were there before Washington Boulevard was all zoned commercial. If you have vacant property and you want to build on it you are currently allowed to do that. If you want to change the usage of that property from a current R-1 to R-2 you would have to ask for a zoning change from the Planning Commission at that point. It doesn't affect the usage that you currently have. It is currently zoned commercial and you can use it for any of the C-1 usages now. If someone came along and wanted to purchase my historical home on Washington Boulevard is that still possible. Mr. Webster stated yes, they could.

Jesse Wynecott 805 Main Street stated that she doesn't have any problems with adding to the C-3 zoning. My main problem is that we are paying SIXMO to review our ordinances and for doing the study. I don't understand why we are talking about this now when the study isn't complete. I thought that is why we hired SIXMO was to get their expertise in zoning. I'm confused if city council is going to change the zoning why did we need to hire SIXMO for their opinion. Mrs. Hoblitzell stated they have reviewed it. Mrs. Wynecott stated that they said they are going to make a presentation on September 30th, 2021. I think we should wait for SIXMO to complete their study, make a report to the Economic Development Committee and not jump the gun. This is what we are paying them for.

Mrs. Miller asked Mr. Webster about grandfathering in and what happens when the residents are no longer here. Mr. Webster stated if the use of the property is the same it can stay the same. The usage of the property is protected. If they want to change it there would be more flexibility. Mr. Webster stated that we are not changing the zoning. Any uses now made on a particular property where the zoning is different from that usage would not be permitted to change in that particular area. It will stay the same.

Unfinished Business:

Mr. Gant brought before council for second reading **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 1501.01 OF THE BELPRE FIRE PREVENTION CODE**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. This will lie over until the next meeting of council.

Mrs. Drake brought before council for second reading **AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTIONS OF THE GOLF CART ORDINANCE ADOPTED JUNE 28, 2021 AND TO AMEND OTHER EXISTING BELPRE CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTION.** Discussion followed with Mr. Jerry Radcliffe of O'Neill Street participating in the discussion. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. This will lie over until the next meeting of council.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mrs. Drake brought before council for first reading **AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND BELPRE CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTION 1145.01(e) TO ADD ADDITIONAL PERMITTED USED IN THE C-3 COMMERCIAL RECREATION DISTRICT.** Discussion followed: William Cassady 824 Belrock Avenue asked for a point of clarification by Mr. Webster. He asked what is allowed under C-3 zoning. I don't recall what C-3 said. Mr. Webster stated that the current permitted uses in the C-3 zoning is Marine docking facilities, large scale marina's, yacht boating club facilities, private food and beverage sales, private and public park recreation areas, swimming areas, etc. Per Mr. Cassady we are adding to that list. Mr. Webster stated that yes, we are. Mr. Cassady stated that he feels we are getting the cart before the horse and that we should wait until the study is complete. He would like to see the legislation tabled. Mr. Gant would like to see the legislation tabled pending discussions.

Mr. Gant made a motion to Table C-3 zoning. Discussion followed

Mrs. Drake stated that this has been in process for over six months. I don't understand why you want to stir this up with SIXMO. I can't see making this more complicated than what it is.

Mrs. Miller stated that it is because this council is trying to rush things through before the end of your term.

A vote was taken with Mrs. Drake, Ms. Riffle and Mr. Shutts voting nay. Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Gant and Mrs. Miller voting aye. The vote was 3 for and 3 against. It was up to the chair to break the tie. President of Council Mr. Martin voted aye to table.

Mrs. Drake brought before council for first reading **AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND BELPRE CODE OF ORDINANCE SECTION NO. 1141.04.**

Mr. Ferguson stated that given the circumstances under Section 1145.01 I would like to make a motion to table this motion. A vote was taken with Mrs. Drake voting nay and the rest of council voting aye. The vote was 5 aye and 1 nay. This ordinance was also tabled.

Mrs. Miller brought before council for first reading **AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE EDITION AND INCLUSION OF CERTAIN ORDINANCES AS PARTS OF THE VARIOUS COMPONENT CODES OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF BELPRE, OHIO.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. This will lie over until the next meeting of council.

Mrs. Drake brought before council for first reading **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO FORMALLY ACCEPT A SOUTHEAST OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL (SOPEC) GRANT ISSUED TO THE CITY.** President of Council Mr. Martin asked if the name was proper for that. According to Mrs. Hoblitzell she checked into this and it is okay. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye except Mr. Ferguson who abstained. This will lie over until the next meeting of council.

Mrs. Drake brought before council for first reading **AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND BELPRE CODE OF ORDINANCE SECTION NO. 1313.12(B) 1, 2, AND 3.** Discussion followed on inoperable vehicles. Those participating in the discussion was Mr. Cassady 824 Belrock Avenue, Belpre, Jesse Wynecott 805 Main Street, Belpre, Derek Hadfield 1584 Lois Street, Belpre, Steve Null 2321 Washington Boulevard, Belpre and John Ruth, 1 Buckeye Lane, Belpre, Mr. Martin, Mrs. Drake, Mr. Ferguson. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye except Mrs. Miller who voted nay. This will lie over until the next meeting of council.

Mrs. Drake brought before council for first reading **AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND BELPRE CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTION NO. 939.04, EXHIBIT A.** Discussion followed. Participating in the discussion was Mr. Cassady 824 Belrock Drive, Belpre. There was a point of clarification made to Mr. Cassady. Mr. Cassady was informed that the water tower is not being replaced, we are adding new. Mr. Cassady asked where the new tower would go. According to Mrs. Hoblitzell they were talking about Mary Street. We have asked for grant funds per Mrs. Hoblitzell. Mayor Lorentz stated that we need to have 2 ½ days in reserve. We do not have that now. Mr. Martin stated that we don't have enough funds to rebuild our infrastructure or for that matter we are not charging enough to apply for grants. Steve Null 2321 Washington Boulevard, Belpre, (According to Mr. Null this council has a lot of lame ducks). Mr. Null was called out of order. John Ruth of Belpre also participated in the conversation along with Jesse Wynecott. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. This will lie over until the next meeting of council.

Rod O'Donnell addressed council regarding the recent Cross-Country Race in the City of Belpre. This was our 4th year for this Cross-Country Race. Mr. O'Donnell thanked the City of Belpre and all those involved. Mr. O'Donnell stated that this is a day of positivity for this town. It also brings a lot of other communities to our town. Michael

Church a professional photographer in our community puts together a professional Invitational Cross-Country page on the website.

Treasurer of Belpre City Schools stated that we don't make much money. We will net between 7-8,000 that will be spread between all sporting events. Thank you too all.

President of Council Mr. Martin thanked Rod O'Donnell for his commitment to our community.

Derek Hadfield 1584 Lois Street addressed the snickering of this council that we put in office. I would like to ask council for more respect to your fellow citizens, I'm running as a write-in for third ward council. I'm looking forward to working for the Citizens of Belpre.

Ms. Riffle brought before council for first reading **AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE MAINTENANCE, RESURFACING PROJECT IN THE CITY OF BELPRE ON STATE ROUTE 618.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. This will lie over until the next meeting of council.

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for first reading **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BELPRE CITY AUDITOR TO REQUEST THE APPROVAL OF THE OHIO STATE AUDITOR TO CREATE AN IMPOUND LOT FUND.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. This will lie over until the next meeting of council.

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL:

Debra Walbrown 804 Jenny Lou Street, Belpre addressed council regarding a building permit that she had applied for in August. At the end of our driveway, we were going to tear out and replace to improve the looks of our property. I was fined \$100 for work we did in the cities right of way. Mrs. Walbrown provided papers to the administration for review.

Mr. Ferguson stated that he heard this story from a person on my street. Mrs. Hoblitzell will pull the permit and review tomorrow.

Ms. Riffle asked about the letter that came out about Peddler Junction having to close before Christmas. Is it the plan to renovate and allow the people in there now to come back? Does it affect any of the other businesses. Mayor Lorentz stated that the old Heck's Building was going to get a total renovation. I don't know about the other businesses.

The second thing I wanted to say is that I have set on this council for 3 ½ years and I don't think anyone on this council is trying to force or push anything through. Last year was a wash. We were just surviving last year. I agree there is some lack of quorum. There is a lot of discussion in council meeting. It is very frustrating to us that after six months that we have this much. When we try to do something, we are accused of pushing things through. We are here because we love Belpre. Once you set here, on this side of the table you learn a lot. We are trying do move forward for the citizens.

Mrs. Drake made a motion to excuse Mr. Locke from this evening's meeting. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

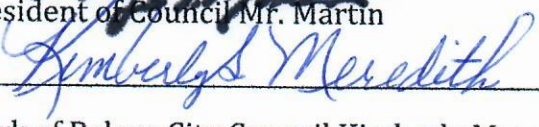
Mollie Hought 902 Boulevard Drive addressed council as she is running for school board. I want to thank all of you for what you're doing. I think the word that sums it up the most is understanding.

Adjourn

Mr. Shutts made a motion to adjourn at 10:03 PM. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.



President of Council Mr. Martin



Clerk of Belpre City Council Kimberly Meredith