Village of Mariemont
Council Meeting
December 16, 2024

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were Mr. Ayer, Mr. Bartlett, Dr. Lewis, Mr. Van Stone and Mr. York. Mrs. Brownknight arrived at 6:12 p.m.

<u>Minutes:</u>

Mr. Ayer moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, to approve the minutes as written for the Council Meeting November 25, 2024. On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

<u>Communications:</u>

*From Police Chief Hines: November 2024 Monthly Report. Chief Hines said car thefts are still active in the Tri-State area. He announced that he will extend his contact through December 2027.

*From Service Superintendent James: November 2024 Monthly Report. The temporary labor has begun to help with leaf pick-up. If needed, leaf pick-up will continue through December and January 2025 if needed.

*From Tax Administrator Barlow: November 2024 Monthly Report.

<u>Permission to Address Council:</u>

<u>Motion to Pay the Bills:</u>

Mr. Bartlett asked if Emil from Envision would be available to address Council on the final report that was shared. It was agreed to hold a Special Meeting of Council to further discuss the report. There will be a reimbursement from the JK Meurer bill. The purchase order for tree installment will carry over to 2025. Mr. York moved, seconded by Mr. Ayer to approve the bills. On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

<u>Committee Reports:</u>

<u>Health and Recreation</u>

The Health & Recreation Committee met on Friday December 9th in Council Chambers. Present at the meeting were Health & Recreation Committee members Randy York (Chair), Susan Brownknight (Vice-Chair), and Matthew Ayer (Member). Also in attendance were nineteen village residents including representatives from The Mariemont Racquet Club Board, MPF, and the Mariemont Park Board. The meeting commenced at 5:35pm.

The purpose of the committee meeting was to review:

1. 2024 Mariemont Racquet Club Results
2. 2025 Racquet Sports Pro Contract
3. 2025 Racquet Club Rates
4. 2025 Racquet Club Budget Request(s)
5. Mariemont Park Board Ordinance Update (proposed/possibly referred to Rules & Law)
6. Mariemont Park Board Budget Request for 2025
7. Mariemont Park Board Request for Member Training/Certification
8. Mariemont Park Board Proposed Appointments
9. Dogwood Park Plan Revisions

The Committee reviewed an updated plan from Village Engineer Chris Ertel to reduce the footprint of the parking lot at Dogwood Park while maintaining handicapped parking, a drop-off area, and separate entrance and exit. The Committee reviewed the footprint and usability of the existing parking lot and reviewed the current approved proposal compared with the updated proposal. The Committee determined that to maintain adequate parking at the park and to maintain improved safety and accessibility that the original approved plan would be recommended by the Committee. Mr. Ayer moved “that we recommend that we stay with the original plan with 21 parking spaces”. The motion was seconded by Ms. Brownknight. The motion passed unanimously. The Committee then reviewed the Mariemont Racquet Club report for the 2024 season including finances, recommended rates, and the 2025 Racquet Club Pro contract. There are updated financials attached to this report. Mr. Ayer moved “that we accept the proposed Racquet Sports rates for the 2025 season”. The motion was seconded by Ms. Brownknight. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Brownknight moved “that we move forward with the Racquet Sports Pro contract for 2025 season pending the review and approval by Solicitor McTigue”. Mr. Ayer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Mariemont Racquet Club Board presented a proposal to add additional pickleball courts to the racquet sports facilities at Mary Emery Park. The board has contracted with Pickleoptics to execute comprehensive planning and a fundraising campaign to convert and expand court 6 to accommodate four pickleball courts by expanding east on the lower courts. The total estimated cost of this project is $130,000 and the MRC has requested that the Village approve $44,000 from the general fund in 2025 and to approve the expansion of court #6 that would be totally funded by outside sources.

Mr. Ayer moved “that we recommend the expansion of court #6 to add four pickleball courts contingent on a successful capital campaign to completely fund the project”. The motion was seconded by Ms. Brownknight. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Ayer moved “that we recommend an incremental $35,000 to be expended from the general fund for a total of $44,000 for the repairs of courts 5,6, and 7 contingent upon Council priorities and available funds”. The motion was seconded by Ms. Brownknight. The motion passed unanimously. The total cost of the project is $130,000, $86,000 in permanent improvements and $44,000 in general fund court repairs.

The Committee discussed the desire to improve access and overall visibility to complete financial and usage data related to the Mariemont recreational facilities and programs. The Committee is particularly interested in those facilities and programs that are subsidized by the Village. The Committee will work with the Fiscal Officer to develop a process and template for this purpose.

The Committee reviewed a necessary update to the ordinance for the Parks Advisory Board. The updates were prompted by increased membership and a request for processes to be more transparent with Park Board activities. Ms. Brownknight moved “that we accept and implement the updates to the Park Board ordinance”. Mr. Ayer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Solicitor McTigue will provide guidance to efficiently implement this update.

The Committee reviewed a budget proposal for $1,000 from the Park Board for 2025. Ms. Brownknight moved “that we approve the 202 5funding request from the Park Board”. Mr. Ayer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed the ten residents who have expressed an interest in serving on the Mariemont Parks Board. The names were forwarded to the Mayor in the hope that he would recommend these candidates to Village Council at the December 16th Village Council meeting and resolutions could be prepared for their first reading at that meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Mr. Bartlett noted that the tennis court repairs is an incremental $44,000, not $35,000. The $86,000 improvement to the tennis courts will not be a Village funded permanent improvement. Mayor Brown said he had a concern with the proposed change to the Ordinance regarding the Parks Board. The report indicates that the Parks Board ordinance update possibly refer to Rules and Law – he does not know if it gives sufficient notice to residents who may have wanted to be part of the discussion. He referenced that the change eliminates the Parks Board from reporting to the Mayor. Mr. York said it stemmed from conversation from the Parks Board to have visibility and when things are done they are discussed in this forum. He does not believe this was visible in the past. Mayor Brown said these groups operate as advisory committees. It was agreed to amend Section 37.03(A)(7) which reads recommendations shall be submitted to the Mayor and the Chair of the Health and Recreation Committee who will present them to the Village Council. Mr. York moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett to amend the ordinance. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Mr. Van Stone asked the Rules and Law Committee to work on the need for a policy regarding using public property for private business purposes. Mrs. Brownknight moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett to accept the report. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

The Health & Recreation Committee met on Thursday December 12th in Council Chambers. Present at the meeting were Health & Recreation Committee members Randy York (Chair), Matthew Ayer (Member). Also in attendance were Mayor Bill Brown, residents Doug Zemke, and Biff Black. The meeting commenced at 2:02 pm.

The purpose of the committee meeting was to review:

1. Bids for the Dogwood Park Sidewalk at Pleasant Street
2. South 80 Committee Report and Budget Request
3. Park Bench Donation

The Committee reviewed the eight bids that were received for the Dogwood Park sidewalk along Pleasant Avenue from Mariemont Avenue to Wooster Pike. The Dogwood Park sidewalk was awarded a SORTA TIF grant that funds 90% of the total construction cost. Conditions of the grant include that the contract be awarded in 2024, and that construction begins by the end of February 2025.

The SORTA application included a concrete sidewalk, and concrete must be used for the portion of the sidewalk that runs from the tot lot down to Wooster Pike because of grade. Engineer Ertel also confirmed with SORTA that a sidewalk funded by SORTA should have a minimum useful life of 20 years and aggregate does not qualify.

Attached was a memo from Village Engineer Ertel listing the bids received along with his recommendation to award the contract to John P. Tumlin & Sons LTD.

Mr. Ayer moved "that we proceed with the concrete sidewalk at Dogwood Park and accept the bid from John P. Tumlin & Sons LTD and that we proceed with the resolution on an emergency basis to meet SORTA TIF timelines". Mr. York seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Committee will work with the Village office, Engineer, and Solicitor to prepare the necessary resolution to accept the bid so that the Resolution can be voted on as an emergency at the 12/16 council meeting. The Committee further recommends that the Solicitor, Fiscal Officer, and Mayor review the contract and sign the agreement so that the executed contract can be submitted to SORTA in advance of the 12/31 deadline.

The Committee reviewed a year-end report from the South 80 committee. Mr. Ayer moved" that we approve the budget funding requests from the South 80 Committee for 2025". Mr. York seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Committee also discussed park benches and will work with Village Council to establish a consistent style/size/specification for future park benches. The meeting was adjourned at 2:20pm.

After discussion, Mr. Ayer moved, seconded by Mrs. Brownknight to amend the report to reflect the Resolution to accept the bid will be at the January 13, 2025, meeting and the contract deadline is February 2025. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Finance

The Finance Committee met on Wednesday, December 11, 2024, at 4:00 pm to discuss the waste and recycling fee paid by residents of the Village. Present at the meeting were Finance Committee Chair Rob Bartlett, Finance Committee Members Bob Van Stone and Marcy Lewis, and Mayor Bill Brown. On December 16, 2024, Council is voting on accepting a 14% increase on the fee that Rumpke charges the Village for collecting waste and recycling. The increase would go into effect on January 1, 2025. The Finance Committee believes it is important that any increase in the waste and recycling fee paid by the residents of the Village go through the normal three readings and not be passed as an emergency measure. As such, the earliest we could pass legislation would be the second council meeting in January 2025. Because that only gives us 11 months to collect the higher fee, the fee increase would need to be 15.3% to equate to a 14% over 12 months. For perspective, the current fee is $19.75/month for a house and $15.00/month for an apartment. A 15.3% increase would make the amounts $22.77/month for a house and $17.30/month for an apartment. The fee will continue to be collected by Greater Cincinnati Water Works and then passed on to the Village. The committee voted unanimously to support increasing the fee charged to houses to $22.77/month and the fee charge to apartments to $17.30/month. If Council agrees with this recommendation, the fee increase needs to be passed via ordinance. The first reading of the ordinance is tonight. That way, the voting will occur at the second council meeting in January, so the price increase can go into effect 30 days after that or on February 26, 2025. Mr. York moved, seconded by Mr. Ayer to accept the recommendation. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Safety

The Safety Committee met on Thursday December 12, 2024, at 3:00 PM. Present were Safety Committee members Matthew Ayer (Chair), Rob Bartlett (Vice Chair), and Randy York (Member); Mayor Bill Brown; and resident Karey Matteucci.

2025 Pool Rates – The Pool Commission provided recommendations for 2025 memberships/day passes. They reflect an average increase of approximately 4.5% for memberships, no increases for day passes. The Committee unanimously endorsed the proposed rates. The Committee recommends that Council pass the conforming ordinance at its first meeting in 2025 on an Emergency Basis, in order for the Pool Commission to commence its membership drive.

2025 Pool Rates						
Village Residents	**Family Season Membership**	**Family & Babysitter**	**Individual (Adult or Child)**	**Senior Individual**	**Daily Pass Village Resident (Adult or Child)**	**Daily Pass - Guest with Pool Member**
2024	**$469**	**$589**	**$199**	**$179**	**$15**	**$15**
2025	**$489**	**$619**	**$209**	**$189**	**$15**	**$15**

Resident Rate Index '24 Vs. '23	**1.045**	**1.054**	**1.000**	**1.059**	**1.500**	**1.500**
Resident Rate Index '25 Vs. '24	**1.043**	**1.051**	**1.050**	**1.056**	**1.00**	**1.00**

School District but non Mariemont Village Residents	Family Season Membership	Family & Babysitter	Individual (Adult or Child)	Senior Individual	Daily Pass Village Resident (Adult or Child)
2024	**$549**	**$699**	**$249**	**$215**	**$18**
2025	**$579**	**$729**	**$260**	**$225**	**$18**
School District Index '24 Vs. '23	**0.998**	**0.999**	**0.996**	**1.075**	**1.500**
School District Index '25 Vs. '24	**1.055**	**1.043**	**1.044**	**1.047**	**1.000**

The Pool Commission also reported positive results from its membership campaign in all categories. Detailed financials are expected to be available in January.

Total Membership	Family	Family & Babysitter	Individual (Adult or Child)	Senior Individual	Total
2023	**175**	**20**	**47**	**34**	**276**
2024	**197**	**23**	**76**	**41**	**337**
24 index vs. 23	**1.13**	**1.15**	**1.62**	**1.21**	**1.22**

Upcoming Open House – Mariemont Connector

Mr. Ayer distributed a DRAFT of the text for a flyer to be delivered door-to-door in advance of the Open House to be held at the Mariemont Elementary School on January 8 from 6:30 to 8:00 PM. The topic is optimizing the Miami Road 6-leg street confluence and its local traffic patterns. The Committee unanimously approved the flyer information and recommended that the Village authorize Choice One to conduct the Open House: to prepare and present options, then seek and compile suggestions and comments. The cost for this engineering assistance is $4,900, which would be formally authorized after January 1. Mr. Ayer will work on getting the flyers produced and distributed by volunteers.

Mr. Ayer also described the opportunity for the Village to apply to ODOT for a Special Active Transportation "Bike/Ped" Grant. Applications are being received on a rolling basis, with reviews commencing January 1, then April 1, and so forth. For a small municipality, there is no local match required. The project must be ready for construction by 2026, with no Right of Way acquisition needed. Given these criteria, the Committee recommended working toward a grant application submitted by April 1, for completing the path from Miami Road, across Plainville to connect to Murray Path.

Mr. Ayer reported that Columbia Township fully supports this grant initiative.

Next steps will be meeting with the Hamilton County Engineer in early January to discuss possible intersection improvements at Plainville; seeking concurrence with residents on a plan to optimize the Miami Road 6-leg street confluence, updating construction cost estimates, and refining details associated with this grant opportunity. The Committee unanimously supports pursuing these next steps for presentation to Council.

Stop Sign Requests

Miami / Mt Vernon intersection – MPD has completed traffic counts. The data is being sent to Engineer Ertel for analysis and comparison to the Ohio Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (OMUTCD).

Miami/West Street intersection – after discussion, the Committee unanimously recommended

1. Painting the curb "No Parking" yellow for 20 feet on Miami at the corner of West Street to improve visibility;
2. Repainting the crosswalks across Miami and West Street as soon as practicable.

Miami Road/Bank Place Intersection

This item was not on the meeting agenda. General discussion suggested looking at restricting parking on Miami near Bank and repainting the crosswalk. This topic will be added to the next meeting's agenda, by which time the Committee, Mayor, Engineer and MPD will have an opportunity to observe current conditions.

Regarding a more general topic of adding stop signs in the Village, Mr. York requested that the Committee seek guidance from Solicitor McTigue as to the necessary qualifications of a Professional Engineer to perform an Engineering Study as described in the OMUTCD. Mr. Ayer agreed to obtain his opinion.

Old Town Parking Lot Lighting

Mr. Ayer reported that he has observed the lot at night a couple times, met with Cincinnati Waldorf School (CWS), and has contacted Bill DeCamp of Bulbs Depot to provide his recommendation. Mr. Ayer's first impression is that the lot is adequately lit (i.e., cars and people are visible) with existing streetlights and the supplemental lights added onto the side of CWS), except for the rear corner nearest the cemetery. CWS also suggested supplemental lighting in that particular area, although they are overall satisfied with the present lighting. Mr. Ayer reported that he will have more information after meeting with Mr. DeCamp. Mr. Bartlett confirmed that there is a $20K placeholder in the 2025 Permanent Improvement budget for lighting.

Crosswalk / Signage at Wooster/Madisonville Rd Crosswalk

Mr. York reported that the crosswalk light is "out of sync" and that the "walk" light is still "on" when the traffic light for westbound drivers turns green. The Committee requests that Engineer Ertel request ODOT to inspect and synchronize the light sequence.

A resident has requested that the Village disallow turning right on red on westbound Wooster at this intersection. The Committee requests that Engineer Ertel contact ODOT and learn what options the Village has with respect to further restricting this right turn.

Mrs. Matteucci asked if ODOT could also look at the syncing of the crosswalk across Wooster at the corner by the Inn, to make it possible to cross all of Wooster within one light sequence. The Committee requests Engineer Ertel to ask ODOT about this crosswalk timing when they visit for the Madisonville Rd intersection inspection.

General Safety Concerns Regarding Crosswalks in Village Square

The Safety Committee has received an additional request to review possible traffic calming and crosswalk safety measures. Mr. Ayer reported that the ODOT HSIP Systemic Safety grant program could fund improvements, such as in-pavement lighting (e.g., in Mongomery) or other crosswalk improvements. Mr. York noted that Montgomery has also converted sidewalks to red pavers that really stand out. Thinking in terms of systemic safety, Mr. Ayer asked, "Do we have too many crosswalks? Are there design improvements we can make? There are so many signs and crosswalks as you drive through the Square, a driver may tend to be overloaded with signs and crossings." The Committee unanimously recommend that Mr. Ayer work with Mr. Ertel on a Scope of Work and Request for Bid for a Pedestrian Safety Study of the square, and to continue to investigate the Systemic Safety grant opportunity.

WRIG Opportunity for Murray Path Hydration Station

In 2024 Mariemont obtained a Waste Reduction Innovation Grant (WRIG) from Hamilton County ReSource to purchase and install a bottle filling station at the Pool. Mr. Ayer recently asked the grant coordinator if she thought a grant proposal for a hydration station on Murray Path would be viewed favorably. She encouraged Mariemont to submit an application. Mr. Ayer met with Columbia Township's (CT) Administrator and a Trustee and asked if CT would split the 25% local match for this amenity if Mariemont administered the grant, and they gladly agreed. The Committee unanimously recommended that Mr. Ayer proceed with obtaining cost estimates for the Project and obtain Council approval to apply for this grant. With complete cost information, the Committee would prepare a resolution for Council. The meeting adjourned at 4:20 PM.

Mr. Ayer stated Choice One will have an Open House January 8, 2025, to present options. Mr. Van Stone said the residents need to understand where the costs are and questioned if percentage break downs could be prepared for residents. Mr. York moved, seconded by Ms. Van Stone to accept the recommendations. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Planning & Zoning and Economic Development

On Tuesday December 3, 2024, the Economic Development, Planning and Zoning Committee met in order to hear the presentation and review the final Economic Development Strategy from Envision. Present at the meeting were Committee Chairperson Marcy Lewis, Vice Chairperson Bob Van Stone and Member Susan Brownknight, Mayor Bill Brown, Councilmen Randy York and Rob Bartlett (as observers), Emil Lizniansky, MPF President Biff Black, MPF President and several others Mariemont residents. Committee members were given a copy on the report in advance of the meeting and given the chance to makes suggestion which were then incorporated int o the report. Emil LIznianski, Envision Principal, presented the Executive Summary and a discussion ensued. Emil explained that "Ohio is a home rule state and does not require municipalities to prepare economic development plans or strategies. Some communities choose to adopt an economic development strategy, but many do not and instead consider it a reference document for administration/staff use rather than a formal policy. Adoption is at the sole discretion of the municipality." The Committee voted unanimously to accept the report as presented. No motion was made to recommend Council formally adopt the report.

Council agreed to have Mr. Lizniansky have a second presentation to Council to go over the final report and answer any questions. Mr. York questioned some of the financial data and finds it could be misleading. The report contains many good recommendations. Mr. Ayer moved, seconded by Mr. York to accept the recommendation of the Committee with the understanding that Mr. Lizniansky will be making a presentation to all of Council at date and time to be determined. On roll call; six ayes, no nays,

Miscellaneous:

- Leaf Season will run through the end of 2024. As a reminder, please do NOT rake leaves into the street.
- Village Offices have relocated to the Artifacts Room while the office renovation is under construction.
- Village Offices will be closed Wednesday and Thursday December 25th and 26th in Observation of Christmas.
- Village Offices will be closed Wednesday January 1, 2025, in Observation of New Year's Day.

Resolutions:

"To Accept Bid of Rumpke of Ohio, Inc. for Collection and Disposal of Solid Waste, Yard Waste and Recyclables; To Authorize Contract and Pay for Services" had a third reading. Mr. York moved, seconded by Mr. Ayer to adopt the Resolution. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Resolution No. R-77-24 was adopted.

"To Update Rates with XPEX for the Purpose of Enforcing the Building Codes Applicable to the Village of Mariemont" had a second reading.

"To Appoint Keri Malafa as a Member of the Mariemont Racquet Club Board for the Calendar Year 2025 and 2026" had a first reading.

Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mr. York to amend Resolution R-76-24 to reflect Kim Beach appoint to the Mariemont Racquet Club Board is for 2025 and 2026. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

"To Accept Bid of John P. Tumlin & Sons, LTD., for the Construction of a Sidewalk in Dogwood Park Along Pleasant Street; To authorized Contract and To Declare Emergency" was tabled. Mr. York moved, seconded by Mr. Van Stone. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Ordinances:

"To Amend Sections 151.005, 151.025, 151.060 and 151.085 Relating to Accessory Buildings" had a second reading. Mr. Van Stone said "extrapolate" needs to change to interpolate. Mrs. Van Pelt will make the change.

"To Revise Section 37.03 of the Mariemont Code of Ordinances; Parks Advisory Board" will be read at the January 13, 2025, meeting with the amended changes.

“To Update the Village Code of Ordinances Section 32.25 Contracts by the Legislative Authority or Administrator” had a first reading.

“To Amend Section 51.17 of the Mariemont Code of Ordinance, To Increase Fees for Garbage and Refuse Pickup” had a first reading.

The meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

William A. Brown, Mayor

Kelly I. Rankin, Fiscal Officer