Village of Mariemont
Council Meeting
January 27, 2025

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were Mr. Ayer, Mr. Bartlett, Mrs. Brownknight, Mr. Van Stone and Mr. York.

Mr. Van Stone moved, seconded by Mr. Ayer to excuse the absence of Dr. Lewis. On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

Mayor Brown said Superintendent Ben James and Maintenance Department employees, Eric Hudson and Scott Flynn have completed their one-year probationary period and he recommends that they be moved to full-time employee status. Mr. York moved, seconded by Mr. Van Stone to approve the recommendation. On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

Minutes:

Mr. Van Stone moved, seconded by Mr. York to approve the minutes as written for the Council meeting January 13, 2025. On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

Communications:

*From Maintenance Superintendent James: December 2024 Monthly Report. He reported that as soon as the snow melts, they will remove the rest of the leaves and the Christmas trees. Hopefully the bids for tree pruning will be prepared before the next Council meeting and the pruning will take place in April. The crew did a great job with the snow removal working in 12–15 alternating hour shifts. The lanes prove challenging. He said the big tree by the Bell Tower will be coming down.

*From Maintenance Superintendent James: Spending Request not to exceed $20,625.00 for remaining 55 streetlight replacements; LED light, photocell, Acorn Globe and Installation. Mr. Ayer moved, seconded by Mr. York to approve the spending request. On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

Permission to Address Council:

Ms. Susan Casey, 3721 Petoskey, to address Council. She said her understanding was residents were responsible for clearing the sidewalk in front of their residence. She was surprised at how few sidewalks were cleared. She asked if a reminder could be sent out reminding residents of their responsibilities. Mayor Brown said it is the homeowner's responsibility to shovel, salt and maintain the sidewalks in front of their homes. He will redouble the effort to get the word out. He will put a reminder on the website and send a message to those on our group distribution list. It could pose liability issues if the sidewalks are not safe. The work requires a building permit so the sidewalks remain consistent.

Mr. Van Stone said he is going to work with the Building Official on municipal sidewalks/properties that need repair in the Village. Mr. Ayer said some communities bid out municipal work like this. A resident could contact them to do the work and they would apply for the fees etc. and all work would be similar in materials etc.

Motion to Pay the Bills:

Mr. York moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett to pay the bills. Mr. York asked what the traffic signs for Hiawatha and the square are. Mayor Brown said he will have to find out. Mr. York noted that Council approved the payment for Envision based on Emil making a presentation and asked if that has been set. Mayor Brown said Dr. Lewis has been in touch with Emil, but a date has not yet been set. On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

Committee Reports:

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee met on Wednesday, January 22, 2024, at 4:30 pm in Council Chambers to discuss potential changes to the fees charged by the Building Department. Present at the meeting were Finance Committee members Rob Bartlett, Bob Van Stone, and Marcy Lewis, Mayor Bill Brown and Zoning Officer Rod Holloway. Rod shared with the Committee revenue and expense data for the Building Department for 2022, 2023 and 2024 (see below).

	2022	2023	2024 (thru Nov)
Revenue	$37,901	$49,764	$35,249
Expense	$55,325	$61,864	$52,270
Difference	($17,424)	($12,168)	($17,021)

Our deficit will likely increase in 2024 and the fees that XPEX charges the Village increased by ~7% effective January 2025. Rod has identified that the area where costs exceed fees the most is in remodeling and additions, and specifically in larger remodeling and addition projects. Attached is a table which shows the current fees for remodeling and additions, as well as the newly proposed fees. These changes should increase revenue by ~$1,500 to $2,000. After some discussion, the Committee voted unanimously to support these increases. If council agrees, then the necessary resolution to increase these fees will be drawn up for council to vote on at the next meeting.

Mr. Bartlett noted that it is hard to benchmark against other communities. XPEX has worked out really well for the Village. Mayor Brown said there are many renovations done in the Village where no permit has been pulled. Those cause a reduction in permit revenue. Mr. York moved, seconded by Mrs. Brownknight to accept the recommendations. On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

Safety Committee

The Safety Committee (SC) met on Tuesday January 21, 2025, at 4:30 PM. Present were SC members Matthew Ayer (Chair), Rob Bartlett (Vice Chair), and Randy York (Member); Mayor Brown; Engineer Chris Ertel; and resident Doug Zemke.

Pool Pay Rates

The Pool Commission, Pool Manager and Mayor have recommended rates of pay for the 2025 season. A summary is attached. The Pool Manager and Mayor also recommend that the Village pay $140 of the $240 fee for lifeguard 2-year certifications. This is a discounted rate available by having a special class for our employees. The employee would pay $100. The Pool Manager will expect a commitment to stay with our Pool all summer if we pay for this portion of their certification. The SC unanimously recommended the proposed rates and paying this portion of the certification fee.

Experimental Closure of the Short Murray Cut-Through on Rowan Hill near Cambridge

Based on citizen input, the Chair suggested we proceed with this test for a 30-day period to evaluate impacts on traffic. A cost summary and a proposed schedule to do is attached. The SC unanimously recommended proceeding with the temporary closure and evaluation.

Grant Proposal – ODOT

The Village has a unique grant opportunity to complete the shared use path through the village, from Miami to Murray Path, including intersection improvements. The Hamilton County Engineer expressed support for the plan, pending review of updated traffic count data. For Choice One to prepare this ODOT Special Bike/Ped Grant, the cost is $6.5K total. $5K is for the grant application prep, $1.5K is for traffic counts at Plainville. Potential grant amount is approximately $2 to $3M.

Qualifiers	Details
Bike/Ped Project	**Application Due April 1**
No Right of Way acquisition or utility relocation required	**Can include design costs**
Construction begins by June 30, 2026	**$0 local match required**
Projects of State significance have priority	**Need: Description, Project Map, Cost Estimate, Budget Breakdown, Photos of Current Conditions, Population Info, Census Tract Information**

The Safety Committee unanimously recommended pursuing this grant opportunity and authorizing Choice One to begin work. The meeting adjourned at 5:20 PM.

Questions were raised by Mr. Van Stone regarding the closure of Rowan Hill and Cambridge and whether it could cause issues with residents on East Street. According to Mr. Ayer it would cost an additional $1500 to study East Street and it is not in the plan. Mrs. Brownknight feels the closure is a process to no end and would like to know what the bigger vision is. She is not comfortable with the present verbiage as it does not appear transparent. The Safety Committee realizes there is safety problem with the street being used as a cut through. Public meetings were held to gather input on the matter. Discussion ensued regarding the traffic plans and processes.

Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mr. York to amend the report to read: "Suggestion to proceed with this test to evaluate impacts on traffic. The test is consistent with the vision to minimize cut through traffic, reroute traffic onto main arteries and improve safety for residents. The test is to confirm that the change does not have unintended consequences in pursuing this vision". On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

Mr. Van Stone voiced concern with the grant. We went through one grant experience and found it needed more vetting. This path crosses many driveways and feels a public meeting is needed to address the matter. A complete safety study is needed with bike paths and driveways. Mr. Ayer said the engineer plans carefully to look at individual properties and make accommodations for the residents, including turnarounds. He indicated that they met with all 5 apartment owners. The owners on short Murray are strong advocates for proceeding with this experiment. Mr. Van Stone disagreed. Disagreement was voiced by Council on whether the last meeting with the proposed plans was sufficient. Construction does not have to start until June 2026 so the Village is not locked into one design. There will be additional meetings on the proposed project in the future. The report regarding the grant is to accept the recommendation to apply for the grant and spend the referenced funds. It does not approve a design. Council has already agreed they were in favor of a multi-use path and that the optimum location was the northern corridor based on feedback from the survey of residents. Mr. York moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett to accept the amended report. On roll call; four ayes, one nay (Mr. Van Stone dissenting).

<u>Miscellaneous:</u>

*Outstanding Citizen Award Nominations are Due to Mrs. Van Pelt by March 13, 2025

*Village Offices will be Closed Monday February 17, 2025, in Observation of Presidents' Day

*With the transition to the new website it has been noted that some are not receiving email notifications. If that is the case, please sign up again on the new website.

<u>Resolutions:</u>

"To Increase the Racquet Club Fees for the 2025 Season" had a second reading.

"A Resolution Authorizing Application for Pedestrian and Bicycle Special Solicitation; and Contracting with the Ohio Department of Transportation" had a first reading.

"To Authorize the Solicitation of Bids for 2025 Tennis Court Improvements; and To Declare Emergency" had a first reading. Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mr. York to suspend the rules to allow for the second and third reading. On roll call; five ayes, no nays. The Resolution had a second and third reading. Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mrs. Brownknight to adopt the Resolution. On roll call; five ayes, no nays. Mrs. Brownknight moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett to invoke the emergency clause. On roll call; five ayes, no nays. <u>Resolution No. R-5-25 was adopted.</u>

"Resolution Approving Intrafund Reallocation in Fund 1000; and To Declare Emergency" had a first reading. Mrs. Brownknight moved, seconded by Mr. Ayer to suspend the rules to allow for the second and third readings. On roll call; five ayes, no nays. The Resolution had a second and third reading. This is a reallocation within the General Fund so the purchase order can be issued in full for the Mariemont Connector. Mrs. Brownknight moved, seconded by Mr. Ayer to adopt the Resolution. On roll call; five ayes, no nays. Mrs. Brownknight moved, seconded by Mr. Ayer to invoke the emergency clause. On roll call; five ayes, no nays. <u>Resolution No. R-6-25 was adopted.</u>

"To Appoint Keri Malafa as a Member of the Mariemont Racquet Club Board for the Calendar Year 2025 and 2026" had a third reading. Mrs. Brownknight moved, seconded by Mr. Ayer to adopt the Resolution. On roll call; five ayes, no nays. <u>Resolution No. R-7-25 was adopted.</u>

"To Confirm the Reappointment of David Russell as the Mariemont Racquet Sport Club Professional; and to Authorize Contract" had a second reading.

"To Appoint Jim Goetz as a Member of the Parks Advisory Board for Calendar Year of 2025 and 2026" had a first reading.

"To Appoint Leigh Sullivan as a Member of the Parks Advisory Board for Calendar Year of 2025 and 2026" had a first reading.

"To Appoint Jerry Stephens as a Member of the Parks Advisory Board for Calendar Year of 2025 and 2026" had a first reading.

"To Appoint Tom Eckhart as a Member of the Parks Advisory Board for Calendar Year 2025" had a first reading.

"To Appoint Greg Wells as a Member of the Parks Advisory Board for Calendar Year 2025" had a first reading.

"To Appoint Carolyn Hohl as a Member of the Parks Advisory Board for Calendar Year 2025" had a first reading.

“To Appoint John McIlwraith as a Member of the Parks Advisory Board for Calendar Year 2025” had a first reading.

“To Appoint Kyle Kropog as a Member of the Parks Advisory Board for Calendar Year 2025” had a first reading.

“To Appoint Mike Sunderman as a Member of the Parks Advisory Board for Calendar Year 2025” had a first reading.

“To Appoint Frank Marzullo as a Member of the Parks Advisory Board for Calendar Year 2025” had a first reading.

“To Confirm the Reappointment of Christopher M. Ertel as Village Engineer for Calendar Years 2025 and 2026; and to Set Compensation” had a first reading.

“To Confirm the Reappointment of Village Zoning Officer Rod Holloway for Calendar Year 2025; and To Set Compensation” had a first reading.

“To Confirm the Reappointment of Kelly I. Rankin as Village Fiscal Officer; and To Establish Pay Rate” had a first reading.

Ordinances:

“To Revise Section 37.03 of the Mariemont Code of Ordinances; Parks Advisory Board” had a first reading.

“To Update the Mariemont Village Code of Ordinances Section 32.25 Contracts by the Legislative Authority or Administrator” had a third reading. Mr. Ayer moved, seconded by Mr. Van Stone to adopt the Ordinance. On roll call; five ayes, no nays. Ordinance No. O-2-25 was adopted

“To Amend Section 51.17 of the Mariemont Code of Ordinance, To Increase Fees for Garbage and Refuse Pickup” had a third reading. Mrs. Brownknight moved, seconded by Mr. York to adopt the Ordinance. On roll call; five ayes, no nays. Ordinance No. O-3-25 was adopted.

“To Amend Ordinance O-11-24 of the Mariemont Code of Ordinances to Increase Payment for Employees” had a first reading.

Mayor Brown said Mr. Ayer asked at the last meeting if the Mayor was going to give commentary on the overall condition of the Village. He wanted to bring to Council’s attention that Haney Graphics, located in the industrial area, are in the process of moving out of the Village. He estimates the impact will be approximately $25,000-$30,000. He is working with the Village Solicitor to finalize the CRA Resolution.

The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

William A. Brown, Mayor

Kelly I. Rankin, Fiscal Officer