

**Village of Mariemont
Council Meeting
April 28, 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, Dr. Lewis, Mr. Van Stone, and Mr. York.

Minutes:

Mr. Ayer moved, seconded by Mr. York, to approve the minutes as written for the Council meeting April 14, 2025. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Communications:

*From Village Engineer Chris Ertel: Spending Request for Patriot's Lane Overage \$8106.00. Mr. Ertel explained that they used more asphalt than was anticipated, including the replacement of the picnic pad. Mr. Ayer moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, to approve the request. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Permission to Address Council:

Mayor Brown recognized Jim Goetz in the gallery and thanked him for his work with the volunteers in the Parks Advisory Board. They have been working hard around the Village. They had a big clean-up day with a lot of participation. Mayor Brown noted this was the essence of a good community. The parks are looking great!

Motion to Pay the Bills:

Mr. York asked if there was still a need for the portolets at the tennis court. Ms. Uhrig will contact Rumpke to have them picked up now that the tennis court bathrooms are open. Mr. Ayer moved, seconded by Mr. York, to approve the bills. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Committee Reports:

Rules and Law Committee

The Rules and Law Committee met April 21st, 2025 at 4:30pm. Present were council members Susan Brownknight, Matt Ayer, Dr. Marcy Lewis, Mayor Bill Brown, Building Administrator Rod Holloway and residents. Here are the highlights:

- 1) Signage legislation: Matt Ayer will assess and make a recommendation about whether to un-table the updated sandwich sign legislation that regulates permitting, locations and standards for sandwich signs on and around the square or to determine that said regulation is not needed and recommend to permanently table the legislation and remove it from the council committee action items. To be discussed at next Rules & Law Committee meeting.
- 2) Refine Code Section: 151.075 and Code Section 150: Matt Ayer to review our historical code to compare with other jurisdictions to assess the code and make recommendations for updates.
- 3) The need for a policy regarding using public property for private business purposes: The committee discussed several examples of when citizens and entities utilize public property for private gain. There is already code—95.09—that addresses this and gives the Mayor the discretion to determine what events are or are not in the Village's interest. Given the breadth of examples, however, it is recommended that we give our Village a better means of enforcement and protection if something were to happen. As such a motion was made by Matt Ayer to create a form that any third party is required to complete to utilize public property for personal gain. Form will be required for any event or experience where a formal contract is not in place and will indemnify The Village from damages and require proof of insurance coverage. The Village at any time may ask for the participating third party to produce this form. Approval remains at the Mayor's discretion per Code section 95.09. Seconded by Susan Brownknight. Motion passed unanimously.
- 4) Mariemont Code of Ordinance Recodification: Motion to endorse of the recodification and seek pricing. made by Susan Brownknight and seconded by Dr. Marcy Lewis. Motion passed unanimously.

- 5) Code Section 101.09 needs to be removed from the Rules & Law agenda in council committee action items as there is not a Section 101.09.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:28pm.

Mayor Brown asked if a standard was going to be established for the sandwich board signs. Mrs. Brownknight said the legislation has standards within it, but it was decided to table it, per Building Administrator Holloway. They will take a closer look at the next committee meeting and make a decision if they want to regulate sandwich signs, but the legislation is drafted with a good degree of detail. The matters of reviewing code section 101.09 and the Mariemont code of ordinances recodification were removed from the agenda. Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Dr. Lewis, to accept the report of the Rules and Law Committee. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Health and Recreation Committee

The Health & Recreation Committee met on Wednesday April 23rd in council chambers. Present at the meeting were Health & Recreation Committee members Randy York (Chair), Matthew Ayer (Member), and Susan Brownknight (Member). Also in attendance were Mayor Brown, Village Engineer Chris Ertel, Jim Goetz, Maggie Kenner, and Doug Zemke.

The purpose of the committee meeting was to:

1. Review quotes for the Dogwood Park Centennial renovation
2. Review Mariemont Park Board report

The committee reviewed the April 23, 2025, Parks Advisory Board Report (attached) and unanimously agreed to:

1. An expenditure of \$1,000 from the Service Department budget for the purchase of landscaping materials for Livingood Park. The landscape design was developed by the Park Board and will be installed with volunteer hours.
2. An expenditure of \$500 for the purchase of Park Board volunteer T-shirts. These funds will come from the \$1,000 that Village Council approved for Park Board operations.
3. To authorize the Park Board to solicit bids for the contracting of a landscape architect to develop plans for Mariemont parks.

The committee also reviewed the plan for the execution of the construction for the rehabilitation of Dogwood Park. The committee will prepare a report with a projected timetable, project phasing, and cash flow diagram that accounts for the specific requirements for each grant. In the near term the committee unanimously agreed to:

1. Authorize Village Engineer to prepare a bid package for the phase of the Dogwood Park Centennial Rehabilitation project that includes the baseball fields, athletics field, and irrigation.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30pm.

Mayor Brown asked where the landscape architect would be paid from. Mr. York said that \$11,500 was put in the permanent improvement budget for planning for the park. There is an additional \$3,400 set aside for Ann Buntin Becker Park. The two focus areas are Ann Buntin Becker Park and the Concourse. Mr. Van Stone asked if the Parks Advisory Board was to get bids or if that was to be delegated to a Village official. Mr. York said they could get quotes which would go to the Health and Recreation Committee for review and then onto the solicitor and Village Engineer for additional review. From there the committee would make a recommendation. Mr. Bartlett said we should have at least two bids. Mr. York took a moment to thank Jim Goetz, the park board, and Superintendent Ben James and his team for all of their work in the parks. The parks look great, thanks to more than 130 hours of volunteer work. Mr. Bartlett and Mr. York discussed items which need to be addressed at the Concourse. Council voted previously that the work at the Concourse was the top priority and \$30,000 remains from the capital improvement fund. Mayor Brown's timeline for the project is being developed with Building Administrator Holloway. The matter of reviewing the Mariemont Park Board report was removed from the agenda. Dr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Van Stone, to accept the recommendations of the Health and Recreation Committee. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Public Works and Service

The Public Works & Service Committee met on April 22, 2025, at 4:02 PM. In attendance were the Committee Chairperson Bob Van Stone, Committee Members Randy York and Rob Bartlett, Mayor Bill Brown, Fiscal Officer Kelly Rankin, Supervisor Ben James, Zoning Officer Rod Holloway, Village Engineer Chris Ertel, and Council member Dr. Marcy Lewis.

The first agenda item was an initial review of the initial assessment of the workload in the Service Department. Supervisor James presented the results of the initial assessment which is attached to this report. That assessment showed the need for one additional person in the Service Department. Supervisor James noted the heavy workload from April through July largely due to cutting grass and for October through December largely due to leaf removal. Fiscal Officer Rankin and Mayor Brown noted that based on legal and insurance issues, if a person were to be added to the Service Department, the best path forward would be to add a part time employee.

There was extensive discussion on the workload in the Service Department. There were concerns that there had been inadequate consideration of various types of contracts for specific tasks and a lack of benchmarking of the Service Departments of similar communities. It was acknowledged that those types of evaluation will take time and that there was an immediate need for help in the Mariemont Service Department for grass cutting season. Mr. York moved that the Service Department shall add a part-time employee through December 31, 2025. The employee shall work an average of 25 hours per week, not to exceed 30 hours per week. This is contingent that Rod Holloway and Ben James complete a full benchmarking and evaluation of the workload and purchased services in the Service Departments of Terrace Park and Newtown, which shall be reported to the Public Works Committee no later than mid-November 2025. The motion was seconded by Mr. Van Stone. The committee unanimously approved the motion.

The Committee also agreed that all citizen requests for Service Department work should be sent to the Mayor.

The discussion of the Service Department ended at approximately 5:10.

Mrs. Rankin, Mr. James, Mr. Holloway, and Dr. Lewis were not present for the discussion of the second agenda item, which was the street repaving plan and application for 2026 SORTA grants. Mr. Van Stone reported that the Village Engineer's assessment of street condition had 4 streets in poor condition with an estimated repaving cost of \$287,354 and numerous streets in fair condition with an estimated repaving cost of \$3,410,269. The Village 2025 and 2026 repaving plan is complicated because the Village will not be notified of the Small Government grant award (paving of Pleasant from Mariemont to Mariemont) until May 9 and the 2026 SORTA grant applications are due at the end of May. The Chairperson working with Mr. Ertel and Mrs. Rankin developed plans for both scenarios. After some discussion, the Committee unanimously approved both plans which are attached to this report. Plan A is for if the Small Government Grant is awarded and Plan B is for the situation where the Village does not win the grant.

The committee recommends that Engineer Ertel be instructed to prepare and submit the appropriate SORTA grant application. The committee also recommended that the Engineer be authorized to go out for bids on the streets to be repaved in 2025 as soon as the Village is notified of the Small Government grant decision.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 PM.

Mrs. Brownknight moved to accept and amend the report to delete "this is contingent that" and add "will" after Ben James, seconded by Dr. Lewis. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Mr. Van Stone moved, seconded by Mrs. Brownknight, to take the previously tabled item off the agenda. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Miscellaneous:

*The Memorial Day Parade will be Monday May 26, 2025

*Village Offices will be closed in observation of Memorial Day on Monday, May 26, 2025. Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mr. Van Stone, to move the Council meeting from May 26 to May 27, 2025. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Resolutions:

“A Resolution to Create a Tax Incentive Council and Confirm the Appointment of Members” had a third reading. Mr. Van Stone moved to adopt the resolution, seconded by Dr. Lewis. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Resolution R-27-25 was adopted.

“A Resolution Authorizing Application and Contracting with the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority” had a second reading.

“Supplemental Appropriations” had a first reading.

“To Authorize the Solicitation of Bids for 2025 Tennis Court Improvements; and to Declare Emergency” had a first reading. Mr. Ayer moved to suspend the rules and allow for a second and third reading, seconded by Mr. York. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. The resolution was read a second and third time. Mr. Bartlett moved to adopt the resolution, seconded by Mr. York. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Mr. York moved to evoke the emergency clause, seconded by Mr. Van Stone. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Resolution R-28-25 was adopted.

“To Authorize the Solicitation of Bids for 2025 Street Repairs; and to Declare Emergency” had a first reading. Suspend rules. Mr. Ayer moved to suspend the rules and allow for a second and third reading, seconded by Mrs. Brownknight. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. The resolution was read a second and third time. Mr. Ayer moved to adopt the resolution, seconded by Mr. York. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Mr. York moved to evoke the emergency clause, seconded by Mr. Van Stone. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Resolution R-29-25 was adopted.

Ordinances:

The meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

William A. Brown, Mayor

Kelly I. Rankin, Fiscal Officer