

**VILLAGE OF MARIEMONT
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS
JANUARY 25, 2016**

Mayor Policastro called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. The following Council members answered present to roll call: Mr. Hlad, Ms. Palazzolo, Ms. Schwartz and Mr. Wolter.

Mayor Policastro asked for a moment of silence in honor of Olivia Erhardt, Mariemont High School 2014 Alumni and student at Columbia University, who lost her life tragically while doing humanitarian work in Honduras this month.

Ms. Palazzolo moved, seconded by Mr. Hlad to excuse the absence of Mr. Marsland and Mr. Miller. On roll call; four ayes, no nays.

Mr. Hlad moved, seconded by Ms. Schwartz to approve the minutes as written for January 11, 2016. On roll call; four ayes, no nays.

Mayor Policastro read the following communications:

From Administration Office: 4th Quarter 2015 MTD/YTD Expense Report

From Police Clerk Maupin: December Mayor's Court Statement

From Council Member Joe Miller: E-mail dated January 14, 2016 re: Resignation from Planning Commission. Ms. Schwartz moved, seconded by Mr. Hlad to nominate Mr. Wolter. On roll call; four ayes, no nays.

From Fiscal Officer Borgerding: 2015 Annual Report. Fiscal Officer Borgerding said the earnings tax leveled off the last few years after a nice run. Due to that he will not budget 3-5% increase and asked Council to keep that in mind. He attributes it to wages being stagnant and the level on people moving in and out of the Village.

Mr. Hlad asked if that was the biggest contributing factor in the change in the fund balance. Fiscal Officer Borgerding said that was a factor along with the increase in Police Department being fully staffed this past year as opposed to paying overtime. Human costs increased \$73,000 due to raises, increase in benefit costs and fully staffing the Police Department. Overall we budgeted for a deficit for 2015 of \$101,000 and we came in about \$104,000. We were light on the revenue but also light on the expenses.

Mayor Policastro said supposedly a contract has been signed to tear down the heating plant which could bring 12-13 more households to the Village. The condominiums on Madisonville Road are half complete hopefully with people moving in this November. As one can see economic development continues in the Village. Mr. Wolter said the revenue really won't show any change until next year.

Fiscal Officer Borgerding said the real estate taxes did increase \$20,000 this past year due to a lot of development.

Mr. Hlad asked if Council sees a levy in the future for Village operations.

Mayor Policastro said as long as we end the year with an excess of one million dollars in our General Fund he does think we need to.

Mr. Hlad said he is addressing the issue from a safety prospective knowing where our police department is as far as other municipalities in regards to wages. He is not suggesting a huge levy to raise everyone's taxes but looking out to future years. He asked if it would be something wise to look at. It has been 20 plus years since the Village has increased the operating levy.

Fiscal Officer Borgerding said he and the Mayor have discussed some things with the Paramedic Levy. Right now the paramedic salaries are split between the Paramedic Fund and the General Fund. The thought is if we bump up the Paramedic Levy it would in turn increase the General Fund as well by \$50,000-\$60,000 per year.

Mr. Wolter said we have pretty much squeezed the turnip as much as the turnip can be squeezed with changes to the Fire Department, combining Fire/Police Chief positions. We are working our Village employees 100%.

Mr. Hlad said he is concerned from a safety standpoint that compared to other municipalities starting salaries here in the Village are lower and may contribute to the reason we are losing police officers to other agencies. Fiscal Officer Borgerding said we started a process in 2015 to slowly increase the rate of pay in the police department over the course of the next few years.

Mayor Policastro said we are probably a couple of years away from putting on a few more mills to the Paramedic Levy. Years ago when we put a continuous levy of 1.94 mill we thought that it would be enough but now 13 years later it is not. Most of our staff is both a firefighter and a Paramedic which require a higher wage. He believes a mill or two levy would put us at where we need to be. Right now the Village is in good shape as long as we stay somewhat conservative.

Mr. Hlad said he has worked on a Committee for Loveland working on a School Resource Officer and perhaps a levy could help fund, in addition to help from our school district, a Resource Officer here in the Village.

Mr. Wolter said he would like to see the school district carry more of the load when it comes to the crossing guards.

Chief Hines said a proposal was given to the school district for a School Resource Officer in the high school several months ago. He should hear what the Committee recommends to the School Board in March. He feels very strong that this is something that should be put into place. He began the dialogue with the school in 2012 with Paul Imhoff. He does not know how it would be something that does not get approved down the road. From conversations he has had with residents of Mariemont, Terrace Park and Fairfax all support this proposal. Ultimately he would like to see a School Resource Officer in all four of the school buildings but that is a funding that would have to be worked out. The proposal he submitted is very cost effective to put an officer in the high school to start with and then evaluate it to see how it is working out. With the Village paying for the crossing guards the majority of the cost for the School Resource Officer would be paid by the school district.

Fiscal Officer Borgerding said the Permanent Improvement Fund is down \$300,000 from last year. However we finally have the fire truck paid off. We also had some unexpected expenses with the swim pool and repairs here in the Municipal Building. The Fund should replenish itself.

Mayor Policastro asked for an updated breakdown of what each levy nets the Village. Fiscal Officer Borgerding said he would prepare a new breakdown.

Mr. Wolter asked if the Village got hit with the assessment from Hamilton County. Fiscal Officer Borgerding said the Village was overpaid by \$2,000 in Inheritance Tax which they will deduct from our real estate taxes.

From Chris Niehoff: Mt. Lookout Services: E-mail dated January 14, 2016 re: Proposal HVAC first floor Municipal Building. Mayor Policastro said the air handler was out and therefore there was no heat in the basement where the firemen sleep. The picture indicates the middle air handler is on its last leg. He tried to save this one for a couple of years but he thinks it is time to replace it. The unit in the basement needs to be torn out which will not be an easy job, but will be easier than the ones in the attic. The estimate is \$10,000. In addition, it was discovered that we have a leak in the tank which they will repair for \$1000.00. His proposal says if both projects are complete they will reduce the repair cost to \$1,900. Mr. Wolter said this should take care of both the heating and air conditioning. Mr. Hlad verified that this is the same company that performed the other work and commented that it would be good to have them be able to service all of the equipment. Fiscal Officer Borgerding said he would add the work to the Permanent Improvement budget. Mr. Wolter moved, seconded by Ms. Schwartz to approve the repairs costs. On roll call; four ayes, no nays.

Mr. Hlad moved, seconded by Mr. Wolter to pay the bills as approved by the Mayor, Fiscal Officer and Chairman of the Finance Committee. On roll call; four ayes, no nays.

Mayor Policastro read the following miscellaneous announcements:

Village Offices will be closed on Monday February 15, 2016 in Observation of President's Day.

Nominations for Outstanding Citizen are due to Mrs. Van Pelt by March 17, 2016.

Ordinances:

“To Amend Ordinance O-3-99 To Provide for the New Rates for Swimming Pool Membership Fees” had a second reading. Fiscal Officer Borgerding said the pool brought in \$91,000 revenue with operating expenses of \$115,000. We are subsidizing approximately \$24,000. In addition the Village spent \$54,000 on permanent improvements at the pool. We made the step this year to increase the rates which is good. Most of the expense is salaries.

“To Amend Section 78, Schedule I of the Mariemont Code of Ordinances to Include No Parking on Certain Streets within the Village” had a second reading. Mr. Hlad said the Safety Committee is going to meet to finish doing the rest of the streets and then all the Village streets should be up to date. There has been some resistance by some residents on Mound Way on agreement of sign placement, yellow curb painting etc. so he believes that is the only street that has been discussed but not yet been brought up to code. Fiscal Officer Borgerding asked if we should be consistent throughout the Village so residents do not get confused. Mr. Hlad said typically yellow paint is reserved for restricting parking in a small section. Signs can be used to restrict parking in any circumstance and is the preferred method when it is an entire street. These are the two approved methods of restricting parking in the Village. We just updated our code to include the language for yellow curbs but it could be amended to state yellow paint is for small sections only etc. Mayor Policastro said one problem with yellow paint is that after a period of time the paint can begin to flake and becomes unsightly.

“Ordinance to Grant Authority to the Tax Administrator for the Village of Mariemont to Adopt Rules and Regulations” had a second reading.

The meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Dan Policastro, Mayor

Anthony J. Borgerding, Fiscal Officer