

**Village of Mariemont
Regular Council Meeting
July 22, 2019**

Mayor Policastro called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 PM. Present were Mr. Bartlett, Mr. Brown, Mrs. Graves, Ms. Palazzolo, Mrs. Rankin, and Ms. Schwartz.

Ms. Schwartz moved, seconded by Mrs. Rankin to approve the Council minutes of July 8, 2019. On roll call, six ayes, no nays.

Mayor Policastro read the following communications:

From Police Chief Hines: June 2019 Monthly Report. Chief Hines wanted to announce two events coming up in the Village. On August 2, 2019, the Village and the Mariemont Preschool Parents Group will hold a "Safety Village" event to teach children about how to stay safe when walking or riding bikes. This has received a lot of interest with 50 families signing up. Also, Safety Services Night Out will be held on August 13th.

From Service Superintendent Scherpenberg: June 2019 Monthly Report. Mrs. Rankin asked who is responsible for cleaning Whiskey Creek. Mayor Policastro said the state is doing a study to measure the water quality. Mrs. Rankin said she is concerned about a tree that fell and is lying across the creek. Mr. Scherpenberg said he would check on it. If it is not impeding the flow of the creek, we have to leave it there. If it is blocking the flow, we can remove it with permission from the Hamilton County Storm Water Management office. He said they would go ahead and remove any part of the tree that is on the trail. Ms. Palazzolo said she had seen kids swimming in the area where the water pools at the end of the creek in the South 80. Mayor Policastro said that Whiskey Creek empties into that retention pond and we are having that water tested for contaminants. Mr. Scherpenberg said we get the run-off from Madeira and Indian Hill. They are testing upstream for pollutants from the dry cleaner and other businesses. The problem is that there are a lot of inlets that empty into the creek, so it's hard to tell where any contamination would be coming from. Ms. Palazzolo asked if it was safe to swim in. Mr. Scherpenberg said it has chemicals and feces in it. It was decided that signs should be posted in the South 80 that there is no swimming in the creek or the retention pond.

Ms. Schwartz asked who was cleaning up the park along Wooster Pike. Mr. Scherpenberg said that was being done by volunteers headed up by Louise Schomburg. She was getting help from some residents and from Wendi VanBuren of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). Everyone agreed that it looked much better. Mrs. Rankin said she was concerned about a tree that fell in Bell Tower Park. Mr. Scherpenberg said a tree fell on the fence by the Bell Tower. Davey Tree lifted it out and the fence was repaired. Mayor Policastro said he is concerned about a tree by the Tot Lot that looks like it is dying and that Ms. VanBuren of ODNR should look at it.

From Building Administrator Keyes: June 2019 Monthly Report

From Swim Pool Manager Schad: June 2019 Monthly Report

From Assistant Fiscal Officer Wendler: Fiscal Officer's June 2019 Monthly Reports

From Police Clerk Maupin: Mayor's Court Statement June 2019

Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mr. Brown to pay the bills as approved by the Fiscal Officer, Mayor and Chairman of the Finance Committee. On roll call: six ayes, no nays.

Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Ms. Palazzolo to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee which met on Wednesday, July 17, 2019 at 2:00 pm in Council Chambers to discuss renewing the Village's risk management insurance. Present at the meeting were Finance Committee Chair Rob Bartlett, Finance Committee Members Bill Brown and Kelly Rankin, Administrative Assistant Joanee Van Pelt, and Karie Novesl, Mariemont's Client Service Manager from Hylant. The Finance Committee reviewed the initial proposal for risk management coverage from Hylant. Ms. Novesl shared that major new coverages included malicious assailant, cyber security/liability, and the municipal building addition. The Finance Committee also noted that the coverage did not include the new ambulance we will be receiving over the next month, or the Native American artifacts from Dr. Charles Metz' collection that we will hopefully be receiving soon. When asked about the \$7 million in liability coverage, Ms. Novesl shared that was on the high end for a community our size, particularly given that our highest claim over the past 26 years was ~\$1.5 million versus what was initially proposed to the Village, the Finance Committee agreed to add the new ambulance (and not remove the old ambulance, as we will continue to use it per the Finance Committee's previous report on that subject), add Dr. Metz'

artifacts once they have been appraised, decrease the deductible on cyber liability from \$25,000 to \$5,000, and decrease the liability coverage from \$7 million to \$6 million. The original quote from Hylant was \$33,406 for one year, a 5% increase versus our current premium. After making the changes listed above, the new quote is \$32,980 for one year, a 4% increase versus our current premium. The Finance Committee recommends going forward with the new updated quote. Because this needs to be passed as legislation and it needs to be effective by the end of August, this will need to be passed as an emergency measure at the first council meeting in August. On roll call: six ayes, no nays.

Mr. Brown moved, seconded by Mrs. Graves to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee which met on Wednesday, July 17, 2019 at 2:30 pm in Council Chambers to discuss how best to invest the Village's cash. Present at the meeting were Finance Committee Chair Rob Bartlett, Finance Committee Members Bill Brown and Kelly Rankin, Fiscal Officer Tony Borgerding, Chris Moorman from PNC and Martha Chomyszak from PNC. The Finance Committee reviewed a proposal from PNC on how to earn more interest on the Village's cash. The proposal involves two elements:

1. For the cash that needs to be available for paying the bills, in addition to our current checking accounts, we would establish a PNC money market account. PNC would set up a sweep mechanism with an upper limit of \$200,000 for the checking accounts and a lower limit of \$30,000. If more than \$200,000 is in the checking accounts, the surplus would be swept automatically into a PNC money market account, where we will earn 1.1% versus the 0.242% we are earning today in the checking accounts. If the checking accounts get below \$30,000, then money will automatically be moved from the money market account into the appropriate checking account.
2. For the cash that does not need to be immediately available, we will invest, via our existing investment account at PNC, in a Fidelity money market account that holds only U.S. government securities. This money market account is currently paying 2.25%. Fiscal Officer Tony Borgerding will monitor the balances in the Fidelity money market account and the PNC money market, and if it is appropriate, move money between the two funds.

The Village currently has roughly \$1.5 million in cash. The Finance Committee recommends investing \$1 million in the Fidelity money market account. The checking account would start with \$200,000 and the remaining \$300,000 would be in the PNC money market account. With this new arrangement, the Village will be able to earn roughly \$20,000 a year more than we currently do on our accounts at PNC. The PNC investment account was already established via legislation in December, 2018. Village Solicitor Ed McTigue has confirmed no additional legislation is required to make the changes discussed in this report. The Finance Committee is recommending we move to this new investment structure as soon as possible, and that Fiscal Officer Tony Borgerding and Assistant Fiscal Officer Eli Wendler oversee these changes, as well as manage the balances in the various accounts on an on-going basis. Mrs. Graves asked if there was any concern about the account dropping below the lower limit of \$30,000 and creating a problem with a large payment. Fiscal Officer Tony Borgerding said there was not, because if the account balance drops below \$30,000, then PNC would automatically sweep money from the money market account into the checking account. Mayor Policastro asked if we had done this in the past. Mr. Borgerding said we had, but then stopped sweeping between accounts, because the interest was earning us less than the sweeping was costing us. Mr. Bartlett said there is no cost to set the accounts up for sweeping. Mr. Brown said he thinks this move is long past due as it will help us to earn more in interest. On roll call: six ayes, no nays.

Ms. Schwartz moved, seconded by Ms. Palazzolo to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee which met on Wednesday, July 17, 2019 at 2:30 pm in Council Chambers to discuss how best to optimize the checking accounts the Village currently has at PNC. Present at the meeting were Finance Committee Chair Rob Bartlett, Finance Committee Members Bill Brown and Kelly Rankin, Fiscal Officer Tony Borgerding, Chris Moorman from PNC and Martha Chomyszak from PNC. The Finance Committee reviewed three proposals from PNC:

1. Direct deposit: the Village already has direct deposit capability in the operating fund checking account at PNC as part of the ACH system but is not yet utilizing it. Martha shared that using direct deposit can save time, money and reduce the risk of fraud. The cost for ACH capability is \$12/month/account and each ACH transfer costs \$0.35. However, 150 business checks typically cost \$100, and Mariemont writes roughly 300 checks a month. Also, for any checks that are mailed, there is postage and the cost of the envelope. Moving to direct deposit can save the Village ~\$1,200 a year. Next step will be for the Finance Committee to work with Joanee Van Pelt to make a deeper assessment of this opportunity.
2. Stop payment via ACH. The cost to stop payment on any Village check via ACH is \$10/check versus \$30/check if we contact one of the PNC branches, which is what we do today. If we already have ACH capability on the account, there is no incremental cost and thus the Finance Committee is recommending we implement this immediately.

3. Scanning checks for deposit. PNC can provide us with a scanner that will allow us to deposit checks without having to go to a branch office. The cost of the scanner is \$50/month. However, we are charged \$3 for every night drop bag deposit. In June, we had 9 night drops costing \$27. PNC's records also indicate that we visit their branches during the day at a rate of 16-18 times a month. Being able to scan checks will avoid all of these additional trips. Given that checks are processed by both the Tax Department and the Village Office, the Finance Committee is recommending that Patty Busam, Deanna Darrah and Eli Wendler work together to determine how best to proceed with this opportunity. On roll call: six ayes, no nays.

Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. Brown to accept the recommendation of the Public Works and Services Committee which met on July 10, 2019 at 2:00 PM to discuss Energy Aggregation service. In attendance were the Committee Chairperson Kelly Rankin, Committee Members Bill Brown and Avia Graves, Councilmember Rob Bartlett and representatives from AGE (Affordable Gas + Electric). A presentation was made by AGE, an energy coordinator providing bulk electricity and natural gas purchases for their members. The discussion centered around AGE's ability to leverage partnerships with retail suppliers, civic and business leaders to manage risk and recommend optimal buying opportunities. They stated that for 7 years AGE has served many municipalities, businesses and industrial customers in Illinois and Ohio; emphasizing they have been able to provide customers collective savings on their electric and natural gas bills and providing price security in the market. The Committee recommends that the Committee pursues the concept of aggregation by discussing with other municipalities and providers to gather more data in order to make a well informed decision. Mr. Brown said that the Fairfax Mayor and Administrator also attended the meeting and participated in the discussion. Mayor Policastro asked how much a household would save with aggregation. Mr. Brown said it would save residents anywhere from \$35 to \$100 per year, depending on their electric usage. Mrs. Graves said she felt we should look into this further and talk to other municipalities who have done aggregation. She said they wanted us to agree to their proposal right away so it could go on the ballot for November. Mr. Borgerding asked what would happen if we were signed up and wanted to leave. Mrs. Graves said the agreement included an "opt out" option. Mr. Bartlett asked if the Village would be saving money.

Michael Cain, 6737 Murray Avenue, Mariemont, Ohio, was given permission to address Council. He said he used to work for an aggregation company and wanted Council to know that the some company representatives aren't always up front with all the information you should have, so it is best to be thorough before signing up. However, he knows many municipalities who have signed aggregation agreements and they did save money. In the end, you can always opt out. He said it is a very good idea to look at several different companies. On roll call: six ayes, no nays.

Resolutions:

"Adopting the Budget for 2020; And to Declare Emergency" had a first reading. Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mrs. Graves to suspend the rules to allow for the second and third readings. On roll call: six ayes, no nays. The resolution had a second reading and a third reading. Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Ms. Palazzolo to adopt the resolution. On roll call: six ayes, no nays. Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Ms. Schwartz to invoke the emergency clause. On roll call: six ayes, no nays. Resolution R- 7-19 was adopted.

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 PM.

Dan Policastro, Mayor

Anthony J. Borgerding, Fiscal Officer