

**Village of Mariemont  
Regular Council Meeting  
March 23, 2020**

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:10 PM. Present were Mrs. Graves, Dr. Lewis, Ms. Palazzolo and Mrs. Rankin. Mr. Bartlett and Mr. Stelzer were virtually connected due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mrs. Graves moved, seconded by Dr. Lewis to accept the amended minutes. On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

Mayor Brown asked for a moment of silence for Springdale Police Officer, Kaia Grant, who was killed in the line of duty last evening.

Mayor Brown said we are holding this meeting under unusual circumstances with the meeting being closed to the public due to the Stay-at-Home Order issued by the Governor due the COVID- 19 pandemic. To those who will watch this on ICRC, the minutes will be available and if there are any questions about the agenda, please email [mayor@mariemont.org](mailto:mayor@mariemont.org) or [info@mariemont.org](mailto:info@mariemont.org) and we will respond as quickly as we can. The Village Administration Office, Building Department and Tax Department are closed to the public. If someone has business with one of these departments please call or email. Mrs. Van Pelt, Ms. Uhrig and Mrs. Darrah are still staffing the Administration Office and Tax Department. The Building Department is working remotely. The Police and Fire Departments and the Service Departments are fully staffed as well. With the Federal Government extending the time to file taxes, we are waiting for a definitive answer from the State if they will extend the deadline as well.

Ms. Palazzolo moved, seconded by Mrs. Rankin to accept the minutes as written for the Council Meeting March 9, 2020. On roll call; five ayes, no nays. (Mr. Bartlett abstained)

Mayor Brown said the Donnelly Family on Homewood Road came to Council earlier in the year with the wish to have the easement vacated on their property. It slipped our attention and we are now following through. Mr. Bartlett said the Solicitor is supposed to meet with Building Administrator Keyes and Service Superintendent Scherpenberg. It was also recommended that a title search be done to be sure no one else is using the pipe. Council agreed to go forward with the process of vacating the easement.

Mayor Brown read the following communications:

From Assistant Fiscal Officer Wendler: February 2020 Monthly report/Expense and Revenue Reports

From Jeff Hinebaugh: Email Dated March 20, 2020 re: Mariemont Avenue Paper Streets

From Brad Westfall: Email Dated March 19, 2020 re: Mariemont Avenue Paper Streets

From Michael Kintner: Email Dated March 19, 2020 re: Mariemont Avenue Paper Streets

Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Dr. Lewis to pay the bills as approved by the Mayor, Fiscal Officer and Chairman of the Finance Committee. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Ms. Palazzolo moved, seconded by Dr. Lewis to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee which met Thursday, March 19, 2020 at 4:30 pm in Council Chambers to discuss the Ohio vehicle registration permissive fee. Present at the meeting were Finance Committee Chair Rob Bartlett, and Finance Committee Members Kelly Rankin and Joe Stelzer. As background, when the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles collects their registration fee, Ohio law allows municipalities to also collect a fee. Each municipal fee is in \$5 increments with a maximum of \$30 per car. By Ohio law, the money that is collected via this registration fee has to be used for street repair and maintenance by the municipalities. Mariemont collects \$20 per car. There are 38 municipalities in Hamilton County. Currently, 26 of those municipalities are charging more than \$20 per car. There are 12 townships in Hamilton County. Currently, 10 of those townships are charging more than \$20 per car. The Department of Public Safety, which administers this program, has estimated that each \$5 fee results in roughly \$13,500 in revenue for Mariemont's street maintenance fund, which is managed as its own separate account within Mariemont's accounting system. The Village's streets are clearly in need of repair. The Village's Permanent Improvement

Fund, which is the other source for street repair work, is significantly oversubscribed (this year, council needed to cut ~\$150,000 from the original spending requests in the Permanent Improvement Fund), and it will remain so for the next 4 years as we pay off the municipal building loan and the loan for the new ambulance. The Finance Committee is recommending that Mariemont increase its registration permissive fee from \$20 per car to \$30 per car, which would provide ~\$27,000 more per year for the repair and maintenance of our streets. If council agrees with this recommendation, it will require an ordinance to be passed. The ordinance needs to be in effect and the appropriate documents sent to the Department of Public Safety in Columbus before July 1, 2020 in order for the new fee to go into effect in 2021. If council agrees with this recommendation, the necessary ordinance will be submitted at the first council meeting in April for a first reading. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Mr. Bartlett noted that the Village of Newtown will be increasing the fee to \$30.00.

Mrs. Rankin said Council anticipated going out to bid for the Petoskey Avenue Repair Project. The legal ad was to hit the paper tomorrow but due to the financial situation as a result of COVID-19 it was decided not to put out to bid at a cost of \$1,000. At this time it was decided to postpone the request for bids. The grant expires at the end of this year but Engineer Ertel is confident that with the current situation it will be extended. He is looking into the process to apply for an extension. Mayor Brown said if there was not an extension granted there would need to be a re-evaluation on how to proceed with the project. We would need to evaluate the potential revenue shortfall into the Village due to the current pandemic. This is a large project and warrants a conservative approach due to the fact that we do not know at this point how the Village will be impacted financially.

#### Miscellaneous:

Village Offices will be closed Friday April 10, 2020 in Observation of Good Friday.

Council Meeting Scheduled for Monday May 25, 2020 will be held Tuesday May 26, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Palazzolo asked about Council members holding virtual Committee meetings. Mayor Brown asked if there was anything so pressing that it could not wait. Ms. Palazzolo said no but some members of Council may consider this downtime and might want to work on something in their committee.

Mayor Brown said let's evaluate day-to-day as we go forward. Dr. Lewis said if there was a need to hold a meeting she suggested more posting time to allow residents to submit questions, comments and concerns.

#### Resolutions:

"To Authorize the Sale of Paper Streets Adjacent to 6500 Mariemont Avenue; And To Declare Emergency" had a first reading. Mayor Brown said he had a conversation with Mr. Westfall and feels Council is addressing the concerns outlined in the emails received. With the next Council meeting three weeks from now it should leave time to address further questions. Mr. Stelzer said he had a conversation with Mr. Hinebaugh. After the conversation, Mr. Hinebaugh seemed to be very comfortable that all his questions had been addressed. Mr. Bartlett said he has a concern with how the Resolution is currently worded. The way it is currently worded he will not vote for it. There needs to be a step between Section I and Section II that there is going to be a loop back to Council for review for final decision per the Ohio Revised Code. Mayor Brown said that is a change that can be added in but tonight we are just having the first reading. Ms. Palazzolo said the legislation appears to address two issues: 1. Sale of the Property and 2. Vacation of the Property. She wants to make sure we are able to do them concurrently and she wants to make sure Council is doing it correctly. She is going to touch base with Solicitor McTigue to clarify and will ask that he reply to all of Council.

Mrs. Rankin said it should be practice that if a Council members emails the Solicitor that all of Council is copied. Mrs. Graves said she feels that she is missing some communications and agrees if it involves all of Council it should be sent to all.

Mr. Stelzer said his understanding of holding meetings is Council can meet as long as we are not soliciting votes for anything that needs to be voted on. If any member of Council has any questions about the street vacation he said he is more than willing to talk with any member of Council. Don't wait until the next meeting and then act like we do not have the right information. To address some of the email concerns he said if the Village does the street vacation, one half of the vacated street will go to the adjacent property owner right away. The \$50,000 minimum bid was determined after a series of conversations with the property owner's agent. Anyone can bid on it. Those two lots and the paper street have sat there

for 100 years and this is the only plan he has heard of to do something with it. He does not believe the street is going to be built and what would be the alternative plan. One question raised was does anyone on Council have a financial interest. He said he does not. The rest of Council voiced that they do not.

Mr. Bartlett said if the house were not to be built he does not think he would be in favor of selling the property because the benefit to the Village is increased income tax and increased property tax. Because of the upheaval in the market place how sure are we, at this point in time, that it will happen? Mr. Stelzer said a contingency can be put on the sale of the property that a house has to be built on the property.

Ordinances:

“Authorizing the Purchase of New Turnout Gear, An Upgrade to the Mobile Data Computers, and Purchase of Chest Compression System by the Mariemont Fire Department; And To Declare Emergency” had a first reading.

Mr. Stelzer said due to the current situation with the COVID-19 outbreak he asked that the Healthy Living Initiative be removed from the Health and Recreation Committee. Council concurred.

Mr. Stelzer said the trees/landscaping along Murray Avenue Parking pads is no longer a working project and asked to have it removed from the Health and Recreation Committee. Council concurred.

Mr. Stelzer said the Clean Up Overgrown Vegetation Day does not look like an active project. Ms. Palazzolo said there were many who said they would volunteer to help. The open question was is there insurance for volunteers. Mrs. Rankin said her understanding is that they would not. Ms. Palazzolo said she would ask the Solicitor to prepare a waiver. Council agreed to remove it from the Health and Recreation Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

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William A. Brown, Mayor

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Anthony J. Borgerding, Fiscal Officer