

**Village of Mariemont  
Council Meeting  
May 9, 2022**

Mayor Bill Brown called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the pledge of allegiance. Present were Mr. Bartlett, Mrs. Brownknight, Ms. Geldbaugh, Dr. Lewis, Mrs. Rankin, and Mr. York.

Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. York, to accept the minutes for April 25, 2022. On roll call: six ayes, no nays.

**Communications:**

From Police Chief Hines: April 2022 Monthly Report

From Assistant Fire Chief Copeland: April 2022 Monthly Report

From Service Superintendent Scherpenberg: April 2022 Monthly Report. Mr. Scherpenberg gave a brief update on the mowing. There have not been any issues. They will be purchasing black mulch for the Village and some brown mulch around the Murray Path. The streetlights will be painted this week along Wooster. The Service Department will erect detour signs for the traffic near the streetlights that are being painted.

From Tax Administrator Barlow: April 2022 Monthly Report. Mr. Barlow confirmed that tax receipts are up. He said the Village has not taken a big hit from people working from home.

From Building Official Holloway: April 2022 Monthly Report. Mr. Holloway said most people are good about notifying him about tree removals but patios/pavers work tends to get missed more. Mayor Brown encouraged everyone to look at Mr. Holloway's article in the Town Crier, stating it is a good refresher on what is required permit-wise for small projects and renovations.

From Cassandra Noertker, Capital Programs Administrative Professional with ODOT: Email Dated April 15, 2022, re: Consent Legislation Request for HAM Signs FY2022 (PID No. 101029) – Requires Emergency. This is an ordinance authorizing ODOT to come in and replace the regulatory signs along Wooster Pike as well as lane lines and striping. Engineer Chris Ertel clarified that the immediate project is just for signs but the ordinance allows them to do striping as well but that will likely not occur this year.

From John Scherpenberg: Spending Request Form for New Vehicle/Equipment and Tree Work. Mr. Scherpenberg explained that Rush Truck has a pre-built truck on order that will be available in May before the prices increase 20-30% in June. He will get the basic F450 non-diesel truck from Rush Truck and Kaffenberger will contract out for the dump bed, snowplow, lighting, and hydraulics. The wait for hydraulics is twenty-two weeks out so he is hoping to have it by October. The total cost will be \$94,000. The second request was for tree trimming by Davey Tree. They had \$60,000 already set aside in permanent improvement for the trees. Mrs. Rankin moved, second by Mr. York, to approve both requests. On roll call: six ayes, no nays.

From Assistant Fiscal Officer Wendler: April 2022 Monthly Report. Mr. Borgerding said receipts were up from the real estate taxes coming in but they only come in twice a year.

**Motion to Pay the Bills:**

Mr. York asked for clarification on a previous bill list for fertilization for the pool. Mr. Scherpenberg explained that Swisher fertilizes different sections of the Village and the expense is broken down. Every area that has a sprinkler system gets fertilized. Mr. Scherpenberg said that the bathrooms at the belltower and at the tennis courts are open. Moving forward the goal is to keep the belltower bathrooms open all year. The bathrooms at the tennis courts will be open mid-May through October if there won't be cold snaps. Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mr. York, to pay the bills as approved by the Mayor, Fiscal Officer and Chairman of the Finance Committee. On roll call: six ayes, no nays.

**Committee Reports:**

The Health & Recreation Committee met on Monday, May 2, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. Present at the meeting were Health and Recreation Committee members Randy York (Chair), Susan Brownknight (Vice-Chair), Leah Geldbaugh (Member) and Mayor Bill Brown. Also in attendance was Council member Rob Bartlett and Village Engineer Chris Ertel and residents Matt Ayer, Linda Bartlett, and Greg McCotter.

The purpose of the committee meeting was to prepare guidelines to be used for the preparation for a scope of work to study the Mariemont involvement in the CROWN urban loop trail.

The Committee agreed that the following would be the guiding principles and the key priorities for the Mariemont Crown Corridor Master Plan Study:

### **Mariemont Crown Corridor Master Plan Study**

The purpose of the Mariemont Crown Corridor Master Plan Study is to establish the level of participation and to determine the optimal integration of the CROWN 34-mile urban loop trail into the Village of Mariemont. The study will determine the level of additional participation, if any in the CROWN trail and to offer a comprehensive analysis of alternatives of the CROWN integration in Mariemont from where the CROWN trail may enter to where it may exit the Village.

The Village of Mariemont is currently not committed to any further expansion of the CROWN 34-mile urban loop trail in the Village; this study will determine if there is sufficient community support for expansion and to present route and design alternatives for the optimal benefit of the Village.

The primary responsibility of the study is to establish a process for community-wide engagement in every aspect of the study. Public participation and input are paramount. This will be accomplished by addressing the following priorities for the Village:

1. Public safety is of utmost concern to Village officials and the study will identify, detail and mitigate any threat to public safety that the trail expansion may cause.
2. The expansion and stimulation of our businesses is a key factor when considering development of any public asset in the Village. The study and design alternatives will maximize the potential positive impact of the CROWN trail on our business community.
3. The Village of Mariemont believes in diversity and inclusion in all public projects. The Village will give priority consideration to organizations with satisfactory diversity and inclusion practices.
4. The study will give particular attention and consideration to those residents who have properties adjacent to any potential path alignment. Issues such as impact on privacy and potential assumed responsibility and liability on the trail will be addressed.
5. The Village of Mariemont is on the National Historic Register and no CROWN trail alternatives or design elements will compromise that standing.

The Health and Recreation Committee will define the scope and commission the study. They will review proposals and interview at least two firms. While commissioned and contracted by the Village, the study will be funded exclusively by private third-party sources. These sources will reimburse the Village for all expenses associated with the study.

The Health and Recreation Committee will take guidance from the selected firm on makeup, process and timetable for the study. The Health and Recreation Committee recommends that the members of the Committee and at least two other residents be included and that a final proposal/recommendation be completed by January 2023.

The Health and Recreation Committee has updated an original scope of work document provided by Village Engineer Chris Ertel to include recommendations for the inclusion of the guiding principles and priorities listed above.

Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mrs. Brownknight to accept the report. Mayor Brown complimented Mr. York on his job of outlining the expectations of what they would like to achieve with the study. Mr. York did get three candidates with inclusion and diversity characteristics from Mrs. Brownknight that they'd like to interview. Mr. Ertel needs to review the updated scope of work before they can move forward. At that point they can move forward with contacting and interviewing potential firms and scheduling public meetings. Mr. York would like to have the three members of the Health and Recreation Committee to be a part of this so that they can get out ahead of it and schedule the public meetings at a time when the most

folks can participate because there is a lot of buzz in the community about this. Ms. Geldbaugh found two companies recommended by the City of Cincinnati's transportation department. She will forward those to Mr. York and Mrs. Brownknight. On roll call: six ayes, no nays.

The Health and Recreation Committee met on Monday March 28, 2022 at 4:30 pm. Present at the meeting were Health and Recreation Committee members Randy York (Chair), Susan Brownknight (Vice-Chair), and Mayor Bill Brown. Also in attendance were Council member Rob Bartlett, Mariemont Tennis Association members Linda Bartlett, Carter Kemper, and Kevin Taylor, and Mariemont Pool Commission members Mandy Rohal and Terry Donovan.

The Committee reviewed the projected 2022 budget for the Mariemont Tennis Association. The Committee projects that the budget will generate an operational surplus of \$10,000 - \$15,000 for 2022. It is recommended that these excess funds be directed to a designated and named capital improvement fund for tennis. It is estimated that a long-term maintenance schedule would require an annual capital allocation of between \$40,750 - \$48,750 for the tennis courts. It was agreed that any funds allocated in the 2022 permanent improvement fund for tennis that are not used would be assigned to the tennis capital improvement fund for 2023.

The tennis budget does not include any contribution from the Mariemont School District. The Mariemont School District uses the courts an estimated 17.4% of available court time with women's tennis in the fall and men's tennis in the spring. Representative from the Health and Recreation Committee will schedule a meeting with the Mariemont School District in hopes of determining a fair and equitable agreement on the sharing of longer-term court maintenance costs.

The Committee agreed that the current condition of the courts with significant raised cracks would need to be addressed this spring. The Committee decided to only do a minor repair of the cracks this season with a repair/patch/and paint approach. There was no current bid for this scope of work, so the Committee authorized the evaluation and selection between at least two bids for this work at a cost not to exceed \$10,000.

The Committee reviewed the 2022 pool budget. The budget projected an operational deficit of \$58,875 for 2022. The Committee recommended reductions to reduce the overall budget from \$191,145 to \$175,145. The Committee recommended the purchase of replacement lap dividers for \$3,200 and industrial refrigerator for \$2,000. The Committee recommends that the pool look into the use of the PNC credit card readers for snack bar purchases rather than utilizing the e-soft system.

The committee recommends that the Pool Commission evaluate the efficiency of pool operations under Cincinnati Pool Management and evaluate memberships and attendance and open up the pool to residents outside of the Village of Mariemont. The additional memberships would be subject to an invitation from a current member at a premium rate to a resident membership. This would be a test for the 2022 season with limited memberships.

Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, to accept the report. Mr. York said no repairs will be done to the tennis courts this year. They couldn't find anybody because of the current labor market. They do not plan on doing any repairs unless it gets worse with the idea being to move these funds to the 2023 permanent improvement budget, get ahead of it and contract someone right now for a more major rehab of the courts before next season. There are ongoing conversations with the Mariemont School District as our hope is to get some money from them for capital improvements. We did add \$25 per camp or anyone that is in an organized program at the tennis courts, and we have a private resident that is going to match that. Hopefully we can get \$20,000-\$30,000 in the fund for next year. Mr. Bartlett said the bids for next year are \$80,000-\$100,000. Mr. York said you do a fix of about \$80,000-\$100,000 every 3-5 years and then every 20-25 years you must scrape it and start over. It is about \$40,000 a year if you divide it. Mr. Bartlett said they set aside about \$40,000 in the Permanent Improvement fund for this year but we are not going to use it so it will roll over to next year. That, with matching money, and additional funds we could be close to what we need. Mr. York figures the Village needs to be able to commit about \$15,000-\$25,000 a year and MTA could come up with the rest of it.

Mr. York said none of the pool repairs will happen this year and we are still at \$175,000 to operate the pool. The contract with Cincinnati Pool is \$115,000. The sign-ups so far are behind schedule. We clearly need to get outside funding. Mr. York is pleased with how responsive the Pool Board has been and they are doing a great job. He does not believe it is possible for the pool to be self-sufficient, but it is an amenity we want to keep. A flyer was suggested to help with memberships as well as opening memberships up to MariElders members. There have also been discussions about opening up pool membership, similar to how we do tennis memberships, by having current members inviting other families to help expand memberships. Though, Mrs. Brownknight said expanding membership won't get them close to the finish line; they simply

must have more community members sign up for memberships. It is such a small percentage, maybe 20% or so, of the Village residents who join the pool. The pool lives or dies by whether this community decides to embrace it or not. Mayor Brown commended the pool commission on their efforts thus far to increase membership. On roll call: six ayes, no nays.

The Finance Committee met on Tuesday, May 3, 2022 at 3:00 pm to discuss the health care plan for 2022 for full-time Mariemont employees. Present at the meeting were Finance Committee members Rob Bartlett and Kelly Rankin, Joanee Van Pelt, and Police Chief Rick Hines.

Mariemont currently participates in the Center for Local Government Benefits Plan (CLGBP). This is a consortium of municipalities that pools their money to self-fund health care and dental care insurance. Horan administers the plan and provided the Committee with data on what other communities are offering their employees. Attachment A includes Mariemont's current plan and the plans of some of the communities that we benchmark with on salaries.

Mariemont is in line with the other communities except for the Platinum A plan. Attachment B compares all communities that are using the Platinum A plan. The average employee contribution for Platinum A excluding Mariemont is 13% versus 10% for Mariemont. Mariemont also has a lower HSA contribution rate from the Village than the other communities. After some discussion, the Committee agreed to recommend that the employee contribution for the Platinum A premium be increased from 10% to 13%, and that the Village's contribution to the HSA be increased from \$1,000 to \$1,100 for employee only, and from \$2,000 to \$2,200 for employee + 1. All other parts of the health care plan would stay as is.

Because of strong results for the consortium in 2021, CLGBP approved a 0% increase for health care premiums and a 0% increase for dental care premiums for 2022.

Changing the employee contribution rates and the Village's HSA contribution requires a change to the salary ordinance for full-time employees. If Council agrees with the Finance Committee's recommendation, the first reading of the new proposed ordinance will be at the May 9 Council meeting. This enables the final reading and vote to occur before the plan is rolled out to employees on June 10. The actual changes will go into effect in August 2022.

Mr. York moved, seconded by Mrs. Rankin to accept the report. Mr. Bartlett noted that benchmarking with similar sized communities has been helpful. Dr. Lewis asked for clarification of the "plus one." Mr. Bartlett said it could be employee plus spouse or employee plus child. On roll call: six ayes, no nays.

#### **Miscellaneous:**

- Village Offices will be Closed in Observation of Memorial Day Monday May 30, 2022
- Memorial Day Parade will be held Monday May 30, 2022
- Village Offices will be Closed in Observation of Independence Day Monday July 4, 2022
- Village Fireworks will be held at Dusk Monday July 4, 2022
- Budget Hearing will be Monday July 25, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

#### **Resolutions:**

"Resolution Authorizing Mayor to Execute Contract with Choice One Engineers for the Purpose of Submitting a Grant Application for work in Connection with the Murray Avenue Multi-Path Trail" had a third reading. Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, to adopt the resolution. On roll call: 4 ayes, 2 nays (Mrs. Geldbaugh and Dr. Lewis dissented). Resolution R-19-22 was adopted.

"A Resolution for the Village of Mariemont to Establish Policies and Procedures Concerning the Naming and Renaming of Village Property" had a second reading. Mr. Bartlett asked if memorial benches would fall under this. Mr. York and Mrs. Rankin noted that benches, trees, rocks, and plaques would all fall under this. Mrs. Brownknight asked if the Mayor can skip steps to remove names. Mr. York answered that a written request from the mayor needs to go through the Rules and Law Committee with a public meeting.

"Resolution to Enter into Project Agreement with Kate Albert Studio, LLC" had a second reading. Mr. York explained she will make ten 18x24 first editions and one hundred 16x20 first editions that will be hand-numbered and hand-signed. The original will be auctioned.

“To Amend Section 151.087; Permitted Obstructions in Required Yards” had a first reading.

“To Amend R-14-22 Resolution Declaring the Necessity of Levying a Tax in Excess of the 10 Mill Limitation for Permanent Improvements and Requesting the County Auditor to Certify Matters in Connection Therewith; and To Declare Emergency” had a first reading. This Resolution had to be revised after the first reading at the last meeting due to an update in required language required by Hamilton County. Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. York, to suspend the rules to allow for a second and third reading. On roll call: six ayes, no nays. The Resolution had a second and third reading. Mr. York moved, seconded by Mrs. Rankin, to accept the Resolution. On roll call: six ayes, no nays. Mrs. Rankin motioned, seconded by Mr. York, to invoke the emergency clause. On roll call: six ayes, no nays. Resolution R-20-22 was adopted.

“Resolution For Consent for the Project Known as PID No. 101029 County/Route/Section: HAM Signs FY2022 Systematic Sign Replacement General Routes; And to Declare Emergency” had a second reading. Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mr. York, to have a third reading. On roll call: six ayes, no nays. Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mrs. Rankin, to adopt the Resolution. On roll calls: six ayes, no nays. Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. York, to invoke the emergency clause. On roll call: six ayes, no nays. Resolution R-21-22 was adopted.

### **Ordinances:**

“To Amend Section 37.06 of the Mariemont Code of Ordinances, Tree Advisory Board” had a third reading. Ms. Geldbaugh moved, seconded by Mr. York to adopt the Ordinance. On roll call: six ayes, no nays. Ordinance O-13-22 was adopted.

“To Amend Section 151 of the Mariemont Code of Ordinances” (Fences & Walls) had a second reading.

“To Amend Chapter 152 of the Mariemont Code of Ordinances Rental Dwellings and Units” had a second reading. Mr. York discussed adding some language to this with Solicitor McTigue. Every effort will be made to cooperate with the apartment owners. We want to be as unobtrusive with the property owners but at the same time fulfilling our obligation to the citizens.

“To Amend Ordinance O-11-22 of the Mariemont Code of Ordinances to Increase Payment for Employees” had a first reading.

### **Task List Updates:**

1. 2021 Financial Recap to Council with commentary/explanations: Mayor Brown – Mayor Brown will get a target date for the next meeting.
2. Creating a Village Foundation: Mayor Brown/Mr. York – A bank account has been set up, they can now accept contributions. Remove from task list.
3. Finish work on Murray Path/Submit invoices to ODNR for Reimbursement: Engineer Ertel – Set target date for Sept./Oct. 2022.
4. Boat House roof repair/potential grants for funding: Mayor Brown – The estimate came back at \$29,985. Mayor Brown sees an opportunity to save money by salvaging some of the stone that will be removed from the church roof. The roof work on the church will begin in late June. Set a target date for September/October.
5. Clean up Village (hydrants, benches, curbs etc.): Mr. York – Assistant Fire Chief Dan Copeland arranged for the owner of Miami Paint Supply to allow the Village to rent their Kubota which powers our machine to clean the hydrants for about \$142/day. That project may start as soon as Chief Copeland gets the Kubota and schedule the timing to work around the painting of the streetlights.
6. Assessing parks, what needs to be fixed/potential grants: Mr. York – A company came to look at reconfiguring the baseball diamonds. The ODNR grant to fund that is due by July 15, 2022. He put in a request with Hamilton County Development Corp. to get a planning grant for \$30,000 for Dogwood Park. They met this morning with the architects for Dale Park. They have not started on the grant for the pool yet. There is a bid to work on the baby pool which is due mid-July. The wood and wisteria need to be replaced at the Concourse. They need to get a bid for that work and see about getting it funded.
7. SWIM POOL:
  - a. Implementation of new contract & associated items: Mayor Brown – remove from task list.
  - b. List of activities identified by Pool Commission/Action: Mayor Brown – This is ongoing.

c. Fixing Leak – Mayor Brown said we have fixed what little leaks we are going to fix. We are not fixing the big leaks this year because the cost is too high.

d. Determine who will manage Concession Stand: Mayor Brown – The pool management company is managing the concession stand. Remove from task list.

e. Long-Term master plan pool/facilities – This is ongoing. Mr. York is working on this. Mrs. Brownknight would like to change the wording from “long-term” to “3-year master plan.”

8. Master Plan for improving office space in Municipal Building: Mayor Brown – Mayor Brown spoke with Randy Huber and they will start with the two front doors. He is going to measure and price it out and then move on from there. Work is being done in the office to scan the large documents and get rid of some of the paper.

9. Find backfill/replacement for Fiscal Officer & Asst Fiscal Officer: Take Mayor Brown’s name off the task list and replace with the Finance Sub-Committee/Mr. Bartlett. Mayor Brown noted that time is of the essence on this matter.

10. Relaunch of Rental Inspection Program: Mayor Brown – They are fine-tuning this now. Target date the next two meetings.

11. Improvements to Bell Tower baseball fields/batting cage: Mr. York – A permit was approved with All-Sport to get the batting cage done. They don’t have a ballpark date yet as they are backed up.

12. Walking Path Whiskey Creek: Mrs. Rankin/Engineer Ertel – Mrs. Rankin said they decided to focus on where the debris is collecting. Beaver Creek Technology estimated the cost to be around \$20,000 so they did not want to do it. Mr. Ertel said the project scope for a grant would be more like \$100,000-\$150,000 to re-contour the creek. Mr. Ertel will start making some calls.

13. Parking Lot Light Issue: Mayor Brown/Mrs. Brownknight – Mayor Brown spoke to Mr. Spinnenweber about possibly placing another lens over the light. It is a back-and-forth issue with no definite timeline.

14. Porsche Rallye: Mayor Brown – Mayor Brown and Mr. York spoke to the new president and discussed the issue of police coverage, portable toilets, parking, and signage. Mayor Brown would like to see the local businesses on the square more engaged with this event. They feel confident that can come to an agreement and bring the Rallye back in the fall.

Mr. Bartlett presented a check was for \$17,991 from the private fund 501(c)(3) that was raising money for the Murray Path. Former Council member Joe Stelzer was instrumental in organizing funds for the path and the citizens really stepped up for this cause and should be commended and celebrated. The total cost was around \$368,000, the ODNR grant covered \$223,000, and private contributions including Columbia Township was \$145,000. There is about \$4,000 amount of work remaining for some repair and unfinished work. The original ODNR grant was for \$269,000 so there is another \$43,000 still available to us. \$29,000 in private contributions remain and the consensus from the donors was to use it for grant application fees, design studies, etc.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

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William A. Brown, Mayor

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Anthony J. Borgerding, Fiscal Officer