

**Village of Mariemont
Council Meeting
August 14, 2023**

Mayor Bill 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, Mrs. Rankin, and Mr. York.

Mr. Emil Liszniansky, Principal, with Envision Group, presented to Council an update on the economic development and strategy plan for the Village. He went over the project overview and explained that the purpose was to provide fiscally sustainable municipal revenue streams to maintain and enhance high quality of life in Mariemont. Phase 1 includes identifying ways to increase property tax and income tax revenue streams and looking at potential areas for reinvestment and redevelopment. Phase 2 will focus on assessment of market analyses to see where there might be gaps in unfilled demand and potential. Phase 3 is the recommendation section that develops solutions for the highest and best use of the underdeveloped or underutilized land that is left. Smart growth land use, infrastructure and zoning comes into place. Phase 4 is implementation through policies, partnerships and funding strategies. It includes the timeline, responsible parties and costs.

Key tasks include market analysis such as high-growth industry sectors and mixed-use commercial voids in trade areas. Highest and best use assessments include consensus for target development areas and considers quantitative impacts (municipal revenue) as well as qualitative desires of the community. Potential tools for implementation include: incentive packages consisting of municipal job creation grants; Community Reinvestment Area (CRA)/property tax abatement if improvements to properties/buildings are needed; tax increment financing if needed for infrastructure/site readiness; downtown revitalization district (DRD). It includes grant/outside funding assistance and strategic property acquisition/assembly by creation of Community Improvement Corporation (CIC). As far as the timeline, the Steering Committee completed its second meeting. Recommendations and implementations should occur fall/winter 2023 with the hope to review and have approvals by spring 2024.

Mrs. Brownknight asked to have examples of similar communities who utilized these strategies. Mr. Liszniansky said he would be glad to provide examples. Dr. Lewis noted that examples are located in the proposal.

Discussion ensued regarding the two-year funding cycle for the State of Ohio. This would probably not be complete in time to apply for the upcoming year but would provide ample opportunity to apply for the next cycle (2025). The option is available to produce a preliminary strategy. Mr. Liszniansky said they would be able to assist with policies etc.

Minutes:

Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. York, to accept the Council Meeting minutes from July 24, 2023, as written. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Communications:

*From Service Superintendent Scherpenberg: July 2023 Monthly Report/Spending Request for street salt not to exceed \$32,000. He indicated that once the quotes come in, the Village only has 7 days to accept the quote. He is splitting some of the cost with Terrace Park which should save \$6700. Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. York to approve the spending request. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

*From Tax Administrator Barlow: July 2023 Monthly Report

*From Building Official Holloway: July 2023 Monthly Report

*From Council Member York: Dale Park Plans – Presentation from MPF

*From Interim Fiscal Officer Rankin: June 2023 Bank Reconciliation/Financial Reports. Mrs. Rankin said the July 2023 will be in the next Council packet. Mr. Bartlett noted he has spoken with Mrs. Rankin regarding that the General Fund is a bit concerning with how much is currently being spent. Through the end of June, we have spent \$135,000 more than we did last year. After July, it is \$188,000 more. It is hard to navigate the reports to find what it is. It is important to understand what is going on – it's a 9% increase with a 3% increase built into the budget. Mrs. Brownknight said 9% is in alignment with inflation.

Permission to Address Council:

Ms. Becca Vianello Hlad, 3602 Center Street, was granted permission to address Council. She thanked Council for supporting the Mariemont Swim Team this summer. In the past, they have had bake sales and used the proceeds for supporting the coaches at the end of the season banquet with gift cards. With the new policies in place, there is no money for the gift cards. She asked Council to consider a bonus for the coaches, who did an outstanding job, on their upcoming paycheck. The proceeds from the bake sales also helped in the past pay for end of season ice cream and gift cards for volunteers who helped the team.

Mayor Brown said this is part of the larger discussion regarding the structure of the pool. He does not believe Council can approve bonuses for this year as there is no legislation in place to allow for it.

Mrs. Brownknight asked if this was designed to work as Boosters work. Administrator Barlow said the way the swim team is currently set up it is being paid for by the Village, thus becoming a Village entity. Therefore, it is subject to governmental accountability. Unfortunately, in the past the monies from the bake sales were never put in the books. By definition, that is an illegal slush fund. The bake sales product is sold for a governmental entity on governmental property. Those monies go into the calculation for sales tax that the Village has to pay to the State of Ohio. The swim team may want to consider going forward becoming a 501(c)(3). It was discussed to have a larger discussion in the coming year about looking into how the Boosters work.

Solicitor McTigue offered to donate the money for the gift cards for the swim coaches.

Motion to Pay the Bills:

Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, to pay the bills as submitted. On roll call: six ayes, no nays. Mayor Brown noted that the water bill was high – Superintendent Scherpenberg said it was most likely from the pool. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Committee Reports:

Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mrs. Rankin to accept the recommendation of the Health and Recreation Committee which met on Thursday July 27th in Council Chambers. Present at the meeting were Health and Recreation Committee members Randy York (Chair), Susan Brownknight (Vice-Chair), and Matthew Ayer (Member). Also in attendance were Mayor Bill Brown, Administrator Chuck Barlow as well as trustees of MPF including Gail McBride, Janet Setchell, Rex Bevis, Bob Van Stone, and Ken White. The meeting commenced at 8:02 am. The purpose of the committee meeting was to review the design plan developed by the Mariemont Preservation Foundation for the construction of a shelter over the Family Statuary Group along with the redesign of the hardscape and landscaping in the area around the Family Statuary Group excluding the stone wall and steps along Plainville Road. Gail McBride and Janet Setchell presented the Dale Park design plan and included information on the history of the Family Statuary Group and research supporting the need for the

monument to be covered. They presented the evolution and justification for the design plan and provided details and justification of the hardscape and landscape plan. These plans were presented to the ARB on July 17th and the shelter, signage, lighting, and landscape components received a Certificate of Appropriateness from the ARB.

The Committee recognizes and commends MPF for their work, diligence, and vision. The design and proposal were well presented and thoroughly researched. The Committee unanimously recommends that the Village move forward with utilizing the MPF design to go out for bid for fund raising and budgeting purposes. The Committee recommends that the Village is not committing to naming or landscape details and that the design may be modified based upon budget and community input. Further, the Committee directs that Village Engineer Chris Ertel develop an itemized work list and bid package and that the Solicitor prepare the necessary legislation. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 am.

Mr. Ayer said he one hundred percent supports the project. He is not comfortable putting the project out to bid without a building schedule and engineer's estimate. He recommended amending the report to include the engineer's estimate as a back-up for applying for a grant application.

Engineer Ertel said there are components of the project that he will not be able to provide estimates for. He will need outside assistance from a structural engineer or registered architect. He suggested reaching out to A359 Architects. Mayor Brown agreed that we may be ahead of ourselves going out to bid. His understanding was A359 Architects was going to provide certain cost estimates.

Mr. Biff Black, Treasurer for MPF, said after talking with A359 it was said that costs really won't be known until the project is bid out. He has had some conversations regarding this matter with Building Official Holloway. Further discussion ensued with agreement that Engineer Ertel will work with architect Cori Cassidy of A359 Architects and Building Official Holloway to prepare project cost estimates of the various project segments. Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mrs. Rankin to amend the report to include that the 'Committee directs Village Engineer, Chris Ertel, to develop an engineer's estimate for the project'. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Dr. Lewis to accept the amended report. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Mrs. Brownknight moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee which met on Tuesday, August 1, 2023, at 3:00 pm to discuss renewing the Village's risk management insurance. Present at the meeting were Finance Committee Chair Rob Bartlett, Finance Committee Member Kelly Rankin, Mayor Bill Brown, Senior Administrative Assistant Joanee Van Pelt, Part Time Administrator Chuck Barlow and Karie Novesl from Hylant. The Finance Committee reviewed the proposal for risk management coverage from Hylant for 2023. If we did not change any of the coverage levels in the plan, the Village's cost would go from \$36,021 in 2022 to \$38,666 in 2023, an increase of \$2,645 or 7.3%. Karie Novesl from Hylant shared that the increase in the insurance rate was just 0.19% and that almost all of the increase in the premium was due to higher property and equipment values for the Village (+\$414,624), and an increase in operating expenditures of +\$112,789/year. The Finance Committee also discussed with Ms. Novesl the deductible associated with our cyber liability coverage. Currently, there are four different types of cyber issues that could lead to claims. Each cyber issue currently has a deductible of \$25,000, so if there was a cyber event that led to a claim in each area, that would mean the Village would be liable for up to \$100,000. At an additional cost of only \$421, the deductible for each of the cyber areas would be reduced to \$10,000, reducing the Village's exposure to \$40,000 in total. Given that we have had a cyber issue in the past four years, and that Eli Wendler will be stepping down as our IT manager at the end of this year, the Finance Committee believes it is prudent to spend the additional \$421/year for the lower deductible levels, for a total increase in cost of \$3,066. The Finance Committee voted unanimously to recommend the \$10,000 deductible for cyber coverage, resulting in a cost of \$39,087 for risk management insurance in 2023. If council agrees with this recommendation, this needs to be passed via resolution. Also, it needs to be effective by August 26, 2023, so the legislation will need to be passed as an emergency measure at the first council meeting in August.

Dr. Lewis said she was not at the meeting and asked that the reference to the ‘Committee voted unanimously to the Committee members in attendance voted unanimously’. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. York to accept the recommendation of the Safety Committee which met on Wednesday July 26, 2023, at 4:00 pm. Present at the meeting were Safety Committee members Matthew Ayer (Chair), Rob Bartlett (Vice Chair), Randy York (Member); Mayor Bill Brown; Village Engineer Chris Ertel; Council Member/Acting Fiscal Officer Kelly Rankin; and Administrator Chuck Barlow. The Safety Committee reviewed the two proposals received by Engineer Ertel in response to the Request for Proposal to conduct a traffic/safety study of the Miami/Hiawatha/Rembold intersection. Ertel noted that both firms were qualified, the Village had previous good experience with each of them, and the costs were similar (Choice One \$19,200, Kleingers \$20,800). As the Kleingers Group project team has previously presented a set of options for the intersection in its feasibility study, Ertel indicated that the Village could benefit from another group of traffic engineers building on the previous work. The Safety Committee unanimously agreed to recommend to Council that the Village select Choice One Engineering and proceed with the Study, at a cost of \$19,200. Costs would be tracked for reimbursement by the ODNR Clean Ohio Trails Fund grant and its corresponding local match from Tri-State Trails. The project award is needed expeditiously to meet the project schedule associated with the ODNR grant. Ertel agreed to draft the appropriate resolution with an emergency clause and forward to the Village Solicitor. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Miscellaneous:

- Village offices will be closed on September 4, 2023, in observance of Labor Day.
- Mayor Brown referred the matter of trash/recycling contract extension renewal to the Public Works and Service Committee.
- Safety Services Night Out will be August 21, 2023, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Resolutions:

- “To Convert and Appoint Village Zoning Officer, Rod Holloway, from Independent Contractor to Part-Time Village Employee Calendar Years 2023 and 2024” had a third reading. Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. York to adopt the Resolution. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Resolution No. R-34-23 was adopted.
- “To Renew Current Contract for the Following Kinds of Insurance; Real and Personal Property, Comprehensive General Liability, Business Automobile, and Other Coverages; To Pay Premiums; and To Declare Emergency” had a first reading. Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett to suspend the rules to allow for the second and third readings. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. The Resolution had a second and third reading. Mr. York moved, seconded by Mrs. Rankin to adopt the Resolution. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded to invoke the Emergency Clause. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Resolution No. R-35-23 was adopted.
- “Resolution Authorizing Mayor to Execute Contract with Choice One Engineering to Conduct the Miami/Rembold/Hiawatha and Mariemont Connector Intersection Study; and To Declare Emergency” had a first reading. Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mrs. Rankin to suspend the rules to allow for the second and third readings. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. The Resolution had a second and third reading. Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mrs. Rankin to adopt the Resolution. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Dr. Lewis to invoke the Emergency Clause. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Resolution No. R-36-23 was adopted.
- “To Authorize the Solicitation of Bids for the Dale Park Improvement Project” had a first reading. Dr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mrs. Rankin to table the Resolution. On roll call; six ayes, no nays.

Ordinances:

Task List and Committee Assignments:

Mr. Bartlett asked if the Village is applying for a brick-and-mortar grant for the Boathouse. There is a grant through the Ohio History Fund with the deadline being September 12, 2023. Mayor Brown said he looked at it and found some aspects that he is not sure the Boathouse would qualify for because it is not a designated historical structure on the Federal level. He believes we should wait until the roofing company looks at it and gives us a cost. Mr. Ayer volunteered to review the grant application.

Mr. Bartlett asked for an update on the Village website and the IT role replacement. Administrator Barlow said he believes Ms. Wendler is working with some tech advisors on the website. He will check with her on an update.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

William A. Brown, Mayor

Kelly I. Rankin, Interim Fiscal Officer