

**Village of Mariemont
Council Meeting
September 25, 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.

Mayor Brown said Police Officer Rachel Hays is being recommended by Chief Hines to be promoted to the rank of Sergeant. Police Chief Hines said Officer Hays has been with the department for 2 years with 6 years prior service at Colerain Police Department. She has been a great asset to the Village. Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mrs. Brownknight, to promote Officer Hays to the rank of Sergeant. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Sergeant Hays was sworn in by Mayor Brown. Her father placed the badge on her uniform. Chief Hines presented Sergeant Hays with a Certificate of Promotion.

Minutes:

Mr. Ayer moved, seconded by Mrs. Rankin to take off the table the minutes from the Council meeting August 28, 2023. Mr. Ayer moved, seconded by Mrs. Rankin, to approve the minutes as written for the August 28, 2023, Council meeting. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Mr. Ayer moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, to approve the minutes as written for the September 11, 2023, Council meeting. On roll call; four ayes, no nays (Mrs. Brownknight and Mrs. Rankin abstained due to their absence).

Communications:

*From Building Official Holloway: August 2023 Monthly Report.

*From Interim Fiscal Officer Rankin: August 2023 Monthly Report. She pointed out that the \$75,000 was a timing issue when the money came out of the Star Account and went into the PNC Account the next day. Also, the property tax revenue that we typically receive in August was received in September. It will be reflected on the September report. Council agreed that the Revenue Status and Appropriation Status reports could be done quarterly instead of monthly, however if the reports need to be tweaked going forward, Mrs. Rankin is happy to comply.

Permission to Address Council:

Mr. Syd Sabo, 3857 Indianview was granted permission to address Council. He wanted to address the impending destruction of Trolley Line Park at the request of the CROWN. This is not by choice of the residents of the neighborhood. They want their park preserved and want Council to represent the wishes of the neighborhood and the request. Since the start of this process, they have been treated to many options by the CROWN through Kleinger's Group. It has been repeatedly pointed out to them that Hiawatha, Rembold and the sidewalk along Rembold provide more than adequate room for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. There is no need to destroy our park for an additional roadway requested by CROWN. Just improve what is currently present. There is enough concrete and blacktop in our neighborhood. Since some members of Council may not be familiar with the Trolley Line Park nor live close to our neighborhood, we hope that Council is not indifferent to our request. The plain truth is Council will not have to live with the decision, but we will. We will have to look at a blacktop road where our park used to be. Children will no longer have a place to enjoy a pickup game of baseball, football or soccer. Kids and adults will not be able to play fetch with their dog. A 12' road through this green space will render it useless for these and other activities -activities that are part of the fabric of our neighborhood. What would be a viable, low cost, responsible alternative? Have bicycles share the road as they do now. Repair the Rembold sidewalk so it is not a gutter for rainwater. Install 4-foot sidewalk abutting Hiawatha for pedestrians. Our aim is not to deny access to users of the bike trail but to let it blend in and flow through our neighborhood responsibly. It is interesting that this issue comes at a time when Council is trying to raise funds

to improve Dogwood Park. One park on the south side of Wooster Pike gets first class treatment and the only recreational park on the north side is considered not worth saving. The residents of this neighborhood feel the Trolley line Park is worth saving. Do not sacrifice our park to the agenda of developers. He reminded Council that the conclusion of the UC Economics Analysis in the feasibility study states “UC Economics contends that the vast majority of pedestrian trips on the pathway will be residents using the pathway as a replacement for their existing walking trip as opposed to generating new walking trips”. This does not warrant spending a couple thousand of our tax dollars. Please do not sacrifice our only recreational park, easily accessible to us, to appease the interests of those who do not live here that only see Trolley Line Park as an available piece of ground they want to cover in asphalt.

He indicated that he submitted a letter to Mayor Brown with 50 signatures against the proposal.

Mayor Brown said he does not believe there are any Mariemont tax dollars being spent on that multi-use path. It is primarily funded by an ODNR grant with a 25% matching section grant from CROWN and private donations. Mr. Sabo said it is funded by taxpayer tax dollars.

Mr. Ayer said he is happy to talk with residents of the neighborhood. He believes there are means to address all of Mr. Sabo’s points. It is not accurate to say the park will be covered with asphalt and it will be rendered useless. A final alignment has not been completed.

Ms. Jennifer Degerberg, 3855 Oak Street, was granted permission to address Council. She is concerned about what is happening to the parks in the Village. We are fortunate to have so much green and family space for a Village of our size. One park that is deeply in need of renovation is Ann Buntin Becker Park which is north of Wooster Pike named after the first woman Council member in the Village. Many children live in the area, but the park has been mismanaged by the Waldorf School. She said Council needs to be careful with the steps being taken. We need to take time to be thoughtful and make sure that the past 100 years have been preparing the Village for the next 100 years going forward. The survey regarding Dogwood Park she feels is a bit misleading. The choices are either “A or B”...without including “none of the above”. She feels Council needs to careful that steps are being taken in the Village that we are going to regret.

Dr. Lewis said the Dale Park Renovation is a project that is being led by MPF with private grants. The financial responsibility would not be that of the Village. It is a centennial gift to the Village to preserve the statuary. Ms. Degerberg said her thoughts are it will lose its historical feel and look with a canopy over it. Council would have to agree to MPF’s request as the Village owns the Statuary and the land it sits on.

Mayor Brown said other parks are being considered for grants such as Hopkins Park. He and Mr. York met with Waldorf School regarding cleaning up Ann Buntin Becker Park. Dogwood Park gets attention because it is a largely used premier park.

Mr. Bartlett said there is a place holder for public discussion for what is best and most beneficial regarding Dogwood Park.

Mr. Terry Donovan, 6622 Pleasant Street, was granted permission to address Council. He is a member of the Pool Commission. He thanked Mayor Brown and members of Council for their support this past year. He also gave special thanks to Leah Geldbaugh for all her assistance. She was instrumental in hiring the new Pool Manager. Mr. York stepped up numerous times to help over the past few years with Council leadership. He looks forward to working with Mr. Ayer going forward. There was tremendous support from numerous volunteers this past year as well assisting with cleaning, landscaping etc. Members enjoyed participating in various exercises, social events and swim team. He thanked the new Pool Manager, Mike Lockhart, who trained a wonderful staff that was dedicated to a safe environment for all pool members. He has committed to returning and has lots of ideas for next year This was the highest income year on record for the pool, concluding with the smallest deficit the pool has had in the past nine years. The goal is to break even. Opening the membership to the school district

outside the Village increased membership by approximately 10%. We have more time in the upcoming year to get the word out.

Motion to Pay the Bills:

Mrs. Brownknight moved, seconded by Mr. York, to pay the bills as submitted. Mr. York said he will check with Engineer Ertel to see if the payment to Kleinger's Group was submitted to Hamilton County for reimbursement. Mayor Brown said the payment for the repair to the guardrail on Miami Road will also be reimbursed. On roll call: four ayes, no nays.

Committee Reports:

Miscellaneous:

- Leaf Season will begin Monday October 23, 2023 and end the week of December 18, 2023.
- Beggar's Night will be Tuesday October 31, 2023, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Resolutions:

- "To Appoint Steve Pipkin as a Member of the Parks Advisory Board for the 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-39-23 was adopted.
- "To Reappoint Brad Lockhart as a Member of the Architectural Review Board for the Calendar Years 2024 and 2025" had a first reading.
- "To Reappoint Tina Getter as a Member of the Architectural Review Board for the Calendar Years 2024 and 2025" had a first reading.
- "To Reappoint Brad Lockhart as a Member of the Parks Advisory Board for Calendar Year 2024" had a first reading.
- "To Reappoint Brian Kelly as a Member of the Pool Commission for the Calendar Years 2024 and 2025" had a first reading.
- "To Reappoint Tom Gilmore as a Member of the Pool Commission for the Calendar Years 2024 and 2025" had a first reading.
- "To Confirm the Reappointment of Michael Lockhart as Swim Pool Manager for Calendar Years 2024 and 2025" had a first reading.
- "To Reappoint Andrew Seeger as a Member of the South 80 Trails, Gardens and Park Advisory Board for the Calendar Year of 2024" had a first reading.
- "To Reappoint Steve Spooner as a Member of the South 80 Trails, Gardens and Park Advisory Board for the Calendar Year of 2024" had a first reading.
- "To Reappoint Mark Glassmeyer as a Member of the South 80 Trails, Gardens and Park Advisory Board for the Calendar Year of 2024" had a first reading.

- “To Reappoint John Fakes as a Member of the South 80 Trails, Gardens and Park Advisory Board for the Calendar Year of 2024” had a first reading.
- “To Reappoint Jon Morgan as a Member of the South 80 Trails, Gardens and Park Advisory Board for the Calendar Year of 2024” had a first reading.
- “To Reappoint Barbara Whittaker as a Voting Member of the Tree Advisory Board for the Calendar Year 2024” had a first reading.
- “To Reappoint Marcy Lewis as a Non-Voting Member of the Tree Advisory Board for the Calendar Years 2024 and 2025” had a first reading.
- “A Resolution Authorizing Filing Application with Ohio Department of Natural Resources and Agreement to Obligate Funds to Complete Project Through the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Program; and To Declare Emergency” had a first reading. Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mr. York, 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. Ayer moved, seconded by Mr. York moved to adopt the Resolution. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. Ayer, to invoke the emergency clause. On roll call; six ayes, no nays. Resolution No. R-40-23 was adopted.

Ordinances:

- “To Amend Section 51.17 of the Mariemont Code of Ordinances, To Increase Fees Collected for Garbage and Refuse Pick-Up” had a first reading.

Task List:

Mr. Bartlett asked for an update on the Village website. The contract expires in April 2024. Mayor Brown said he is actively working on that and also filling the IT position.

Mr. Bartlett asked if the backfill for the positions becoming available in the Service Department should be put on the Task List. Mrs. Rankin said the organization of the Service Department is in her department, but just as important is getting people. It is premature to say if the Public Works Committee would be the one to post and interview for the positions without talking with Administrator Barlow. Mr. Bartlett said it is important to define the roles and post those positions. Mr. Ayer said it would be ideal to have overlap work time. Mr. York asked if Superintendent Scherpenberg and Mr. Schmid were asked to put together a continuity plan. They are very valuable and with them leaves all their intellectual knowledge of loyal service to the Village for 25+ years. Mrs. Rankin believes that Superintendent Scherpenberg is working on putting something together.

Mr. Bartlett asked for an update on the Fiscal Officer position. He appreciates the job Mrs. Rankin is doing but he believes it is important to post the position. The Center for Local Government has a place for posting positions.

Mr. Bartlett asked if MPF applied for the French Art Grant for the Family Statuary. Dr. Lewis said MPF is exploring applying for the grant as well as multiple other grants.

Mr. Ayer said he distributed a picture of the beautiful work that Mayor Brown has done at the west end of the Concourse.

Mrs. Brownknight noted that she is having trouble signing into her Mariemont.org account and asked that her gmail account be used in the interim. Mrs. Van Pelt said she will contact Mrs. Wendler to look into the matter.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

William A. Brown, Mayor

Kelly I. Rankin, Interim Fiscal Officer