

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL
VILLAGE OF MARIEMONT, OHIO
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER
NOVEMBER 12, 2012**

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. The following Council members were present: Mr. Andrews, Ms. McCarthy, Mr. Miller, Mr. Scheeser, Mr. Stelzer and Mr. Wolter.

Mr. Miller said the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the frequency of the Council meetings from two times per month to once per month.

Mr. Stelzer said the Village made a decision to reduce the number of meetings that the Solicitor and Village personnel were asked to attend in order to save money. Some meetings we have issues where it would have been helpful to have the Solicitor present. The question is would it be more efficient to reduce the number of meetings to once a month versus twice per month and then have everyone in attendance. The other issue we were looking at is the length of the meetings which over the summer were very short being less than 30 minutes. The Solicitor put together an analysis of other communities and approximately 50% are doing monthly meetings. The other concern was the passage of legislation with more emergency clauses and timely payment of bills. An e-mail was received from former Councilman, Rex Bevis, outlining his opposition to the change.

Mr. Wolter said he would agree with Mr. Bevis and would like to see the meetings continue twice per month. He thinks it is good for Council to get together eye to eye and communicate. Some on Council have busy travel schedules and missing a meeting would mean missing a whole month. His concern is the perception on the part of the Village that Council does things on the fly and we are not being transparent as we should be. It would not give the residents an opportunity to come in and speak but once per month. For those reasons he is against going for once per month meetings.

Mr. Scheeser said he agrees with Mr. Wolter. Our job is to make our job description as appealing as possible for those that come after us. So for him a less of an ask might be more appealing to ask people to sign up for a four year commitment. But Mr. Wolter and Mr. Bevis's comments bring up valid points. Transparency will go down and decision making will take a hit too.

Mr. Miller said he is torn between the two. He does not think the transparency will be affected that much. He thinks we might get more feedback from the residents going to once per month meetings. When you get a commitment from someone to run for office he feels we might be losing some people because of the 24 meetings per year. Having only 12 meetings may be more attractive. He believes it is in people's character to talk with each other and those that do not want to talk with each other are not going to do so at a Council meeting. If we need to call a special meeting we can certainly do so. People show up not because there is a meeting but because there is a topic of interest to them.

Mr. Andrews said his sentiments are closer to Mr. Wolter and Mr. Scheeser's. His experience has always been that the summer meetings are shorter in nature. We had a few meetings that were very short. He would rather see the meetings stay twice per month with the summer months (June, July and August) be shortened to once per month. In those months if there is a need to call a second meeting it can be done. Typically when we miss a meeting it tends to be in the summer. If we did go to monthly meetings, aside from residents having fewer chances to come in, there will be a need to do more emergencies. If you miss a monthly meeting then you go so long in between meetings.

Mayor Policastro said he has heard of communities alternating two meetings per month then followed by a month with only one meeting. The consensus of Council was that would be too confusing for people to remember. Mr. Miller suggested altering the starting time to 7:00 p.m. which was agreed upon by Council.

After further discussion, it was agreed to continue the meetings on the second and fourth Monday of the months, except June, July and August which will be held once per month the second Monday of the month. All meetings will begin at 7:00 p.m. beginning January 2013. Mr. Scheeser voiced some concern with not having 24 meetings per year. Mr. Andrews said if it does not work we can always change it back. The Committee report will ask the Solicitor to prepare the necessary legislation.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Dan Policastro, Mayor

Anthony J. Borgerding, Clerk