

Village of Thurston
Council Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2019

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by Mayor Mary Boring. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll call: Robert Ortman – present JoAnn Hite – present Jimmy Barber JR - absent
 Scott Whited – present Lowell Hite – present Heather Baker - present
 Mary Boring, Mayor – present Aaron Reedy, Fiscal Officer – present

No visitors wished to speak.

Robert made a motion to approve the October 2019 meeting minutes. Scott seconded. Roll call vote: all YES. Motion carried. Scott made a motion to approve the October 2019 financial statement. Robert seconded. Roll call vote: all YES. Motion carried. Robert made a motion to approve the October 15, 2019 special meeting minutes. Scott seconded. Roll call vote: all YES. Motion carried. Mary asked for a motion to waive council pay for the October 15 special meeting. Robert made a motion. No seconds – motion did not carry.

Heather made a motion to waive the 3-reading rule and declare an emergency for Ordinance 2019-16 – An Ordinance to Amend the 2019 Appropriations Ordinance and the Declaration of an Emergency. Scott seconded. Roll call vote: all YES. Motion carried.

Heather made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2019-16 – An Ordinance to Amend the 2019 Appropriations Ordinance and the Declaration of an Emergency. Robert seconded. Roll call vote: all YES. Motion carried.

Business from Fire Chief - Chief Jim Hite was not present at the time – meeting continued.

Business from the Safety Committee - None

Business from the Service Committee – None

Business from the Finance Committee – Didn't meet.

Business from the Regional Planning Representative – Robert said there was nothing that concerned the Village.

Old Business – Account # 19 – Aaron said it's been 4 months since the meter has been replaced and the average monthly usage is 4,500 gallons. Aaron explained that though these readings don't prove there was an issue with the previous water meter, it also doesn't prove there wasn't. Council discussed. Heather made a motion to credit account #19 for \$319.02 for the estimated overage charge of 20,990 gallons over the previous 4 months. Scott seconded. Roll call vote: all YES. Motion carried.

New Business – Mary asked when Council wanted to have the annual Christmas dinner. It was agreed that it would be on 12/7/2019 at 5:00pm. (Post meeting, this was changed to 12/14/2019 at 5:00p.m.)

Scott Whited's position on the Walnut Creek Sewer District Board of Trustees expires at the end of this year. Robert made a motion to re-appoint Scott Whited to that position. Heather seconded. Roll call vote: all YES, with Scott abstaining. Motion carried.

Mary brought a quote from National Safe and Security Systems Inc for \$9,015 to replace the current security system at the municipal building. The new system will have better cameras and better coverage than the old one. There's been an issue with trying to make out people's faces on the old one, and we've been having to call for a lot of service issues. Scott made a motion to accept the quote from National Safe and Security for \$9,015 and get the new system. Heather seconded. Roll call vote: all YES. Motion carried.

Mary announced that the furnace in the museum that heats the offices and museum is on its last leg. Service has been called, and they are suggesting getting a new one. She will get quotes.

Mary asked for a motion to have Gary Kern power wash the holding tank at the water plant. Robert made motion to have him do this, Scott seconded. Roll call vote: all YES. Motion carried.

Mary said that Barber's Towing is donating a lift to be used to put up Christmas ornaments this year and Jamie Carroll will be hanging them.

Chief Jim Hite was now present at the meeting so mayor asked him to present. Chief presented his reports. He asked who from Council would be witnessing the testing of Kent Leitnaker. Heather volunteered. Jim said he's had knee surgery lately and can't do the physical testing right now. Chief Hite brought up the possible issue of there being special needs for testing for Leitnaker. Council discussed and agreed that if he wants to take the test in the normal fashion, he can. If special accommodations are necessary, we would have to review the special request and have that reviewed by the Village Solicitor and/or a representative from the State Fire Marshall's office, or someone else from the state.

Mary told Jim that this is his last verbal warning in terms of reporting fire department vehicle accidents to her. She has stated in the past that she wants notified any time there is an accident. A recent accident went unreported. Jim said there's times he doesn't know right away, or it's in the middle of the night, or it's just a small accident. Mary made it clear that she wants notified immediately of any accident, no matter how small, or when it is. She wants to know when he knows.

Robert made a motion to approve the purchase orders and new vendors as presented in the Chief's report. Scott seconded. Roll call vote: all YES. Motion carried.

Jim asked about the American flags around the Village. Mary asked they take them down any day after Veterans Day. Mary said that Detria Hiles is going to work on repairing and cleaning the flags for the Village – and possibly get new brackets. Detria was present and Mary expressed her gratitude to Detria.

Chief Hite said he would rather not have the fire department be responsible for installing and removing the flags around the Village as they have for several years. He said it's a possible worker's comp issue. He's had to deal with people calling the fire department and complaining of issues with the flags, or with people's garbage cans causing issues, or other issues not related to the fire department. Mary and Aaron suggested he direct those people to call the Village office. Chief Hite continued complaining about all the unnecessary calls they get down there. He was told that it happens everywhere, and just direct them to the proper authority. He went on and said that then people will complain that they aren't helpful at the fire department. The conversation went into an almost endless, nonsensical loop. He somehow just wanted people to stop calling the fire department for non-fire department-related issues. No one has such power to make that happen.

Firefighter Mike Rogers was present and said that he was representing the Thurston firefighters about the Evan Martin situation. They were upset that they were not given the opportunity to attend last month's special meeting between the Village and the Township. Mary said it was a public meeting (however, the posted sign did state they would probably be going into executive session). Rogers said they have an issue that Millersport Chief Price was present at that meeting representing Evan Martin. Rogers said that FF Martin is constantly causing problems. He doesn't come to work or training. He lies about situations. Rogers said he was defamed by Evan Martin to the Lancaster Fire Department where Rogers is trying to get hired on. He said FF Martin doesn't do his job. FF Rogers said he wants the voice of the firefighters to be heard. He said they were disappointed in how the minutes from that meeting were put out and made people look bad. FF Rogers said that

Evan Martin has been a detriment to the department. He had to use the folks from Millersport Fire Department to support him because he can't find anyone in Thurston to defend him.

Firefighters Gallo and Thatcher were also present and stated they didn't like that they were talked about by Millersport Fire. FF Thatcher said he had written a statement about a situation on a run, and Chief Price defended Martin, but Thatcher wasn't able to defend what he wrote. They briefly discussed the run in question. FF Thatcher has an issue with the Millersport Chief calling him a liar.

Heather Baker said we should have another meeting with the Township so that all affected members can be present. John Layton was present and said this needs to end; it's been going on for months. The firefighters present all state they love the community and their job. They come a long way to work (i.e. Galloway, Gahanna), so they feel very strongly about this. Rogers, Thatcher & Gallo would like to meet with the Trustees. Mary told them if they wanted to meet with the Trustees to go to their meeting. Layton said he would like the hiring process to be re-vamped completely.

FF Gallo showed concerns about scheduling/payroll. Mary said there are reporting issues related to payroll and that there are three different places where things are being handled. The Township Trustees and Mary have concerns regarding the accuracy of the payroll being submitted and the process. FF Gallo said no one is recognizing there's a solid group of people who are being positive about the department. Everyone present just wants something to be done.

FF Rogers aid that Jimmy Barber and Bill Yates should recuse themselves of being the ones looking into the situation because of their relationship with Evan Martin. Mary said those two people are the ones that know the most about running a fire department and the politics thereof.

As there was no further business to discuss, JoAnn made a motion to adjourn at 8:20 pm. Scott seconded. Roll call vote: all YES. Motion carried.

Respectfully prepared by,

Aaron Reedy