

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2024
REGULAR MINUTES/JOURNAL**

PLEDGE

President of Council Paolone: We lost a former employee of the city, 38 year employee of the city, John Villecco, police captain, passed away last night, so can we please have a moment of silence for John. Thank you. John was a good guy.

ROLL CALL

PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL	MR. REYNALD J. PAOLONE	PRESENT
FIRST WARD COUNCILMAN	MR. KEITH SCHUBERT	PRESENT
SECOND WARD COUNCILMAN	MR. MARK STANDOHAR	PRESENT
THIRD WARD COUNCILMAN	MR. JEFF KAY	PRESENT
FOURTH WARD COUNCILMAN	MR. THOMAS GRUMLEY	PRESENT
COUNCILMAN-AT-LARGE	MS. LILY MARTUCCIO	PRESENT
COUNCILMAN-AT-LARGE	MR. JOHN MOLITERNO	ABSENT
COUNCILMAN-AT-LARGE	MR. SAM ZIRAFI	PRESENT

MOTION GRUMLEY SECOND KAY TO EXCUSE COUNCILMAN MOLITERNO FROM THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 26, 2024.

SCHUBERT
STANDOHAR
KAY 2
GRUMLEY 1
MARTUCCIO
MOLITERNO Absent
ZIRAFI
MOTION PASSES 6-0

COMMUNICATIONS

ADDITIONS & DELETIONS

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

MOTION KAY SECOND SCHUBERT TO ACCEPT THE AGENDA OF FEBRUARY 26, 2024 AS WRITTEN.

SCHUBERT 2
STANDOHAR
KAY 1
GRUMLEY
MARTUCCIO
MOLITERNO Absent
ZIRAFI
MOTION PASSES 6-0

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

MOTION ZIRAFI SECOND MARTUCCIO TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 12, 2024 AS WRITTEN.

SCHUBERT
STANDOHAR
KAY
GRUMLEY Abstain
MARTUCCIO 2
MOLITERNO Absent
ZIRAFI 1
MOTION PASSES 5-0

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Susan ala LuLu Zirafi, 441 North Ward Ave.: My question is I would like to know what the plan is for the blighted property at 349 Forsythe Ave.? It is probably not on your list. It has been empty for 2 years. It is destroyed inside from the last people that moved out. There are holes in roof where squirrels are jumping in, and it has got everyone in the neighborhood quite upset. I believe they tore the toilet out of the floor when they moved out so in the summer and a lot of the windows are open, but in the summer all condensation and everything inside. The windows fill with condensation probably from the open sewer hole that is in bathroom and somebody about a year ago tossed a brick through one of the windows and when the detectives and police officers came up to investigate it they said that house is destroyed and needs to be red tagged and that was a year ago and I believe someone either, I believe they are in Pompeno, Florida and they have an apartment address, owns the place but it is destroyed. I'm tired of looking at it.

President of Council Paolone: I understand. I am going to give this one to the mayor. I'm not sure if he is aware of it or not. **Zirafi:** 349, it's on the corner of Forsythe and Ward, right across from me, right across from me.

Mayor Zuppo: I don't recognize the address but **Paolone:** Neither do I Lu. **Zirafi:** 349. It is right across from my house on Ward and Forsythe. Scrapy Zirafi's house. Thank God he is not alive to see this because the last people that were in there were going down the plasma place in Youngstown to get money to go to Wal-Mart and they'd bring back people and rent rooms for \$50 a month. Whoever they could find at that plasma place to bring back and it was disturbing. I stopped watching tv. I just looked out the front door. **Paolone:** Now that you've come I can pretty much guarantee someone will be out. Mark, it will be done. **Zirafi:** I hope so. It is really in bad, bad shape and it stinks. There is a smell coming out of there in the summer that is horrific. **Paolone:** Thank you. Mayor you have the floor. **Zirafi:** 349 Forsythe. **Mayor:** I got it. I wrote it down. I certainly know where your house is. **Zirafi:** Oh good. Yea. It's famous. It shouldn't be in front of that. **Mayor:** We just went through a list of blighted homes in conjunction with the health department and I don't recognize that but it doesn't mean it's not on it. I will check tomorrow and if it is not on it we will get the zoning people up there and start taking action. **Zirafi:** I appreciate it. **Mayor:** Absolutely.

Attorney Kren: Towards the second half of last year I do know that we had, through I think either the planning commission or the health department, applying for a grant for demolishing buildings and we had sent them a list of properties. Now, I can't say for sure what properties were on it, but if that gets granted then the county would be tearing them down for us. If not, then the alternative is for us always to declare them unfit and then we would have to tear them down. **Mayor:** So, the list that Brian is referring to is the list we are working on. What the health department has told us is that we need to and the neighborhood planning people too, they needed us to go and vet that list because we found there were a lot of addresses on that list that were like vacant lots. So we had to go through that list and it has been a process that we have been working and I think we have completed it now. If it is not on that list then I will get in touch with the health department tomorrow and we'll get working on it. You have someone from the board of health sitting right behind you by the way. **Paolone:** LuLu, any more comments or we're going to move on. **Zirafi:** Well when I went on Zillow that house is \$102, mine is \$82. So, that shows you how accurate Zillow is.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS OF THE CITY

MAYOR

MARK ZUPPO

PRESENT

Mayor Zuppo: I attended a block watch meeting, I can't remember what day that was Lil. **Councilwoman Martuccio:** Last week. **Mayor:** Yes, last week sometime. An hour and a half of grilling. It went pretty well though. The group was very positive for the most part. **Martuccio:** Thank you for attending. **Mayor:** I hosted a luncheon for all of our ecumenical people in the community. Father Jordan was gracious enough to host it at St. Rose because he has a dining room and we don't. We had a lot of people from all of the churches, most of the churches showed up from Girard. It was a good meeting and we developed a group out there that I think wants to do some volunteer work and helping people who can't help themselves fix their homes up and stuff like that. Somebody made eye contact with me and I made him the chairman of that group. It is going to be continuing forward. They meet every Wednesday morning at Olgun's for breakfast, so I will probably be down there meeting with them this Wednesday morning for breakfast. In case you don't know, the gym is now open. We have two part-timers down there helping Mike now. If you want, I know that Councilman Schubert asked me about it this evening, call Mike Cardiero to schedule. We have strict rules. Don't be thinking you are going to walk in off the street with your shoes, but it is open. Mike said the volleyball leagues are ready to start up starting next week I

believe. He has gotten equipment to accommodate pickleball in the gym and we're setting up for pickleball at Tod Park and some other fun stuff recreation wise. We have the concerts in the park starting up again. We already hired all of the bands for the summer at Tod Park. We have got disc golf. I don't know if I mentioned that last meeting or not, but in case I didn't, disc golf will be getting set up at Liberty Park. We spent the money on that already and that can actually be self-sufficient. We are going to try to get sponsors to sponsor their holes and so the \$8,000 we spent up front or thereabouts, Jullie I'm sure we are somewhere in that ballpark, right? **Auditor:** Yes. **Mayor:** We can probably recoup that. So that is another activity for people in Girard that won't really cost anything for us to manage. We had a meeting today with KO Consulting to go over our list of grants, grant requests. We have a bunch on our list. I can tell you our top priority remains the dam at the lakes and the Wellman Theater is second on our list. We feel very confident about getting some funding for the dam from both the state and federal level, and we feel very confident about some opportunities to do some partnering at the theater. I can't say much more than that about that at this time. Finally, I would like to point out that we are very close to, we reworked our website. We have a brand new website that we will be launching. It will be very exciting for the community. My goal was to have anything and everything that you would want to know about Girard on that website. The young man who is putting it together for us, there is going to be some exciting stuff, including artificial intelligence and stuff like that. We are going to be at the forefront. We are going to have something that no other community of our size in Northeast Ohio has. We are hoping to get with the department heads in the next few days and add some more information and you should be able to go on that site. If you moved into Girard and went to our website you should be able to get anything you'd ever want to know about the community, services, activities, etc. from our website. That's our goal. That concludes my report Mr. Chairman.

COMMENTS:

Councilman Schubert: Do we have any idea of a timeframe of the results of the upper dam that was just done? **Mayor:** So we have been told the end of February and here we are the 26th. Believe me we ask Dennis every day. Sal, do you want to expand on that? **Sal Ponzio:** I talked to Dennis at 3:30 his afternoon and as of that time he was trying to call Verdantis to get the final results and they didn't get them yet. **Mayor:** I get the feeling we are going to get the call at 4:30 on the 29th. **Councilman Kay:** Good thing they get that extra day.

Attorney Kren: Will there be a polka band? **Mayor:** I think there may be a polka band. Yes I do.

SAFETY/SERVICE DIRECTOR

SALVATORE PONZIO

PRESENT

Salvatore Ponzio: Just some updates. We have been busy putting some projects out for bids. I mentioned at the finance meeting, the salt barn. The bid opening will be March 7th at city hall. The projected completion date will be July 26th. In a perfect world that is going to happen. The Tibbetts Wick and Churchill pumpstation bids will be open on March 14th. The plan is to have Churchill completed by August 16, 2024 and Tibbetts Wick cannot start until July because of state funding and that completion date is set for November 6, 2024. We also have been busy, we told you before, we asked for qualification statements from area engineering firms. Dennis Meek is going to retire at some point this year. He is staying on for a transition period. We got more than a dozen reports to review and after narrowing down the list to the best 4 candidates we had a selection committee and a grading scale. It was very close. We had companies like CT Consultants, GPD Group, MS Consultants, and Thomas Fok & Associates made the final four and the firm that scored the highest was MS Consultants. They are going to be our engineer of record for the city in the future, and along those lines we will be asking for legislation to contract with MS Consultants. On to our building department and zoning. I don't know if you know we had our commercial person that reviewed our commercial plans and inspections for work is not able to do it anymore so we have been trying to find someone else to do this and after extensive research trying to find an individual we settled on the Trumbull County building inspector. This will be a long-term solution. When we have a big commercial project they will be able to help us review the plans and then come do the inspections. We also be asking for legislation to enter contract with the Trumbull County to let them do the commercial plan reviews and that's my report.

COMMENTS:

Councilman Grumley: Sal, will they be doing residential also? **Ponzio:** We are working on getting a person, for residential, Tom, you need just a certification. You don't have to be a PE or have additional licenses to do that. So, we are trying to find someone to do that. Our engineer that we had, Joe Sanson, let his certificate expire so he can't do that anymore. We had a person in today interviewing them. They did not have the certification which is required by the State. You have to have at least a certification to be able to do residential. So that is still a possibility to find an individual to do that. Joe told me, Sanson said last year we only did 10 or 12 residential inspections. **Grumley:** I was one of them. **Ponzio:** The

good news Tom is that if we don't, Trumbull County building department can do that for us also. That is part of what we are talking about. **Grumley:** That is why I was asking if they were going to assume that also. **Ponzio:** The important thing is we don't want to stop any progress so there are some projects that are coming forward, and we don't want to stop them because we don't have someone to review our plans right now. We are working diligently. There is some work we have to do and there will be some ordinances coming your way to allow us to work under Trumbull County for this. **Schubert:** Will the permits still be pulled here or at the county? **Ponzio:** Some of those will still be pulled, you can still come to Girard to get your zoning permit for things like fences that don't require a review like that, but you will be going through Trumbull County for big projects. If there is a new building, going up or a roof on UPS or something you'd have to go through Trumbull County. **Mayor:** I was just going to say actually Sal and I had another chance to talk since Sal left and I left this afternoon, but there is a possibility that we found something in the Revised Code that will allow someone to use years of experience instead of certification. We've got this person that was in today calling state tomorrow to see if that is indeed the case. If it is he is definitely interested in helping us out. This is just for the residential.

LAW DIRECTOR

BRIAN KREN

PRESENT

Attorney Kren: I don't have a report of my own. Just to follow up on what the service director said, I am sure in the course of this you may also have to amend the permit schedules to properly have them in compliance with whatever the county has in addition but we will work that out as we negotiate the contract with the county.

COMMENTS:

AUDITOR

JULIE COGGINS

PRESENT

Ms. Coggins: A few things also with this. All of the monies would basically be going to Trumbull County too even if we have someone who does residential? We would keep the residential? Is that? **Ponzio:** We would and I think for I don't know enough about zoning to answer that correctly, but my understanding was when people come in for smaller projects like fences or sheds that is still Girard's permit and doesn't require a review by anybody to review that, so fences, there is a list of things that we can still do. Whether we want to increase fees for those types of things, we can look at that too. **Coggins:** Because that would be my only concern losing, I forget his name who did it before. **Ponzio/Mayor:** Doug Kearns. **Coggins:** Doug Kearns was the city did bring in all the revenue for those projects. **Kay:** What kind of revenue is that? **Coggins:** I would have to look exactly at the numbers for the commercial but I mean zoning in general brings in around \$70,000 a year. **Grumley:** I was over \$900 for an addition, so. **Paolone:** When did I lose control? (There was conversation between all.) **Coggins:** So basically I would have to look at the differences between what is going to Trumbull County and what is going to stay in Girard. **Kay:** Yea. I wouldn't want to lose that zoning that we're getting the regular smaller stuff. **Mayor:** I was just going to say and I think Sal was saying the same thing, we are not losing that. We would lose commercial building inspections. That's what we would lose. **Schubert:** Not the residential? **Mayor:** That's if we could keep our residential engineer and the zoning permits are all going to stay here. **Kren:** Our fee structure whether commercial or residential has always been like a percentage of the project. One could argue that that is an illegal taxation. I'm not sure if other communities do it that way or it should be a flat fee. So whether they stay in house or not whether we revisit that that might be an issue financially anyway. But it always struck me odd that we wetted our beak every time someone had a project. **Grumley:** I would just hope that if we have to go to Trumbull County for residential that we can make sure that they set up some type of online service. **Mayor:** That was discussed. **Coggins:** The only thing that we talked about the camera money during finance and I had mentioned the Wellman Theater. I didn't give the numbers. I do want to give those. So this is for the first month, the month of January, that the Wellman Theater and the bike trail received money from the camera money. The bike trail, the 1%, we created a new line item for that. The camera money was low but the bike trail received a little less than \$700 this month and the Wellman Theater was 3% so that amount was \$2000 that went to the Wellman for the month of January and then, with that being said, because we established the Wellman Theater fund for the month of January for this money to go into we are also posting, going to begin to post, we started in January, the revenue that we receive from the church that rents that out which is \$900 a month that will also go into the theater fund starting the beginning of this year.

COMMENTS:

TREASURER

HENRY SFORZA

PRESENT

Mr. Sforza: No report this evening.

COMMENTS:

FIRE CHIEF **JAMES PETRUZZI** **PRESENT**
Chief Petruzzi: Calls to date, 324. First off I would like to thank council and the safety committee for allowing me to speak on potentially bringing back a city run ambulance service. Also, I provided everybody with a copy of our 2023 annual report. The only other thing I have, we currently have three individuals in school right now to be certified as fire safety inspectors.

COMMENTS:

POLICE CHIEF **JOHN NORMAN** **ABSENT**

COMMENTS:

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCES-MOLITERNO-GRUMLEY-ZIRAFI

Councilman Grumley: We met this evening and received a full report from the auditor and I don't really have anything else to add.

COMMENTS:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-KAY-MARTUCCIO-MOLITERNO

Councilman Kay: No report.

COMMENTS:

BUILDING & GROUNDS-SCHUBERT-STANDOHAR-KAY

Councilman Schubert: The mayor gave a great report so I will piggyback off of him.

COMMENTS:

HEALTH & SAFETY-GRUMLEY-MOLITERNO-MARTUCCIO

Councilman Grumley: As the chief alluded to, we met this evening to discuss the feasibility of bringing back the city run ambulance service and we are going to continue to meet. I will have a meeting date at the next meeting.

COMMENTS:

STREETS SIDEWALKS & EMPLOYEE WELFARE-STANDOHAR-KAY-GRUMLEY

Councilman Standohar: I think we are probably about due in March, either the first or second meeting, to bring back last year's street list as Committeeperson Grumley stated, we need to look at last year's list. Also, would ask the auditor to give us an idea the next meeting or so as far as what you think a reasonable budget is for the street paving program for 2024 and we can go from there. We have some mild weather certainly forecast over the next week or so, so a good time for everybody to drive around and get a good snapshot of what we want to accomplish this year in the paving program. Thank you.

COMMENTS:

UTILITIES-ZIRAFI-SCHUBERT-STANDOHAR

Councilman Zirafi: I am going to be calling some meetings shortly. There are a lot of issues that we have to discuss. Per your suggestion, we are going to be discussing the garbage. We are going to make it part of the utility committee because we have to review it going forward and the financial impact it is going to have on the city. **Paolone:** There definitely is one. **Zirafi:** There is definitely an impact. I just want it to be known that we are going to be holding meetings and I will get some dates from them when they are going to be available.

COMMENTS:

ZONING-MARTUCCIO-ZIRAFI-SCHUBERT

Councilwoman Martuccio: Zoning there is a March 11th zoning meeting scheduled at 6:30. I want to thank the mayor for attending the block watch on February 15th and speaking and answering questions with the citizens that were there. I have a question for the police chief regarding, or maybe Sal, driving around the city, and I have also received complaints about cars parking so close to corners that it's hard to see turning those corners, so should we call the police department when we see those? Will they give them a citation of warning or, because there are several consistent violators on that and that was my concern there. And then I wanted to ask about our streetlights on 422. Some of them are out so how do,

how does that work that we get those, do we call First Energy? **Ponzio:** You're not talking about the traffic lights? You're talking about the streetlights. **Martuccio:** Streetlights. You know we have to be home by the streetlights so. **Grumley:** I've dealt with that situation a few times. What you have to do Lil is stop and there is a tag on the pole, get the tag number and **Mayor:** Call us. **Grumley:** I don't have the name of the person we had but she came to council before. **Mayor:** It's a new person. He has been in to meet with us already. So when you get the number. That's the key, Tom. When you get the number off the pole call us and we'll call Troy. I got one taken care of just last week. **Martuccio:** Ok. Great. Thank you. **Mayor:** He's been very responsive. **Martuccio:** I think that's it. **Mayor:** Lily, excuse me, I would say the same thing about the parked cars. Instead of different councilmen calling the police department, call us. Me or Sal and we'll talk to John. **Martuccio:** Thank you. **Grumley:** Just a quick question. The cans from Republic, the cans that are still on the street or the curb or whatever, is there any way that we can have maybe the street department go around and just pull them to the side of the vacant houses and everything. I'm just afraid that they are going to start disappearing or get hit or whatever goes on. **Ponzio:** You're referring to ones that people have not collected themselves yet? **Grumley:** Yes. They are vacant homes. **Ponzio:** I'm not sure if they can move them on their property, but I told Tom Watts to certainly move them off the street so they're not, because when they first started they were leaving some of them in the middle of the streets, and we had to tell them you cannot leave them in the streets. So, at least they are putting them on the curb. On the devil strip then. **Grumley:** I was just afraid that they were going to start disappearing or whatever.

COMMENTS:

THEATER COMMITTEE-MARTUCCIO-MOLITERNO-SCHUBERT

Councilwoman Martuccio: I'd like to I'll call administration to meet with, to have a meeting about a potential program in June.

COMMENTS:

RULES-GRUMLEY-STANDOHAR-SCHUBERT

Councilman Grumley: The only rule changes I have are the ones that you submitted to me, so without any other changes I will give them to Monica or if somebody else has some I can wait, but. **Paolone:** If we can have it in the packets for the next meeting we vote and be done with it.

COMMENTS:

ORDINANCES

52-07

SECOND READING

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE DISTRIBUTION RATES FOR INCOME TAX COLLECTIONS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2024 AND DECLARING IT AN EMERGENCY.

MOTION KAY SECOND ZIRAFI TO SUSPEND THE THIRD READING OF ORDINANCE 52-07.

SCHUBERT
STANDOHAR
KAY 1
GRUMLEY
MARTUCCIO
MOLITERNO Absent
ZIRAFI 2

MOTION PASSES 6-0

MOTION KAY SECOND ZIRAFI FOR PASSAGE OF ORDINANCE 52-07.

SCHUBERT
KAY 1
GRUMLEY
MARTUCCIO
MOLITERNO Absent
ZIRAFI 2

MOTION PASSES 6-0

52-08

SECOND READING

AN ORDINANCE CREATING ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2024 IN THE CITY OF GIRARD, OHIO.

MOTION KAY SECOND ZIRAFI TO SUSPEND THE THIRD READING OF ORDINANCE 52-08.

SCHUBERT
KAY 1
GRUMLEY
MARTUCCIO
MOLITERNO Absent
ZIRAFI 2
MOTION PASSES 6-0

MOTION KAY SECOND ZIRAFI FOR PASSAGE OF ORDINANCE 52-08.

SCHUBERT
KAY 1
GRUMLEY
MARTUCCIO
MOLITERNO Absent
ZIRAFI 2
MOTION PASSES 6-0

52-09

FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO HIRE NO MORE THAN SIX (6) TEMPORARY SEASONAL EMPLOYEES.

Paolone: Sal, do you need this? **Mayor:** It can wait and I want to point out really so we weren't making Brian create a whole new, we are probably only going to hire 4 since we hire those other 2. Just so you know. As long as we get it passed by April 1st, unless Julie sees a reason we need it before then. **Paolone:** Julie, do we need this? **Coggins:** It depends on when they want to hire them. **Mayor:** Yes. That's true. April 1st is when we want to start them. As long as it passes the first meeting of March we should be good. **Paolone:** Why don't we just suspend the rules and pass it? **Mayor:** That's up to you guys. I don't want to be in the habit of asking to suspend. **Paolone:** I understand. I get it. **Standohar:** The next meeting? The first meeting of March? **Grumley:** I need to clarify it's going to be 4 and not 6. **Paolone:** First reading? We're good? **Martuccio:** At our last meeting we asked for 4 in our minutes for this legislation. So, I don't know if we need to change it to 4 or keep it at 6. **Kay:** It says no more than. **Martuccio:** No more than 4. **Grumley:** For clarity at the next meeting we'll amend it.

NEW LEGISLATION

Kay: I want to revisit the trash cans real fast here. So, they are ours now? We are responsible for it? I'm responsible for that trash can if somebody takes it do I owe Republic? Do I have to buy another one off of them? How does it work? Just wondered. There was conversation regarding the cans between all.

Mayor: Republic jumped the gun in putting them out there. **Kay:** Yes. I understand. **Mayor:** There is something going out in everybody's water bill explaining them and then they jumped the gun and put them out a month sooner than they were supposed to quite frankly. So, we had to scramble to get the information out. You are not going to be held responsible. **Kay:** But there will be information regarding it all? **Mayor:** Hopefully, you will be able to read all of that on the new website. **Paolone:** I will say I personally have taken two cans off the curb and put them up to the house and nobody called the police on me or anything. They look terrible sitting there on the devil strip. There was more conversation between all.

Grumley: No new legislation but is our singing councilman going to be part of the new website? **Mayor:** I can assure you he will not be. **Kay:** Thank you, Mark.

Kren: I think there are two legislations that's why I hesitated. I think the service director wanted a contract, an ordinance to authorize an annual contract with MS Consultants.

MOTION KAY SECOND SCHUBERT TO PREPARE LEGISLATION TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH MS CONSULTANTS.

SCHUBERT 2
STANDOHAR
KAY 1
GRUMLEY
MARTUCCIO
MOLITERNO Absent
ZIRAFI
MOTION PASSES 6-0

MOTION GRUMLEY SECOND SCHUBERT TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE TRUMBULL COUNTY BUILDING DEPARTMENT.

SCHUBERT 2
STANDOHAR
KAY
GRUMLEY 1
MARTUCCIO
MOLITERNO Absent
ZIRAFI
MOTION PASSES 6-0

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION SCHUBERT SECOND ZIRAFI TO ADJOURN THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 26, 2024.

SCHUBERT 1
STANDOHAR
KAY
GRUMLEY
MARTUCCIO
MOLITERNO Absent
ZIRAFI 2
MOTION PASSES 6-0

REYNALD PAOLONE, PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

MONICA URBANIC, CLERK OF COUNCIL