

**CITY OF BELLEFONTAINE NEIGHBORS  
BOARD OF ALDERMEN SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
May 22, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.**

**MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY** Mayor Pierson at 7:06 p.m. Copies of the agenda and spreadsheet of some of the 4<sup>th</sup> class cities and their city clerk and parks director salaries were made available to the public.

**ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Alderwoman Tatman, Alderwoman Reed, Alderman Jordan, Alderman Christian, Alderwoman Dailes and Alderwoman Avant-Elliott

**ABSENT:** Alderman Merz and Alderwoman West

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Aldermen Christian moved for the approval of the agenda, Alderman Jordan requested a close session to be added to the agenda, the motion was seconded by Alderwoman Tatman.  
***Motion carried unanimously***

Alderman Jordan made a motion to go into a close session seconded by Alderwoman Dailes

**Upon the roll being called the vote were cast as follows:** Alderwoman Avant-Elliott Yes; Alderwoman Tatman, Yes; Alderwoman Reed, Yes; Alderman Jordan, Yes; Alderman Christian, Yes; Alderwoman Dailes Yes.

***With a 6-0 vote. Motion passed***

Alderwoman Dailes made a motion to bring meeting back to the board, Alderman Tatman seconded.  
***Motion carried unanimously.***

**DISCUSSIONS REGARDING SALARY AND CITY BUDGET**

- Mayor Pierson requested Alderwoman Avant-Elliott to facilitate the salary discussions and she requested Chief Ihler to begin the discussions of his budget.
- Chief Ihler discussed his budget and indicated his major changes included the need to replace workstation computers, server and switches, vehicles, and microfilm to digital format. Indicated that Windows need updating along with other critical systems. The cost will be \$10, 000 to convert from microfilm to digital. City hall and courts use microfilm as well. He indicated that vehicle (12) replacement is the biggest ticket item. Cars have been inventoried for durability to determine which vehicles can be replaced and he recommends four at a time over a three-year period. Major Williss noted that risk management issues increase with the life of the vehicles.
- Alderman Jordan asked about the additional vehicles. Chief indicated there are two detective vehicles, chief vehicle, traffic vehicle, and administrative vehicle.
- Alderwoman Reed asked if the expense for the vehicles would come out of capital funds. Chief confirmed.
- Mayor Pierson asked Chief about General Motor vehicles. Chief Ihler indicated that the Tahoe makes a good vehicle but is expensive. Major Williss provided input about state bid for vehicles. Chief mentioned St. Louis County bidding option. Major Williss mentioned contacting the city.

Chief Ihler indicated that a Ford Explorer was \$30,000 a vehicle and the new Explorers will be a few thousand dollars more.

- Alderman Jordan shared the history of the vehicle replacement indicating the city use to replace 1/3 of the vehicles every three years. Patrol in three-year cycle, administrative vehicles the following year, and then the others.
- Chief Ihler indicated that total fleet purchase required a loan of about \$360-380,000.
- Alderwoman Avant-Elliott asked Chief Ihler if there was any grants or other special funding to cover the vehicle cost. Chief Ihler was not aware of any grants. Alderman Jordan asked about drug forfeiture funds. Chief Ihler explains what these funds could be used for.
- Alderwoman Dailes asked about the amount in the drug forfeiture fund. Chief was unsure of the exact numbers but estimated it was under a \$100,000.
- Chief Ihler indicated he is still pending information from the treasurer to get clarification on the budget disparities and he needed information immediately to make decisions.
- Alderwoman Dailes asked if Chief Ihler was able to manage the incoming Prop funds from the state. Chief Ihler explained how the funds were disbursed and expensed out but needed obtain information from the treasurer for updates on the status of the incoming funds.
- Alderwoman Tatman asked for the treasurer to attend the meeting so the board can be privy to what the treasurer has in his records.
- Chief Ihler indicated that for budgeting and to be fiscally responsible he needs the treasurer, who is the holder of the official financial records.
- Alderwoman Avant-Elliott indicated that she requested the treasurer attendance at the meeting and that he typically responses to requests from the Mayor. Alderwoman Reed concurred and shared that no document was sent for her to review as previously indicated. It was suggested that the board be very specific in their request from the treasurer to get the information that is needed.
- Alderwoman Tatman raised concerns about the Treasurer being the only one fully informed about budgetary items and processes.
- Wanda Lane raised her hand for input and Mayor Pierson allowed her input. Following her input Mayor shared his recent thoughts about forming a budget committee. (see public input)
- Alderwoman Dailes and Alderman Tatman both expressed concerns about being more transparent and allowing the community to work with the board and beware of what is going on.
- Alderwoman Reed shared that outside of discretionary funds most of the budget is tight. There are 55 employees and several part-time staff and monies are dwindling. She expressed there was not much a committee could offer based on how the budget is structured.
- Chief indicated that 60% of the city budget is held by police and Lager's will publish their rate and percentage for payroll which goes into effect for the next fiscal year. Mirma will also be publishing their rate concerning risk insurance. Civilians contributions to Lager's is 4.5% and for police officers it is 15.1%.
- Mayor Pierson asked Chief about the solvency of the Lager's as it related to the contribution from the city. Chief explained how the pension system is managed and how wisely the state invests.
- Alderman Jordan shared that he believes Lager can only raise the contribution by 1% per year. Additional discussion about the percentage continued.

- Mayor Pierson and for further input and hearing none he closed the discussion of the budget

#### **CITY CLERK SALARY DISCUSSIONS**

- Alderwoman Avant-Elliott opened the discussions about the City Clerk salary by sharing Municipal League information from 4<sup>th</sup> classes cities in the budget range of Bellefontaine. Alderwoman Tatman expressed concerns about the salary data in relation to the board discussions.
- Alderwoman Dailes asked the mayor what skills he was looking for in a city clerk and whether he was looking for recent graduates with technology skills. Alderwoman Reed expressed the need to have more skills than just technology and social media.
- Mayor indicated that he was looking for a good city clerk no matter if he/she are fresh out of college or older and that he was not discriminating based on age. He thought it was important that he had someone that would work well with he and the board. Additional conversation took place about city clerk.
- Alderwoman Avant-Elliott read the job description of the city clerk based on discussions.
- Alderwoman Tatum was concerned about casting a vote for the city view before reviewing applications and interviewing applicants
- Wanda Lane raised her hand for input and Mayor Pierson allowed her input. (see public input)
- Alderwoman Avant-Elliott brought the discussions back to the city clerk salary and expressed the need to consider the responsibilities over adjusting the salary based on experience. She expressed that the workload would be the same regardless of the candidate's credentials or skills.
- Alderman Jordan expressed that he believes that a range should be developed based on experience and skills. Alderwoman Reed agreed with a range based on the varying credentials, skills, and abilities.
- Alderwoman Avant-Elliott questioned the board about the potential range and Alderman Jordan recommend a percentage breakdown of the current salary.
- Alderman Christian calculated the range from \$34,900-52,000 based on Alderman Jordan recommendations.
- Alderwoman Avant-Elliott discussed drafting the ordinance with the salary range which would be followed by an ordinance with the salary awarded to the new city clerk.
- Alderman Jordan recommended allowing the absent alderpersons to provide input before drafting an ordinance and incurring an expense from the attorney. Alderwoman Avant-Elliott reminded the board that the members can draft ordinances and have the attorney to review cutting down on cost. She also indicated that in the past ordinances have been drafted without consensus.
- The board discussed the length of time to accept applications and when to close. Open until filled was the recommended language to add to the online post for city clerk.

#### **DISCUSSION OF THE PARKS AND REC SALARY**

- Alderwoman Avant-Elliott lead the discussions about the Parks and Rec Director position by providing the salary amount indicated in ordinance along with other rec that salaries.

- Alderwoman Dailes discussed combining public works/park and rec director positions. The board discussed the concerns with the skills of individuals taking on both roles.
- Alderwoman Reed and Alderman Tatman recommended splitting the salary among staff already in positions with an \$10,000 increase each. Input was provided by various alderman on how the new structure can save funds and meet the future personnel request of the mayor. Alderwoman Tatman about the salary caps of the current rec center staff.
- Alderwoman Avant-Elliott read the portions of the job description of the parks and rec director based on discussions.
- Mayor Pierson indicated he would further investigate the programming and rec center personnel before making a final decision. General discussion about the rec center continued with possible reasons for low participation citing esthetics, member retention concerns, low community participation, and climate and culture.
- Alderman Jordan recommended a range be developed for the parks and recs director position. Alderwoman Avant-Elliott presented the information from the Municipal League for 4<sup>th</sup> class cities and was asked about the salaries for 3<sup>rd</sup> class cities and presented this information as well for discussion. The board determined that the discussions should continue at the next meeting as additional information was needed before calculating a range.
- Many of the alderpersons thought that the director position should be posted while we continue to discuss structure changes.
- Alderwoman Avant-Elliott asked the Mayor about Mark's last day and was informed that it was June 30<sup>th</sup>.

#### PUBLIC INPUT

**WANDA LANE 99XX MARTENGALE:** Wanda shared her thoughts about budget process and the need to involve the public. Wanda went on to share how the budget director and treasurer work together and how she believed the board is behind in the process. She also referenced Mayor Pierson sharing that he would have an audit upon coming mayor, and she expressed how expensive this would be to have. During discussions of the salary, Wanda asked would the city clerk have the responsibility of creating a newsletter since it was the included in job description.

Alderman Jordan made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Alderman Reed. ***Motion carried unanimously.***

**MEETING ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting Adjourned at 9:07 pm

ATTEST:

**Alderwoman Miranda Avant-Elliott**  
Sitting in for the City Clerk

Approved by the Board of Aldermen on     MAY 30, 2019