

**3CITY OF BELLEFONTAINE NEIGHBORS  
MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY FEBRUARY 2, 2023 – 7:30 P.M.**

**PRESENT** Mayor Tommie Pierson, City Attorney Dorothy White-Coleman, Director of Public Works Jeff Ross, Director of Parks and Recreation Jimmy Kirincich, Chief of Police Jeremy Ihler, Treasurer Rick Rognan and City Clerk Semmie Ruffin-Hall.

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY** Mayor Pierson called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGEANCE**

**ROLL CALL:** City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll:

- Alderman Theresa Hester-Present
- Alderman Dinah Tatman-Present
- Alderman Peg Warnusz-Present
- Alderman Lynette VonSeggern-Present
- Alderman James Thomas, Sr.-Present
- Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward-Present
- Alderman Alease Dailes-Present
- Alderman Alicia Smith-Present

**Eight Present** -Quorum was established.

**Mayor stated these items are not on the agenda.** Chief Jeremy Ihler will present awards to some of his officers before approval of the agenda.

**Chief Ihler stated** he would be presenting two awards. The first award is an award of excellence issued by the Bureau Commander under which the employer reports. This award can be used when the action of an employee is worthy of recognition but not rise to the level of other awards. This award recognizes the small things that they do, and great feedback is given, based on emails and letters. This is based on things that we do every day. I think it is important that you know the small things we do and that the employees are recognized for it and that you are aware of it. At this time, I will turn the floor over to **Major Willis.**

**Major Willis** called up **Officer Bittick**. **Bittick** is one of our newer officers although he is new to Bellefontaine. He however does have 11 years in North County and surrounding areas. This award of excellence is for exceptional performance while conducting police service on January 26, 2023, an email was received from a motorist who had been stopped by **Officer Bittick**. The motorist praised his conduct and remarked that his actions were a model representation on how a police officer should conduct themselves. **Officer Bittick** was described as courteous, informative, empathetic yet stern. **Officer Bittick** issued a warning and a citation to the motorist and clearly explained why issues regarding the traffic stopped needed to be fixed and the representation for not fixing the problem. **Officer Bittick's** courtesy and professionalism is reflected in the expectations of the Bellefontaine Neighbors Police Department. The next two involve the same incident but with **Officer Johnson and Sergeant Holmes**. This award of excellence is for excellence performance while conducting police service on November 24, 2022. These officers responded to the 1200 block of Ashford for report of a sick case. Upon arrival they spoke with the reported party who stated her 84-year-old husband was unresponsive and not breathing. CPR was performed and after further investigation it was determined that the reporting parties' husband of 26 years had passed away. On January 27, 2023, the reporting party mailed a letter to the police department to express her appreciation and gratitude for their compassion and how the situation was handled during her most vulnerable time. These officers' courtesy and professionalism is reflected in the expectations of the Bellefontaine Neighbors Police Department.

**Chief Ihler stated he** is giving out The Chiefs Citizen Citation Award. Citizens do high performance in helping law enforcement out to do things that if they don't pitch in it could not happen.

- **Leo Gordon** received the award.

**Chief Ihler read** The Chief Citizen Citation Award recognizes **Leo Gordon** for protecting our community without regards to his own personal welfare. On January 29, 2023, Police Officers were tracking a stolen BMW. Resident **Leo Gordon** was travelling north on Bellefontaine Road when the BMW recklessly passed him and crashed into a truck. As the Police Officers were approaching Mr. Gordon parked his car and went to check for injuries, he observed the driver of the BMW attempting to leave the scene of the accident by running away. To prevent the driver from escaping Mr. Gordon ran after the driver and detained

him for the police. His action supports the importance of residents policing our community with the police department. Working together holds people accountable and preexists the safety of our city. His highly commendable actions had a positive impact on the outcome of an incident that furthered law enforcement in our community.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Mayor** called for a motion to approve the agenda as is. **Alderman Alease Dailes** made motion to approve agenda for February 2, 2023. Second made by **Alderman James Thomas**. **Mayor** called for an all-in favor. **Eight-Ayes/0-Nays. Ayes' have it. Motion passed.**

### **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC (With 3-minute time limit)**

- **Marcie Gooden-94XX Duenke**

-I as a citizen and a taxpayer to the board I know you all voted and approved Jeff Howe as our collector, I recall he is not bonded. Being an HR professional, you all need to make sure he is bonded. If not, he is a liability to the citizens and to the community. We talked about that that is critical.

-Board, I remember at a meeting that two citizens wanted to be considered for Planning and Zoning, and I know there was conversation about the ordinance and all of that. Are you all reconsidering redoing the ordinance in order for these two citizens to join?

-Thanked the police for adding a trailer to Duenke Drive today.

-Jeff there are three buildings that you already be aware of. Last week **Alderman Dailes** talked about the building on Jennings Station Road by Sun Valley and Pat took the address but he said he is not building. I just wanted to remind you that the building needs to be looked at, it needs to be painted and all of that. The North County Journal I know you sent an email to the owner but they have not done anything, Semmie if you could send something out I would appreciate it.

- **Gloria Stanton-92XX Waldorf Drive**

-The problem I have has been going on every since May of last year.

-Problem with my sewer line. Mine was fixed. The Rush Plumbing Company came out and told me they could not fix it because he could not dig that deep.

-I have been in this community thirty-seven years. I try to keep up my property and to do this to me. I paid \$15,000 for my work to be done.  
-I am a senior citizen and retired. Mr. Mayor I would like to see you after this meeting.

- **Anthony Green-92XX Waldorf Drive**

-Today is February 2, 2023 one month after the 1231-year end. I looked on line I have not seen it. The 1231-22 ending audit results are supposed to be published by the First month after that.

-I know it should be published in a format accessible to the public for the six Month ending for the period ending 1231. You usually have 30 days to do that. If it is not publishable, the city is not supposed to spend any money until published and available to the public. In addition, this is the Missouri Statue (This is not my feelings) if you need the statue I will be more than happy to supply it to you. However, I want to see the financial and I want us to comply with financial reporting so we can actually look at it.

-One of my questions is on accounts receivable again (We talked about this when Patrick was here) I know it is cash basis but we have a 2.15 million dollar credit in accounts receivable and I am still asking what that is and is it suppose to be a debit balance. Receivables are what we receive in and what we are going to collect in. Last time we did this with Patrick it was two something million credit and I asked him, and he could not answer the question so what is that. If we do not know, where our receivables are then how do we know what is coming in. I am not really clear as to why. this two-million-dollar credit is sitting on there from 12/31/21 to 6/30. Also I am not clear as to why but that is too large of a credit, that no one can explain. So, if the treasurer can explain why we have a 2.15 million dollar credit that was filed for the period that was filed with the state auditor I want to hear it.

-Also at Citizens bank there is a \$771,000 credit at Citizens bank and that suppose to be a normal balance, the other ones are normal. So why would we have a \$771,000 credit sitting in Money Market account at Citizens Bank. That doesn't make sense. I understand it is a cash basis and it could be some timing issues, but it should not be a credit that large. I would like to know what those two are, the two million in credit receivables and the \$771,000 credit in investment account. Those don't make sense to me we filed them with the Missouri State Auditor on our letterhead. I would love

to hear from our treasurer what that looks like and I definitely would like to see the balance sheet and income statement for the period 12/31/22. Because those were due January 31. Any publish format you want, online, newspaper or newsletter. But I haven't seen it. I would like to see it. Since we are saying going forward things will be smoother.

### **Mayor made a Statement on the Excessive Force Death of Tyre Nichols**

- *Statement is attached.*

### **Simmons Bank Presentation (Introduced by Rick Rognan)**

#### **Nicole Carter-Vice President of Treasury and Management**

- We are going not only streamline your processes but enforce dual controls.
- In the revenue streams that are coming in month to month is going to be very nice and long term and going to benefit the city and its citizens with the revenue streams.
- I have sent over packets that will break it all out that you will see in a revenue streams each month. As well as all the protections on your account as well as the delegations of duties.

#### **Alonzo Shaw-Business Development Officer**

- We are glad to be here tonight.
- I want to give you a brief history on Simmons Bank. We are founded in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. We are approximately 100 years old. Here in the St. Louis area, we have 18 locations and soon to open in the Sears Building at 1408 N. Kingshighway. Home of the Urban League. We should be opening in about 3 months. We have locations outlining in the St. Louis County area, we have one in North County and then they are spread out throughout the rest of North County, and we have one in the Grove in the City of St. Louis. We are a regional community bank. What that means is that we are concerned about the area that we are in. We have a strong suite of CRA Products that are available to low- or moderate-income groups. Sect of individuals in that what we offer is we have a loan product where they can open for one thousand dollars and what happens we create a savings account which helps them improve their credit. Every month it will debit an amount to put it back and at the end they will get their one thousand dollars plus their interest on that plus it will improve their credit score. We are

constantly working on new innovative ways to help the community in which we are in. We have strong relationships with nonprofit organizations throughout the City of St. Louis, The Urban League, Community Action Agency, St. Louis County, Justin Peterson, and the list goes on and on. We want to work deeper with the City of Bellefontaine Neighbors. We want to support and engage the stakeholders. Some of the stakeholders here tonight we want to let them know that Simmons Bank is here for you. We have financial education programs which we want to present and do right here at Bellefontaine Neighbors.

**PRESENTATION OF UNAPPROVED MINUTES (Regular B.O.A Meeting Minutes 01-19-23)** -Motion made by **Alderman Alease Dailes** to approve the unapproved minutes; 2<sup>nd</sup> made by **Alderman Alicia Smith**. **Mayor** called for all in favor-8 Ayes/0-Nays. Motion passed.

**APPROVAL OF INVOICES OVER \$500 (01-19-23 through 1-30-23)**-Motion made by **Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward** to approve invoices over \$500 for \$107,659.16, 2<sup>nd</sup> made by **Alderman Alease Dailes**. **Mayor** called for any discussion-none. **Mayor** called for an all-in favor-8 Ayes/0-Nays. Motion passed.

### **PARKS AND RECREATION REPORT-DIRECTOR JIMMY KIRINCICH**

- **Van Update:** I reached out to Modot who we received the original grant through to purchase the bus that was involved in the accident. Per the grant requirement, we have to repair the bus whether we are looking to give the bus back to Modot or continue to use it. MIRMA our insurance company sent out an appraiser to provide a quote. Our deductible to get the van fixed in \$1,000.
- At this point, the city has two options.
  1. We repair the current bus and pay MIRMA the \$1,000 to meet our deductible. The lead-time on repairs is estimated to be anywhere from 8 months to 2 years wait to get the bus fixed.
  2. The city pays the \$1,000 deductible to get the bus fixed. The bus company can take as long as they need to fix it and we order a bus from Master's Transportation in the amount of \*\*\*\*\*. The new bus would be available in 12-16 weeks.
- **Pool Repair Update:** Westport finished the pool plumbing repair project in the pump room. I am waiting on St. Louis County to come out for their final

inspection. St. Louis County is paying Westport directly for the grant portion and then we will receive the invoice for the remaining due.

- The city did the demolition portion it took the park maintenance staff and myself roughly 7 hours to complete the demolition and cost the city \$454.30 in staff salaries. Saved the city \$3,435 by electing to do that work in house.
- **Video Surveillance Camera Upgrade:** I sent out the RFP to have the cameras at City Hall and the Recreation Center updated today. The RFP has a due date of Thursday, February 23 at 12:00pm. It is currently posted on our website and The Countian St. Louis County. Those bids will be presented to the board at the March 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.
- **Gymnasium Roof Update:** Crallo is still following their anticipated timeline even with a few weather delays the last two weeks. The demolition crew finished removing the rest of the roof today. Tomorrow they will start removing the wooden joists with the crane on the parking lot. The steel rebar and deck plates will be arriving Monday/Tuesday and the joist will be here by the end of next week. The steel is arriving roughly 3 weeks ahead of the original anticipation date. The masonry contractors will start next week with demolition of the two end walls and then they will start the process of rebuilding the new walls. Let's hope puxuntany phil was wrong today and the weather stays above average for February.
- We received a reimbursement check for \$17,000 from the municipal grant commission for the engineering portion of the roof project. I have a meeting soon with them to set up a reimbursement schedule for the remaining project.
- **Maintenance:** The Park Maintenance staff finished painting the ceiling hallways at the recreation center. They were originally a brown wood and the floor, walls and ceiling were all the same color making it look dark. The new white ceilings make the hallways brighter and look nicer. They will be starting on repairing the walls in the weight room and painting in there next.
- **Summer Newsletter:** I talked with Alderman Dailes today about the summer newsletter. I need the information by March 27. She will need City Halls information before that date and will be in touch with specifics. I

anticipate the newsletter to be mailed out to residents the first week of May and the newsletter will cover June through September.

### **PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT-DIRECTOR JEFF ROSS**

- Street sweeping completed throughout the city.
- Annual Gas Line/Underground tank inspections complete.
- MSD Annual Report Done
- The sewer on Haviland has finally been repaired.
- List of auction vehicles have been supplied to all aldermen (suggest auctioning off in Spring)
- Potholes filled: Ashford, Huntsman, Foxpath, Roxton, Hopedale, Edna, and Donnell.
- We will be getting bid prices to replace the city gas pump with swipe cards. Our current pump is a 2001 model. Only rebuilt parts can be used to repair. It has been repaired but there are only two companies in the area that install gas pumps: **Newby and United Petroleum**
- Three inches of heavy wet snow arrived with the winter snowstorm which arrived on Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup>. The street crew was out early plowing our streets. A total of 14 tons of salt was used. The snow melted quickly. A second storm beckoned the street department to get busy at midnight on January 29<sup>th</sup>. This storm brought ice & light snow with temps in the teens. A total of 26 tons of salt was spread.
- Vacant letters continue to be sent to management companies and owners. Currently we have sent 320 letters. Vacant houses are being tagged so that residents can visually determine that the house is vacant.
- We are working on developing residential renter forms.
- Communicated with MSD regarding a broken sewer at 1411 Blackhurst. They have yet to be repaired.
- The water company is continuing to replace the water main in the 1000 block of Fontaine.
- Three sewer laterals have been repaired. Our contractor abruptly retired last week. We have residents awaiting lateral repairs. We have a repair company for now and will request bids for a plumbing company for future repairs.

### **IMAGE AND BEAUTIFICATION REPORT-LYNN GODON**

- Image and Beautification Board is inactive in the months of January and February,



## CHIEF OF POLICE REPORT -JEREMY IHLER

- I would like to start off with the statement you read about the excessive force incident involving Tyre Nichols. I want to discuss specifically what our department does to specifically to manage and have control measures in place for uses of force. We don't have an excessive force policy, it's a response to resist policy. We have to use force in certain situations.
- We have three major policies in place:
  1. The first one is called response to resistance incident which is basically it discusses the decision making process when using force for compliance.
  2. Response techniques and weapons. That goes over all the different techniques we use and goes over all the weapons that we are authorized to use.
  3. This is one of the most important ones-Response to resistance incidents. Discusses how the investigative process works after each use of force. Goes into other things like psychological services for the officer if it is deemed a justifiable shooting. A homicide is nothing more than a justifiable shooting.
- We also do an annual assessment of force incidents and that works into our early warning system. Meaning that as we track uses of force we can see who is doing what and how much. If we see someone going into an area we are a bit concerned about, we will sit down and have a talk with that person. Even if force is justified, are they communicating enough, are they using de-escalation techniques. Because physical force is the last thing you do want to use. Communication is usually used most of the time.
- All incidents of the use of force are reported to the on-duty supervisor.
- All police reports include all use of force actions.
- We have an administrative form that is complete for each use of force, that is reviewed by the supervisor, the bureau commander, and the police chief (me). All must sign off on.
- We also use other methods, such as (and there has been a lot of talk around the Tyre Nichols case) dash cams. There is not one tool that's going to make this full proof, it's the multiple techniques and methods that you use.

- We have the body cams, we have the dash cams, surveillance camera footage from buildings, witness statements and crime reporting systems. We try to use everything at our disposal.
- We always report usage of force to our insurance company, no matter how big or small, so they know as well.
- We also report our use of force to the FBI National use of force data base collection. That's published for public review online.
- Lastly, there is a lot of bad mystiques about having a small police department. Very large police departments are much harder to manage, supervise, monitor, and patrol. Even though you may have all these different layers of management our police department small enough I know all my employees. I know what their behaviors and personalities are like, and I know personal stuff about each one. And that is key to relationship with your employees.
- We can better monitor their behavior, like the traffic stop that was brought up tonight. That's a big deal, this guy wrote a very long paragraph on how impressed he was with that officer and that stop. Even though he got a traffic ticket.
- That's why I wanted to highlight it. We can do our job and we can do it professionally and we can walk away, and everything is clean.
- I was asked to talk about the Castle Law Doctrine. Basically, it is the use of force on the civilian side. When protecting your property like your home or car. I am just going to read a very basis sentence just to describe what this is. This is the Missouri Revised Statute §563.041. ***“Use physical force upon another person when and to the extent that he or she reasonably believes it necessary to prevent what he reasonably believes to be the commission or attempted commission by such person of stealing, property damage or tampering in any degree.”***
- So here is actually the key factor:
  1. If your car is being stolen, you have to be in it in order for your car to be jacked. If it is being stolen from your driveway and you wake up at 3 in the morning and you bring out your shot and start drilling holes in the car, it doesn't work that way. Same way goes for your house rummaging through your house, you can't shoot through the front window. You can defend yourself in your home, but there are also caveats and consequences.

- Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023, there was a shooting that resulted in a fatality in the 9900 block of Raford Court. The victim and suspect knew each other. The suspect later turned himself in to the police along with his attorney. And that is where the Castle Law Doctrine came into effect. Because the person that was shot was shot in his car. He was outside his car and shot the person in the car. The Prosecuting Attorney is having a difficult time. Ruling on this whether or not this was a clean shoot.
- I want to hit on there has been some discussion on political signs. I brought this up a few years ago, last February during the meeting there was no quorum. Went over the sign ordinance and I got an approval from the City Attorney, and we made some temporary corrections until this ordinance can actually be approved by the board. We struck out the unconstitutional parts of it. So, when you are talking about signs opposing or advocating a candidate the issue, we voted on at a public election may be displayed are subject to the following limitations. The first thing removed: signs may not be displayed more than 45 days prior to the election in connection with the sign that is displayed nor more than 10 days after such election. You can leave campaign sign in your yard all you want, that's your right. That is covered under the first amendment. That was struck out of there so the police do not enforce that. The other section was, not more than one single or double face sign with respect to the same candidate or position may be directed on any lot, parcel, or site. What that is saying you can put 20 signs with Tim Jones on it for alderman, for mayor, or for whoever on your property. If you are starting to hear some chatter about how campaign signs are handled, we are not handling it. It is covered under your first amendment right to do so.
- I did find out why residents are being told that the police were not going to come out and answer your calls and this stems from what I found out from the shooting on Raford Court. The dispatcher was automatically putting them on emergency status and what that does the police do not honor any priority 2 calls. So, the dispatcher was telling the residents that the police are not going to come by your house. So, I talked with my staff, and we have corrected that problem so if you have an issue, they still are going to accept the calls, but they are going to accept those calls as a priority call when they become available. A shooting takes up a lot of time.
- Last thing I want to talk about is the status of the police department. Normally we have 31 police officers, now we have 17 including me and

administrative staff. Since August we lost one 1 lieutenant, two sergeants and 12 police officers. Combined loss of 50 years of experience. I mean no disrespect the main reasons the officers are leaving and still considering leaving, when I do exit interviews two things come up, pay is an issue and they don't feel like they are supported by the board. Since October we have hired 4 police officers one in October, one in December, one in January and one in February.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT- RICK ROGNAN**

- I just want to address Anthony's questions really quick in regard to the balance sheets. Keep in mind that is the same issue that exists with the audit. The exact same issue with the balance sheet. Once the audit is complete that balance sheet will adjust up and we then we can move forward. We are not going to keep playing with the balance sheet adjusting until the auditors are done once the auditors are done that balance sheet will automatically adjust. So, keep that in mind.
- One of the other issues that's important to understand, we talked last meeting about the possibility of consideration of going to a modified cash balance sheet. It is important. A lot of things that come up that are on the balance sheet don't need to be there, if you are on modified cash.
- Auditor selection, you are going to have more auditors bidding so it will cost us more to go to the modified accrual which we are on to the modified cash which will be much easier. Now I am not recommending that we do it right now I am recommending that we sit down with the auditors first make sure it will not be an issue for them before we do any change in accounting.
- City perspective if you talk accrual most people don't have a clue what you are talking about. When I say what cash what came in and what went out almost everyone understands that.
- If we are going to get better selection of auditor's better opportunities, are they going to get through audits quicker. It seems to be that would be the best solution doesn't affect or impact our bond rating as long as we get good discussion with the auditor, again not recommending that tonight. That would be before we finish this fiscal year and move forward. But keep in mind the balance sheet will be adjusted. As soon as the auditor is done. A lot of what is being seen today exists because of the audit that's under review right now. Keep in mind that will change. Just need a little bit more patience we are almost there, hopefully sooner than later. I wish I could

tell you a date Sikich is going to complete, but I can't. I want to make everyone understand as we move forward.

- Now I am going to add a little more value because you are going to be voting tonight (I want to thank Dorothy because she did a great job on the ordinance for the Simmons Bank for tonight). They did a great job, Nicole, and Alonzo, again I think from a partnership standpoint we are going to have a good team we are going to work with.
- I want to give you a little bit more detail on what you will be looking at tonight:
  1. **Earning Credit**, that means we are going to earn more than we are paying on fees and if you earn more than you pay on fees, in theory we shouldn't have any fees and we will have interest that will exceed. Right now, with regions we are paying over \$300 a month and we are earning so very little. We are paying out to them more than we are bringing in. So that will change.
  2. **Interest** should be substantially more; we will earn more than we have seen.
  3. We will be adding **scanners** that built into the proposal, a scanner for courts, a scanner in parks and recreation and a scanner in building. What does that mean, we will be tightening up internal controls. If These entities that collect their own money and do their own deposits and get it in on the same day benefits the city in several ways. First of all, we will earn interest sooner, quicker and from a standpoint it is going right into the bank, we will not have anyone driving over to the bank, Lori's not doing all of this like she has done in the past. Each department will be responsible for their own area. They will fill out the sheets of what is being deposited. In the past Lori did not know half the deposits and what they were for. You are going to know nightly what is going on. Semmie and I will get copies, Lori will get a copy and Jimmie and whoever signing off on it that night what went into the bank and what account it relates to what is the deposit on a nightly basis. They are going to get the bank statements at the end of the month, and they are going to reconcile them and so will two other people. Lori will be one and so will two other people. There are no checks that will be paid out of this account funds are going to be swept into the general account at the end of the month. No checks are going to come out of this account

checks are still going to come out of the normal checking account that you see.

4. We are also looking at the **vaults**, so these vaults are completely secure. So, what does that mean. Only Semmie and Jimmie are going to have access. Jimmie for Recreation and Parks and Semmie for Building and Courts. When cash comes into this building it goes straight into the vault and that vault only has the key for Loomis to come by and pick up, and they do it once per month. Why once, instead of weekly, cost. There is no since in overdoing it. We don't have excessive amount of cash sitting around. That means what, no one going to the bank no liability, it is locked up that day, that night all protected. We get the deposits sooner faster and again we got a completely secure system from an internal control standpoint, now we know what cash is taken care of are deposits are taken care of. Is Lori involved in any of this, not at all she is now completely removed from this whole process. So now from an internal control process we have now segregated the finance person who is issuing all of our checks from all of our deposits, and we are getting a better detail on each of these deposits and why that has been primarily a lot of the accounting problems, nobody knows once the deposits is made what it represented. We are now going to know it will be a sheet every single night that's going to detail this so everyone has this so that's going to take place. The vaults again are going to lock everything up.
5. We are also going to have what is called **positive pay**. Positive pay is this once the check is approved the bank gets the information, all the key attributes on that check, well what are those? Check number, check date, payee, and amount. If they do not agree the check doesn't get processed. That means someone can't steal a check out of a mailbox, recreate it like travelers do today. Moving in an out of town recreate it and go to the bank and try to cash it. So, the bank will send us a warning, here is what's transpiring they will deny it unless we ok it and its going to stop the process. It's called positive pay, that means all of our accounts, all of our checks once they are approved by the board. That's it. Lori uploads the information, and we are good to go. Now to keep someone from slipping a check in without the board from knowing and uploading that information. What transpires after the checks are signed someone that Semmie

appoints, not Lori, mails the checks. If Lori gets the checks to mail them, she can always slip another check in. She is the one uploading the information. After you are done with a check register at the end of each meeting the next meeting, someone has to be responsible to make sure and it has to be noted on the check register, what was the last check number that we all approved. So, we can see everything is in sequence, if it is not in sequence, we need to find out what is missing and why. Because as long as we know all of those checks are accounted for and signed all recorded here and in sequence; what was the last check we approved and what is our first one this time. No one can slip in a check and get it taken care of without the knowledge of the board. Unless it is approved here it is unacceptable. And we are not going to upload any information. Positive Pay takes place, we now have that protection to ensure we have looked at it, we have approved it and now we can move forward. This will have to take place each meeting just someone to sign off just to make sure we have looked at it.

6. In addition, voided checks will need to be identified. Would like to know why check voided. I like to know why check was voided was it payee wrong, wrong amount something just as a clue we are not accidentally voiding checks showing up somewhere. Just to give us some indication the voided checks should be highlighted on the check register. Additionally, any new vendor we work with has to be highlighted. So that gives this board an opportunity, if a new vendor is coming before this city who is it and why. If they have a PO Box that sometimes is a level of suspicion. Most business do not operate with PO Boxes. Individuals looking to circumvent systems operate with PO Boxes. Again just question not saying that business do not do it, they do, but it is more of an exception than the rule. Every new vendor we should have a sheet that Lori goes out and investigates to make sure it is a legitimate business. Secretary of State has a website. Most businesses today all get registered. In order to do business especially if they are significant. Most of the vendors we deal here at the city are probably significant.
7. If we agree tonight to move, forward with Simmons we are looking at starting March 1, 2023. The statements are going to run to the end of the each month for bank reconciliation purposes. Keep in mind

our other relationship with the bank will slowly go away. It does not happen overnight. It could take three months depending on how fast everything gets transposed or as long as six months. Patience we are going to get there hopefully we can get there before the next fiscal year, July 1<sup>st</sup> start, but again it may take a little longer and it depends how long we can long it will take to get things turned over or transferred. These are the internal control things we are looking at right now, based on just switching too Simmons giving us the opportunity. The mayor will be the key contact administrator along with Semmie. Alease is the back up in regards to what will transpire. They will be contact for relationships and authorizations. That is it, not going to be Lori or anyone of that nature. Not me. We are supposed to be overseers of this whole situation, and not directly involved in the authorization process. This is what is being proposed.

**NEW BUSINESS- BILL #2665- AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF BELLEFONTAINE NEIGHBORS WITH SIMMONS BANK TO SERVE AS A DEPOSITORY FOR ALL CITY FUNDS; PROVIDE WIRE TRANSFER SERVICES; PROVIDE INVESTMENT COUNSELING; PROVIDE ON-LINE ACCOUNT ACCESS TO THE CITY; AND/OR PROVIDE ANY OTHER BANKING SERVICES REQUIRED BY THE CITY; DESIGNATING CERTAIN CITY OFFICIALS TO ACT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY WITH RESPECT TO SUCH SERVICES; AND APPROVING ANY OTHER DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THIS ORDINANCE.**

**Alderman Alease Dailes** made motion for the first reading of **BILL #2665**, Second was made by **Alderman James Thomas, Sr.** **Mayor called for an all in favor: 8-Ayes/0-Nayes.** **Alderman Alease Dailes** made the motion for the second read for **Bill #2665**. Second made by **Alderman Alicia Smith.** **Mayor called for roll:**

**City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall** called the roll:

- Alderman Dinah Tatman-Yes
- Alderman Theresa Hester-Yes
- Alderman Peg Warnusz-Yes
- Alderman Lynette VonSeggern-Yes
- Alderman James Thomas, Sr.-Yes
- Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward-Yes
- Alderman Alease Dailes-Yes
- Alderman Alicia Smith-Yes



**8-Ayes/0-Nayes. Motion passes. Bill #2665 will become Ordinance #2639 if and when the mayors signs it.**

**CITY ATTORNEY’S REPORT -DOROTHY WHITE COLEMAN**

- I have some information to share with the board. You all know the city recently passed its redistricting ordinance. As a result of the 2020 Census. Some of you had some questions about the process at that time. There is now pending Senate Bill 218, which creates new provisions relating to redistricting within political subdivisions. That bill is sponsored by Senator Angela Mosley, District 13<sup>th</sup>, St. Louis County. It is currently on for a second reading and has been referred to senate local government and elections committee. So, if you are interested you might want to take a look at that bill or contact Senator Mosley. Since some of you had some questions at that time.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS: PRESENTATION OF RFQ FOR THE VAN (JIMMY KIRINICH)**

- We sent off an RFQ for the van to get some bids in. We received one bid in for the transportation van for the ford; the bid came in from Masters Transportation for \$74,341.00. We still have to fix the old van, which will cost us \$1,000 so the total would be \$75,341.00.

**Alderman Dinah Tatman made a motion to contain the bid for a total of \$74,341.00 for our transportation vehicle. Mayor called for a second, second made by Alderman Theresa Hester. Mayor called for roll.**

**City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll:**

- Alderman Dinah Tatman-Yes
- Alderman Theresa Hester-Yes
- Alderman Peg Warnusz-Yes
- Alderman Lynette VonSeggern-Yes
- Alderman James Thomas, Sr.-Yes
- Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward-Yes
- Alderman Alease Dailes-Yes
- Alderman Alicia Smith-Yes

**Eight-Ayes/0-Nays. Ayes’ have it. Motion passed**

**Alderman James Thomas made a motion** to pay the \$1,000 to get the van repaired and then give it back to the state. **Mayor called for a second**, second made by **Alderman Dinah Tatman**. **Mayor** called for an all-in favor.

**8-Ayes/0-Nays. Ayes have it. Motion passed.**

#### **DISCUSSION iWORQ SYSTEMS-(INDTRODUCED BY `ALEASE DAILES)**

- For the last couple of weeks we have been speaking iWORQ, what that is, is a software that will help us with our building department, recreation center and help with the Police Department when we are out checking on properties, writing up the issues in the neighborhood.
- In addition, our citizens will be able to go on the website to fill out applications for permits, work orders and photos, which can be taken as well. What I really like about this system, they are hooked up to St. Louis County. Therefore, every address in this city on their map has a sequence number so with this sequence number, if an address has issues over the next ten years or however long we have it identified. Whatever may go on with that particular property it will stay under that particular sequence number for that particular property. In addition, the software has the address but it does not have any vital information from the homeowner. I am going to turn it over to Jeff Ross so he can speak on this system. .

#### **Jeff Ross**

- We have been speaking with them for the last couple of weeks. I was actually amazed at what they do offer. Comes with different packages. There is a public works package; we can print out work orders, sign management and payment management. They have a fleet management; if something goes wrong with the fleet we work on it so many times it will give us a range and tell us it is time to get rid of this vehicle. Cut down on a lot of legwork.
- Building department the residents can be able to go on the website and they can create a work order for one of their complaints and track it. They can also upload photos.

- We can be out in the field with a tablet that is web based. We run across a property violation we can take a photo of it and upload it to the software and immediately generate a letter.

**Alderman Alease Dailes** would like to ask the board if she could make a motion to move forward. We have to have our attorney look at this and we would like move forward with **iWORQ SYSTEMS** for the City of Bellefontaine Neighbors moving forward. **iWORQ SYSTEMS** a second, second made by **Alderman Lynette VonSeggern**. Mayor called for any further discussion. None. Mayor called for an all-in favor.

**Eight-Ayes/0-Nays. Ayes' have it. Motion passed**

### **Mayors Report**

-Tonight we are trying to bring our city up to par. For years and years, things have been patched. The reason we do not have a roof on the gym is because they have been patching it. It has become the duty of this board to get it fixed because it cannot be patched anymore. We are bringing our systems up to date and we are going to cameras here for our zoom meetings. For those citizens who can't get out at night can participate in our board meeting. We see important that is for our citizens.

-We are getting our finances in order. There has been complaints about that for years. However, you cannot get that done until you get someone in here that can do it. Therefore, we are fortunate to have Rick as our treasurer to bring our finances where it should be. As you see, we are moving forward as fast as we can. As soon as we identify issues and then we have to identify someone that can solve those issues.

-I thank Rick, I thank Rejis and I thank this board for accepting these proposals, because without the cooperation of this board none of this could happen. Therefore, I applaud the board for moving forward with our proposals.

### **ALDERMAN'S REPORT**

#### **Alderman Dinah Tatman**

- No report
- Thanked the citizens for coming. Good that some of you are making it in regular attendance.
- Spread the word and let people know what is going on here
- You are our employers and we are your employees.

### Alderman Theresa Hester

- Thanked everyone for coming out.
- Mentioned in last meeting would like a farmers market here in Bellefontaine. Something I will be working on.

### Alderman Peg Warnusz

- Thanked everyone for coming.
- Thanked Simmons, looks like a really good place for us to be.
- I have been in this community for 36 years and this is really the first time I have seen people pushing together in a positive direction.
- Mistakes have been made but overall, I think things are going well.

### Alderman Lynette VonSeggern

- Thanks everyone for coming out this evening.
- Good to see everybody, regular faces and new faces.
- Welcome aboard Simmons, I think we are going to do good things.

### Alderman James Thomas, Sr.

- Good evening. I like to thank everyone for coming out tonight and welcome Simmons to help us make it through this.
- Celebration of Black History Month, I would like to read a quote from Langston Hughes:  
**(Hold fast to your dreams for without them life is a broken winged bird that cannot fly)**
- Thank you.

### **Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward**

- No Report
- Thank you so much for coming out, we welcome you and look forward in working with you.
- Thank you everybody else for coming out as well. I like to see the same faces, I love it. I wish we could have more.
- I look forward to the things we are working on and seeing them to come to pass and see where they lead us to and hopefully it will lead us to better places.

### **Alderman Alease Dailes**

- Thank you to everybody that is here.
- Happy Black History Month.
- I would like to pay salute to my grandmamma Mary Jenkins Stevens who taught us how she lived in barns with the native people and how they had to move north so her children would not have to be taken into the barns. She taught us never to deny food or love to anyone. For people to learn how to love, they have to be around people that love them.
- On January 26<sup>th</sup> we went to the Monthly Municipal League of Metro St. Louis, and I was shocked. The west county corridor they tried to have a task force about stealing cars. They work with family services and what's happening is, if a 12- or 13-year-old go out and steal a car they have no way of arresting them. They have to go to family services or release to their families. What's going on is they are releasing them to their families, and they are not being processed. What the problem is they are saying the state is allowing St. Charles and Jefferson County to do things different. If you are caught in St. Charles you are going to automatically get 11 points then another couple of points for running away then some more points for whatever, then you are up to 15 points, and they are able to process. However, over here in St. Louis County they are not letting them do it. Therefore, they are working with St. Louis County Prosecutor's office. There is a person that sat down with multiple times with Family services and they said that they were going to help him and they did not.

Therefore, that is what the problem is. In the area, we live in. St. Louis City and St. Louis County. Therefore, their hands are tied.

-Vacant Houses we start getting deposits on November 18, 2022, the last one was recorded January 27. Total received right now is \$12,600.00. One LLC sent in \$8,600.00, they have 48 vacant houses in this neighborhood. The total that we would get for the total 306 vacant houses is \$46,000.00 every six months. This is just to let you know how we are doing.

-I am going to ask the board for a couple of things and I will get the research for you. With the way fair money if we can hire a City Administrator, lower the salary of the mayor to \$1000, increase the BOA to \$500 and increase the stiffen for the image and beautification. They work hard to keep our city clean, and they get \$20 a month for the leader and \$15 a person and they are out there cleaning the city. They should have an increase.

-With iWORQ SYSTEMS the only fee they will charge us if we change our logo. So, we talked about it and we will ask the community and our high school to come up with a different logo for the city just to change things around. We want to give \$500 to the winner. I will ask the board is that ok, something to think about to move forward.

-I would like to welcome Simmons Bank.

-Congratulations to our officers.

-I would like to thank the citizens for coming out. I also would like to thank our board because we really have a really good board. We have a really good board.

-I am working on Juneteenth.

### **Alderman Alicia Smith**

-Thank you everyone for coming out and staying.

-Congratulations to the Police Officers that were awarded.

-Congratulations to Leo, from Ward 4. That's exactly what we do in Ward 4 we are a little bit bold.

-I do have one question Jeff I did not ask you during your report, sorry Mayor I want to go on Public record. I know the last meeting we had the heat was out, did the heat get repaired. *Jeff stated it did not. We currently still do not have heat, from the previous meeting before we are waiting to*

*get the next bid for the air conditioner so we can have one. We had an electrician come in earlier this week. He called me today and he is getting with MC Services, and I should have that bid soon.*

-If you guys are looking for me and my counter part Alease Dailes we ride the city every week. Sundays mainly. If you see anything please let us know.

-The best way to get ahold of me is by text.

-I would like to thank a special guest for coming out his name is Minister Joseph Oliverires, he was also my treasurer when I ran for my seat.

### **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC (3 MINUTE TIME LIMIT)**

- **Anthony Green-92XX Waldorf Drive**

-Just for a point of clarification, when a vehicle destroys city property, light poles whatever. Who is the person who calls the insurance company of that person. Is that changed by situation. Is that the Chief is the City Attorney, who calls to make sure the insurance company of the person who hit the pole assuming he actually has insurance (because a lot of them drive around without insurance). They contact them and actually collect the money for the damage done to property, that includes any type of city property whatsoever. I have not heard that, I would like to hear who is that contact person in the city. Who coordinates that and makes sure the money collected.

-Lastly I did not hear about when you plan on publishing (I heard about the balance sheet-that's fine) the 12/31/22 semi-annual financial results, those are required to be published in a public format for us, not just the board.

-Does the court ever present anything? I haven't seen anything. I would love to see cases annually processed, dismissal whatever you want to provide.

-Also can we get Angela Dorn down here to see why she can't get the audit done.

- **Marci Gooden-94XX Duenke Drive**

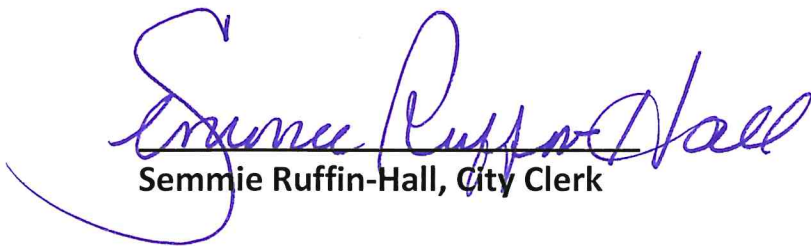
-I have a question based on the system you were talking about, what about those citizens that don't use computers. Can they call and reach out to you? **City Clerk** stated they would still be able to reach out and call.

**ADJOURNMENT-Alderman James Thomas, SR.** made a motion to adjourn and go into close session, second was made by **Alderman Alicia Smith.** **Mayor** called for an all-in favor, **8 -Yays/ 0 Nays.** The meeting adjourned to close session at 9:45pm.

**Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward** made a motion to come out of close session, second made by **Alderman Peg Warnuz.** **Mayor** called for an all-in favor, **8 -Yays/ 0 Nays.** Meeting adjourned at 10:30pm.

**Alderman Alease Dailes-**made a motion to adjourn, second made by **Alderman Alicia Smith.** **Mayor** called for an all-in favor, **8 -Yays/ 0 Nays.** Meeting adjourned at 10:32pm.

**ATTEST:**

  
Simmie Ruffin-Hall  
Simmie Ruffin-Hall, City Clerk

Approved by the Board of Aldermen on 2-16-23