

**CITY OF BELLEFONTAINE NEIGHBORS  
MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY JUNE 1, 2023 – 7:30 P.M.**

**PRESENT** Mayor Dinah Tatman, City Attorney- Susie McFarland , Director of Parks and Recreation- Jimmy Kirincich, Director of Public Works- Jeff Ross, Chief of Police-Jeremy Ihler, Treasurer- Rick Rognan, Auditor -Angela Dorn and City Clerk- Semmie Ruffin-Hall.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

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

- Alderwoman Theresa Hester-Present(By Zoom Video)
- Alderwoman Peg Warnusz-Present
- Alderwoman Lynette VonSeggern-Present
- Alderman James Thomas, Sr.-Present
- Alderwoman Regina Harmon-Ward-Present
- Alderwoman Alease Dailes-Present
- Alderwoman Alicia Smith-Present

**Seven Present** -Quorum was established.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Mayor** called for a motion to approve the agenda. **Alderman Alicia Smith** made a motion to approve the 06/01/23 agenda. Second made by **Alderman James Thomas, Sr.** **Mayor** called for any questions. **Alderman Alease Dailes** made a motion for the board to pay for Semmie Ruffin-Hall for \$252.46 and Alderman James Thomas, Sr. for \$252.46 to attend The Elective Official Training Seminar. A motion to add a special meeting to approve the bills for 06/01/23 on 06/06/23 at 7 p.m. via Zoom because the bills do not have check numbers. Discuss and vote employment of the code enforcer for public works, cross training for finance clerk and city clerk, city vehicles, current commissions, no signature stamp and a recess session for the Board of Aldermen and City Clerk all under new business. To table #16, move #17 to #19 and move #19 to #17. **Mayor** called for a second. Second made by **Alderman Alicia Smith.** **Mayor** called for any questions. **None.** **Mayor** called for all in favor. **Mayor** called for roll call vote:

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

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

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

**PRESENTATION OF UNAPPROVED MINUTES (Regular B.O.A. Meeting Minutes 05-18-23)** Motion made by **Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward** to approve the unapproved minutes; second made by **Alderman Alicia Smith**. **Mayor** called for any discussion. **None**. **Mayor** called for an all-in favor:

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

**COURT REPORT-(RECEIVED ON 06/01/23)** **Alderman Alease Dailes** made a motion to table court report dated 05/2/23-06/01/23 until they had time to review and will bring up any questions at next meeting; second made by **Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward**. **Mayor** called for any questions. **None**. **Mayor** called for an all-in favor:

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

**IMAGE AND BEAUTIFICATION REPORT-** **Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward** made a motion to accept the report as attached; second made by **Alderman Alease Dailes**. **Mayor** called for any questions. **None**. **Mayor** called for an all-in favor:

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

**PARKS AND RECREATION REPORT-DIRECTOR JIMMY KIRINCICH-(EXCUSED)**

**Mayor** stated she excused Jimmy. He is working on a grant that we are applying for and we have been trying to upload it since 3 p.m. today and it is due at 10:59 p.m. **Mayor** stated there would be a grand opening for our newly renovated Recreation Center at 5:30 p.m. on June 15, 2023. North County Chamber of Commerce will be cutting the ribbon.

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

- Trees and limbs are being cleaned up
- Potholes filled
- Asphalt patch work 12 1200 block of Laire
- Sewer lateral repairs in progress on Hayward, Hoyt and Gardo.
- Five tree stumps were ground out
- Mowing of vacant properties and common ground areas has been completed.
- The Public Works department participated in Career Day at Highland Elementary on May 12. Looking forward to the children growing up and submitting their resumes.
- We helped with the City cleanup on Saturday, May 6. Trash pickup: St. Cyr, Shepley.
- Contracted with Drury Tree to remove 2 trees (Ashbrook & Donnell)
- One vehicle is left to debadge, then we will send to auction.
- Budget team meetings
- Pet Clinic on June 3, 2023 at 9 am until 11am (behind Police Department)
- Working on forestry grant

### **CHIEF OF POLICE REPORT -JEREMY IHLER**

- Police continues to maintain a high level of motorist contact.
- Trying to cut speeding and license violation problem. Taking this as a priority.
- Getting warmer check on your neighbors especially the elderly.
- If you see anyone putting anything in storm drains, please contact the police department and we will take proper action.
- Fourth of July is coming up, please call in the violations and we will do the best we can.
- You see something say something and we will respond.
- Still operating with a limited staff. I have not had any employees leave since last meeting.

### **SIKICH, LLP -ANGELA DORN- (AUDIT)**

- I am here to give you your 2021 audit.
- I am going to go through the independent audit report.

- We believe our audit report is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.
- Your financial statement for the 2021-year end, we believe that they are very stable.
- Your financial position of your governmental activity each made through fund an each fund balances of June 30, 2021.
- When we are doing your financial statement, we have other required supplemental information that is included within your statements.
- Other information is included in the audit, which is called other supplemental information, which is part of our required basis financial information statements.
- We also assured quarterly the city's internal control in accordance with government auditing standards.
- City's net position increased by one million three hundred fourteen thousand three hundred forty seven dollars.
- Fund balance is increased by five hundred fifty seven thousand thirty-four dollars. The primary reasons for the increases in your fund balance were receipt of your cares money of \$720,000.00 that contributed too many of the city's positive fund balance changes.
- Now if we looked at your general fund, your fund balance \$746,023.00 as June 30, 2021 is compared to a deficit of \$208,163.00 in a prior year. Again, you can see the Cares money was attributable to that change. Without that, Cares money you would most likely had broken even. Which still would have been an increase of \$200,000.00 from the prior year.
- The Capital Improvement Fund had changes of fund balance of a deficit of \$233,840 and a deficit of \$162,442.00. When I looked at your Capital Improvement Fund compared to the budget there was one thing that stood out you bought five additional police cars, which I am sure you needed and I do not think this was unexpected.
- Your Debt Service Fund had changes in fund balances of a deficit balance of \$26,608.00 compared to \$16,379.00 the year before. Monies are transferred from your tax revenue and is used to pay your Debt Service Clause.
- In addition, you have your Bond Fund which had very little change in it between the two years and the reason for that is; Bond Fund contain your project money that you all have to decide on how you are going to spend the rest of that bond money.

- Assets in 2021 were \$25,258,295.00 compared to \$20,477,492 the year before.
- Liabilities \$10,575,597.00 compared to \$11,113.322 the year before. So your liabilities went down and your assets went up.
- Other changes were changes in the pension and investments in 2021 were doing very well.
- Get the Budget approved before end of fiscal year.

**\*\*\*\*AUDIT WILL BE POSTED ON WEBSITE\*\*\*\***

### **TREASURER'S REPORT-(RICK ROGNAN) - (BUDGET)**

- Semmie is still working with Loomis to get those safes set up.
- Department Heads did great job with the budget.
- This is the first discussion for the budget. One of Angela's comments was to get the budget approved before fiscal year end.
- The goal will be at the next meeting to answer as many questions as you have and hopefully be able to get a budget approved at that time.
- Within this budget is essential expenses, for the most part you got employee pay is frozen but they are in here.
- Keep in mind what you here is on a cash basis. Money coming in which is revenue and money being spent by check is expense.
- This has no modified accrual in it. All modified accrual does is confuse the average reader looking at a financial statement.
- Everyone understands cash coming in and cash going out, this is a very simple process.
- We talked about modified cash, Angela is accepting I would ask her once again and get all the opinions before we make that decision.
- One good question to ask Martin (Bond Counselor) and Angela (Auditor) what is their opinion on what benefit do we have from modified accrual.
- If we all are on the same page, my recommendation is we should move in that direction of modified accrual.
- New to the budget is the used tax and \$250,000.00 is what is being estimated. We think it will be close to that or it could be a little less. Approved in November actual used tax took place in April very first month of collections will be May.
- Went over sections of the budget.

- Looked at Hazzard pay. We talked about this last year something I strongly recommend that if we are going to do it, we do it soon. Here is why. Really related to COVID year, we could only assign the money to existing employees that worked doing that time frame. It is up to the board, up to the city to decide how much that would be. I strongly recommending not putting this one off, I think it is difficult to explain we gave hazard pay in “24” for something dated way back when. It should be done sooner than later.
- The only account that get used here at the City is that Regions General Fund Account.
- You cannot co mingle restricted funds with unrestricted funds.
- It will be up to the board for questions and up to the board to decide what we will do at the next meeting on June 15 and how we want to proceed.
- The opportunity to move forward is still there, we can still make changes.
- Next meeting if there are any changes to the budget that is all we will talk about.
- The goal is to move all of our money over to Simmons Bank (Our primary bank and eventually our only bank). Our goal is to move all the money over. It is up to the board now if they want to motion to get this process going and in place for our new fiscal year.
- **Alderman Alease Dailes** requested balances on each account so when funds are moved over to Simmons the board will be able to state exact amount in the motion.

#### **CITY ATTORNEY’S REPORT –SUSIE MCFARLIN**

- Ms. White-Coleman did give an update with respect to legislation that had been enacted by The Missouri State Legislature. One of the matters that she had talked about related to State Law concerning home based businesses. Your ordinance is not in compliance with what was enacted by the state in August of 2022. There were some possibilities that the state might modify what it did but in the end, the state did not make any changes to that law. I would hope that you are focusing on what needs to be done in terms of your ordinances to make sure the city is in compliance with that law. Again, we are available. The mayor can give us directions with respect to anything we need to address related to that.

**Alderman Alease Dailes** made a motion for \$252.46 for City Clerk Semmie Ruffin-Hall, Board President James Thomas, Sr. to attend the Elective Official Training in Columbia, MO in June 8<sup>th</sup> -9th. Second made by **Alderman Alicia Smith**. **Mayor** called for any questions. **None**. **Mayor** called for an all-in favor: **7-Ayes/0-Nays**. **Ayes'** have it. **Motion passed**.

**Alderman Alease Dailes** made a motion to add special meeting to approve the bills from June 1, 2023 to June 6, 2023 at 7 p.m. via zoom to approve the bills with check numbers. Second made by **Alderman James Thomas, Sr.** **Mayor** called for any questions. **None**. **Mayor** called for an all-in favor: **7-Ayes/0-Nays**. **Ayes'** have it. **Motion passed**.

**Alderman Alease Dailes** made a motion for the finance clerk to cross train the city clerk in her job duties until an essential worker is hired. **Mayor** stated she is not calling for a second. **Alderman Alease Dailes** stated point item.

**Alderman Alease Dailes** made a motion to discuss city vehicles and take a vote about what had happened in previous meetings and why it is not being recognized. In previous meetings we had, a motion by previous board had voted that no city vehicle could be taken home except by the mayor. We understand that city vehicles are being taken home. And the board is making a motion now that no city vehicles be taken home except for the use of the mayor. Second made by **Alderman Alicia Smith**. **Mayor** called for any questions. **Alderman Theresa Hester** has a question on the motion. She asked no vehicles under no circumstances would be taken home. **Alderman Alease Smith** stated that is correct under no circumstances will a vehicle be taken home by anyone other than the mayor. **None**. **Mayor** called for an all-in favor and then requested a roll call.

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

- Alderwoman Theresa Hester-No(By Zoom Video)
- Alderwoman Peg Warnusz-No
- Alderwoman Lynette VonSeggern-No
- Alderman James Thomas, Sr.-Yes
- Alderwoman Regina Harmon-Ward-Abstained
- Alderwoman Alease Dailes-Yes

- Alderwoman Alicia Smith-Yes

**3 Ayes/3 Nays/1 Abstained. Motion failed.**

**Alderman Alease Dailes** stated the board would ask that the mayor bring before them all the people that are on the commission currently before the board for renewal. **Mayor** stated she does not recognize the motion.

**Alderman Dailes** she would like to make a motion that there is no signature stamp. Nobody signature should be rubber-stamped. **Mayor** stated she does not have one and never has used one. **Alderman Dailes** stated they were not aware.

**Alderman Dailes** made a motion for a recess session for the Board of Aldermen and City Clerk for the week of July 3, 2023 through July 14, 2023 due to the City Clerk being on vacation. Meaning that is only for the first meeting in July only because the City Clerk is unavailable. Second made by **Alderman James Thomas, Sr.** **Mayor** called for any questions. **None.** **Mayor** called for an all-in favor: **7-Ayes/0-Nays. Ayes' have it. Motion passed.**

#### **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC (5 MINUTE TIME LIMIT-THIS MEETING ONLY)**

- **Bryant Nelson-9XX Marias Drive**

-Absurd that the citizens had to sit through hours before having their voices heard.

-At least seven citizens walked out and said they were never coming back.

-Absurd to sit here this long and not here your citizen's voice.

-Never been to a meeting that is so combative.

-I have been to meeting in this city hall were police officers were hired that we are asking for stuff now that was never asked for before.

-If it was in an ordinance than why didn't it happen three years ago? Now all of a sudden you want all this documentation.

-Isn't a police officer an essential worker, is not a finance clerk an essential worker.

-I heard that ordinance or the thing that you passed except for essential workers but in the next breath, you say you do not even have a definition for an essential worker. So how can you pass something you do not have a definition for?



-A lot of unnecessary bickering and we set here for three hours and listened to this.

-All we want to do is move the city along.

- **Barbara Powell-12XX Laire Drive**

-Where are the microphones that I have been promised for over 2 years?

-Regards to the street, yes Jeff that did a great job over on 1200 Laire and it was a long time coming to.

-I have been told over 2 years ago that the streets would be totally resurfaced. All of a sudden, the funds vanished. Had something to do with bonds. I do not get into that that is not my expertise at all. These bonds were originally allotted for that particular street, it is a main thoroughfare, it is a snow route and it is a bus route.

-I am just so angry.

-There is a depression in my street, what if it caves in.

-Jimmy took a copy of Ms. Powell's list to be looked into.

- **Michelle Nunley-12XX Laire Drive**

-This has been an extremely long meeting.

-Things that happened tonight could have been handled without us, or included us.

-Thanked Jeff and Thanked Alease for hearing her out.

-Can the police department patrol on Laire more. We are getting more and more section 8.

-We got an owner that lives in California and you think he cares about our neighborhood but I do.

- **Felicia Bishop-10XX Fontaine Place**

-I am hearing many issues.

-I would just come to the board and hope you would define an essential worker. A code enforcer is definitely an essential worker.

-When a municipality lack a code enforcer that responsibility falls on the police.

-I would expeditiously get that in order.

- **Cassandra Tolbert-9XX Lebon Drive**

-Been a resident for almost 30 years. I have a question, can a resident burn leaves or a tree stump in the yard.

-Called dispatch and when an officer did arrive he indicated it was ok as long as the fire is contained.

-No burning at all when I first came to Bellefontaine Neighbors.

-We need code enforcers, people that know what they are doing.

- **Wanda Lane-99XX Martingale Road**

-Ruler Foods. You need to visit Ruler Foods, it is despicable.

-I asked about the services we as citizens receive for our tax dollars.

-Not including the Fire Department or Police Department, but what other services do we receive for our tax dollars.

-We use to have the street department (now public works department) if you cut down branches or whatever we had a chipper that would come by and pick up limbs or branches. That was a great service for the citizens.

-We had a street sweeper that use to come by more than winter and summer. Maybe twice a year now.

-We use to do that on a regular basis. We all talk about how we hate the trash and stuff in the city. But we have equipment to do those things and yes, I asked the Director why we could not use them. He stated I do not have enough staff that is an essential worker.

-We are essentials, citizens are essential. #1 essential. Having said that I would like you guys, I understand the city administrator is a very popular topic right now and there is money in the budget, (I asked Mr. Rick about it) there is money. But back in the day that department had a dozen workers and the city looked better.

-We had a building inspector that we do not have any more that we are trying to hire, and this code inspector. Those are essential workers. They are a little more essential than a city administrator is.

-I also would like you to read the ordinance for the city administrator because according to the ordinance we would lose this position. According to the city administrator ordinance. That person would take the position of treasurer/financial officer and I do not think we want to do that, but that is just my opinion.

-Please, go on your website and read what the ordinance states about a city administrator. \$120,000.00 what we would pay them; we could hire two to three more people in Public Works now.

-I am hoping that the citizens will be able to participate in the final budget presentation. Nobody asked the citizens what they thought, what was important for the budget in public works. Everybody here is talking about what is going on in our city and 90% of it is public works. That seems to be lost on some of you; I would just like to say that.

-Chief, Ferguson has initiated something called Ticket Tuesday. Were they are not just allowing people to drive by with no tags for five years. I think we should consider that.

-Finally as your Riverview Gardens School District Representative. I am now going to publish a one-page synopsis of activities going on in the school district.

**Marcie Gooden-94XX Duenke Drive**

-Those financials were great; I took a lot of notes.

-Is Lori bonded? (**Mayor** stated yes). Will the financial assistant be bonded? (**Mayor** stated yes).

-I have to tell my alder people the Old North County Journal Building where Red Circle is going to be the building is a hot mess. Yawl need to call her tomorrow. They have a dumpster and people are throwing stuff in it.

-They are supposed to have a grand opening Saturday.

-A little disappointed in the new owner.

-Thanks to the Chief that has always been available and the police officers.

-Did we hire a code enforcer yet?

-We have many voucher houses and I am the letter writer in our ward.

**Alderman Alease Dailes** made a motion that the board approve the hiring of the code enforcer. Second made by **Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward**. **Mayor** called for any questions. **Mayor** stated this is being done as a courtesy because the Board of Alderman do not have the authority to hire employees. Mayor called for any questions. **None**.

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

**Felicia Bishop introduced herself as the City's new Code Enforcer.**

**Alderman Thomas** stated he would like the agenda in the future to move the citizens comments back to number three.

**ADJOURNMENT-Alderman Alease Dailes** made a motion to adjourn; second made by **Alderman Peg Warnusz**. **Mayor** called for an all in favor:

**7-Yays/0-Nays Meeting adjourned at 10:30 pm**

ATTEST:

  
Simmie Ruffin-Hall, City Clerk

Approved by the Board of Aldermen on 6-15-23