

**Council for the Village of Yellow Springs
Regular Session Minutes**

Council Chambers @ 5:00 P.M.

Monday, July 1, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Vice President of Council Gavin DeVore Leonard called the meeting to order at 5:06pm.

ROLL CALL

Present were Vice President DeVore Leonard and Council members Brian Housh, Carmen Brown and Trish Gustafson. Also present were Village Manager Johnnie Burns and Solicitor Amy Blankenship.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 5:07pm, Brown MOVED and Housh SECONDED a MOTION TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION To Consider the Compensation of a Public Employee. The MOTION PASSED 4-0 ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.

The Village Manager and Solicitor were present for the session, and Kevin Stokes was present via ZOOM.

MOTION TO RESUME REGULAR MEETING

At 6:02pm, Brown MOVED and Gustafson SECONDED a MOTION TO RESUME REGULAR SESSION. The MOTION PASSED 5-0 ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Burns announced the schedule for July 4th festivities.

Housh thanked those involved for a successful and peaceful Pride celebration, highlighting the great work of the YS police team. He thanked Public Works for rapid banner change-outs for Street Fair to Juneteenth to Pride in rapid succession.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes of June 17, 2024 Regular Meeting

Brown MOVED and Housh SECONDED a MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES of June 17, 2024. The MOTION PASSED 5-0 ON A VOICE VOTE.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

There were no changes to the Agenda.

PETITIONS/COMMUNICATIONS

The Clerk will receive and file:

Evelyn LaMers re: Green Space Fund

Brown reviewed the communication received.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/LEGISLATION

Reading of Resolution 2024-45 Approving the Finance Director's 2024 Tax Budget for the Village of Yellow Springs. Housh MOVED and Brown SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE.

Finance Director Michelle Robinson explained that every year the Greene County Budget Commission requires tax budgets be prepared for the upcoming tax year. One of the duties of the Budget Commission is to ensure there is a need for the property taxes levies being levied against our taxpayers.

The proposed 2025 tax budget is in the format that is required by the County Auditor. It is an estimated projection to prove the need to continue to tax Villagers at the current rate/s by showing that the need for expenditure is above the amount received through taxes.

Housh thanked Robinson for a thorough presentation to Finance Committee.

DeVore Leonard CALLED THE VOTE, and the MOTION PASSED 5-0 ON A VOICE VOTE.

Reading of Resolution 2024-46 Authorizing a Contract with Amy Blankenship of Bricker Graydon for Continued Legal Services. Stokes MOVED and Gustafson SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE.

Stokes stated that Council is pleased with Blankenship's services to date.

DeVore Leonard noted that Blankenship's contract is up and that she has proposed moving to an hourly rate.

Blankenship acknowledged that shifting from a retainer model to a \$275/hour blended rate will affect some interactions going forward, but assured Council that this would be worked through effectively. She noted need for an additional change to one section of the contract to improve efficiency, stating that she will make the change prior to signatures being obtained.

Blankenship pointed out that she did change the signatory for the Village from Council President to the Village Manager, explaining that the VM is the usual signator for Village contracts.

Housh expressed confidence that the hourly rate arrived upon is well within the norm for the area. He commented that when the Village has attempted to curtail legal costs in the past, the effort has regularly resulted in an increase in overall cost due to lawsuits or need for outside counsel.

DeVore Leonard CALLED THE VOTE, and the MOTION PASSED 5-0 ON A VOICE VOTE.

Reading of Resolution 2024-47 Granting Monies to Yellow Springs Development Corporation for the Purpose of Contributing to the Funding of a Part-Time Director Position for the YSDC. Stokes MOVED and Gustafson SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE.

YSDC Director Lisa Abel apprised Council of current upcoming job-growth opportunities in the area as suppliers seek locations, as well as the need for available workforce housing. She listed several specific companies to whom the YSDC has reached out and who are engaged in site searches.

Michael Slaughter, YSDC, identified that he is responsible for developing promotional materials for YSDC, has a relationship with Intel and is assisting in outreach efforts currently.

In response to a question from DeVore Leonard, Slaughter stated that the types of opportunities available would be a blend of new residents and current residents. He commented that Intel in particular invests in training opportunities to develop a local workforce.

Responding to a question from Stokes, Slaughter said that the sooner the Village is marketing itself, the better, but certainly within the next two years.

Brown asked whether the proposed position would take on some of these marketing duties, noting that the YSDC had budgeted \$30,000 for a marketing position at some point.

Abel confirmed that indeed, the Director would be expected to take on some of these tasks. She stated that this position could report out to Council quarterly.

Brown received confirmation that the Village would be funding the majority of the proposed position.

Housh commented that the Village had previously had an Economic Development position.

Housh added that Miami Township did agree to some amount of funding at their last meeting, and had discussed contributing proportionally to the Village's contribution.

Burns asked whether the request to fund the position would be an annual one or whether this is a one-time request.

DeVore Leonard expressed that he would potentially be agreeable to funding the position for several years if there were clarity regarding the role.

Stokes commented that the effort seems to be a two-year need at minimum. He stated that it would seem prudent for the Village to have an Economic Development capacity. He indicated support for a clear plan.

Brown advocated for a plan prior to promising funds.

Gustafson advocated for a higher per-hour rate for a potential candidate and agreed with Brown's position regarding a plan.

Housh commented on prior successes for the YSDC, stating that there is a proven track record. He questioned the ability of the YSDC to produce a plan without having a Director in place. Housh advocated for funding the position for one year, during which time that person's efficacy can be gauged and the feasibility of a second year of funding determined. Housh added that having an Economic Development capacity at this moment seems critical, pointing out that Council had agreed to use the YSDC in this capacity.

The idea of a plan was discussed generally.

Abel stated that YSDC could create a draft plan, but advised bringing on a Director to finalize the plan.

DeVore Leonard took an informal poll, concluding that three of the five members of Council were in favor of at least a draft plan being in place prior to a commitment of funding.

Brown stressed that funds provided are public funds, and that diligence should be employed prior to agreeing to their provision.

Stokes asked that an outline for a plan be provided for the next meeting.

Upon direction from the Solicitor, Stokes withdrew his motion for approval to permit the resolution to be considered at the July 15th meeting.

DeVore Leonard asked for a draft at the earliest time possible.

Abel pointed out that the request has been made and an opportunity for questions was offered at the June 17 meeting. She asked that any concerns or questions be sent to YSDC at the earliest opportunity so that she is able to present a responsive document on July 15th.

DeVore Leonard asked that any requests be sent to either Housh or the Clerk by close of business Wednesday, July 10th.

CITIZEN CONCERNS

There were no Citizen Concerns.

SPECIAL REPORTS

There were no Special Reports.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Burns reported on the following:

Street repair in the downtown area week of July 15th; continued development at Spring Meadows; cleaning and repainting of water tower #2.

Burns welcomed Elyse Giardullo as the Village's Project Lead.

Burns asked Council for direction in signing on to initial exploration of a grant for electric car charging units through AMP.

DeVore Leonard called an informal poll, and all Council members expressed agreement with pursuing the opportunity. DeVore Leonard asked that ongoing information regarding cost be provided.

The County will be doing roadwork on Grinnell Road on July 3rd to prepare the road for paving that will start on the 8th, which should last 3 days, weather permitting.

Burns noted that he will be bringing a request for funding of about \$24,000 to add parking spaces to the Lawson Place apartments, which are experiencing overcrowding. He asked that this come out of the Affordable Housing fund because this project was not budgeted for.

DeVore Leonard asked Council members for an informal vote, with all members agreeing that a resolution should be brought to the next meeting.

Burns asked for feedback on a permanent sign for the CBE, as recommended by Allison Moody. There was general agreement from all Council members.

Emily Seibel, Home, Inc. Executive Director, offered to engage in strategic planning with Council.

Reilly Dixon asked what the funds donated to the Parking Fund will be used for, and was told that these will be used to support Streets and Parks initiatives.

OLD BUSINESS

Grant Application Process Discussion. Following discussion of the information and chart provided, and suggestions made for revision to the flowchart, Council asked that a resolution be brought for the 15th.

Update on Actions Related to LIHTC Effort. Housh reported on next steps, stating that negotiations with a neighboring property owner to the school land are ongoing to attempt to purchase replacement land for use as soccer fields.

Housh reported that the “Neighbors for More Neighbors” group is holding weekly potlucks to discuss the LIHTC project. He noted that one Council member and two School Board members are regularly attending, highlighting that they are not representing their elected bodies.

Blankenship reported that she should have information back from the bond attorney by Friday.

Housh noted a follow up conversation with the government liaison from OHFA regarding Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs), stating that the developer’s proximity to and relationship with local governments is a key factor in obtaining LIHTC grants.

Housh noted that this particular LIHTC project will not request tap fee waivers as those costs will be included in the funding. Housh relayed that the CHDOs are supported in part through “set-asides,” so that they can be competitive with for-profit developers. The developer is also required to hire a property manager for the property. Finally, Housh said, any LIHTC project will be required to complete a phase one environmental review and a second review if needed, and there are solid environmental standards for the project.

Stokes asked what the expectation regarding land purchase is for the Village.

Housh responded that replacement acreage will likely have to be purchased by the YS Schools in order to de-collateralize the three acres now serving as recreational soccer fields. He said his understanding is that the Village would have to purchase and subsequently sell land to a developer for the project.

Seibel stated that purchase of the YS Schools property may not be necessary to satisfy a developer, but control of the land would be needed for that developer to pursue funding.

Housh responded to a question from DeVore Leonard regarding the timeline, stating that while option to purchase the land by mid-July is not critical, it is necessary that a developer be secured in enough time to make application, and a developer will want assurance that land has been secured.

Rebecca Potter stated that “the school” will need the Village to fund all legal costs, and that the funds from sale of the YS Schools property for the LIHTC project would need to cover cost for land to replace the soccer fields.

DeVore Leonard inquired who “we” is, with regard to the requests for funding.

Housh responded that he would need to determine this clearly moving forward.

Seibel commented that while Home, Inc. would be of support, they are not in a position to lead the effort.

DeVore Leonard pressed for clear identification as to who is in charge.

Housh asserted that “we” in the context of his memo was meant to reference Council.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- July 15:** Light Up Navajo Nation Report Out
 - Reading of Resolution 2024-46** Authorizing and Directing the Village Manager or Designee to Apply for Any and All Grant Funds Provided that Any Grant Funds Requiring a Match Must be Approved by Council Resolution
 - Reading of Resolution 2024-XX** Authorizing the Village Manager to Enter into a Contract with XXX for Purchase and Installation of Water Meters
 - Reading of Resolution 2024-XX** Approving a Planned Unit Development Agreement Between the Village of Yellow Springs and YS Home, Inc. for the Cascades Project
 - Ordinance** Supplemental
 - Resolution** Utility Write-Offs
 - LIHTC Update
 - Quarterly Financials
 - Treasurer’s Report
 - Potential Executive Session
- Aug. 5: **NO MEETING**
- Aug. 19: TLT Annual Report
- Aug. 21: 5-8pm Council Teambuilding
- Aug 26: 5-8pm Council Teambuilding
- Sept. 3: TUESDAY

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:02pm, Housh MOVED TO ADJOURN. Gustafson SECONDED, and the MOTION PASSED 5-0 ON A VOICE VOTE.

Signed: _____
 Gavin DeVore Leonard, Council Vice President

Attest: -----
 Judy Kintner, Clerk of Council