

MINUTES
WADSWORTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING
July 6, 2021

The regular meeting of Wadsworth City Council, Tuesday, July 6, 2021, at 5:30 p.m., was held in-person at City Council Chambers.

PRESIDING: Bob Thurber, *President of Council*

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL PRESENT: Ralph Copley, Bruce Darlington, Patty Haskins, Jeanne Hines, Tom Stugmyer, David Williams, Jon Yurchiak

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Mayor Robin Laubaugh, Public Service Director Robert Patrick, Auditor Catherine Fix, Director of Law Director Tom Morris, Asst. Public Service Director Michael Testa, and Clerk of Council Tammy Guenther

PRESS REPRESENTATIVES: *None*

OTHERS PRESENT OR SPEAKING: *Ron Samic, past commander, American Legion Post 170
Bill Alexander, new commander, American Legion Post 170*

Mr. Thurber called the meeting to order at approximately 5:45 p.m. He led the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the Invocation. The Clerk of Council called the roll.

MINUTES: **Mr. Williams** made a motion, which was seconded by **Mr. Stugmyer**, to adopt the minutes of the Council meeting **June 15, 2021**. An all-in-favor vote was taken and all Council members present voted in favor of the motion. **THE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES of June 15, 2021 WERE APPROVED.**

CORRESPONDENCE: *None*

VISITORS SPEAKING: Mr. Thurber invited American Legion Commanders Ron Samic and Bill Alexander to come forward with their comments.

Mr. Samic introduced himself for those who did not know him. He had been the Legion Commander for the last two and a half years. That evening he was of course representing Post 170 and their new Commander Bill Alexander. On behalf of Mr. Alexander and all their Legion Members, he thanked them very much letting him speak to them. Two years ago, he saw that another post in California gave an annual state of the post to their city council. He was prepared last year to do that, but then Covid hit.

Mr. Samic spoke to the reason he was in attendance. He talked about their donations, literally every day, and was not sure that the community was aware of all the ways that they supported the whole City and community members. He hoped to try and do that today.

The national organization guided itself by four pillars, as they were called. Those were veteran's affairs and rehabilitation, national security, Americanism, and children and youth. Mr. Samic said they excelled in a couple of those and were expanding into the other areas as opportunities made themselves available.

The Post turned 100 years old in 2019 and perhaps people had seen their (commemoration) sign. They were one of the very first posts in American in 1919. This year they would be 102 years old. The first commander was Fred Falk, who happened to be the Mayor of the City of Wadsworth as well. Mr. Samic said they had a picture board with all of their past commanders and some of those names he also saw on the street signs in Wadsworth.

Mr. Samic said he was born in Wadsworth in the hospital right down over the hill and had been there forever. Their post had deep roots as well.

In the 1920s, the Legion started doing street fairs in the square to raise money. Those events became “Wadsworth Week,” which was what it was when Mr. Samic grew up. It became the Blue Tip Festival.

Mr. Alexander said in looking back at the Post’s history, there had been a lot of community involvement. Legion members were also involved trying to stand up Grandview Pool. Most, if not all of them, remembered Grandview Pool. Mr. Alexander said he learned to swim there. The Legion was also instrumental in getting Boy Scouts into the City of Wadsworth. He was a Cub and a Boy Scout and certainly reaped the benefits of what they did.

Commander Alexander referred to the handouts and said if they looked at the total membership number; it was a little over 600. About 314 of those were actual veterans. They also had sons of the American Legion and the Ladies’ Auxiliary, which made up the rest. Out of the 314 veterans, two-thirds fell into the 66 to 94 year old age group. He was part of that group these days! The largest numbers fell under Vietnam era. Today they had 16 guest members but category would be phased out. Members must be a veteran or a relative of the veteran.

They were a mature, older group and because of that, the majority of what they did to contribute to the community was in the form of dollars. It was difficult to have someone out with a cane or a walker trying to pick up trash on a bike path, for instance. They donated money too many organizations and, in Mr. Alexander’s opinion, they were very good at it.

In the past year that ended June 30, they donated a little over \$59,000 to the community. The amount represented 48% of all their profits for that year. Mr. Alexander said they could see on the sheet that it was broken down: for national organizations, it was \$1,000; for community support, \$25,800; children and youth, \$12,900. Mr. Alexander noted that much of their community support, overall, did support local children. For veteran’s supports, they provided a little over \$20,000, which had doubled from previous years.

The financial status before he took over (“not a pat myself on the back”) was that the Post was operating in the red and existing off of savings accounts. But they had turned that around, which he thought was good news for the Post and for the City. They had been in the black for two years and Mr. Alexander saw that continuing.

Covid affected the Legion just like everybody else, but they made their way through. They were able to keep their employees and since Covid had even added a 15% bonus to their pay.

As for the future, he’d just spoken with Mr. Patrick before the meeting about the parking situation behind the Post. Just like some others in the City, parking was a nightmare. If there was no parking space for a 94 year old, they went home. They were in the infancy stages of looking for a new home. He did not expect it to happen soon, but they had to find a way to provide parking, along with one floor.

With that, Mr. Alexander thanked them very much for the time and referred them to the handout for a breakdown of organizations to which Post 170 had donated.

Mr. Thurber and the other Council members thanked the American Legion.

Mr. Thurber asked if anyone else wanted to address City Council evening and there was no one.

LEGISLATION:

The following legislation was read for the first time and acted upon as follows:

ORDINANCE NO. 21-041 (1st RDG.): AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE NO. 21-034 TO CORRECT THE NEW WADSWORTH CITY LOT NUMBER TO 10166 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

- Sponsored by Council Member Thomas Stugmyer

Mr. Stugmyer said, as indicated, there was simply an error in assigning the lot number, which would be corrected to 10166. Based on that, Mr. Stugmyer made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Yurchiak, to suspend the three reading rule on Ordinance No. 21-041. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Stugmyer, Hines, Yurchiak, Darlington, Copley, Haskins, Williams. Nays: None. Mr. Stugmyer called the question. Mr. Thurber called for a vote. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Hines, Yurchiak, Darlington, Copley, Haskins, Williams, Stugmyer. Nays: None. **Ordinance No. 21-041 declared to have been adopted have been adopted July 6, 2021.**

ORDINANCE NO. 21-042 (1st RDG.): AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO DO ALL THINGS NECESSARY AND PROPER TO ACCOMPLISH THE PURCHASE OF A PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED IN SHARON TOWNSHIP AND TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY

- Sponsored by Council Member Bruce Darlington
- Forwarded by Public Service Committee July 6, 2021, with recommendation to suspend the three reading rule

Mr. Darlington noted for those who did not attend Public Service Committee that evening, they discussed a purchase of land adjacent to the City's substation at Sharon Center to install some additional generators like those located on Leatherman Road. Sharon Township would discuss it at their Zoning & Planning Commission next week. The ordinance gave their Service Director the ability to go ahead if Sharon Center approved it.

Mr. Darlington made a motion, which was seconded by Ms. Haskins, to suspend the three reading rule on Ordinance No. 21-042. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Yurchiak, Darlington, Copley, Haskins, Williams, Stugmyer, Hines. Nays: None. Mr. Darlington called the question. Mr. Thurber called for a vote. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Darlington, Copley, Haskins, Williams, Stugmyer, Hines, Yurchiak. Nays: None. **Ordinance No. 21-042 declared to have been adopted have been adopted July 6, 2021.**

RESOLUTION NO. 21-07 (1st RDG.): A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A TAX BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF WADSWORTH FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2022, SUBMITTING SAID TAX BUDGET TO THE AUDITOR OF MEDINA COUNTY, OHIO AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

- Sponsored by President of Council Bob Thurber
- Discussed by Committee of the Whole July 6, 2021

Ms. Haskins made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Darlington, to suspend the three reading rule on Resolution No. 21-07. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Copley, Haskins, Williams, Stugmyer, Hines, Yurchiak, Darlington. Nays: None. Ms. Haskins called the question. Mr. Thurber called for a vote. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Haskins, Williams, Stugmyer, Hines, Yurchiak, Darlington, Copley. Nays: None. **Resolution No. 21-07 declared to have been adopted have been adopted July 6, 2021.**

The following legislation was read for the second time, having been previously read at different meetings on different days, and acted upon as follows:

ORDINANCE NO. 21-039 (2nd RDG.): AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY TO DONATE AN “AS IS” 2012 DODGE CHARGER POLICE CRUISER TO THE FOUR CITIES COMPACT FOR ITS CRIMINAL SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY CAREER TECHNICAL PROGRAM AND TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY

- Sponsored by Council Member Ralph Copley
- Forwarded by Public Safety Committee June 15, 2021, with recommendation for three readings

Mr. Copley made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Williams, to place Ordinance No. 21-039 on third reading. An all in favor vote was taken and all Council members present voted in favor of the motion. **Ordinance No. 21-039 advanced to third reading for the meeting of August 3, 2021.**

The following legislation was read for the third time, having been previously read at different meetings on different days, and acted upon as follows:

ORDINANCE NO. 21-036 (3rd RDG.): AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE DESIGN OF THE WTP (WATER TREATMENT PLANT) IMPROVEMENTS - PHASE 1 PROJECT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

- Sponsored by Council Member Bruce Darlington
- Discussed by Public Service Committee June 1, 2021

Mr. Darlington called the question on Ordinance No. 21-036. Mr. Thurber called for a vote. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Williams, Stugmyer, Hines, Yurchiak, Darlington, Copley, Haskins. Nays: None. **Ordinance No. 21-036 declared to have been adopted July 6, 2021.**

ORDINANCE NO. 21-037 (3rd RDG.): AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION OF \$25,000.00 IN THE 672 – WATER SUPPLY-WATER TREATMENT FUND FOR PURPOSES OTHER THAN PERSONAL SERVICES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2021

- Sponsored by Council Member Bruce Darlington
- Discussed by Public Service Committee June 1, 2021

Mr. Darlington called the question on Ordinance No. 21-037. Mr. Thurber called for a vote. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Stugmyer, Hines, Yurchiak, Darlington, Copley, Haskins, Williams. Nays: None. **Ordinance No. 21-037 declared to have been adopted July 6, 2021.**

That concluded the legislation for the meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Rules of Council: Special Committee

Mr. Thurber referred to their *Rules of Council*, which was last adopted before Covid hit. Council

needed to revisit those and he would have the Clerk send them out with some corrections that she'd found.

One matter that Mr. Thurber wanted to take care of that evening was supposed to okay any special commissions per Rule 4 (Rule 4 calls these special "committees"). They had kicked off a Parks Commission and Mr. Thurber requested that it be approved by hopefully four members.

Motion to Approve the Formation of a Special Parks Committee: Mr. Copley made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Yurchiak, to form a Parks Commission. An all in favor vote was taken and all Council members present voted in favor of the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

Mr. Thurber noted that a meeting was scheduled for the next day at 11:00 a.m. He thanked Council for cleaning that up. Ms. Guenther would send the Rules of Council to them with some notations, one of which was the meeting time change from 6:30 p.m. to a 5:30 p.m. start time. If any Council member had thoughts about it, Mr. Thurber invited them to reach out.

Bixler Electric Closing

Mr. Thurber also spoke about the closing of Bixler Electric and its history. He asked them to think about the fact that Bixler Electric had been there since 27 years after Edison invented the light bulb. That was when it opened its doors. Unfortunately, it had also closed them two weeks ago. It was sad, but good for them with five or six generations. Wonderful job and they deserved all the retirement they could get.

Blue Tip and Fourth of July Kudos

The Council President also acknowledged Law Director Tom Morris for his role with the Blue Tip and thanked him for the wonderful job. Mrs. Hines chimed in that it was amazing. Mr. Morris said he wasn't alone, but accepted their accolades. Mr. Thurber said he wore the hat well and deserved the accolades. It was great!

For the Fourth of July festivities, Mr. Thurber said there were many people in the room who helped. There were dozens and dozens who helped, but he could only talk to those in the room. The people he saw picking up garbage and putting stuff out were Tom Stugmyer, as always of course; Jon Yurchiak; Mayor Laubaugh, who picked up garbage like no one else (she could be heard laughing), along with her husband (Bryan); and Robert Patrick and his wife, Adrienne.

Mr. Thurber asked if anyone else had heard that the fireworks were the best ever and several agreed with him.

Mayor's Comments

Regarding American Legion Post 170

Mayor Laubaugh offered some comments, first thanking the Legion for their report. She thanked them also for their service over the years. She'd had the opportunity to work with them many times. They had always been very giving. Their members and the leadership had always been very supportive of various causes throughout Wadsworth. To see that number, almost \$60,000 for one year was really tremendous. The year before was not much less. It was amazing what one organization could give and the impact that made. She was appreciative of the line items they provided because it showed how many organizations and non-profits that did so much good in their own right benefitted the community in other ways. She thanked them again for their service and for the report.

Thanks to State and County Legislators

The Mayor also mentioned a news item from the last several weeks that concerned Wadsworth. They were very happy with the elimination of the broadband amendment in the state budget that would have been damaging. She thanked their legislators, particularly State Representative Sharon Ray, who communicated with them on a regular basis. They worked with their State Senator Mark Romanchuk as well. Thankfully, also Commissioner Hambley, who used to be in the state legislature, was familiar with the process and was very engaged and involved. The Mayor could not enumerate all the individuals and organizations that they worked with, recognizing that was not something they wanted to have taken place.

They heard from many citizens because they certainly valued the ability to have publicly owned services – their broadband and CityLink. They recognized those benefits and being able to grow in the future.

Mayor Laubaugh said they were grateful that amendment was taken out and so grateful to those who were so responsive to the request for help in that regard.

Mr. Thurber asked for any other comments from Council. There were no further comments

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Williams made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Stugmyer. All were in favor. **The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:07 p.m.**

Clerk of Council

President of Council