

Buckeye Lake Village Council Meeting Minutes
Held in Council Chambers, streamed live on Facebook

February 14, 2022

Call to Order: By Council President Linda Goodman at 7:09 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence: Led by Council President Linda Goodman.

Roll Call: Present: Don Cable (0,0), Linda Goodman (0,0), Deb Julian (0,0),
(Consecutive, Total Absences) John Lemmon (0,0), Max Thompson (0,0), Tom Wolfe (0,0)

Staff Present: Mayor Jeryne Peterson; Jennifer Dennis, Clerk/Treasurer; Samantha Torres, Clerk of Council;
Jason Harget, Police Chief;

Approval of Regular Council Meeting Minutes: Motion by Councilor Cable, seconded by Councilor Wolfe, to approve the January 24, 2022 regular council meeting minutes.

Roll call vote: Yes: Julian, Lemmon, Thompson, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 6 – 0

Approval of Special Council Meeting Minutes: Motion by Councilor Wolfe, seconded by Councilor Julian, to approve the January 27, 2022 special council meeting minutes.

Roll call vote: Yes: Julian, Lemmon, Thompson, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 6 – 0

Approval of Clerk Treasurer's Report: Motion by Councilor Lemmon, seconded by Councilor Cable, to approve the January 2022 Reconciliations and Treasurer's reports dated February 10, 2022.

Roll call vote: Yes: Julian, Lemmon, Thompson, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 6 – 0

Former Council member Rod Mitchell, 5459 East North Shore Landing, came to the microphone to formally apologize to council for having to resign from his seat. He said that being on council for the village was in direct conflict with his law enforcement disability. He said at OPERS, it is difficult to get ahold of someone to try and figure it out. He was looking forward to working with the members of council and feels confident that the community is going in the right direction. He is available to help in any way he can.

APPOINTMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS: Police officer Aaron Wolfe was sworn in by Mayor Jeryne Peterson as Sergeant for the Police Department.

COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance Committee: Meeting minutes submitted. Finance Committee Chair John Lemmon stated that the committee had a meeting today before the council meeting. Ordinance 2022-07 has already been recommended at a previous meeting. In the meeting, they talked about moving to the permanent budget from the temporary budget, where they recommended that all of the changes carry over except for the Fire Department where they will have an additional meeting with the Fire Chief.

Public Safety Committee: Public Safety Chair Max Thompson stated that he met with Police Chief Jason Harget to discuss some opportunities within the Police Department. He will meet with Fiscal Officer Jennifer Dennis and Fire Chief Ryan Wyse. He plans to be heavily involved with the budgets and any necessary levies that need pushed forward.

Public Service Committee: Public Service Chair Don Cable stated that the committee had a meeting last Monday, February 7th. Meeting minutes submitted and will be included at the next council meeting. Other than

the normal projects, a few issues were brought up that will be discussed at the next couple of meetings, one being a potential road repair schedule, as well as potential police and fire crosswalks.

Rules Committee: No Chair for this committee yet, so no report.

Community Development Committee: Community Development Chair Tom Wolfe asked for a status update on his request for an ordinance or resolution about the Landings at Maple Bay putting in an emergency access road for the residents of Cranberry Bay. President Goodman stated that it is with legal being reviewed at the moment.

Personnel Committee: Personnel Chair Deb Julian stated the committee had a meeting where they proposed the seventh member to the vacant council seat. Now with the seat open again due to Rod Mitchell's resignation on January 27th, the Personnel Committee is planning another meeting on February 24th at 6:00pm. There are 3 applicants for the newly vacant seat, 2 of which will be interviewed and 1 who has already been interviewed. An agenda will be sent out beforehand.

Report of Council President – Strip mall next to the new Goodwill building will have a Genesis Health Care primary care office that will occupy two spots with a ten-year lease with multiple doctors and several exam rooms. A butcher shop / market called Rittberger Meats and Farm Fresh Market from Zanesville will occupy another space in the building. Knuckleheads from Granville will go into the old Lakeside Tasty Treats building. The Eye Care About You building is coming along as well and may soon open. North Shore Coffee Co. will be closing. President Goodman would like each member or committee to make goals for the year to help get more organized and stay on task.

Report of Mayor – Mayor Peterson stated that the Village of Buckeye Lake is now an official member of MORPC. Jennifer Dennis applied for a federal surplus contract.

ORDINANCES

Ordinances for 3rd Reading – None.

Ordinances for 2nd Reading –

Ordinance 2022-07 - AMENDING ORDINANCE 2021-67 TEMPORARY APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

This will move on to a third reading.

Ordinances for 1st Reading – None.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions for 3rd Reading – None.

Resolutions for 2nd Reading – None.

Resolutions for 1st Reading – None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

Council President Goodman read a citizen's comment from Charlene Hayden of 67 Lighthouse Lane that has been submitted as part of the minutes.

Arletta Ruton of 99 Elmhurst Lane came to the microphone to say that what has taken place in regards to the donations that were made to the Fire Department and the Police Department is unconscionable on how the donor, Casey Clark, has been treated. She said it is a violation on many, many levels and that it is basically corruption. She said that in Section 504 of the Village Charter, it states that the mayor shall not “interfere with the exercise of powers, duties, or functions of other elected officials of the Village” and Arletta believes that is what Mayor Peterson has done. She believes that neither Casey Clark nor Chief Harget have done anything wrong and that it is a slander campaign to keep Casey off of council (as there is currently a vacant seat). Arletta believes the Ohio Revised Code has been violated as well and the village needs to put a stop to it. She said it is not up to the mayor or anyone else to choose who goes into the vacant council seat, it is up to the members of council in picking who they want and who they feel would be the best person to sit on the seat. She said there needs to be consequences and she believes Mayor Peterson should step down. She supports what Casey’s donations have done for the village.

Police Officer of the Village of Buckeye Lake Police Department Johannes Lorenz came to the microphone to speak. He said he does not live in the village but he drives an hour to the village and an hour home every day to be here for the village. He does this because he has an amazing team and an outstanding Police Chief. He said he is speaking about integrity. Officer Lorenz is a five-year Marine and is six months into law enforcement. When he came to Buckeye Lake, he saw many challenges between the Police Department and the village. Walking into bars, they were met with challenges at the door, but they went in and handled their jobs. He said they have since fixed those challenges and changed the village to look to their department and know that they will do the right thing. He said here we are again, fighting off another “black eye” and in his eyes, it is not right. He said they do what they need to do to take care of this village because it is important to them and they make a huge effort. He said we are all human and we all make mistakes, but part of integrity is standing up and saying “I made a mistake. I am here to fix it” and if you cannot do that, you need to step down. He said if you are here for the village, you are here for the Police Department, because the Police Department is here for you.

Casey Clark of 241 Lakeview Drive read two comments that she had posted on Facebook that have been submitted as part of the minutes. She said they speak to what exactly happened. She added to these comments that she made the donation of the police bike as a private resident of Buckeye Lake. She said that each and every donation she made was because she loves the Village of Buckeye Lake and she had no ulterior motive except her love and compassion for the Village of Buckeye Lake and the residents. She said that her partner George Rex who passed away loved the village, the Fire Department, and the residents and when it came out about his donation, it was a punch in the gut to her. She said the donation to the Fire Department was simply made in George’s name for his love for this village and nothing else.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS:

Councilor Goodman – She said that this council supports the Buckeye Lake Police Department and Chief Jason Harget and since he has come on, they have not wavered from that one bit. She said they are happy and she is proud of the Police Department that we have in this village. She believes it is the best we have ever had in this village. She will continue to support and help the Buckeye Lake Police Department in any way that she can. She said through trials and tribulations, there is a learning process. She asked what is the village’s procedure for accepting a donation. She said it needs tightened up and put out to everyone. We have received donations before and appreciate anything that citizens and various city groups donate. They are encouraged and accepted and we are very grateful for them, but the procedure on how it is done needs tightened up, for the village and for the people so it is nice and clean and set up the right way. Most importantly, what we need to do is move forward.

Councilor Julian – She likes what President Goodman said about goals during her Report of Council President. She would like for council collectively to come up with a priority list of what they want to get accomplished in the next couple of years, as there are so many things to do and council can become overwhelmed. For her second comment, she listened to the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on February 7th and she said there were many things said in the meeting where, if council does not know about them and council does not listen to their meeting and someone from Planning and Zoning does not come to the council meetings, council will not know about them. She said there are zoning map and zoning book changes that have been out there for two years and the Planning and Zoning Commission keeps saying it is in council's hands or it is in the attorney's hands. She said council needs to review that because it is a long process to get changes and there are probably changes that need to be made since the previous changes were recommended as well. Her third comment is that this is a small village. The incident that has happened already this year is bad and there is an upset citizen and an upset Police Chief. She said she was not at the staff meeting and does not think all of the details were looked at and that sometimes in leadership positions, we have to sit back and say "I may not have had all of the information, I apologize if I did something that I wasn't supposed to." She thinks Mayor Peterson needs to apologize. She said these are two good people that are trying to do good for the village and there was nothing malicious and we need to take some of that personal emotion out of it.

Police Chief Jason Harget – Jason came to the microphone and he apologized for commenting at this point in the meeting; he thought they would go around to speak to Public Safety Officials. He appreciates the comments that were said and appreciates the great team and support he has behind him. He said that unfortunately, this situation became public and that is the issue that he has with this. He said now we have a "black eye" that we have to put ice on again. He has asked through emails for a redaction from Mayor Peterson. What has been accused is very serious and a chargeable offense. He said any time you talk about someone's ethics and integrity, that is a problem. He has worked over 26 years to be where he is today and his integrity means the world to him and the officers behind him. He said we have come a long way in the Police Department and he appreciates the support that council has given him. He has asked for an apology, a retraction. He agrees with Councilor Julian that maybe this person did not have all of the information and that is why he went out and got that information, to show that we do things by the book. He said now we need to think about the healing process from here: how do we move on, how do we retain great officers, how do we get rid of the "black eye" in the community that he hears from other agencies when he puts in for grants or funding that is frustrating. He and his team feel council's support. He said it is not about Jason Harget, and that the main thing is how do we move on for this village that has been through enough.

Councilor Lemmon: He thanked Casey Clark and said that what she did was very appreciated. He has been in the village a long time and this Police Department has never been as good and professional as it is now and it has been needed for a long time. The integrity and professionalism that he sees is outstanding and he is proud to say we have a great Police Department. He thanked them for what they do.

Councilor Thompson – Congratulated Sergeant Wolfe. He told Casey that he knows her heart lies with the village and he knows she meant nothing bad about the donations. He has respect for the Police Department and that is why he took the Public Safety Committee Chair position. He said he knows they lay their lives on the line every day and he knows the feeling, having been in the military himself. He was very disappointed by the emails and what he had heard about what Mayor Peterson accused them of doing and it bothers him personally because he holds the Police and Fire Departments at the highest integrity. He thinks an apology directly from the Mayor would help to start the healing process. He thinks it would help the village move forward in this case.

Councilor Wolfe: Congratulated Sergeant Wolfe. He told Casey Clark that he thought her donations were appropriate and kind and that the council supports the Police Department.

Councilor Cable: He completely agrees with the citizen's comment letter from Charlene Hayden and he called her after he received it to tell her he supported her letter and everything in it. He has spoken to the Police Chief personally to show his support for him and his team as well. He thanked Casey Clark. He said there seems to be an issue of donations and who the donation is from and in his opinion, that is a witch hunt. He gave examples of donations that were given to the village with no issue, such as Christmas lights and remodeling of the village offices. He said now we have someone who appears to be "on the other side" that we have an issue with. When he was getting his signatures when running for council, he was asked which side he is on. He did not and still does not have a side. He agrees that an apology is requested and needed. He said it is sad that we get to pick and choose our donations and who they are by, and it is sad that it has only taken a month in office for this to come out. He said this has to stop on both sides. There is a side that says everything is illegal and there is a side that wants to stop them, whatever we can do. Enough is enough. He does not agree with using Facebook as a sounding board to hide behind a keyboard. It is time to move forward. Hopefully a lot of people will donate, as the village needs help. We cannot pick and choose who we provide a witch hunt for.

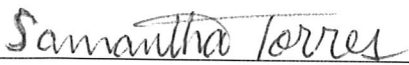
President Goodman asked Mayor Peterson if she had anything to say. Mayor Peterson said she has nothing to say based on what the solicitor has advised her.


ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Councilor Cable to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilor Julian.

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm

NEXT MEETING: Regular Council meeting on February 28, 2022


Samantha Torres, Council Clerk


Linda Goodman, Council President