

Buckeye Lake Village Council Meeting Minutes
Held in Council Chambers, streamed live on Facebook
November 27, 2023

Call to Order: By Council President Linda Goodman at 7:04p.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), Kellie Green (0,0), Deb Julian (0,0),
(Consecutive, Total Absences) John Lemmon (0,0), Sue Wadley (0,1), Tom Wolfe (0,3)
Absent: None

Staff Present: Mayor Jeryne Peterson; Samantha Torres, Clerk of Council; Jason Harget, Police Chief; Keisha Amspaugh, Fire Chief; Toby Miller, Public Works Superintendent; Rex Adkins, Code Enforcement Officer; Kevin Strang, Zoning Inspector;

Approval of Regular Council Meeting Minutes: Motion by Councilor Cable, seconded by Councilor Green, to approve the November 13, 2023 regular council meeting minutes.

Roll call vote: Yes: Green, Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 7 – 0

Approval of Special Council Meeting Minutes: Motion by Councilor Cable, seconded by Councilor Julian, to approve the November 21, 2023 special council meeting minutes.

Roll call vote: Yes: Green, Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 7 – 0

Approval of Clerk Treasurer's Report: Motion by Councilor Lemmon, seconded by Councilor Green, to approve the Treasurer's report dated November 22, 2023.

Roll call vote: Yes: Green, Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 7 – 0

APPOINTMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Pam Reed – President of the Friends of the Buckeye Lake Library Board – Pam read a letter she received the day before Thanksgiving from the Licking County Library Board of Trustees about the merging of the Buckeye Lake and Hebron branches of the library to a singular location in the Arrowhead Shopping Center in Hebron. Pam stated the library's lease is up with them on December 23rd and the county has obviously chosen not to renew that. The county has said they would like to continue month-to-month until they move into their storefront in the Spring of 2024. Pam stated she cannot see the kids riding their bikes or walking to cross SR70 to go to the library if it moves there. The library is very important for the growth and help of the members of the community. They were given no heads up about this plan or decision. Pam has requested a letter of resolution of support for the library to remain in Buckeye Lake. Pam has requested a meeting at the Downtown Newark library with the Board of Trustees for December 20th at 4:00pm for board members and a few concerned community members. President Goodman stated she believes Hebron was not aware of this plan either. The Friends of the Buckeye Lake Library Board pays operating expenses for use of the building and utilities, cleaning, fire, safety, security. Licking County provides staff and the books. Councilor Julian stated that if what is being proposed is the final decision, she hopes that the money from the Friends will remain in the village to support the children. Councilor Wolfe mentioned if the community could continue with the way they have raised funds and the village could find a way to support staffing, it seems like some way or another we could keep something going for the kids. He hopes the County would give some type of transition to find a solution. Pam's goal is that the County change their mind. Councilor Wadley mentioned that around this time last year we learned that LEADS HEAD START was leaving the community, now the library. It is a big huge concern

and as the community grows, there will be more need. Many people do not have the transportation. Councilor Goodman stated that from times in the past, the County does not have a complete understanding of the need, of the area, of the use and when members of the community and the Friends Board tried to speak to them, they were very angry.

Motion by Councilor Wolfe, seconded by Councilor Lemmon to write a resolution of support for keeping the library in Buckeye Lake.

Roll call vote: Yes: Green, Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 7 – 0

Jonett Haberfield – Executive Director at Visit Fairfield County – Has partnered with the Chamber. Tourism director for Fairfield County. Created Escape to Buckeye Lake brand to help promote the lake area as a destination for visitors. Cannot wait for things to be perfect before you start marketing something as it takes 3 years for people to know what you are talking about. They made a website, logo, app, and social media presence. Their organization is the Fairfield County Visitors and Convention Bureau and it is funded 100% by a lodging tax. There is a 3% lodging tax county-wide in Fairfield County on any kind of lodging facility where someone can sleep inside of a building, such as hotel, short-term rental (does not apply to campgrounds). 3% goes to County Commissioners and a majority of that money comes to her office exclusively for marketing Fairfield County as a destination. They market locally as well since residents can be visitors. Most of the money is spent outside of the county. Much of it in Amish County and Hocking Hills to promote to those heavily visited areas. They also reach out to travel writers and influencers. Money goes to annual state tourism guide. Their efforts paid for lodging tax in Lancaster and Pickerington. There are no hotels in Fairfield County at the lake which means no lodging tax coming in. They will do some extra work with the Chamber who will pay them to get more revenue. They bring more visitors, they sleep in hotels, that brings lodging tax. In Fairfield, they get lodging tax from short-term rentals that are in Millersport only because the rest of Walnut Township has outlawed short-term rentals within residential areas. Any municipality can enact an additional 3% lodging tax. Licking County does not charge lodging tax on short-term rentals currently. 3% the county collects is only for hotels. Council President Goodman stated the village does get some bed tax from the KOA campground because of the cabins and the village has had a municipal bed tax for several years. Money is coming to the region which has some of the closest water. They will come here. Need to keep the people who are promoting tourism. Don't see people from Licking County Tourism so they can see the tourism and money coming into this region. Need to start collecting bed tax from short-term rentals. Support tourism with the money that is coming in.

Nate Green – Montrose Group – Spoke about the TIF district. Answered any last-minute questions from council before the vote on the legislation tonight and provided a breakdown of property tax rates and projections, found in the minutes binder. He also recapped that it will be a 30-year, 100% non-school TIF, meaning the school districts of C-TEC and Lakewood will still collect what they collect as of today and everything else comes back to the village to pay for infrastructure improvements along State Route 79. It only collects from the parcels that touch State Route 79. Does not include anything tax-exempt. Councilor Julian stated that the village has a lot of vacant land along SR79 and if a strip mall, boutique hotel, or anything else comes, those will be considered improvements and that money will go into the TIF, not into the General fund and that is what concerns her. As expenses go up, we would have to find a way to pay for that. President Goodman stated that in ten years, there should not be an operating levy.

COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance Committee: Finance meeting held this evening where they discussed the second draft of the budget for 2024. This is a temporary budget; anything could not get to will be addressed after January 1, 2024.

Public Safety Committee: Nothing to report.

Public Service Committee: No report at this time. Next standing meeting will be Monday December 4, 2023 at 6:30pm where an Open House will happen for the Cranberry Bay Repaving project.

Rules Committee: Nothing to report.

Community Development Committee: Discussed tourism and heard about the library today. Second annual holiday parade is coming up on December 2 at 4:45pm.

Personnel Committee: Next committee meeting to be held on December 11th at 5:30pm before the Finance Committee meeting, they will finalize the pay grid based on what was recommended by administration and department heads. Chair Julian sent the Fiscal Officer position to the Ohio Municipal League to post on their site. There have been some interviews that have not worked out. Traveling clerk Melanie Smith has been helping Toby Miller.

Report of Council President: Parade was fun last year, looking forward to it this year. Fiscal Officer posting has been updated with the correct information.

REPORT OF VILLAGE OFFICIALS WRITTEN OR VERBAL

Police Department – Chief Jason Harget – Call report submitted. Disappointed and devastated to hear about the library. It is so important for our children and adults to have a place to study. He will be supportive of going to the meeting. These kids need something to do and that is why the public safety crews do things like movie night. Parade has an entry form this year. Currently looking into an applicant's background due to police department vacancy. Event name changed from Shop With A Cop to Shop With First Responders though no date set yet. Fire Department assisted in that every year. They are coming up with a fair process for giving gifts this year. Had a very large donor last year and are hoping for that again this year. Officers will start working special duty trying to catch the Grinch.

Fire Department – Fire Chief Keisha Amspaugh – Written report submitted. Excited for Christmas parade. Estimate received for the lettering on the side of the fire truck. Chief reached out to 4 companies. 2 could not do it until Spring, 1 said no thanks, and she has the estimate from the last one. Fire Department will be out and about training new members to acclimate to the town, each other, and the trucks. Feel free to stop and talk to them if you see them out.

Public Works – Toby Miller – Able to retain billing clerk no staff. Tree work will be done in front of KOA & Taco Bell. Final drawings and estimates for Cranberry Bay repaving project presented at next Public Service Committee meeting in an informal, open house format. On-line with new meter reading software; bear with us – some growing pains and kinks to work out but will be able to see a lot more with this new system.

Parks and Recreation – Written minutes submitted.

Code Enforcement – Rex Adkins – Written report submitted. Short-term rental ordinance up for second reading on the agenda tonight. Rex asked council to pass this tonight so the iWorq system can be up and running. Hoping to have all inspections and licenses done by the end of January if everyone gets their applications submitted. Councilor Julian suggested a more realistic expectation of the end of March. She asked if there is a policy / procedure / county or state code for condemning properties? Rex stated the International Property Maintenance Code is used for condemning property. No legal process. Applied to all houses in the village the same way. Unsafe structure (possibly has to be demolished or has severe structural issues that need

looked at) and uninhabitable (several violations that can be remedied by the property to make it habitable again) are the 2 condemning types.

Zoning – Kevin Strang – Report submitted. Recent activity included 16 on-site visits to look at a problem or complaint or to see what is happening at the job site versus what is on the application, 24 electronic / telephone communications, 2 stop-work orders. Stop-work order usually means they did not obtain the required permit.

Planning and Zoning – Dick Williams – Meeting minutes submitted. Absent.

Report of Mayor – Written report submitted. Information about fiscal officer position has been corrected.

Citizen’s Comments regarding Ordinances or Resolutions on the Agenda – None.

ORDINANCES

Ordinances for 3rd Reading –

Ordinance 2023-54 - AN ORDINANCE CREATING THE BUCKEYE LAKE SR79 TAX INCREMENT FINANCING INCENTIVE DISTRICT DECLARING IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PARCELS WITHIN THE INCENTIVE DISTRICT TO BE A PUBLIC PURPOSE AND EXEMPT FROM REAL PROPERTY TAXATION; REQUIRING THE OWNERS OF THOSE PARCELS TO MAKE SERVICE PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES; ESTABLISHING A MUNICIPAL PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT TAX INCREMENT EQUIVALENT FUND FOR THE DEPOSIT OF THOSE SERVICE PAYMENTS; AND SPECIFYING THE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS TO BE MADE THAT DIRECTLY BENEFIT THE PARCELS AND THE DECLARATION OF AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Councilor Lemmon, seconded by Councilor Cable to adopt Ordinance 2023-54.

Roll call vote: Yes: Green, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman

Abstain: 0; **Nays:** Julian; **Motion Passed 6 – 1**

Ordinances for 2nd Reading –

Ordinance 2023-59 - AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE LICKING COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF LEGAL COUNSEL FOR INDIGENT DEFENDANTS FOR THE VILLAGE OF BUCKEYE LAKE, LICKING COUNTY, OHIO.

This ordinance will move on to a third reading.

Ordinance 2023-60 - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 2022-56 REGARDING SHORT-TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE AND BED AND BREAKFAST REGULATIONS.

Motion by Councilor Lemmon, seconded by Councilor Green to suspend the rules.

Roll call vote: Yes: Green, Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman

Abstain: 0; **Nays:** 0; **Motion Passed 7 – 0**

Motion by Councilor Cable, seconded by Councilor Julian to adopt Ordinance 2023-60.

Discussion: Councilor Lemmon suggested a process for reviewing short-term rental licenses each year, much like how the village approves liquor licenses as they are presented. Rex Adkins stated that a report can be printed through the iWorq system at any time as well.

Roll call vote: Yes: Green, Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman
Abstain: 0; **Nays:** 0; **Motion Passed 7 – 0**

Ordinances for 1st Reading –

Ordinance 2023-61 - AMENDING ORDINANCE 2023-08 PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Councilor Lemmon, seconded by Councilor Cable to suspend the rules.

Roll call vote: Yes: Green, Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman
Abstain: 0; **Nays:** 0; **Motion Passed 7 – 0**

Motion by Councilor Lemmon, seconded by Councilor Green to adopt Ordinance 2023-61.

Roll call vote: Yes: Green, Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman
Abstain: 0; **Nays:** 0; **Motion Passed 7 – 0**

Ordinance 2023-62 - AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE VILLAGE OF BUCKEYE LAKE, STATE OF OHIO, DURING THE FIRST FISCAL QUARTER ENDING MARCH 31, 2024 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

This ordinance will move on to a second reading.

Ordinance 2023-63 - AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A MUNICIPAL INCOME TAX AT A RATE OF ONE AND ONE-HALF PERCENT (1.5%) PER YEAR, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2024, AND THE DECLARATION OF AN EMERGENCY.

This ordinance will move on to a second reading.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions for 3rd Reading – None.

Resolutions for 2nd Reading – None.

Resolutions for 1st Reading –

Resolution 2023-21 - A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE NECESSITY OF LEVYING A REPLACEMENT TAX ON PROPERTY IN EXCESS OF THE TEN-MILL LIMITATION FOR POLICE PROTECTION AND SERVICES AND REQUESTING CERTIFICATION FROM THE LICKING COUNTY AND FAIRFIELD COUNTY AUDITORS AND THE DECLARATION OF AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Councilor Lemmon, seconded by Councilor Cable to suspend the rules.

Roll call vote: Yes: Green, Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman
Abstain: 0; **Nays:** 0; **Motion Passed 7 – 0**

Motion by Councilor Lemmon, seconded by Councilor Green to adopt Resolution 2023-21.

Discussion: Renewal versus Replacement was discussed in Finance Committee. Looking at it because we have 5 years of inflation. If we renew it, it stays at the rate that was collected 5 years ago. 5 years down the line we will be 10 years in, will be collecting at the rate 10 years behind which will not keep up with expenses and inflation. Start off strong in the beginning, then towards the end, replace that to start the process again. Toby stated that Brad Cottrell said he could not do a renewal because of something that was not in yet.

Roll call vote: Yes: Green, Lemmon, Cable, Goodman
Abstain: Wadley; **Nays:** Julian, Wolfe; **Motion Passed 4 – 1 - 2**

Resolution 2023-22 – A RESOLUTION DECLARING NECESSITY FOR A RENEWAL TAX LEVY IN EXCESS OF THE TEN-MILL LIMITATION, AND REQUESTING THE LICKING COUNTY AUDITOR AND FAIRFIELD COUNTY AUDITOR TO CERTIFY THE TOTAL CURRENT TAX VALUATION AND THE DOLLAR AMOUNT OF REVENUE THAT WOULD BE GENERATED BY THIS LEVY, PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 5705.03, 5705.192, 5705.25 OF THE OHIO REVISED CODE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Councilor Cable, seconded by Councilor Julian to suspend the rules.

Roll call vote: Yes: Green, Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman
Abstain: 0; **Nays:** 0; **Motion Passed 7 – 0**

Motion by Councilor Wolfe, seconded by Councilor Green to adopt Resolution 2023-22.

Roll call vote: Yes: Green, Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman
Abstain: 0; **Nays:** 0; **Motion Passed 7 – 0**

Resolution 2023-23 - A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING VILLAGE TO ENTER INTO INSURANCE COVERAGE CONTRACT AND DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.

Councilor Julian stated that this was done outside of Personnel Committee and they have not seen the insurance contract. Mayor Peterson was the contact person. Mayor Peterson stated that the fee structure stayed the same. Councilor Julian stated they would need that in writing. We are asking seven people to pass something that none of them have seen.

Motion to suspend the rules by Lemmon and Green was rescinded.

Motion to adopt by Cable and Lemmon was rescinded.

Motion to table Resolution 2023-23 for more information by Councilor Lemmon and seconded by Councilor Wolfe.

Roll call vote: Yes: Green, Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman
Abstain: 0; **Nays:** 0; **Motion Passed 7 – 0**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None.

NEW BUSINESS – Discussion was had that an inappropriate post was made by Mayor Peterson on the professional Village Facebook page.

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS –

Brian Thom – 4863 North Bank Road – Brian stated that he heard Mayor Peterson say she is barely on her Facebook page though she posts every day and that was inaccurate information on her behalf. Brian gave an update that at the last council meeting, he submitted a letter showing the intent to recall Mayor Peterson, giving the electors of the village the opportunity to speak. In previous council meetings, the council unanimously voted to censure the mayor and unanimously passed a motion for a vote of no confidence of the mayor. Staff members have reported verbal abuse and the Civil Rights Commission is investigating allegations from staff. Council and staff have spoken and now the residents are being counted. Over 180 signatures have been collected within 7 days. The village charter requires 15 % of all registered voters for signatures. Residents are speaking and we will prevail. For the community, the facts are there to inform yourselves. A few publications, such as the Perry County Tribune and a Logan County publication, have printed articles about what has been going on. You can

visit the Village of Buckeye Lake – Just the Facts Facebook page to get factual information. He wants everyone to be informed. Please step up and be counted. Appreciates your hard work.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS:

Councilor Cable: Parade is this weekend. Will be bigger and better than last year and he is glad everyone is working together on it. Sad to hear about the library. Stigma about the village for many years. Different posts don't help that matter at all.

Councilor Lemmon: Thank you to the members of the Finance Committee who have put in a lot of hard work on the budget. Has been difficult getting this taken care of and they did not get to discuss as much as they would have liked. They were hoping to have the information by the end of September. Have worked hard and it has put a lot of stress on our employees. Thanks to Toby and Sam for their hard work on it and to the department heads who met with the committee. Hope all had a good Thanksgiving and has a good Christmas.

Councilor Green: Asked everyone to please be supportive of the library. Moving the library down by Kroger is not convenient for the people who live neither in Hebron or the Village. Hope we all can support the library staying here in the village where it belongs. Thanks to Councilor Lemmon for his work on the budget. Shout out and thanks to Toby who has been picking up slack everywhere.

Councilor Goodman – She had the privilege of working at the library when she first retired so she got to see first hand just how important our library is for the families and kids in this community. They came in and used the computers on a daily basis. Gaming, homework, a place to get warm, a snack after school. The library gets a lot of use and there are activities there a lot. The people on the Friends of the Buckeye Lake Library Board have worked hard for 19 years to keep that library open and now the rug is being pulled at the last minute. Please attend the Licking County Library Board meeting if you can to support the library at 4PM on December 20th.

Councilor Julian: It is sad this is happening to the library after the work that has been put in and Chet Hauck has been gracious to the village about the library's facility. The village will fill in, somehow some way because that will be a huge void if it happens. Ditto on thanking Toby Miller – he has really helped us a ton. Enjoy December, we have a lot to do in two weeks to finalize the year.

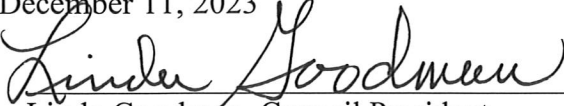
Councilor Wolfe: Next council meeting will be very long. Escape to Buckeye Lake – awesome that people are supporting the region. Library situation is horrible. Details of the levy need to be given before the meeting or the vote is no. Commend all the members of the Finance Committee. Very dedicated people make a great council.

Councilor Wadley: Thanks to village employees. Condolences to Jimmy Hanzy's family, as he passed away recently. He was a member of the police department for a lot of years. Budget – it is difficult to approve anything without knowing the details. Decisions we make affect us on this council just as it does the residents.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Councilor Cable to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Councilor Goodman. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:28pm

NEXT MEETING: Regular Council Meeting: December 11, 2023


Samantha Torres, Clerk of Council


Linda Goodman, Council President