

Buckeye Lake Village Council Meeting Minutes
Held in Council Chambers, streamed live on Facebook
September 9, 2024

Call to Order: By Council President John Lemmon 7:05p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence: Led by Council President John Lemmon.

Roll Call: Present: Don Cable, Kellie Green, Deb Julian, John Lemmon, Sue Wadley, Tom Wolfe
Absent: Douglas Keener (excused)

Staff Present: Linda Goodman, Mayor; Samantha Torres, Clerk of Council; Amanda Hoppel, Clerk Treasurer; Jason Harget, Police Chief; Jerry Brooks, Interim Fire Chief; Toby Miller, Public Works Superintendent;

Approval of Regular Council Meeting Minutes: Motion by Councilor Green, seconded by Councilor Wolfe, to approve the August 26, 2024 regular council meeting minutes.

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

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; **Motion Passed 6 - 0**

Approval of Clerk Treasurer's Report: Motion by Councilor Wadley, seconded by Councilor Julian, to approve the July 2024 reconciliations and Treasurer's report dated September 5, 2024.

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

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

APPOINTMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Mayor Goodman introduced Interim Fire Chief Jerry Brooks who has been a firefighter for 42 years; he is a fire inspector, and paramedic and he has a lot of good experience behind him to help keep our village safe and to train new people. Happy he is with us.

Mayor Goodman swore in Nevaeh Wall as Firefighter for the village.

COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER:

Finance Committee: Meeting held tonight where they discussed the completion of the debrief on 2022-2023 audit results and findings. Really clean audit with some minor things. In the management notes, only significant thing were purchase orders not preceding the invoices. Ordinance for \$74,000 in appropriations on agenda tonight. Talked about budget process. Mayor is already meeting with department heads to speak with them about their budgets. Getting things through administration to council will be expedient this year. What will it take to get a perm budget approved by first meeting in December? At third reading, will need emergency to have it go into effect January 1, 2025 but Chair Julian thinks it can be achievable. Next meeting October 14th at 5:30pm.

Public Safety Committee: Thanked Mayor Goodman for all of her work. Welcome to new fire chief and firefighters. Have a police levy coming up and there is a townhall meeting for that on October 3rd at 7pm in council chambers. Appreciate the support on that.

Public Service Committee: Meeting held last Wednesday Sept 4th. Discussed Cranberry final improvements and walkthrough. Union Avenue paving had some warranty issues that are being finalized and putting together a repair schedule. On the schedule to be paved this year are Lakeview near Monkey Island, Second Street, and Essex. Some legislation tonight that went through the committee. Next meeting first Monday of October at 6:30pm.

Rules Committee: Absent; no report.

Community Development Committee: Meeting held tonight. Finalizing what needs to happen for getting the proposed charter changes out to the voters. Printer can get this out in about 4 days once we receive a price. Motion request to pay for that during new business. Moved village properties and zoning issues to next meeting.

Personnel Committee: Meeting held tonight where they discussed looking at policies in the employee handbook. Finalized political activities with help from the village solicitor and will forward recommendations to full council about that. Passed out tentative draft of the revised drug and alcohol policy. Had discussion about hiring and backgrounds and criteria on that moving forward. Discussion about insurance and renewals. Next meeting to be held October 14th at 6:00pm after Finance Committee meeting.

Report of Council President: President Lemmon stated that a lot of the discussion happens in committee meetings. He explained some of the legislation on the agenda for tonight. He stated Councilor Keener is not here tonight and that Councilors Wolfe and Julian will not be at the September 23rd meeting. Council Clerk will be on vacation at some point next month.

Report of Mayor: Mayor Goodman thanked President Lemmon for allowing her some additional time to speak tonight. She stated that everyone met Jerry the Interim Fire Chief tonight and that he has been a firefighter for 42 years. He is interim fire chief for 90 days. The process we are going to follow for the hiring of the new chief is that anyone in-house that wants to apply for that position is asked to please do so. Also, for the first time maybe ever, we are going to open it up to an outside search as well. We will put together a committee of Mayor Goodman, Councilor Wadley (Personnel Committee Chair), Amanda Hoppel (HR), and Councilor Wolfe (Public Safety Committee Chair) to review the applications and references. Mayor stated that currently we have about 8 members that are on the schedule / roster and being scheduled at the fire department. This is changing hour by hour and moving very quickly. She is very happy to say we have had a lot of people reach out to us, email us, come in from other departments that have heard our story in the last couple of weeks who want to help and who want to be a part of the reorganization of the Buckeye Lake Fire Department. She has had the opportunity to meet some really fine, professional firefighters and it has been her pleasure to do that. Right now, we are adding to the staff but sometimes it takes a few days to get the applications processed. We are going through a proper procedure of asking for references, an application, and a background check. Typically, a background check is the thing we have to wait a few days on. She also thanked West Licking Fire Department from their Hebron substation for their continued backup and assistance. She cannot say enough how wonderful they have been and their professionalism has been excellent. They came in to see her; they check on the department and stop by; the guys have been on a run together and it has gone very well.

Mayor Goodman stated she wants to make sure the community knows that the correct information is that the village was never not protected. There may not have been anyone in our firehouse on a shift but West Licking, and they proved it, can be here in 3 minutes. She wants the residents to know that and we do know how important it is that our village and the residents be safe. We take it very seriously and because of the way that the resignations came in, it was a little difficult for a few days to know if people were going to show up for their shifts. That is what caused the lag for a few days but we have gotten through that and we are adding people and we are protected. This process to fill the interim chief position she based on the reviewing of personnel files, recommendations from people, and she cannot tell you how many times the name Jerry Brooks came up. It came up many times and she was familiar with Jerry from when he was on the fire department before and she went through his personnel file and discussed it with the village solicitor and they saw no reason to not invite Jerry back and to be our interim fire chief.

Mayor Goodman stated she wanted to thank council and the village staff. There have been accusations from the former fire chief and her captain that she felt that she did not have the support of council and the support of the administration. Mayor Goodman wanted to point out a few things: in 2021, council purchased a new medic. When the former chief was fired, the then-mayor requested that the village do away with the assistant chief position so we could afford to give Chief Amspaugh more money and council voted to do that. Prior to doing that, our fire chief was only paid an \$800 a month stipend. When the village did away with the assistant chief position, the Fire Chief received \$24.36 an hour and is required to work 20 hours a week and that is the current situation. In the pay plan, council authorized a higher pay plan for

the basics and the medics. We have learned in the past two weeks that what council approved was not passed on to them and we will be addressing that situation. There has been much talk about it and the basics and the medics will be getting more money. Also, with all of the money that the village received through COVID and ARPA funds, we appropriated approximately \$80,000 to the fire department, specifically for equipment, uniforms, turnout gear, and a lot of things that this village could not afford to buy, replace, or just never had before, so we really brought that end of the fire department up. Council was a large part of that; it was financial; council had to vote to approve doing those things, so council – thank you. Thank you for showing you DO support the fire department. She stated that council also helped pass a fire levy a little over a year ago, so we have a fire levy that council voted to put on the ballot.

Mayor Goodman stated that one of the things that changed that was brought to her attention was that she did ask for a little more accountability from the chief's position than was requested prior. The things that Mayor Goodman requested were things that council had requested – schedules, access to ALADTEC (software program used by the fire department for scheduling, clock-in / clock-out, and gives a lot of information). This access was something that was requested that the administration did not receive; it took them about 5 days to get that clearance and have that access. So now, at the push of a button, the Fiscal Officer can see all of those things. She was denied that access before. The other thing Mayor Goodman asked of the former Fire Chief was attendance at department head meetings and for when the chief was on vacation or out of the area at conferences, just a quick email or update on who is in charge, who is taking care of staffing, those kinds of things. Those are the changes that were made. Mayor Goodman stated she feels very optimistic right now and she thinks good things are going to happen. Sometimes change is good. Not to say that former Chief Amspaugh did not do a good job in some areas because she did, but it is time to move on – she made her choice and now we have made ours. Mayor Goodman thanked everyone, not only council but the staff as well. The staff is who a lot of these things fall on and she wanted to thank them too. On Labor Day, Mayor Goodman asked that the spaghetti dinners be brought back to the firehouse, but first the kitchen needs cleaned. There will be a spaghetti dinner hosted by and benefitting the Buckeye Lake Fire Department on October 19th from 4-7pm. This will also promote our Police Department who has a police levy coming up on the November ballot. Please come support and meet our safety services and have some real good spaghetti.

Citizen's Comments Regarding Legislation on Tonight's Agenda: None.

ORDINANCES

Ordinances for 3rd Reading –

Ordinance 2024-38 - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE VILLAGE OF BUCKEYE LAKE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ETHICS POLICY.

Motion by Councilor Julian, seconded by Councilor Cable to adopt Ordinance 2024-38.

Discussion: Councilor Wadley added that this was a recommendation from the Personnel Committee and has been created to help employees understand some of the ethical requirements that need to be followed from the Ohio Ethics Law and the ORC.

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

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

Ordinances for 2nd Reading –

Ordinance 2024-48 - AMENDING ORDINANCE 2024-10 PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

This will move on to a third reading.

Ordinances for 1st Reading –

Ordinance 2024-49 – AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT MODIFICATION WITH OHM ADVISORS, FOR ADDITIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES TO COMPLETE THE DESIGN OF THE WALNUT RD SIDEWALK AND ROADWAY UPGRADE PHASE 1 IDENTIFIED AS LIC-SR79-03.28 (PID #117102), AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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

Roll call vote: Yes: Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Green
Abstain: 0; **Nays:** 0; **Motion Passed 6 – 0**

Motion by Councilor Green, seconded by Councilor Cable to adopt Ordinance 2024-49.

Roll call vote: Yes: Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Green
Abstain: 0; **Nays:** 0; **Motion Passed 6 – 0**

Ordinance 2024-50 - AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT BETWEEN ADR & ASSOCIATES, LTD. AND THE VILLAGE OF BUCKEYE LAKE FOR LAND SURVEYING, CIVIL ENGINEERING, AND CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION SERVICES FOR THE FIRST STREET WATERLINE EXTENSION PROJECT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

This will move on to a second reading.

Ordinance 2024-51 - AMENDING ORDINANCE 2024-10 PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Discussion: Councilor Julian stated this was discussed in the Finance Committee meeting and it was recommended by the Public Service Committee 3-1 and it was said to move it forward but to go through as much of the process as possible and hopefully all 3 readings.

This will move on to a second reading.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions for 3rd Reading – None.

Resolutions for 2nd Reading – None.

Resolutions for 1st Reading – None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS –

Charter Changes on November Ballot–

Motion by Councilor Green, seconded by Councilor Cable for a floor vote – for a \$2,000 purchase order for the printer (Pal Printing) to be paid and the proposed charter changes mailed to the voters of the village instead of waiting until the next council meeting.

Roll call vote: Yes: Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Green
Abstain: 0; **Nays:** 0; **Motion Passed 6 – 0**

NEW BUSINESS –

Payment for tree removal due to West North Bank Storm Sewer Project–

President Lemmon stated he believes these are on Cottage Street. Councilor Cable stated this was discussed in the Public Service Committee meeting and it was recommended that they move forward. There is a work agreement between the village and the owner of the property for \$5,000 compensation.

Motion by Councilor Wolfe, seconded by Councilor Julian to pass the work agreement between Michele & Jeffrey Lyons and the Village of Buckeye Lake – 21 Cottage Street – up to \$5,000 for the trees.

Roll call vote: Yes: Julian, Lemmon, Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Green
Abstain: 0; **Nays:** 0; **Motion Passed 6 – 0**

Full-time Fire Chief – Mayor Goodman brought this up to be looked at moving forward. What does that do to the budget? What does it do to the OP&F regulations that we have to meet? This can be discussed further through Public

Safety, Finance, and Personnel committees. Would want to have that ready so it goes active January 1, 2025. Councilor Wadley stated it should be done in a timely manner in order to have the time to advertise and recruit for that position, may get a different candidate base for a part-time position than for a full-time one.

PMUD – Councilor Julian attended the most recent Planning and Zoning Commission meeting and the realization was that the person that owns the property in question at the meeting was not in attendance at the meeting and the property needs rezoned. She stated we have to follow the proper procedure and it really concerns her that they had a very long conversation about a possible PMUD with people that do not even own the property and there need to be more policies and procedures that need to be followed there. The process of rezoning has to come from the landowner. Mayor Goodman reached out and received some answers that we can proceed but we will need a letter from the landowner stating that he agrees to it then that is fine and we can proceed. She also received a letter from OHM laying out the whole process where Planning and Zoning will make a recommendation to full council, council will look at it, there will be public hearings, and so on. The change in this zoning would be from agricultural to PMUD.

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS –

Charlene Hayden – 67 Lighthouse Lane – Charlene read her comment (submitted) about the former fire chief and the situation surrounding her resignation.

Jonathan Vince – 78 Second Street – Jonathan stated to council and Mayor Goodman that he thinks they handled this very well over the last week or so for the fire chief situation. He stated his background is an engineer for 10+ years for a multi-billion-dollar corporation as project manager so people come and go all the time. Unfortunately, when high level people leave, they bring people with them. A lot of times when they leave, they may not want to see change, they're going to leave too. It happens all the time in the industry and it is extremely difficult to hire right now so thank you to Mayor Goodman for going through things and doing her best trying to find people. It is extremely difficult to hire people right now, both due to issues and also just having people who want to work. He thanked President Lemmon for speaking with him a little bit online and suggested the best thing to do when dealing with people online is to just ignore them. There is a professional setting. Especially with the previous mayor, he has been here for almost 10 years and what he has seen in this short time period, things that were said is not professional in any way, in any industry. That goes to not only the previous mayor but also people in the village, too who straight up said things that should not have ever been said. With a lot of that, he thinks everyone handled it very well. He suggested turning off comments on Facebook. There is a professional setting and motioned that the council meeting is the proper professional setting. He stated that is why council meeting exist. Jonathan also thanked Toby. It is good to see that his street, Second Street, will be paved. There has been a lot of increased traffic from the baseball games. He will try to keep coming to the council meetings.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS –

Councilor Julian – Thanked the two members of the community for speaking tonight. It is during difficult times that you appreciate the people that you get the opportunity to work with and she has never had negative things come from Mayor Goodman's mouth and she is all about moving forward. Councilor Julian stated she appreciates that because it could have gone down completely the wrong path. From a council perspective, she never once heard that we refused to meet or hear anything from the fire department, so it is really sad that it happened and that we got blamed for not wanting to resolve issues. They did not know there were issues and they still do not know what those issues were. She is glad they all just moved forward and she knows we have a lot of fantastic firefighters who have been professionals for many years who will be helping the department and they are the people that we want there.

Councilor Lemmon – He stated when Councilor Cable, Goodman, and himself ran for council, they all did it separately. They did not know each other that well but he thinks they all had the same idea to want to “stop the BS” and Mr. Cable said return to respect. Councilor Lemmon stated that that really resonated with him and some others. What we have seen from a former council member and a former mayor online was not respectful and perfectly illustrated the problems that we had before. It was very unfortunate. He is very proud to sit with every council member and Mayor Goodman up there. The work done here and the professionalism has been outstanding. Thank you.

Councilor Wadley – Welcomed Jerry and Nevaeh. If they need anything from a personnel aspect to reach out to her. She is excited to move the fire department forward. It is a great opportunity to revisit it and find out the future needs of the village. We all know today is different than five years ago and will be different five years from now. Appreciates Mr. Vince's comments. Councilor Wadley believes in freedom of speech and she said that unfortunately people use social media for that instead of coming to the council meetings. We cannot control what people say but we can control how we react to it. Kudos to everyone up here and how they act. It is not always easy when you're in this position to do the right thing and not get caught up in the turmoil. She believes if you do the right thing, you will prevail and she believes that is what they are doing.

Councilor Wolfe – Welcomed new interim chief and new firefighters. Thanked surrounding fire departments for their mutual aid and their coverage and sincere help. Thanks to mayor, council and the public who have done a great job. Town Hall meeting on October 3rd at 7:00pm in council chambers for the Police Levy; please come. We appreciate your citizens comments.

Councilor Cable – He stated President Lemmon's comment. He considers the news coverage to be noise. If there are real issues, come here and have a discussion, otherwise he is not involved. He has heard for maybe a year about electronic signage in the village and how we do not want the village to turn into Las Vegas...why not? This is the Playground of Ohio' let's make it the Playground of Ohio! Have a little bit of fun. Something to think about. Bring people to the village.

Councilor Green – Welcome to new interim fire chief and firefighters. Her admiration for all of our first responders. Appreciates all that they do for us every day. Thanked committee members and chairs. She really enjoys the committee meetings. A lot of things are accomplished and how they work together, new ideas are always brought forward during these meetings and she looks forward to them because a lot of things are done for the village in the committee meetings. Thank you to everyone for your time and effort in these meetings and helping each other. Knows Mayor Goodman had a tumultuous week and she thanked her because she proved that she can stay steady through a storm and Councilor Green knows that the mayor's major priority was keeping the village safe.

Adjournment: Motion by Councilor Cable, seconded by Councilor Green, to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:04pm.

NEXT MEETING: Regular Council Meeting – September 23, 2024


Samantha Torres, Council Clerk


John Lemmon, Council President