

MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING June 26, 2023

Bellevue City Council met on Monday, June 26, 2023, at 7:35 p.m. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, a prayer was offered by Pastor Jeff Durrow of Bellevue Alliance Church. Council members present: MR. BAKER, MS. DOWNING, MR. HILL, MRS. OMMERT, MR. SHEPHERD and MR. WYNBISSINGER.

Minutes of the regular City Council meeting of June 12, 2023 were presented for approval. A motion was made by Mr. Wynbissinger to approve the minutes as written. It was seconded by Mr. Baker. The minutes were approved as written.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY OFFICIALS:

Mayor Strecker invited Wilbur Wade and Marianne Daniel to come forward and receive citizen awards. We would not have the holiday house today if it were not for Marianne and Wilbur. They both have stood up time and time again for Bellevue's children and citizens. They always go beyond the call of duty. He gave them plaques for their extraordinary leadership and dedicated service to the four-county area.

He congratulated Bellevue's Fire Department for winning the 2023 Hometown Heroes Award sponsored by the Bellevue Area Chamber of Commerce. There will be a dinner to celebrate on Thursday at the Bellevue High School cafeteria.

He thanked the vendors and citizens who came out to the June 16 Concert in the Park. The next concert will be on Friday, July 21. The last concert will be August 12 which will include a car show.

There will be a Community Fun Night at Robert Peters Park on Friday, July 7, from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Fireworks will be set off at dusk.

There will be a community pep rally and snake dance on Thursday, August 10, at Central Park with student athletes, cheerleaders, and the Bellevue High School band. They will have food trucks.

He thanked the Mayor of Norwalk who loaned us one of their wood chippers to aid in our clean up after the storm. He appreciates the mutual aid agreement Bellevue has with the surrounding communities.

Safety-Service Director, Mr. Brugnone, thanked City employees and other citizens who helped clean up after the storm. All departments of the City, within a half hour of the end of the storm, were out working until 3:00-4:00 in the morning at which time they took a short break and then they came back the next day and continued working through the weekend. He thanked Mr. Baker who is our liaison with Ohio Edison.

Auditor, Mr. Smith, stated that City crews did a great job with the clean up after the storm. The Auditor of State will be doing the City's 2022 audit for the third year in a row. After that, the City will go out for bid for other auditors.

Treasurer, Mr. Freitag, stated that last week he attended a Regional Council of Governments meeting which is the government entity that allows Bellevue to participate in RITA. A representative of RITA put on a presentation. For this year the cost of collections was down to 1.15 percent. That is amazing when you think of what it would require of us to do it ourselves. They collected

2.1 billion dollars in tax revenue and the cost was 27 ½ million dollars. There are 376 communities now in the RITA system. They put some great technology in place. On their website you can now use their calculator and file your taxes through the portal. They have a document upload now and you don't have to scan them and send them back and forth. Last year the Executive Director, Donald Smith, retired and Amy Arrighi, who was their chief legal counsel for many years, became the new Director. We already have a good relationship with her. RITA is n good hands and they have a very efficient system.

Law Director, Mr. Wallingford, thanked City crews for the good job they dd after the storm. His street was blocked with lots of limbs and debris and around 10:00 p.m. the City crews made it so traffic could get through. The City is fortunate that there were no serious injuries with the storm and hats off to the City workers.

Council Clerk, Mrs. Soper, thanked Vickie Dauch for doing such a great job filling in for her on June 12.

REPORTS OF CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Mr. Shepherd stated that he noticed property on the north side of Buckeye Street which the City owns, where neighbors have taken over the swimming pool, swing set, and trampoline. He already informed Mr. Brugnone who stated it is an on-going issue. Mr. Shepherd suggested that the City go through its real estate properties and get rid of the excess properties if it doesn't have any need for them.

Ms. Downing thanked the City for the great job they did in the storm cleanup.

Mr. Baker thanked the City for the storm clean up. He understands first hand what it is like working twelve hour days after storms. He inquired if there is any way the City could get reimbursement from the State when a tornado has been declared to cover some of its costs.

Some citizens from the townships have been using our compost site. He is wondering if we could look at the way we do fire contracts with them and perhaps have them cover some of our costs. Mr. Brugnone stated we can look into it and address the issue with each township.

Several citizens called him regarding food trucks in the parks. They are using City utilities and are competing against some of our restaurants. Mr. Brugnone stated there is no contract in place but one vendor made a sizable contribution for a future event. They can look into having contracts with the vendors and who can enforce them.

Mr. Wynbissinger thanked the City crews who did a great job with the clean up. He is grateful that the City has enough staff to get it taken care of so quickly.

He inquired about the issues with trains being stopped and blocking the tracks. Mr. Brugnone stated that the recent issue was because there was a tree across the tracks from the storm.

Mr. Hill gave kudos to the City crews. He is looking forward to Madden Street being repaired. Amy went on GovDeals and sold a lot of fitness equipment. It should all be picked up by July 3. She wanted us to know that it worked out great and she thanks Council for passing the GovDeals legislation.

Mrs. Ommert stated she was asked by several citizens to thank the City for the clean up after the storm. It is nice that they recognize and acknowledge that the City is doing a good job.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

President Smith stated that a **Committee of the Whole** work session was held previous to this meeting where a report was made by Peggy Courtney, Executive Director of the Sandusky County Visitors Bureau. She distributed copies of the Sandusky County Community Guide for 2023. Jill Van Fleet, Director of the Bellevue Area Tourism & Visitors Bureau, was also in attendance

There was a discussion of the City's acquisition of a new snow plow and proposed Ordinance No. 19-23. A motion was made and passed to take the ordinance out of committee and add it to our next agenda on July 10.

He reminded Council that we will have a public hearing on July 10 at 7:15 p.m. preceding our regular Council meeting to discuss Ordinance 17-23. Mr. Wallingford reminded everyone that this is an ordinance re-zoning the old Gordon Lumber property which will now be re-zoned light industrial.

Mr. Shepherd inquired if there were any more streets that will be repaired this summer. Mr. Brugnone stated that there was money left over after completing the 2022 streets and one more street will be resurfaced.

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

Patti Gray, 252 Gunther Street, stated that she went to use the recycling bins. Four of them were full and the fifth was partially full. Citizens are using them and they are keeping the area clean. She thanked the City for initiating this service.

Steve Hill inquired what the City's policy is on citizens making comments, sitting down, and coming back up again to make more of the same comments repeating themselves over and over. President Smith stated that hopefully they won't keep getting up over and over again. He has talked with citizens regarding making sure they don't engage any Council person or City administrator in conversation. Hopefully we won't have that issue again.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Smith stated that Mr. Waldrup is excused tonight. He then turned the time over to Mr. Wallingford for tonight's legislation.

LEGISLATION:

Ordinance No. 17-23 was given its second reading by title only. AN ORDINANCE RE-ZONING A PARCEL OF LAND OWNED BY AEGLOS ENTERPRISES LLC, THEREBY AMENDING THE PLANNING AND ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF BELLEVE, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Ordinance No. 15-23 was given its third reading by title only: AN ORDINANCE REVISING THE SALARY AND BENEFITS OF FULL-TIME NON-UNION EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF BELLEVUE, OHIO, THEREBY REPLACING ANY AND ALL PREVIOUS ORDINANCES OR RESOLUTIONS, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE PREVIOUS ORDINANCE NO. 6-14, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

A motion was made by Mr. Shepherd to adopt Ordinance No. 15-23, and as an emergency. It was seconded by Mr. Wynbissinger. A vote was taken. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0, and as an emergency.

CLOSING REMARKS:

Mr. Baker stated that since Jill Van Fleet is in attendance tonight, perhaps we can address the subject of having a bed & breakfast tax which could benefit the Bellevue Area Tourism & Visitors Bureau. Ms. Van Fleet stated that some of them have been flying under the radar and she would like to get them involved with the Visitors Bureau. They are bringing people into the community. Mr. Wallingford stated that according to a current ordinance, there has to be three or four units, not just one house, to enforce taxes. There could be legal issues. We can look into it.

Safety-Service Director, Mr. Brugnone, stated that in response to Mr. Shepherd's inquiries about City properties, some of them have emergency easements and the City needs to keep ownership of them. Others will be going out for bid.

Mayor Strecker stated in response to Mr. Baker's question regarding reimbursement by the State after a storm event, he checked with the Director of Sandusky County Emergency Management about funds to help with the clean up. Her answer was that the total has to be greater than 1 percent of the City's 2023 budget before we can be reimbursed.

President Smith thanked everyone for attending and requested a motion to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Baker. It was seconded by Mr. Wynbissinger. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald Smith
President of Council

Rhonda R. Soper
Clerk of Council