



Village of Milan

Special Council Meeting

July 21, 2021

The July 21, 2021 Special Council Meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance by Mayor Pam Crosby.

Roll call: Rospert – yes, Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, DeLand – yes, McIlrath – yes, Bickley – yes.

Also, present: Mayor Pam Crosby, Fiscal Officer Cathy Ramey, Administrator Brian Rospert, and Attorney Jim Barney.

OPENING COMMENT FROM THE MAYOR – Mayor Crosby expressed the decision to raise the water rate was not an easy decision for Council to make but has become necessary. Mayor Crosby stated that in addition to changing over in 2017 to Erie County Water, the cost of decommissioning the water plant, infrastructure costs of hook up to Erie County Water, required projects expected to continue and as required by the Ohio EPA mandates are the driving forces. Since going to Erie County Water in 2017, the Village has seen increases per cubic feet for water per year and expected to see a much larger increase in 2022.

Mayor Crosby continued to say that 45% of the revenue taken in, is now being used to pay for water being purchased through Erie County. Since 2017, the Water Fund and Water Replacement Fund end of year balances have considerably depleted due to most of the costs associated in the decommissioning of the water plant, infrastructure costs and water costs.

Village Council, with over six and a half (6 ½) years passing without an increase in water rates and based on the recommendation of the Ohio RCAP rate study, voted and approved three readings of a rate increase of 12% and lowering the minimum gallons to 2,000 to take effect on the June 2021 utility bills.

Mayor Crosby went on to say that the rate study, in order to determine the rate is compiled of necessary information such as, number of customers, gallons of water sold, water loss percentage, inflation, material, equipment, operation and maintenance costs and capital improvements projects.

The Finance/Utility Committees and Village Council worked endlessly for the last several years to ensure that they were not charging more than what is needed to sustain the water fund balance and give the customers the best value possible.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION – Mary Bruno questioned why One Call was not utilized for this meeting? Solicitor Barney answered that the One Call is utilized for emergency and not for meetings. She also asked if there was a mistake made. Administrator Rospert answered, no there was not a mistake but when speaking with Joseph with RCAP he did make an error on his surplus totals. Other questions she had was who made a motion on the first rate study? How

the 4.75 increase went to 12% ten months later and not being discussed in any meetings? How could Council vote on the 12% increase without knowing what they voted on? Another resident questioned why township resident's water rates are doubled? Tina Frederick asked if Council believed that no mistake was made in the rate study. Administrator Rospert said he does have a call in to Joe with RCAP and at the time of this meeting he has not heard back. She also asked how the inside and outside usage of over 2 thousand gallons could be reflected in the rate study. Administrator Rospert said those figures are included in that rate study, that Joe was given that information. She would like to know how her rate went up to 49%. Administrator Rospert replied that with the minimum going from 3,000 gallons to 2,000 gallons and with her additional usage due to the minimum change.

Township resident Darlene Walker asked why they pay double for their water then the inside residents. She did thank Administrator Rospert for calling her back to answer some of her questions. She asked Council how is double the water rate justified? Council said rates have been doubled for outside residents for years. Administrator Rospert will look into this for Darlene and will get back to her. Another resident questioned about getting grants in the future.

Mayor Crosby said the increase was discussed as it was also listed on the Ordinance given to Council. Administrator Rospert said per the Village Rules of Council; each Ordinance and Resolution shall be read by title only. The legislative authority may require any reading to be full by a majority vote of its members. The meetings were available to the public through the Village Facebook page and was posted that if you have any questions or concerns to email the Fiscal Officer prior to the meetings and it was also posted in the Sandusky Register. Noting that the Village did their best during the pandemic.

Councilperson Rospert said that on October 13, 2020 all of Council received an email and an attachment from the Ohio RCAP rate study clearly showing a recommendation of lowering the minimum and an increase in rate of 12%. Then on December 11, 2020 Council received another email including the ordinance including the 12%, 4.5%, 4.5%. The first reading was in December, second reading in January and the final reading in February.

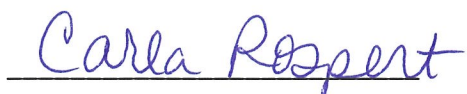
Mayor Crosby answered on some of the questions that were posted at the Milan Post Office.

Question for next meeting - None

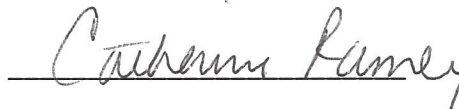
Adjournment

Motion by Schafer, seconded by McIlrath, to adjourn tonight's meeting.

Roll call: DeLand – yes, Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, Rospert – yes, McIlrath – yes, Bickley – yes.



Carla Rospert, Council President



Catherine Ramey, Fiscal Officer