

# Village of Milan

## Council Meeting

June 28, 2023

June 28, 2023 Council Meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance by Mayor Pam Crosby.

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

Also present – Mayor Pam Crosby, Administrator Brian Rospert, Fiscal Officer Cathy Ramey and Attorney Gabriela Toscano sat in for Solicitor James Barney.

Mayor Crosby introduced Joanne Clapp, the Village of Milan’s new Fiscal Officer.

Motion by Rospert, seconded by McIlrath, to approve the Minutes of the May 24<sup>th</sup> Regular Council Meeting. Roll Call: Bickley – yes, Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, McManus – yes, McIlrath – yes, Rospert – yes.

Motion by McManus, seconded by Taylor, to approve the Minutes of the June 8<sup>th</sup> Special Council Meeting. Roll Call: Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, McManus – yes, McIlrath – yes, Rospert – yes, Bickley – abstain.

Motion by McManus, seconded by McIlrath, to approve the Minutes of the June 8<sup>th</sup> Work Session Meeting. Roll Call: McManus – yes, McIlrath – yes, Bickley – abstain, Rospert – yes, Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes.

### **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

The Milan Melon Festival Committee President Mike Lewis discussed this year’s Milan Melon Festival Agreement. Only change to the agreement this year, part-time officers will go from \$14.00 an hour to \$15.50 an hour.

Motion by McManus, seconded by Bickley, to approve of this year’s Milan Melon Festival Agreement, as presented. Roll Call: Shafer – yes, McManus – yes, Bickley – yes, McIlrath – yes, Rospert – yes, Taylor – yes.

Ashley Ballah with Leadership Huron County discussed having a fundraiser event, Bar Crawl, in the Village Square sometime in early October on a Saturday from 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm. The group is aware of the required insurance. Once the event date is secure, Ashley will come back to the Village Council for approval.

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION cont.** - Village resident Mary Bruno brought to the attention of the new Sewer Ordinance needs to be looked into, due to a possible EPA grant attached. Council President Rospert noted to Attorney Toscano to follow up with Solicitor Barney on this.

Village Resident Roberta Weber questioned why she is charged for four (4) thousand gallons of water when she uses 3,500 gallons. Mayor Crosby will have the Utility Committee review.

### **OLD COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

**Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewers** – The ODOT 601 Repaving Project began earlier this month. The base has been installed and handicap ramps at every intersection north of Broad Street began June 22<sup>nd</sup> once completed, Erie Blacktop will apply asphalt topcoat and manholes, catch basins and valves will be adjusted with concrete collars.

The Village is still waiting for RMH Concrete to begin this year's sidewalk pavement project. Administrator Rospert will schedule a date with Tom Gfell, owner of Milan Inn-tiques, on picking up the old street signs he is going to sell for the Village.

Roof MDs installed the new roofing material on the Street Barn the week of June 12<sup>th</sup>.

Erie Blacktop completed the Lockwood Road Paving Project earlier this month and ARL was in to stripe the roadway afterwards.

**Safety** – Mayor Crosby and Village employees attended the AMP Safety/OSHA Compliance Training on June 14<sup>th</sup>; the topic was Emergency Action Plan.

**Finance** – Motion by Bickley, seconded by McManus, to accept the proposed Agreement with Cathy Ramey as a contracted employee for the Village of Milan as an independent contractor to assume the duties of Fiscal Officer on a temporary basis. The Village will pay Cathy \$40.00 per hour to assume the duties of the Fiscal Officer starting July 1, 2023, and ending August 30, 2023.

Roll Call: McIlrath – yes, Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, McManus – yes, Bickley – yes, Rospert – yes.

As the meeting continued, Village resident Victor Spurling shouted out how much is the contract going to cost. Administrator Rospert read over the agreement contract. Spurling then asked "Ms. Clapp have a degree in accounting or anything." Newly hired Fiscal Officer Clapp said she could answer that and proceeded to list her qualifications to Spurling. However, Spurling interrupted her and with a sigh saying, "so we have someone unqualified again." Councilperson Bickley interjected stating she is highly qualified and the meeting proceeded.

**Regional Planning, Building Codes & Inspection** – Jeff Stopar continues to work on the Village of Milan Zoning Code review. After a meeting with Jeff Stopar on June 14<sup>th</sup> a discussion on adding new language to include Public Nuisance. Also reviewed the Fence, Sign and Design Review Ordinances. The next meeting is scheduled for July 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 AM.

**Utilities** – All documents have been submitted to R.A. Bores to begin the North Edison Drive Water Line Replacement Project. These documents were approved, and a preconstruction meeting will be scheduled.

**OLD COMMITTEE BUSINESS cont.** – Since no bids were received for the backup generator at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, a meeting was scheduled with the Village engineer and Columbia Gas, to see if it is possible to simplify the bid process and it was determined to rebid the project with a bid opening on July 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

**Civic Contacts and Historical Preservation** – The Quick Claim Deed has been signed by Judge McGookey and the Village is waiting to hear from Solicitor Barney and Jim Peters for their portion to be completed.

**Parks and Trees** – Councilperson Taylor discussed the good turnout for the first ‘Small Town Summer Night’ event that took place in the Village Square on Monday June 12<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. On behalf of the Parks & Activities Commission, Councilperson Taylor requests to have another ‘Small Town Summer Night’ event on Monday July 24<sup>th</sup> but with four (4) Food trucks, Lemonade truck and Shaved Ice truck. There will be live music and games with the event starting at 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. with the closure of Park Street  
Fiscal Officer Ramey noted that the State Auditor’s approved the fund, and a resident has since donated \$500.00 to this fund.

Motion by McManus, seconded by Shafer, to approve the Parks & Activities Commission the use of the Village Square for another ‘Small Town Summer Night’ event on Monday July 24<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. with the closure of Park Street. Roll Call: Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, McManus – yes, McIlrath – yes, Bickley – yes, Rospert – yes.

**Records Commission** – Next Records Commission Meeting will be held on September 12, 2023.

**Citizen Property Maintenance** – Zoning Inspector is still working with four residents on Property Maintenance issues. One issue was resolved this past month.

Council President Rospert made mention on how disappointment she was on how some people in the audience attack other people. Council President Rospert continued to say, this has been ongoing for some time and doesn’t feel it’s appropriate, the Village needs to move forward and in the right direction and for someone to come in tonight and attack the new Fiscal Officer before she even starts is quite appalling. Village resident Victor Spurling interrupted with an outburst, Council President asked him to stop that it is appalling and Council will not tolerate it. Township resident Sharon McNicol and Village resident Roberta Weber spoke out, the meeting was getting out of hand. Mayor Crosby hit the gravel several times to get control and told them the meeting will move on.

### **NEW COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

**Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewers** – The department changed the oil in the street sweeper, pressured washed and cleaned the Administration building, backfilled driveways on Lockwood Road after the paving project, restored four yards that tree stumps were removed and worked with the contractors on paving projects.

**NEW COMMITTEE BUSINESS – cont.**

**Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewers cont.** – The new Chevy Dump Truck has been delivered to the dealership, the Village will take delivery once the recall to the brake cylinder is done.

Brock Busdicker submitted his resignation from the part-time Summer Help position in the Street Department, due to unforeseen circumstances. The job posting will remain active on the Village’s social media platforms.

Motion by McManus, seconded by Shafer, to accept the resignation of Brock Busdicker from the Summer Help position with the Street Department, effective June 14, 2023. Roll Call: Rospert – yes, Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, McManus – yes, McIlrath – yes, Bickley – yes.

**Safety** – Councilperson McManus read full-time officer Shaun Craig’s resignation letter. Councilperson McManus would like to discuss the Police Department vacancies during the next Work Session.

Motion by Bickley, seconded by Rospert, to accept Shaun Craig resignation effective July 15, 2023. Roll Call: Rospert – yes, Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, McManus – yes, McIlrath – yes, Bickley – yes.

**Finance** – Fiscal Officer Ramey went over revenue and that it was still out pacing expenses. Fiscal Officer Ramey has not heard back from the State Auditors on the audit that was to be completed last October 31<sup>st</sup>. She will contact the Auditors again to see if they have a timeline when they feel it may be done. Council President Rospert would like to know if the Village can do anything legally with the Auditors, Attorney Toscano will look into it. Fiscal Officer Ramey stated the additional cost for the extended time on this audit has not been determined but feels it will be quite high. Fiscal Officer Ramey has not heard back from the Auditors from the top level on who will be responsible for the over cost, the Village or the State. Ramey is also waiting to hear back from R.I.T.A. on the non-filers.

Motion by Rospert, seconded by Taylor, to approve the Council Bills for the period of May 25<sup>th</sup> – June 28<sup>th</sup>. Roll Call: Shafer – yes, McManus – yes, Bickley – yes, McIlrath – yes, Rospert – yes, Taylor – yes.

Motion by Bickley, seconded by McIlrath, to approve the Utility Bills for the period of May 25<sup>th</sup> – June 28<sup>th</sup>. Roll Call: McIlrath – yes, Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, McManus – yes, Bickley – yes, Rospert – yes.

Motion by McManus, seconded by Rospert, to approve the Financial Reports as presented for the month. Roll Call: Rospert – yes, Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, McManus – yes, McIlrath – yes, Bickley – yes.

**NEW COMMITTEE BUSINESS – cont.**

Love Insurance presented this year's Annual Proposal for Property, Liability and Cyber Insurance, through the Ohio Plan Risk Management, effective date of coverage 07/01/23 to 07/01/24. The Jenkins Warehouse property and the new body cameras were added to the Plan. This year a decrease in the premium amount by \$2,315.00, with a total cost this year of \$29,384.00, versus last year's premium at \$31,699.00. This year's Plan also shows an increase in Property Values, Inland Marine Values and Computer Values by about 5% due to inflation.

Motion by Rospert, seconded by McManus, to accept Love Insurance's Annual Proposal for Property, Liability and Cyber Insurance in the amount of \$29,384.00.

Roll Call: Bickley – yes, Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, McManus – yes, McIlrath – yes, Rospert – yes.

**Regional Planning, Building Code, and Inspection** – Zoning Inspector has issued two Demolition Permits for 16 and 20 S. Main Street and one Building Permit for 106 Center Street.

**Utilities** – The Water/Wastewater Department submitted the 2022 Community Metrics Report, Asset Inventory Spreadsheet and Consumer Confidence Report to the EPA and began the residential valve turning program.

EPA was in on February 13<sup>th</sup> to perform a Sanitary Survey of the water distribution system. All but one violation has been corrected and approved by the EPA. The Village has until October 1<sup>st</sup> to complete the remaining violation.

Samples of TTHM, HAA5, lead and copper water samples were tested, and all tests came back within limits set by the EPA.

Power outage on June 11<sup>th</sup> affected the auto-dialers at each lift station but since the power was out for a short period of time all that was needed was to monitor the situation.

The Electric Department removed a dead tree at 121 S. Edison Drive, removed tree limbs on wires at 116 S. Center Street, trimmed trees away from power lines on Front Street, Edison Drive and Center Street. Installed two new poles and transferred the electrical wires by the A-frame on US 250, installed a new pole on Seminary Road and transferred the electrical wires. Installed the new AED at the Administration Office, installed six spans of neutral wire on Front Street and two spans of three phase primary for upgrading 15 houses, 1 apartment building and 2 businesses. They are planning the changeover to our new system on July 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Civic Contacts and Historical Preservation** – None

**Parks and Trees** – The Beautification Commission met on June 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss the 2023 Plan. The Commission voted to elect Randy Rospert as Chairperson and Trudy Riddle as Secretary of the Commission. The 2023 Plan is to continue with the fall decorations to include pumpkins, squash, gourds, and corn stalks around the light poles at the Village Square and Lockwood Road Park. Continue with the 2023 Lighting Ceremony that will be held on November 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 P.M. Where they will invite the Edison Show Choir to participate along with

**NEW COMMITTEE BUSINESS – cont.**

providing hot chocolate, cookies and have Santa arrive on a fire truck. New additions proposed would be to add vintage C-9 multi-colored LED lights with garland around the fence of the monument, new garland for Lockwood Road Gazebo. The Commission will be attending a Milan Township Trustee Meeting on July 19<sup>th</sup>, to request permission to put garland up around the front door of the Town Hall and see if they will install candle lights in the windows.

Motion by McIlrath, seconded by Shafer, to approve the Beautification Commission 2023 Plan as presented. Roll Call: Bickley – yes, Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, McManus – yes, McIlrath – yes, Rospert – yes.

**Records Commission – None**

**Citizens Property Maintenance Commission – None**

**Communications** – Administrator Rospert brought up at the Work Session on June 8<sup>th</sup> that the North Substation and Wastewater Treatment Plant was offered to the Village for purchase and is just under 10-acres, the owner is asking \$165,000.00. Council sees no need for the property. Fire coverage was also discussed at the Work Session, area for the Village of Milan that resides in Norwalk Township. The Village was informed that Norwalk Township Trustees have contracted with Norwalk Fire to cover all of Norwalk Township including the portion of the Village that is in Norwalk Township.

Village employees were treated to lunch today by several Village residents, the Milan Drive-Thru and Baker on the Square. Village employees are very grateful for the support Village residents show them.

On June 9<sup>th</sup> Administrator Rospert received an email from Village resident Mary Bruno, who had some questions on utility upgrades in electric and water. It was suggested Administrator Rospert read it then at the Council meeting. The Questions are in bold, Administrator Rospert responses are below each question.

**Questions asked by Ms. Mary Bruno on June 9, 2023 via email**

**As a concerned tax paying resident, I have some questions I'd like answered. First, I was stunned when you said there has been no discussion on how the bulk of \$3,000,000 (in all actuality, probably closer to \$4,000,000+) for the electric upgrades would be financed. This study was completed for review at the end of 2015, and should have been approved with a plan and funding in place by late 2017, as funding takes time. Instead it is now half way through 2023 and funding hasn't been discussed.**

I don't recall stating that there were no discussions on how we were going to fund the electrical upgrades. I have stated that this was discussed at several Utility Committee meetings (4) and Finance Committee meetings (2) in 2016 and in early 2017. The upgrade study was done by the GPD Group in 2015 and our committees discussed the overall project and funding. Ms. Bruno was our Fiscal Officer for part of the discussions in 2016 and it was determined by our committees to do this work in house, with few exceptions, such as the installation of the substations. At the February 10, 2017, Utility Committee meeting, the committee selected to present to Village Council, by Ordinance, to assist in covering these costs that we should raise

**Questions asked by Ms. Mary Bruno on June 9, 2023 via email cont. –**

our rates up 10%. The recommendation to the Council was that we raise the General Service Large by 10% and the Power Supply Cost Adjustment multiplier to \$0.0679 which is equivalent to 10% increase. This Ordinance was passed at the March 29, 2017, Regular Council meeting. I also told Ms. Bruno at the May Regular meeting that the GPD study was to hire outside contractors, and we elected to perform this work in house. The amount of money she keeps referring to is to have an outside contractor perform the work. It is our opinion to complete the electrical upgrades it will cost the Village \$1,500,000.00. This will include, which wasn't in the GPD Study, a new transformer for the South Substation at an estimated cost of \$750,000.00 (which is based off spending \$507,000.00 for the North Substation Transformer in 2020).

**In the rate study there are several key sentences and comments from Courtney and Associates in 2015:**

- this equipment has reached the end of its useful life (several times)**
- equipment is well over 50 years, some is 60-70 years old**
- all costs are based on 2015 prices (2023 inflation is a minimum of 22% higher at this time, and going up)**
- much needed upgrades**
- necessary to reach out to FE about load capacity prior to the system load study**
- we caution the village with continuing with this path.....and many more**

I believe Ms. Bruno is mistaken here and she meant to say the GPD Group not John Courtney. Ms. Bruno makes it appear that the Village isn't doing any of the upgrades to date. This is further from the truth. To date we have begun, completed or need to perform the following projects:

Phase I, the Sleepy Hollow Subdivision, is 90% completed with an estimated \$15,000 to complete.

Phase 1a, replace the N. Substation Transformer, this is completed.

Phase 2 Edison Drive from Tenge (Front Street) to the Broad and Main St. area, we need to complete at an estimated cost of \$50,000.

Phase 3, Main Street, from the Electric Barn to Perrin Road, this is completed at no cost to the Village because of the Orion Project which was a savings to the Village in the amount of \$389,000.00.

Phase 4, Indian Acres subdivision needs to be completed with an estimated \$50,000 to complete.

Phase 5 Landsdown Drive needs to be completed with an estimated \$75,000-\$90,000 to complete.

Phase 6, Center Street, Front to Broad, needs to be completed with an estimated \$50,000 to complete.

Phase 7, Perrin Road to include Cherry and Willow, needs to be completed with an estimated \$75,000 to complete.

Phase 8 Seminary Road to the end of our system, needs to be completed with an estimated \$100,000 to complete.

Phase 9, Williams and Bond, needs to be completed with an estimated \$75,000 to complete.

**Questions asked by Ms. Mary Bruno on June 9, 2023 via email cont. –**

Phase 10, Bank and alley from Kelly St. to Swan St. needs to be completed with an estimated \$125,000, to complete.

NOT INCLUDED IN THE STUDY SOUTH SUBSTATION needs to be completed with an estimated \$750,000 to complete.

**This is supposed to be a 10-year plan for the next 20 years regarding load growth. What are you going to do when the load exceeds the capacity?**

Ohio Edison performed a power factor analysis recently for our substations, from their 69kVA feed. The North Substation was at 95% factor while the South Substation was at 85% factor. Our system is well maintained, and we do not expect the load to exceed the capacity, especially since we have already begun the transfers to the new substation.

**The only way the village can afford to make the necessary upgrades is to take out loans, bonds or notes, which must be paid back, the only way to pay these back is to raise rates. Currently the village has spent approximately \$700,000, transformer included. With inflation, that leaves about \$4,000,000 of upgrades undone. Again, what will you do when the load exceeds the capacity? You are currently, according to the study behind 5-6 years at a cost of approximately \$2,500,000.**

The plan that was created during the 2016 year and adopted in 2017 is working. To date we have completed the North Substation as Phase I and we are working on Phase II. Phase II includes putting all the downtown business on to the new substation, which over 90% of this complete. We have also begun putting residents on the new system, this includes the administration office, the apartments behind the administration office and heading south down the alley to Williams Street. Currently we are rebuilding the system to include all of east Front Street and will begin switching them over in the near future. We feel that we will need 1.5 million to complete this electrical upgrade project to include the S. Substation, which was not included in the 2015 Study.

**More recently, the electric credit is over, and while it was nice to have a negative PCA, it was unrealistic and irresponsible. I don't know why, like in times past it wasn't spread out more evenly over a longer period, so residents got a small break, but not so much when the credit ran out it looked like an electric increase. It is the responsibility of the Administrator to secure funding, it is the Fiscal Officer's job to certify the funds are available to be repaid.**

We were fortunate to pass these savings on to our residents. The electric breaks is not over, we received additional REC's from our JV5 that will allow us to pass on additional savings to our residents. Our residents will see a break in May, June, July, August, and September. This was a joint decision by the mayor, fiscal officer, our consultant John Courtney and myself.



**Questions asked by Ms. Mary Bruno on June 9, 2023 via email cont. –**

**Going forward, it will look like the electric was increased because the negative PCA is back to where it should be. It's summer, air conditioners are running, so are pools. Electric bills are going up faster than ever, Sandusky and Erie County are quickly trying to be proactive for their constituents that are about to have their electric bills become unaffordable due to fossil fuel and natural gas prices. It was front page news, What is the village doing? Then with funding, you are going to pass the monthly payments onto residents?**

See my answer above.

**Let's not forget the sewer rates going up 24% in 30 months' time or an increase on the water for the 3rd year in a row? You also stated in the last meeting Courtney moved in water the \$800,00+ upgrades back past 2024-2025, but I have his study as well as Joe Lawry's and I see nowhere where that happened. Pam Crosby also made the same statement yet could provide no proof. Please let me know where I can find it. Otherwise, I would have to believe you raised rates for upgrades, upgrades that you are not doing. How will you fund this amount? Loans, bond or notes that need to be paid back through consumer charges?**

We are looking into funding and grants for these projects. To date we have received a grant for the N. Edison Drive Waterline Project and reapplied for the Elm Street Looping Project. As the previous Fiscal Officer, you know that it takes time to generate the necessary funds to start projects once you increase the rates. As with Ordinances in the past, we step increased our rates, so it doesn't affect the resident initially.

**What are you going to do? I wish I had some answers to any of the questions I asked, but since there is never any discussion, I have to rely on you. This is not a public records request, this is a resident, asking the Administrator how this impending disaster is not going to blow up in the worst way possible?**

The majority of these questions were already answered at the Regular Council meeting in May.

Administrator Rospert notified Council that their request to have the Village of Milan records and records request are now on the Village of Milan website. Once on the website click on the Government tab, then click on the Public Records Requests & Policy. The years 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 through May is on.

Councilperson Bickley thanked Administrator Rospert for the great job he did getting the questions answered and Administrator Rospert, Tyson and the rest of the staff on the job they have done saving the Village money.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** – Administrator Rospert may schedule a Special Council meeting prior to the Work Session, for the hiring of a Water/Wastewater position. Two applications have been received.

**LEGISLATION**

Ordinance – Next Number will be 859-6-23

Resolution – Next Number will be 632-6-23

**AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE RESIDENCY OF JOANNE CLAPP, VILLAGE FISCAL OFFICER, OUTSIDE OF THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE VILLAGE OF MILAN, OHIO**

Motion by McIlrath, seconded by Taylor, to bring this Ordinance to its first reading by title only.

Roll Call: McManus – yes, McIlrath – yes, Bickley – yes, Rospert – yes, Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes.

**AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE GENERAL FUND AND OTHER FUNDING SOURCES AND AN INCREASE IN ESTIMATED RESOURCES AND FURTHER APPROVING CASH TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

Motion by Bickley, seconded by Rospert, to suspend the rules.

Roll Call: Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, McManus – yes, McIlrath –yes Rospert – yes, Bickley – yes.

Motion by McManus, seconded by McIlrath, to adopt by title only as an emergency.

Roll Call: McIlrath –yes, Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, McManus – yes, Bickley – yes, Rospert – yes.

**Questions for Next Meeting** – None

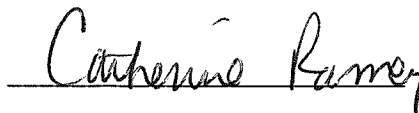
**Adjournment**

Motion by Taylor, seconded by McManus, to adjourn tonight’s meeting.

Roll Call: McManus – yes, Taylor – yes, Shafer – yes, Rospert – yes, McIlrath – yes, Bickley – yes.



Carla Rospert, Council President



Catherine Ramey, Fiscal Officer