

**Village of Clinton**  
**Regular Council Meeting**  
**Tuesday, February 4, 2025**

Mayor Bud McDaniel called the meeting to order on Tuesday, February 4, 2025 at 7:00 PM in Clinton Village Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Diane Gunter and recited by those present.

Council Members Present: Jan Godwin, Rita Joseph, Marissa Gensimore, Matt Steiner, Ross Blankenship and Keith Clackler.

Others Present: Diane Gunter, resident; Seth Marcum, Attorney's Office; Officer Zampelli, New Franklin PD; Village Fire Chief Conroy; and Street Supt. /Commissioner, Mr. White.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mrs. Joseph made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Mrs. Godwin.

Roll Call: Clackler, Godwin, Steiner, Gensimore, Blankenship, and Joseph voted yes. Motion passes.

**Solicitor Monthly Report**

Mr. Marcum indicated it's been a busy month so far. Mostly, the American Legal Publishing work. He met with Mrs. Joseph and Mr. Steiner and at the Laws and Ordinances Committee meeting, more was approved. There are still a couple outstanding issues that will be discussed with administration and the fiscal officer.

Mrs. Gensimore asked Mr. Marcum to speak to how the Village government is structured. We are a non-chartered Village, and are a Weak Mayor Government according to an article that Mrs. Godwin gave her to review.

Mr. Marcum said generally, it looks like a company or corporation. Council exists as the board of directors. It's the job of the mayor who takes the position of the president of the company, or manager, to carry out the desires of the board who set the hire level goals and objectives, and rules for the mayor and his subordinates/employees to follow. When it comes to the subordinates, the mayor has managerial authority over them with certain limitations and council may have to get involved, especially with severe discipline of officers in the Village.

Mrs. Gensimore said some authority does fall under the mayor, but some falls under council and has to go by council. Council has to approve. She brought up the zoning inspector – that's council driven. Mr. Marcum said the Mayor does have some supervisory authority of the zoning inspector position that council appoints, such as egregious conduct, he can be charged him with misconduct per the ORC, and bring the charge to Council.

She indicated that this body has always acted, as the document indicates, in granting the power to the mayor to execute contracts made by the legislative authority, which is the Council. Initiating or negotiating a contract outside the authority of council - that becomes a sticky wicket.

Mr. Marcum said the mayor is the face of the Village. Generally, a high-profile point of contact for the village - the person to is talking with people daily, that's where there is a grey area. It's a difference of what is right and what is legal. I'm here to tell you what is legal. Fiber and sewers are a popular topic in the Village. They might come to Council, but there is nothing stopping someone/village partner from speaking to the Mayor first to get his thoughts, etc. They can talk before speaking with the council on basics of what the topic may be.

Mrs. Gensimore said in the past, what has happened, once conversations start it's brought to the specific committee who would discuss that particular topic, and then to council.

Mr. Marcum said what is legal, is the mayor cannot enter into a final agreement without council's ability to review all it involves. From a legal perspective, that's the firm, clear line is.

Mrs. Gensimore indicated what the president of council, and committee chairs are designed to do.

Mrs. Godwin said the information she shared with Mrs. Gensimore came from a State quarterly magazine, filled with laws and references.

Mr. Marcum said each municipal body may work slightly different depending on their ordinances and resolutions in place. Depending on the county, city, etc. Needs are different on how their government functions.

Mr. Blankenship asked why we were discussion this and if the Mayor is working on something we don't know about.

Mrs. Gensimore said there is confusion as to how our government works.

Mr. Steiner was wondering as well and asked if we were not following proper procedures.

Mrs. Gensimore responded that there have been things that have transpired and put into a public forum and I wanted to make sure Village residents knew what the structure of our government was and who has the authority to do what.

Mr. Steiner said the Mayor can talk to other mayors or state officials – looking for opportunities to bring back to council.

Mr. Blankenship said he heard stated at the last meeting, that his job as Utilities Chair was to report street light outages, and now has heard different.

The Mayor asked to move on.

### **Police Monthly Report**

Mr. Zampelli read the report to Council. (in packet)

Mayor McDaniel asked if the accidents reported were because of weather or negligent driving. The officer was not aware but gave more information as to where the stops were made in the Village. Officer Zampelli added that they are working hard to stop those speeding in the Village, as well in New Franklin. He understands the traffic concerns in the Village. More discussion continued about the traffic in Clinton.

Mr. Marcum asked for a breakdown of the citing of drivers under Village Code, or a city code, versus the ORC. He was told zero have been cited under the Village Code. The Village will be getting their code updated.

Mrs. Gensimore asked if New Franklin was a sanctuary city. The officer didn't know.

### **Fire Chief Monthly Report**

Chief Conroy read the report to Council. (in packet)

### **Street Commissioner Monthly Report**

There were quite a few plowing and salting events. We met with the playground equipment representative and picked out the area where it will be placed. Construction may be the end of March. The old wooden one will be removed.

### **Fiscal Officer's Report**

Mr. Steiner said we got notice that some of the funding is on hold by the Federal government for Clinton Road until further notice.

### **Unfinished Business**

Mr. Steiner got a list for more signage options to purchase with the donation from the church.

The Village Committee members and Chairs will remain the same.

Mr. Steiner said that he and Leah Weirick spoke about the check signing issue and we will leave our policy as is. It has not been a problem. Mrs. Gensimore explained in the past, why the Mayor signed the checks. Leah and Mr. Steiner are comfortable the way it is.

### **Mayor's Communications**

Mayor McDaniel said Rep. Sykes told him at a meeting that right now funding for Clinton Road is frozen but soon it will get passed and be there for us.

He then reported about the rail road tracks. There is a congressman that has a bill in place to limit the amount of time a train can stop on tracks. But it's doubtful it will pass.

He had information about Route 21 and the 2024 work performed. He also read what would be done this winter.

He said Governor DeWine has a new budget and anyone can read that report Mayor McDaniel has if they would like to.

### **Council Communications and Council Committee Reports**

Mrs. Joseph reported that there was a Laws and Ordinances Committee meeting before the Council meeting. They worked on the American Legal changes and passed an ordinance that will be on the next agenda.

The new playground equipment made it to the publisher for the next Community Newsletter. It will also be posted on the Village Facebook page.

**Citizens Comments** – No comments.

### **Resolutions and Ordinances**

**No First Readings**

## **Second Readings**

### **Resolution No. R-25-02**

A Resolution Authorizing All Actions Necessary to Accept Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) 2025 Energized Community Grant, and Declaring an Emergency.

## **Third Readings**

### **Ordinance No. O-25-01**

An Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. O-23-26, Establishing the Pay Rates for Certain Employees, Effective January 1, 2025, and Declaring an Emergency.

Mrs. Joseph made a motion to adopt, second by Mr. Steiner.

Mr. Blankenship asked what this was and Mr. Steiner responded that it was pay raises that were budgeted.

Roll Call: Steiner, Godwin, Clackler, Blankenship, Joseph, and Gensimore voted yes. Motion passes.

## **New Business**

Mr. Blankenship made a motion for the Mayor and President of Council to be able to discuss with New Franklin the possibility of rejoining the partnership of the fire departments. Second by Mrs. Joseph.

Mrs. Godwin asked why we are doing this and Mrs. Gensimore said it should go to the Safety Committee. We also cannot afford it.

There was much discussion about how we can afford it and how the two departments split. Mr. Steiner wants to give the Mayor permission to talk to New Franklin. No contracts or legal binding. Just talk of the possibilities and the mayor and Council President have that option.

Roll Call: Blankenship and Joesph, yes; Gensimore, no; Steiner, yes; Godwin, no; and Clackler, yes. Motion passes.

## **Council General Discussion**

Mrs. Gensimore stated the property tax increase that all of Summit County incurred was directed by the State of Ohio. The State recommended a 43% increase and Summit County countered and they agreed to 34%. The fire levy voted on and passed was not the sole reason for the property tax increases. The 8.25% increase was a new tax levy, not renewal. We bundled it with one that was expiring as well according to Mr. Steiner. Mrs. Gensimore further explained why the Council at that time voted to put the tax levy through. More discussion continued as to why the two departments split up.

Mrs. Gensimore reported that it was a 10-year agreement and at the end of that period extended it for three more years. It came to the end of the agreement and there were issues that arose and New Franklin stopped paying their portion of what they owed the Village. They also didn't staff their

portion of the fire department which caused our fire department to spend \$15,000 to cover shifts. There was a dispute resolution as well that went to the mayors. There was an inability to resolve. New Franklin walked away from the table. Village Council never voted on it.

Mr. Steiner stated when the residents voted to move forward with New Franklin there was one; agreement to buy and build property across the tracks and put a fire station there; two, go from volunteer to full-time fire department; three, Village pay for an employee and a half, and New Franklin pay for an employee and a half. When we voted for that, I don't think residents were voting for that for only 13 years. We don't build a new fire station for a 13-year program. He is glad we passed the motion to at least be open to discussions. Partnering with neighboring departments only makes us stronger. Mr. Steiner added that Chief Conroy was in a tough spot to come up with money. We got him the money to do that with the levy and he has landed on his feet. We have 24-hour manned service and ordered a new tanker and ambulance which are on order. He has done what he said he was going to do.

Mrs. Godwin asked when the zoning changed out on Van Buren from 5 acres to 2.5 acre lots? Mr. McDaniel said in 2019. She said that's making a difference now.

Mrs. Gensimore asked that it just be a talk with New Franklin, not like what happened in May. Mr. McDaniel said he told council that he was going to give the information from New Franklin to the Village Safety Committee meeting for their review. Services for safety is only going to get more expensive. Mrs. Gensimore mentioned that our levy monies are for Clinton only. Mayor McDaniel said whatever happens, if we come back with something, all of Council can attend the Safety Meeting, and if the Committee rejects, the Council can still vote on it. The public will be well informed what's going on and they will be in agreement with what we do. Council members can attend any committee meeting. Whatever is recommended to council does not mean it will pass.


### **Presentation of Purchase Orders and Bills for Approval**

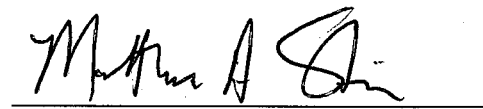
Mr. Steiner indicated that Pride Heating fixed the furnace that went out. It was a simple problem. A couple of igniters were cleaned. He indicated the bills totaled \$32,318.07. Mrs. Joseph asked about Stryker Medical. It was not known at that time but will ask the fiscal officer.

Mrs. Gensimore made a motion to approve the bills, second by Mr. Clackler.

Roll Call: Blankenship, Joseph, Steiner, Godwin, Clackler and Gensimore, voted yes. Motion passes.

A motion was made to adjourn at 8:08 PM, seconded, and meeting was adjourned.

  
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Mayor Bud McDaniel

  
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Matt Steiner, President of Council

  
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Leah Weirick, Fiscal Officer