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FEBRUARY 20, 2024 – REGULAR MEETING

Tiffin City Council met for its first meeting of the month in accordance with Codified Ordinance Section 121.03. Council President Bridget Boyle opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. The invocation was given, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL: Clerk of Council Ann Forrest recited roll call and six councilmembers were present: Aaron Jones (1st Ward), Scott Hoernemann (2nd Ward), Kevin Roessner (3rd Ward), Dennis Snay (4th Ward), Cheyane Thacker (At Large), and John Kahler (At Large) were present; John Hays (At Large) was absent. Also attending were Mayor Lee Wilkinson, Director of Law Zachary Fowler, City Administrator Nick Dutro, Director of Finance Kathy Kaufman, and Director of Communications and Constituent Services Liz Croak.

MINUTES: The minutes of the February 5, 2024 Regular and Committee of the Whole Meetings were approved as written.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilmember Snay reported that a Recreation and Public Property Committee meeting was held in Tiffin City Council Chambers on February 12, 2024, starting at 5:15pm. Its purpose was to review and discuss Mayor Wilkinson's request for Legislation #24-10 regarding an application for a NOPEC Energized Community Grant and any other business that may come before this committee. Attending were committee members Dennis Snay, Aaron Jones, and Scott Hoernemann. Additional guests attending were Mayor Wilkinson, Law Director Zachary Fowler, City Administrator Nick Dutro, Council-at-Large members John Kahler, Cheyane Thacker, and John Hays. Councilmember Snay explained to the committee that the NOPEC Grant needed to be amended into the Park Capital budget. He went on to explain that it is used to upgrade and purchase city pool equipment (slide, pumps, permits and freight cost). Total cost will be \$17,346.00. Finally, Councilman Snay requested that this legislation be declared an emergency and suspension of Council's three-reading rule so equipment be ordered immediately and installed before summer. After no discussion from the committee, City Administrator Dutro gave more background information to members of the chamber on what NOPEC is, how it is involved with our community and for how the NOPEC grant is used. Councilman Jones made a motion to have Law Director Fowler draft legislation upon Mayor's request #24-10 and seconded by Councilman Hoernemann. The motion carried a passing 3-0 vote. Mayor Wilkinson interjected regarding Kathy Kaufmann's (City Finance Director) wanting to have a piece of legislation combined with #24-10. Law Director Fowler explained to the Mayor that Kathy's request will be separated and assigned to a different committee. With no further action needed at this time the meeting was adjourned at 5:24 p.m. Report respectfully submitted by, Dennis A. Snay, Chair.

In the absence of Chair John Hays, Councilmember Kahler read the report on the Personnel & Labor Relations Committee meeting that was held in City Chambers on February 12th, 2024, starting at 5:21 p.m. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss Mayor's Request for Legislation #24-11 – Approval of City Administrator as proxy for Seneca County General Health District meeting and Mayor's Request for Legislation #24-12 – Appointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals, and any other business to come before the committee. Attending were committee members John Hays, Cheyane Thacker, and John Kahler. Also attending were Mayor Lee Wilkinson, City Administrator Nick Dutro, Law Director Zachary Fowler, and councilmembers Aaron Jones, Scott Hoernemann, and Dennis Snay. Councilman Hays started the meeting by confirming that the Mayor is sending a proxy to the Seneca County General Health District meeting due to a scheduling conflict on the date of March 18th. Mayor Wilkinson explained that he was requested to have a proxy voted on by City Council. City Administrator Dutro stated that the Health District administration made this request. Thacker motioned to have the Law Director draft the legislation for Dutro to be the proxy for the Mayor. Kahler seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 3-0. The committee then discussed the Appointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Mayor explained the reasoning for his selection, including the appointee's previous experience with the City and familiarity with zoning rules and regulations. Kahler motioned to accept the Mayor's appointment. Thacker seconded. The motion carried on a vote of 3-0. The committee then discussed its options of how it may handle future appointments brought before the committee. With no other business to discuss, our meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m. Report respectfully submitted by John Hays, Chair.

No additional Committee of the Whole was scheduled.

REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS:**MAYOR LEE WILKINSON:**

Mayor Wilkinson reminded Council and the public that quarterly Community Clean-ups are being planned, starting with the first to be held prior to the April Eclipse on March 30 in the First Ward. Information and volunteer opportunities will be coming soon.

The Mayor congratulated Cassandra Immele who won the \$500 Shop Small/Win Big contest just for shopping locally-owned businesses in Tiffin. He also thanked TSEP, the Chamber, and an anonymous donor for making this happen.

Aqua Ohio has plans to begin work to replace water lines starting as early as late February or early March on Madison Street, parts of Melmore St., and parts of Miami Street.

The street sweeper is up and running. If you see “No Parking” signs and cones along your street, pay attention to the date and try to get your cars moved off of the street to let the street sweeper do a good job. The street sweeper will be on Clay Street tomorrow.

Sewer work continues on Schonhardt St. and will be moving to Main St. between Jefferson and Schonhardt in the coming weeks.

Mayor Wilkinson then introduced Seneca Regional Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Bryce Riggs, who gave an update on the Chamber and Destination Seneca County, with focus on the latter. Riggs introduced the staff: Deb Martorana, Director of Internal Operations; Marisa Stephens, Director of Marketing; Judy Smith Desze, Marketing Specialist; and Joanne Elchert, long-time volunteer. He stated that there are not a lot of Chambers in Ohio that run their visitors bureaus. They were the Chamber of the Year for the State of Ohio this last year, and assist 545 members throughout the county and beyond through their four points of education, promotions, relationships, and resources and savings in support of both tourism and commerce. This last year they were first place winners of three Ohio Travel Association Ruby Awards: the Official Chip Contest, the Destination Seneca County Coloring Book put together by Marisa Stephens, and the Special Features Blog. They were also awarded Citations of Excellence in two different awards: the Slice of Seneca County and Be a Tourist in Your Own Town. As of their renewed contract with the County about four years ago, they began working transparently with the Tourism Council and have an open door for feedback. They have seen quite an increase in the County Lodging Tax in the last number of years. Funding sources are through memberships and sponsorships, the County Lodging Tax now provides a little over \$165,000 and the City of Tiffin provides \$25,000 yearly. Marisa Stephens then provided an update on Destination Seneca County. She said that they also work in four buckets to support four core areas: Relationships, Marketing, Leisure Travel and Group Travel. They not only tailor their promotions to visitors coming into Seneca County, but also to getting residents to stay in Seneca County and experience the things we have here. Over the past year in 2023 their focus has been on letting residents and visitors know that whatever they were looking for, they could find a piece of it here, and Seek Seneca County was born. For marketing, their big focus is on featuring the people and the stories of our community. They have reached 2.8 million users on social platforms and 113,000 website users. They were able to highlight our assets, such as the Seneca County Fair Family Lights and addresses of decorated houses that were included on the Ohio Holiday Lights Trail. They have been working diligently to make sure we are seen not only on a statewide stage but also nationally, and involving all parts of the community so that it's just not promoting Seneca County but the businesses and people that make it up. Under Relationships, they try to be as actively involved as possible with Tiffin and countywide organizations, and with different statewide organizations as well. Under Leisure Travel they launched the first geocaching trail in northwest Ohio, which was very successful. Slice of Seneca County, a pizza and a geocaching trail in one, really took off and has brought in people from all over the country. Recently they helped put together and promote the first-ever Seneca County Restaurant Week, with over 23 participating restaurants and over 200 customers. They also go out beyond the community and set up every year at the Fostoria Farmers Market and Train Fest, as well as setting up at the State Tourism Day. Group Travel covers bus travel with anywhere from 35-65 individuals per bus; they take them to businesses and different experiences and offer them behind the scenes excursions that they wouldn't otherwise get. It has a great economic impact on those organizations and promotes their return on the Leisure Travel side. They are also out connecting with different industry leaders and partners. The past two years they have been invited to the Great Day Tours Marketplace Show, where they see a lot of organizations coming back to Seneca County, and they are heading to the Ohio Travel Association Heartland Show in South Bend, IN. Riggs then spoke about the Eclipse on April 8th, which

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they are helping out with on two fronts. One is from the community standpoint with Eclipse Insights Events on Monday the 26th in Tiffin, Fostoria and Attica. The Chamber and Destination Seneca County will be there with EMA, Fostoria Economic Development and the Fostoria Chamber, TSEP, Downtown Development and the Health Department to give people information for a good experience. There is the Out of the Dark Fun Run on Saturday night, and a Solar Eclipse Bingo to coincide with the release of the 2024 Community Guide where visitors can check off and submit their visits and receive gift cards. The Elope at the Eclipse has taken off with 120 weddings and vow renewals, with cake and a first toast at The Chandelier. We are right in the path of totality, so there will be a list of where to buy swag on their website. Stephens also mentioned that this is also the year of the 2024 Seneca County Bicentennial which will begin April 1. It includes the Beard Contest, Heritage Festival, a K9 Commissioner contest, and the Be a Tourist in Your Own Town event will be themed around the Bicentennial. She thanked all their partners for their support and the City of Tiffin for providing additional funding. Mayor Wilkinson said he appreciated all their collaboration with the City and County and their efforts to make things happen in Seneca County.

CLERK OF COUNCIL ANN FORREST: No report.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE KATHY KAUFMANN:

Director of Finance Kaufman explained that Ordinances 2024-8 and 2024-9 were up for their third reading. Ord. 2024-8 is for the OPWC loan for the street paving and is due this summer. At the time the budget was prepared they thought the number was lower than it actually is and asked that funds be transferred from the .25% Income Tax Public Streets Fund to the OPWC Loan Street Paving Fund. These funds need to be appropriated so that the necessary payment on the OPWC Loan for street paving can be made by the due date.

Kaufman also explained that Ord. 2024-9 was for the continuance of insurance coverage. A certain amount had been put in the Budget, but now more people on are it and more funds need to be appropriated for the year.

Director of Finance Report for the month ending:	JANUARY 31, 2024
Total Receipts for the month:	\$5,099,547.55
Total Expenses for the month:	\$4,985,099.06
The General Fund unencumbered balance:	\$4,072,081.07

The income tax receipts for January 2024 are \$1,189,827.16. The total annual increase in income tax receipts through January 2024 compared to January 2023 is \$42,709.48 or 3.72% increase year to date.

The .25% portion of income tax receipts that was transferred into fund 215 for public streets for January 2024 is \$146,557.31.

The unexpended balance for all funds is **\$38,512,839.48** which is the same as the bank balances for the same time period.

Councilmember Roessner moved to accept the January 31, 2024 financial report as presented, as well as the bank reconciliation emailed to Council; Councilmember Snay seconded. On a voice vote motion was approved 6-0.

DIRECTOR OF LAW ZACHARY FOWLER: No report.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor's Request for Legislation #24-13 – Approval of Rod Morrison's Reappointment to the Planning Commission. – *Referred to Personnel & Labor Relations Committee*

Mayor's Request for Legislation #24-14 – City Lot #2 Lighting
Referred to Streets, Sidewalks & Sewers Committee

Finance Director's Request for Legislation #F24-13 to amend the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate funds into the Fire Claims Escrow Budget. (\$30,000.00)
On file in Clerk of Council's office; prepared under Ord. 2024-21.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

MOTIONS: None.

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RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 2024-24, introduced by Cheyane Thacker and read for the second time.

A RESOLUTION authorizing the City Administrator to prepare and submit an application to participate in the Urban Waters Federal Partnership tree planting grant, to execute contracts as required, and declaring an emergency.

Resolution 2024-25, introduced by John Kahler and read for the first time.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's appointment of the City Administrator to attend the Seneca County General Health District annual meeting as proxy for the Mayor, and declaring an emergency.

Councilmember Kahler moved for suspension of the three-reading rule and passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

Discussion: Councilmember Thacker explained that Mayor Wilkinson would be at the Council meeting on that same evening, March 18th.

Roll call votes were taken on the suspension, emergency and passage, and each was approved 6-0.

Resolution 2024-26, introduced by John Kahler and read for the first time and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's appointment of Dawn Iannantuono to serve an unexpired term on the Zoning Board of Appeals from the date of this signed resolution through December 31, 2025.

Councilmember Kahler moved for passage; Councilmember Roessner seconded.

Roll call vote was taken on the passage, and it was approved 6-0.

ORDINANCES:

Ordinance 2024-4, introduced by Cheyane Thacker and read for the third time.

AN ORDINANCE authorizing participation in the ODOT Road Salt Contracts Awarded or the City Administrator to competitively bid for the purchase of road salt.

Councilmember Thacker moved for passage; Councilmember Hoernemann seconded.

Roll call vote was taken on the passage, and it was approved 6-0.

Ordinance 2024-8, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the third time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate \$18,750.00 into the .25% Income Tax Public Streets Fund and approve a transfer from the .25% Income Tax Public Streets Fund to the OPWC Loan Street Paving Fund.

Councilmember Roessner moved for passage; Councilmember Hoernemann seconded.

Roll call vote was taken on the passage, and it was approved 6-0.

Ordinance 2024-9, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the third time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate \$25,000.00 into the General Administration Budget.

Councilmember Roessner moved for passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

Roll call vote was taken on the passage, and it was approved 6-0.

Ordinance 2024-11, introduced by Cheyane Thacker and read for the third time.

AN ORDINANCE authorizing and directing the City Administrator to prepare plans and specifications, advertise for and receive bids, and recommend and execute a contract for the West Market Street and Hopewell Avenue traffic signal repair project.

Councilmember Thacker moved for passage; Councilmember Roessner seconded,

Discussion: City Administrator Dutro confirmed that this was an insurance reimbursement.

Roll vote was taken on the passage and it was approved 6-0.

Ordinance 2024-13, introduced by Cheyane Thacker and read for the second time.

AN ORDINANCE enacting Section 139.07 of the Tiffin Codified Ordinances authorizing the City Administrator to maintain a file for prequalifications of professional design firms.

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Ordinance 2024-14, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the second time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to reallocate \$15,000.00 into the .25% Income Tax Public Streets Budget.

Councilmember Roessner moved for suspension of the three-reading rule and passage; Councilmember Jones seconded.

Roll call votes were taken on the suspension and passage, and both were approved 6-0.

Ordinance 2024-15, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the second time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate \$27,861.19 into the Police Budget.

Ordinance 2024-17, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the second time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate funds into the CSO 24 & 30, Benner Interceptor, Federal Urban Paving and OPWC Funds and approve the return of the advances to the sewer and general funds.

Ordinance 2024-19, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the second time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate \$2,000.00 into the Park Department Budget.

Ordinance 2024-20, introduced by Dennis Snay and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE authorizing all actions necessary to accept the Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) 2024 Energized Community Grant, and declaring an emergency.

Councilmember Snay moved for suspension of the three-reading rule and passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

Discussion: Councilmember Thacker explained that suspension was being requested so as to order the parts in time to make sure the pool is ready for its opening.

Roll call votes were taken on the suspension, emergency and passage, and each was approved 6-0.

Ordinance 2024-21, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate \$30,000.00 into the Fire Claims Escrow Budget.

Councilmember Roessner moved for passage; Councilmember Snay seconded.

Discussion: Councilmember Roessner explained that this was for an insurance money check for the Fire Department.

Roll call votes were taken on the suspension and passage, and both were approved 6-0.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Regarding Mayor's Request for Legislation #24-14 for lighting at City Lot #2, Councilmember Thacker moved too have legislation prepared for said lighting which is already in process and to rectify what has already happened; Councilmember Jones seconded. On a voice vote, motion was approved 6-0.

Councilmember Thacker announced a Personnel & Labor Relations committee meeting to be held February 26, 2024 at 5:15 p.m. to discuss Mayor's Request for Legislation #24-13 (reappointment of Rod Morrison to the Planning Commission) and any other business that may come before them.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Ann Forrest, Clerk of Council.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2024

Presiding Officer of Council

Attest: _____

Clerk of Council