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MARCH 4, 2024 – REGULAR MEETING

Tiffin City Council met for its second meeting of the month in accordance with Codified Ordinance Section 121.03. Council President Pro Tem Cheyane Thacker 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 five councilmembers were present: Aaron Jones (1st Ward), Kevin Roessner (3rd Ward), Dennis Snay (4th Ward), Cheyane Thacker (At Large), and John Hays (At Large) were present; Scott Hoernemann (2nd Ward) and John Kahler (At Large) were absent. Also attending were Mayor Lee Wilkinson, Director of Law Zachary Fowler, City Administrator Nick Dutro, Director of Finance Kathy Kaufman, Director of Communications and Constituent Services Liz Croak, HR Director Deb Reamer and Parks & Recreation Director Bryce Kuhn.

MINUTES: The minutes of the February 20, 2024 Regular and Committee of the Whole Meetings were approved as written.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilmember Hays reported that the Personnel & Labor Relations Committee held a meeting in City Chambers on February 26th, 2024. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss Mayor's Request for Legislation #24-13 – Reappointment of Rod Morrison to the Planning Commission, and any other business to come before the committee. Attending were committee members John Hays and John Kahler. Also attending were Mayor Lee Wilkinson, City Administrator Nick Dutro and Law Director Zachary Fowler. Councilman Hays called the meeting to order at 5:21 p.m. Councilman Kahler asked about the appointee. City Administrator Dutro commented on the appointee's history with the Commission and experience with zoning law. Dutro also explained the details of the Planning Commission, including frequency of meetings. Kahler motioned to draft legislation approving the reappointment to the Planning Commission. Hays seconded, and the motion carried on a vote of 2-0. In other business, Hays asked about the committee meeting for future appointments. Law Director Fowler explained the roles of Mayor and Council President in business being assigned to the committee, and Dutro commented on steps a committee chair can take during a City Council meeting to have legislation prepared. With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 5:32 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 read a proclamation declaring March 2024 Development Disabilities Awareness Month. Seneca County Opportunity Center Superintendent Lew Hurst thanked the Tiffin community for the support they give the program. He said they have been reviewing bids for the renovation off the old cancer center, and they will be moving their adult program there. He added that SCOC has grown 25% in the past four years, mostly with children. Advocate Bill Young announced the Palm Sunday drive-thru chicken dinner to be held at the Center on Sunday, March 24 with pre-orders taken through March 11. John DeVanna announced their March 26 Bakery Bingo at 5:30 p.m.; money raised will go towards the 2024 Unity Conference planned every year by the advocates. Also, the annual Celebrity Basketball game will be held March 14 at Seiberling Gym with proceeds from the sale of food and merchandise to help fund the Special Olympics to be held in April. Rock Your Socks World Down Syndrome Day is March 21, and everyone is encouraged to share their mis-matched socks on social media in support.

The Mayor asked for volunteers to sign up as soon as possible for the First Community Clean Up that will take place in the First Ward on March 30th at 9:00 a.m.

AQUA still has plans to begin replacing water lines as early as this week on Madison St., parts of Melmore St. and parts of Miami St. Main Street will also be closed to through traffic between Jefferson and Circular for sewer installation. Beginning today and tomorrow there will be temporary lane closures on N. Sandusky St. between Hall and Tomb Sts., as well as near Sixes Corners in preparation for the North Sandusky Street Project.

He congratulated Public Works Superintendent Brandon Burner for obtaining a \$50,000 ODNR Division of Forestry grant to be used for tree purchases, removal and inventory work.

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Mayor Wilkinson introduced Parks & Recreation Department Director Bryce Kuhn for his annual report. Kuhn announced that Alen Bilger had received the 2023 Tiffin Parks & Recreation Volunteer of the Year Award. He said Bilger has been a volunteer with the Parks Department and has given a lot of his time helping with the summer camps. His specialty is showing the kids how to build rockets and then brings his rocket launching pad to the park on the last day of camp so they can launch fly their rockets. Kuhn stated that 2023 capital projects included a retaining wall, landscaping and lettering through Arnold Machine at the back hillside entrance to Hedges-Boyer Park through grants from the Messich Frost Foundation and Lupton Foundation for a total of \$64,000. This will help with draining and water runoff. Every year they update a different piece of equipment while there is still some value in it to offset the cost of new. This year they purchased a new 11 ft. wide lawnmower costing \$85,000-\$95,000 by trading in an old mower and bringing the cost down. They also purchased a toolcat, which is a bobcat mixed with an ATV-type body. Annual events include the Oakley Park clean-up on April 20, the pitch, hit and run competition, Band Bash, Thursday Night Tunes at the East Green beginning June 20, special needs community swim days, NOPEC Party in the Park on the 4th of July and the car show on the 4th, yoga at the East Green, and the fishing derby on June 1. The pool will open May 27 and close August 11. Online day camp registration begins April 5 at 9:00 a.m., and last year they filled up within just over 4 minutes 22 seconds, which demonstrates how good of a camp Mason Correll puts on. Kuhn also explained that most of the revenue for the department camps, pool memberships and day admissions, shelter rentals, food trucks and concession stand sales. He thanked Council for allowing them to do what they do as a service department and supporting their programs and events. Councilmember Roessner asked if leasing was an option, and both Finance Director Kaufman explained that historically it had not been done due to the additional interest costs. City Administrator Dutro agreed but added that they are piloting it with Public Works for some major equipment that is only used occasionally. Roessner noted that in comparison with the green spaces in Findlay and Fremont, we have a tremendous well-managed park system and gave kudos to the Parks Department for their work. Councilmember Hays asked about the park pool supplementing the YMCA pool during its renovation. Kuhn explained that the YMCA would be operating the pool from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. before they actually open for the season, with the YMCA paying for the extra chemicals and staff. This will be weather-dependent and depending on how soon they can get the pool prepared. They would do this beginning the first Monday of May and go until Labor Day.

Deb Reamer, Director of Human Resources, began her annual update by listing the various departments and the number of personnel in each, pointing out that Parks & Recreation will soon be adding an additional 27 seasonal employees, 16 of which are returning. In 2023 there were 11 new full-time hires and 11 part-time, and 13 outgoing full-time employees (five of which retired) and 7 part-time (six of which left Council). Total City employees at the end of 2023 were 127 full-time and 10 part-time. Regarding the City's workers' compensation claims, there was a decreased frequency from 10 in 2022 to 7 in 2023, and losses decreased 39%. The City of Tiffin outperformed what was expected, with fewer losses than cities of a similar size. The City participated in programs resulting in \$26,591 in refunds in 2023. When there is a work-related injury the department heads understand it is imperative she know right away because there is a lag time which means more costs involved. Medical providers billed \$157,768.22, of which Ohio BWC paid \$27,285, resulting in \$130,482.94 in medical charges saved from entering the City's future experience and 82% discount. 71% of claims were under \$5,000. 57% of claims were medical only, and less than 8 days off work. This is why it is important to bring them back to work under transitional duty and reduce claim losses. Reamer is the BWC administrator handling workers' compensation claims and contacts; handles employee issues; serves as a liaison for benefit groups; is the unemployment administrator, interviews, hires and does employee orientation for new employees; and enters into Employee Navigator all employee terms and authorizes all changes required. All employee policies and procedures can now be found online under Lexipol. She also outlined the requirements for FMLA, which is available for employees who have worked a minimum of one full year and 1250 hours. Reamer closed by pointing out that the City of Tiffin offers some things that others do not: step increases, longevity increases, very good benefits, a retirement plan for the public service field of employment, and an atmosphere that strives to make all members feel part of a big family.

CLERK OF COUNCIL ANN FORREST: No report.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE KATHY KAUFMANN:

Director of Finance Kaufman explained three ordinances that were up for third reading. Ord. 2024-15 appropriates grant funds for Tiffin Police Department professional training. Ord. 2024-17 covers several advances that had to be done at the end of the year. There would be an Audit finding if there was a negative balance at the end of the year, so they need to be returned to the funds they came from. Ord. 2024-19 appropriates a NOPEC grant into the Parks Department for special events.

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DIRECTOR OF LAW ZACHARY FOWLER:

Director of Law Fowler reported that the administrator assistant from the Prosecutor's office was on vacation, and someone from his private law firm was going to fill in while she was out.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

Finance Director's Request for Legislation #F24-14 to amend the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate funds into the OPWC Loan Street Paving Project. (\$18,750.00)

On file in Clerk of Council's office; prepared under Ord. 2024-22.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

MOTIONS: None.

RESOLUTIONS:

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

Councilmember Roessner moved for passage; Councilmember Snay seconded.

Roll call votes were taken on the emergency and passage, and both were approved 5-0.

Resolution 2024-27, introduced by John Hays and read for the first time and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's reappointment of Rod Morrison to serve a four-year term on the Planning Commission from January 1, 2024 until December 31, 2027.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Roessner seconded.

Roll call vote was taken on the passage, and it was approved 5-0.

ORDINANCES:

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

Councilmember Roessner moved for passage; Councilmember Hays seconded.

Roll call vote was taken on the passage, and it was approved 5-0.

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

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

Councilmember Roessner moved for passage; Councilmember Jones seconded.

Roll call vote was taken on the passage, and it was approved 5-0.

Ordinance 2024-17, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the third 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. Councilmember Roessner moved for passage; Councilmember Hays seconded

Roll call votes were taken on the passage, and it was approved 5-0.

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

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

Councilmember Roessner moved for passage; Councilmember Snay seconded.

Roll call vote was taken on the passage, and it was approved 5-0.

Ordinance 2024-22, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate \$18,750.00 into the OPWC Loan Street Paving Budget.

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Ordinance 2024-23, introduced by Cheyane Thacker and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE authorizing the installment of two streetlights in City Lot 2, and declaring an emergency. Councilmember Jones moved for suspension of the three-reading rule and passage; Councilmember Roessner seconded.

Roll call votes were taken on the suspension, emergency and passage, and each was approved 5-0.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Ann Forrest, Clerk of Council.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2024

Presiding Officer of Council

Attest: _____
Clerk of Council