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MAY 6, 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), Kevin Roessner (3rd Ward), Dennis Snay (4th Ward), Cheyane Thacker (At Large), John Hays (At Large) and John Kahler (At Large). Scott Hoernemann (2nd Ward) was 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 and Fire Chief Rob Chappell.

PETITION: Petition No. 2024-02 by Don Pritt/John Hill, 2 Main St., to vacate an alley in the First Ward of the City of Tiffin, Ohio, being a 16.5 foot wide alley running north/south and east/west between Lots #597 east/#598 west and Lots #596-597 north and #15 south, all in Heming's Resurvey. *Referred to Streets, Sidewalks and Sewers Committee.*

MINUTES: The minutes of the April 15, 2024 Regular and Committee of the Whole Meetings were approved as written.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilmember Thacker reported that a Streets, Sidewalks, and Sewers Committee meeting was held on April 22, 2024 at 5:30 P.M. on site at 73 Frost Parkway. Attending were committee members Cheyane Thacker, Aaron Jones, Scott Hoernemann, and Kevin Roessner, along with Council Member John Hay, Law Director Zach Fowler, Mayor Lee Wilkinson, City Administrator Nick Dutro, City Engineer Matt Watson, and resident, Urban Schalk. Thacker called the meeting to order. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss Alley Vacation Petition No. 2024-01 by Urban Schalk to vacate an alley in the Second Ward and any other business that may come before them. Thacker asked Mr. Schalk to inform the committee why he wanted the alley vacated. Mr. Schalk plans to put up a fence around his adjacent parcels. Also, he was concerned for the safety of children that ride their bikes down the alley. He gave the attendees the history of his home and a picture of the fence likely to be installed. Thacker read the responses of department heads regarding the potential alley vacation. Watson informed the committee of an existing sewer located in this alley. This alley's location in proximity to the river could potentially provide future benefit to our sewer collection system. Watson's only request was that the city maintain an easement for the operation and maintenance of our existing sewer and ensure the easement also for the construction of future sewers, if needed. Roessner motioned to have the Law Director prepare legislation to vacate the alley. Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. With no further business the committee adjourned at 5:40 P.M. Respectfully submitted, Cheyane Thacker, Chairperson.

No additional Committee of the Whole was scheduled.

REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS:

MAYOR LEE WILKINSON:

Mayor Wilkinson presented a proclamation declaring May 2024 as Motorcycle Awareness Month in Tiffin to Ed Schetter, executive director of American Bikers Aimed Toward Education (ABATE) of Ohio, which focuses on local and state issues regarding motorcycle rides and safety. Schetter said that each year members of his organization gather proclamations from as many counties as they can and ride to the statehouse to receive the governor's proclamation, with ABATE Ohio members also presenting the proclamations they have collected from around the state.

Mayor Wilkinson also presented a proclamation declaring May as National Historic Preservation Month in Tiffin. Members of the Tiffin Historic Trust President Tim McKee, Mary Lewis and Nancy Rubenstein were present to accept the proclamation. McKee explained that their purpose was to advance historic preservation as well as to evolve into more of an educational and collaborative resource while preserving as much history as they can.

The Mayor offered his comments regarding the recent officer-involved shooting, noting that the outcome of any event like this is heartbreaking for all individuals involved and families affected. He asked that we come together as a community to support those who need help and advocated for mental health resources and community programs to prevent such a crisis in the future. Please get to know what resources are available such as

Ohiospf.org and 988 as a call, text or chat lifeline. He said we need to let the professionals at Ohio BCI sort out the details of the situation. He asked for all of us to support our police officers, firemen and first responders who protect our city everyday as it is not an easy job. President Boyle thanked him for his comments on the horrific event and fully agreed with everything he said.

Fire Chief Rob Chappell presented his annual update on the Tiffin Fire/Rescue Division. Chappell reported that the Division had 3,610 calls for service in 2023, which was actually flat when compared to 2022. However, there has been a 17% increase in emergency responses since 2018. He noted that the Third Ward, although slightly down last year, led the number of emergency responses with 1,057 calls; Second Ward also had a slight decrease; the First Ward has seen steady increases over the past three years; and the Fourth Ward has had a 19% increase in calls each year. Of the 3,610 calls for services, 2,988 required EMS and 2,309 of those calls resulted in EMS transports. Many were to Mercy Hospital-Tiffin, but thanks to their equipment, protocols and training they were able to diagnose in the field when a patient was having a heart attack and would either contact Life Flight or transport directly to Blanchard Valley Hospital's Cath Lab. There was no doubt that this ability saved the lives of numerous patients over the last several years. Through the use of their billing company, EMS transports resulted in over \$700,000 in revenue. The Division also contracted for EMS services in Clinton Township and the northern portion of Eden Township, which brought in an additional \$52,000 to the general fund. Heidelberg University and Tiffin University contract the department for standby services during sporting events, resulting in nearly \$5,000 of revenue. The 622 remaining calls for service required the response of a fire truck, and they respond to a myriad of calls beyond a fire. They responded to many gas lines that were struck, carbon monoxide investigations, car accidents, fire alarm system activations and animal rescues. Of the 622 calls, 36 were actual fires and 18 were considered building fires. With 23 of the 32 largest employers being within their response area, they have the responsibility to protect the buildings and equipment that provide the livelihoods of so many residents. Recent fires at Tiffin University's Heminger Center and Tiffin Pointe Apartments were two examples of significant properties they assisted within city limits. Their average response time within city limits is four minutes and four seconds from the time of dispatch to arriving at the scene for all response types. He recognized 13 department members who had achieved 10, 15, 20 and 30 years of service and noted the promotion of Keith Johnson to Lieutenant, who has been instrumental in helping develop their tactical EMS program to assist law enforcement. He recognized FF/Medics McNeal, Higgins and Albright for completing their National Registry Exam, which requires up to two years of training and hundreds of hours of clinical time to learn the skills needed as a paramedic. With two vacancies from a resignation and a retirement, they welcomed FF/EMTs John Grieve and Sarah Elliott. Due to attrition they have transitioned to a very young department with new approaches that have helped move them forward. Retention has improved, and they continue working to return the department to its pre-pandemic levels and working to recruit the second of three positions lost during COVID. The Division has 25 of the 30 authorized number of FF/EMTs or medics, six lieutenants, three captains, Deputy Chief Mike Homan, and administrative assistant Amanda Hannam. They are currently working with two fewer people than when he was hired in 2004, even though they now respond to twice as many calls. They have pursued local, state and federal funds to minimize its impact on City funding, receiving funds to purchase a new \$1.1 million ladder truck, a new ambulance for \$250,000 and numerous smaller awards for equipment. In 2023 they applied for nine grants to fund anything from equipment to personnel and were awarded nearly \$200,000 in funds. As more and more fire departments are competing for the same grant dollars, many are turning to professional grant writers which raises the bar to receive an award. The two largest grant programs for fire departments are managed through FEMA: the AFG equipment and SAFER for staffing. Each receives \$325-\$350 million per year from the federal budget through a partnership between Lexipol, their policy management system, and 3M Scott, the manufacturer of their SCBAs (air packs). Professional grant writers were provided at no expense to evaluate this year's AFG application to increase the likelihood of funding; if awarded they would receive over \$250,000 towards the purchase of SCBA equipment. They recently applied for a SAFER grant; if awarded it would fund positions for three years and the City would be reimbursed over \$979,000. Chappell stated that the tempered implementation of measures and the change in culture of their department has been perhaps the greatest source of satisfaction in his 3.5 years as Fire Chief. They incorporated an electronic scheduling platform to streamline the payroll process, and the Division was also the City's pilot program for the city and moving to FirstNet cellular service has provided a cost savings to the department. In collaboration with the union they have updated 81 departmental policies, which in part has led to the Division being recognized with Lexipol Gold status. 24 SOGs or Standard Operating Guidelines were created to guide daily operations. The cumbersome employee evaluation process was eliminated to create a more specific goal-oriented format for much better ownership and overall better work performance. His goal has been to build a program to assist with the betterment of the firefighters' mental health and overall well-being. A

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department chaplain has been re-introduced with retired Tiffin firefighter George Morgan, who understands the toll the profession can have on a person and their family. They recently completed their second year of employee physicals with LifeScan Wellness, which assesses the staff's general health and through the process are able to look for many forms of cancer and heart issues which are two of the largest killers of firefighters. A \$50,000 investment in workout facilities at the two stations provides top tier equipment for them and any city employee wishing to use it. Mental health wellness visits will be completed this week with practitioners skilled in working with first responders. All personnel will have the opportunity to sit down with a counselor. The mental health needs of first responders are unique so the counselors we talk with must be also. In Ohio there are only eight fully credentialed counselors trained to work with fire, EMS and police, and this company has two of them. If one of our people needs help they can get it immediately with a phone call. A final part of their wellness program is that of financial health the employment. They need to plan early for a decreased number of years to save for retirement and covering healthcare gaps until Medicare is available. A local financial planner will visit the fire station this summer to meet with each of their three crews about what a good financial plan should look like. Their EMS training program is overseen by Deputy Chief Homan, who performed the majority of instruction for their paramedic refresher program that is done every other year. The class ensures that every member of the department has more than adequate training hours to recertify with the state for each three-year cycle. The Division also manages the annual fire inspection program for nearly 800 commercial properties within the city to minimize the likelihood of a fire developing. They explain possible violations to the business representatives and hope they will also apply the information in their homes. Completing the initial inspections and any needed re-inspections is a time consuming process. On February 1, 2024 they held a ribbon-cutting to celebrate the 130th anniversary of being a full-time department and to showcase some of the history amassed over the years. The station has served the department and community well for the past 85 years; however, it has reached the point where we must consider replacing it. Careful evaluation of alternate locations, the impact on response times, and determining what will meet the needs of our community far into the future will all factor into any decisions being made. As this process takes shape and moves forward much more information will be shared with City Council and our citizens. He added that while the massive population influx that was possible did not happen during the April 8th solar eclipse, it was still a very memorable event for those living in or visiting Tiffin and Seneca County. In conjunction with the EMA and numerous agencies from around the county, a year's worth of planning and preparation was exercised on that single day. Tiffin Fire/Rescue was adequately prepared to meet the needs of citizens and visitors, and he thanked The Willows for allowing them to stage an ambulance and personnel at their Tiffin campus. With the Third Ward making up so much of their call volume, having resources already within that area was an important part of their action plan that day.

Mayor Wilkinson congratulated the Division for their Lexipol Gold rating and thanked them for everything they do to keep us safe.

CLERK OF COUNCIL ANN FORREST: No report.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE KATHY KAUFMANN:

Finance Director Kaufman gave further details on two ordinances up for their third reading: Ord. 2024-31 is for donations received for the Park Department, and Ord. 2024-32 was requested by Engineer Watson for the household sewer systems treatment project to make sure we have enough money in the Budget for any possible change orders or the construction portion of that project.

DIRECTOR OF LAW ZACHARY FOWLER: No report.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor's Request for Legislation #24-19 – SIEDC Contract Renewal

Referred to Law & Community Planning Committee

Mayor's Request for Legislation #24-20 – Removal of Stoplight

Referred to Streets, Sidewalks & Sewers Committee

Finance Director's Request for Legislation #F24-24 to amend the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate funds into the Prosecutor's Budget. (\$22,000.00 + \$3,883.00)

On file in Clerk of Council's Office; legislation prepared under Ord 2024-37.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

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MOTIONS: None.

RESOLUTIONS: None.

ORDINANCES:

Ordinance 2024-31, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the third time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate \$650.00 into the Park Budget. Councilmember Roessner moved for passage; Councilmember Jones seconded.

Discussion: Councilmember Roessner thanked the Lee Martin and Parkins families for their donations.

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

Ordinance 2024-32, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the third time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate \$100,000.00 into the Sewer Fund Budget.

Councilmember Roessner moved for passage; Councilmember Snay seconded

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

Ordinance 2024-34, introduced by John Hays and read for the second time.

AN ORDINANCE authorizing the Mayor and/or Tiffin-Seneca Economic Partnership to apply to and receive from the Ohio Department of Development, Office of Community Development for a Small Cities Community Development Block Grant for qualifying projects and allowable administrative expenses, authorizing bidding and executing of contracts as needed, and declaring an emergency.

Ordinance 2024-36, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the second time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate \$8,648.00 into the Police Budget and \$663.00 into the Park Budget.

Ordinance 2024-37, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate \$25,883.00 into the Prosecutor's Budget.

Ordinance 2024-38, introduced by Cheyene Thacker and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE responding to Petition No. 2024-01 vacating the alley off of Frost Parkway running East/West between Lot Nos. 517, 518, and 519 of Heming's Resurvey and Lot Nos. 533 and 534 of New Fort Ball Addition in the Third Ward of the City of Tiffin, Ohio.

OTHER BUSINESS:

President Boyle announce a public hearing to be held at the next regular meeting on Monday, May 20, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. for Alley Vacation Petition #2024-01 under proposed Ordinance 2024-38.

Councilmember Thacker announced a Streets, Sidewalks and Sewers Committee meeting for Thursday, May 9, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. on-site at the parking lot on the corner of W. Market and St. Clair Streets. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss Alley Vacation Petition No. 2024-02 to vacate an alley in the First Ward between West Market and St. Clair Sts., Mayor's Request for Legislation #24-20 for removal of the stoplight at Hall and S. Sandusky Sts., and any other business that may come before them.

Councilmember Kahler announced a Law & Community Planning Committee meeting to be held Monday, May 13, 2024 at 5:15 p.m. in Council Chambers to discuss Mayor's Request for Legislation #24-19 (SIEDC contract renewal) and any other business that may come before them.

City Administrator Dutro announced that Rumpke would be doing their annual bulk pick up the week of June 10th. Five bulk items can be put out on your regular trash day but no earlier than 18 hours prior. He noted that there are some restrictions that can be found on their website. All upholstered furniture and mattresses must be wrapped in plastic and CFCs must be removed from appliances. He also noted that Rumpke will pick up bulk items at any time but with the associated fee. As a quarterly update for Rumpke, Dutro reported that thus far in 2024 Rumpke has collected 1,831.41 tons of municipal solid waste and 312 tons of recyclables.

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ADJOURNMENT: 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Ann Forrest, Clerk of Council.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2024

Presiding Officer of Council

Attest: _____
Clerk of Council