

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Meeting

DAYTON LEGAL BLANK, INC., FORM NO. 10148

Held

October 21

20

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**The Village of Weston
Council Meeting Minutes**

October 21, 2024

Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Jeremy Schroeder at 6:00PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and presentation of the agenda. A roll call was taken: Mr. Craig Warner, Mr. Dean Babcock, Mr. Rob Myerholtz, Ms. Jessica Susor, Mr. Rick Easterwood, Ms. Brittney Klockowski. *A motion to approve October 7, 2024 council meeting minutes as written was made by Mr. Warner, seconded by Mr. Babcock; Approved unanimously.*

Old Business

Harold and the Mayor provided an update regarding the storm-damaged bus garage. It was reported that there has been contact with the insurance company and awaiting further guidance on whether the structure can be demolished or if it will be necessary to repair the roof. The insurance policy/value of the building is \$1,000 less than the verbal estimated cost of replacing the roof, creating some uncertainty about the path forward. PEP/UIS Insurance will provide an update.

There was an in-depth discussion on various grant opportunities and the progress being made. Kristi had provided an updated document that fleshed out potential non-matching grants, refining the initial list. These non-matching grants are seen as a priority because they would be simpler to submit without the need for immediate matching funds, which can take more time to arrange. Kristi's contract runs until February, and she estimates being able to complete 8 to 10 grants within that time frame. The goal is for committees to finalize the list of grants and associated projects. The document categorizes grants by submission deadlines, allowing for better planning. These include both small-scale grants, like \$5,000 proposals, and larger ones for amounts up to \$500,000, ensuring a diverse range of projects. The Administrative Process committee has already reviewed part of the list, and the focus is now on Public Works and Safety grants. It was suggested that Kristi could start with those that are straightforward "no-brainer" options. One key grant discussed was the Stormwater Infrastructure Analysis (SEARCH Grant). The council agreed that this analysis would be crucial to determine the capacity of existing stormwater systems during heavy rainfall and assess whether current drainage solutions are adequate. Bob Desmond in a previous meeting suggested using college interns to map out existing infrastructure, but some council members expressed concerns about relying solely on interns. A professional assessment would likely be necessary for a thorough analysis, especially in evaluating the conditions of catch basins, culverts, and ditches. Another grant that was mentioned by Stephanie was the Workman's Compensation Safety Grant, specifically for the acquisition of a Lucas device. Kathy had already been in contact with Stryker, the vendor, and obtained a quote for the device. Stephanie discussed whether the Safety Grant, which may require matching funds, could be handled through the EMS fund, which likely has sufficient resources to cover the match if necessary. Mr. Easterwood raised the question of whether some of the grants could fit together under the same project, effectively layering different grants for a larger initiative. There was also a discussion about the Building Demolition Grant, and the response time for funding approval. Questions arose regarding how quickly the village could secure funds if a building required immediate demolition. A question was also asked as to whether the grant functions as a reserve fund and whether the ownership status of a building (village-owned versus non-owned) would affect eligibility. *A motion for Kristi to move forward with the USDA Rural Development - SEARCH grant for infrastructure analysis was made by Mr. Warner, seconded by Mr. Myerholtz; Approved unanimously.*

The background check policy was revisited, which had been previously discussed. Council wanted to wait for Mr. Easterwood to be present before proceeding. Everyone confirmed they had reviewed the policy, and there were no further questions. The policy sets clear standards for what is and isn't acceptable when conducting background checks on potential employees. *A motion to approve the updated Background Check Policy as written was made by Mr. Easterwood, seconded by Ms. Klockowski; Approved unanimously.*

Reports

Attendance: Stephanie Monts (Fiscal Officer), Ken Taylor (Code Enforcement), Harold Boggs (Village Administrator)

Mayor: Expressed gratitude to Parks & Rec for organizing a successful Fall Fest, sharing that they received many compliments and noting it was bigger and better than last year. Mr. Myerholtz added a comment, suggesting it would have been thoughtful to thank the taxpayers for making the event possible, as it was funded by taxpayer money.

Fiscal Officer: Provided updates on several grants. The PEP grant for \$1,000, intended for security cameras installed a few months ago, was submitted last Thursday. The Wood County Park District Grant was submitted last Wednesday to cover \$11,340 in mulch for various parks, with a quote from Renewed Outdoors, the company previously used for mulching services. A decision on this grant is expected in December, while the PEP grant, typically awarded each year, is anticipated to be approved. Additionally, paperwork for the Suburban Natural Gas grant, which would provide \$1,476, was received; the only requirement is to outline its intended use, which will be addressed under miscellaneous business.

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Administrator/Maintenance: Harold reported that he spoke with Red, who mentioned that a tree in front of his business is obstructing the view. Harold planned to have the tree removed before Red opened, pending discussion with Public Works. Harold clarified for Mr. Easterwood that the tree in front of Red's sign, an invasive species, had been discussed at a previous meeting with plans to either remove or transplant it. Mayor issued a reminder about brush pickup.

Code Enforcement/Zoning: Ken provided updates on several matters. A permit was recently issued for a fence on Silver Street. He received a call from a property owner on Sycamore regarding a nuisance issue, noting that the tenant is actively working on cleanup. However, Ken observed a trailer filled with uncovered trash which he will keep an eye on. Ken also met with the Wood County Health Department regarding a property on Walnut Street, they will be issuing a letter to the owner to tear down the structure. He also added that the Health Department discussed the suggestion of the possibility of selling the property "as is" to a buyer who would assume responsibility for demolition. Lastly, Ken reported that, despite repeated attempts to contact a state official about a property on Taylor (the old church), he has not received a response. He plans to follow up again.

Committee Reports

Parks & Rec: Jared Bossa, representing Sonlight Church, volunteered to run games for the Fall Fest and assist with setup. Final preparations for the event included Stephanie sending out a Reach Alert about road closures and parking. The pickup area for the tractor ride was arranged to avoid interference with the magician's show. Krystine confirmed securing 30 bales of straw. There was a brief discussion confirming that EMS, Fire, Suburban Natural Gas, Wood County Sheriff, and Wright Towing will attend for the Touch-a-Truck. A budget of \$200 was approved for the Oct. 26th Monster Mash event. A \$150 budget was also approved for a Veteran's Day coffee event on Nov. 9th, requested by Brittany.

Administrative Process: Reviewed non-matching grant options, recommending specific projects and committee assignments to make the best use of available funding. In the 2025 budget review, discussed expanding the part-time and seasonal employee pool, adding a computer for the cemetery budget, and addressing funding requests from Safety & Roads. Examined the PEP "Faithful Performance Application" as a potential alternative to surety bonds; Stephanie will gather pricing for the committee's review at the November meeting. Proposed that WSIB cover utility costs for the next three years, with these expenses deducted from funds currently held by the village. This approach would give the village time to reallocate these costs within its own budget. A discussion on the donation policy included feedback from Paul Skaff, clarifying distinctions between donations, sponsorships, and advertisements to better define expectations. Additionally, the part-time maintenance job description was flagged for updates.

Community Development & Public Affairs: The meeting focused on brainstorming project ideas for potential Non-Match Grants that fall under the Community Development Committee's responsibilities. For Ohio's Rural Business Development Grants, ideas included infrastructure projects to enhance the business district, such as Main Street revitalization. Possible projects included a small grant for parklets with planters and benches, a medium grant for upgrading the public parking area behind the library, and a large grant to improve Main Street, with a potential median downtown. For the Spark Grant, ideas centered on civic engagement and community enhancement, like a neighborhood mural, an art walk, and various volunteer and workshop initiatives. The Community Service Grant ideas involved neighborhood revitalization, improved gathering places, and pathways for bikes and pedestrians, with suggestions for benches and planters via a CSX grant. For the CDBG, slated for potential funding in 2026, project ideas included road and sidewalk improvements, stormwater management, facade upgrades, housing rehabilitation funds for residents, public restrooms in parks, and general park upgrades. Lastly, under the Building Demolition and Site Revitalization Program, the Board discussed demolishing vacant properties, raising questions around ownership issues related to these properties.

WSIB: The adult league season is wrapping up on November 3rd, and utilities will be shut off by November 5th. The Board talked over ideas for storing items in the maintenance building. Dennis updated everyone on Otsego Town Ball's restructuring process, sharing that teams are working with OTB on some changes. Online sign-ups will start November 1st, with an in-person sign-up set for January 25th as a last chance. The Board agreed to continue the scholarship program next year, and Jeanettie mentioned that sponsor letters will be sent out early in the new year. The Board also scheduled the coaches' meeting for February, with Opening Day planned for May. The financial report showed that \$16,000 was brought in this year, but expenses were \$18,000 due to buying new equipment and other start-up costs. The Board is meeting with a lawyer in November to go over details for becoming a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Ms. Susor and Ms. Klockowski shared updates on council and committee discussions about the contract, noting the timeline is stretched out because of the gaps between meetings. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 20th, at 5:30 p.m.

Upcoming Meetings: Public Works 10/22 at 6PM, Special Ball Committee 10/24 at 6PM, Safety 10/29 at 6PM

New Business

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Mayor asked if everyone had reviewed the 2025 Appropriations Ordinance. He noted that the budget was shaped by feedback from departments like Streets and Cemetery, ensuring that all line items aligned with the General Fund and administrative needs. He highlighted that more funds had been allocated for an additional part-time position next year. Since this was the first reading, the Mayor invited everyone to bring up any adjustments that might be needed and asked if there were any questions. In discussing the Parks and Recreation budget, Mr. Myerholtz and Mr. Easterwood inquired if it remained consistent with last year. Mr. Easterwood observed that last year's budget was \$10,000, which increased to \$12,500, and wondered what accounted for the additional \$2,500. He acknowledged increases in costs, such as the sheriff's funding and wage adjustments, and questioned the necessity of the Parks and Recreation increase. Stephanie explained that the current budget line for Parks and Recreation is \$12,500 and remains the same for 2025. This increase from 2023's \$10,000 occurred when a repairs and maintenance line was added, allowing Harold to access funds for upkeep. Mr. Myerholtz voiced interest in a more detailed breakdown of how Parks and Recreation funds would be used, specifically requesting an overview of budget allocations for events, repairs, and maintenance. Stephanie pointed out that a detailed spreadsheet accompanies the appropriation ordinance, listing each line item's purpose. Ms. Klockowski pointed out the Parks & Rec Board is not elected, they are an appointed board. Mayor acknowledged that from recent discussions, the board seems satisfied with its current allocation. Mr. Myerholtz pointed out that other Parks & Rec boards function differently, often relying on levies to fund their activities. He emphasized his belief that taxpayer input should play a larger role, suggesting that taxpayer-approved levies, rather than council-driven funding, could foster a more accountable approach to funding Parks and Recreation. Mr. Myerholtz emphasized that the budgeting process for Parks and Rec should be more transparent and involve greater public input. He argued that taxpayer funds should not be allocated to events without the community's ability to vote on such expenditures, as is done in other municipalities where programs are often funded by dedicated levies or groups like "Friends of Parks." Ms. Klockowski commented that Mr. Myerholtz's viewpoint is a personal opinion. He responded firmly, disagreeing and stating that his perspective is not personal but rather based on standard practices in other municipalities, which he could provide as examples at the next meeting. Ms. Susor stepped in to clarify the budget process and address Mr. Myerholtz's concerns. She asked if he was looking for additional line-item details or specific maintenance allocations. Mr. Myerholtz clarified that he was seeking assurance that the budget adequately prioritized essential maintenance and repairs over events. Ms. Susor explained that wishlists are submitted to the council, which then is incorporated into the budget, noting that not all requests from departments are fully funded. Mr. Myerholtz questioned whether the Parks and Rec Board was involved in their budget. Stephanie noted that only the Safety, Public Works on the \$75,000 in roads aspect, and Cemetery actively participated. Mr. Easterwood shared examples about how expenses for Public Works are allocated and questioned which budget categories specific park expenses, like bleacher repairs or mulching, would fall under. He noted ambiguity in whether certain costs should come from capital outlay or maintenance. Mr. Warner suggested that repairs should come from the park maintenance budget, while Stephanie mentioned that unforeseen expenses might require budget amendments. Mr. Myerholtz emphasized that if a grant for mulching is not obtained, the expense should still be anticipated in the park budget. He argued that costs such as porta potties and maintenance should have clear allocation. Ms. Susor confirmed that porta potties are a topic up for discussion. Mr. Easterwood expressed that Public Works budgets sometimes bank funds for future projects, questioning if Parks and Recreation budgets should do the same. Mayor clarified that unused funds do not roll over, instead reverting at year's end. Ms. Susor suggested that the Administrative Process committee review this in more detail. Mr. Warner emphasized the importance of community investment for achieving community buy-in for local events, countering concerns about spending. Stephanie shared information about insurance coverage for events, particularly regarding bounce houses and other activities that might require additional policies. This discussion concludes the first reading of the Annual Appropriation Ordinance: Ordinance providing permanent appropriations for current expenses and other expenditures for the Village of Weston, Ohio, through December 31, 2025.

Resolution 2024-20 received an emergency reading: a resolution nominating Rick Easterwood to the vacant seat on the 9-1-1 program review committee. *A motion to suspend the rules for Resolution 2024-20 was made by Mr. Warner, seconded by Mr. Babcock; Roll Call Vote: Mr. Warner - Yes, Mr. Babcock - Yes, Mr. Myerholtz - Yes, Ms. Susor - Yes, Mr. Easterwood - Abstained, Ms. Klockowski - Yes. A motion for passage of Resolution 2024-20 was made by Mr. Myerholtz, seconded by Mr. Warner; Approved - 5, Opposed - 0, Abstained - 1, Mr. Easterwood.*

Approval of Expenditures

Council reviewed a summary of the bills (\$54,396.12) and outstanding invoices (\$11,634.96). Mr. Warner shared that after the last meeting, Paul Skaff raised questions regarding the 3G invoice. He noted that the address on the invoice listed Mr. Myerholtz's home, to which Mr. Myerholtz responded that his wife owns the business. Mr. Myerholtz used the example of Shad Kendall, who, as a former council member, did business with the Village by abstaining from votes on relevant matters, a process supported by a state review at that time. He further stated that he would be willing to provide documents verifying his wife's business ownership. Ms. Klockowski pointed out that the issue is with the contents of the invoice, which lists safety jackets, a responsibility of the Safety Committee that Mr. Myerholtz chairs. Mayor added that this arrangement falls under the category of a household or significant other transaction. Ms. Susor expressed concerns over conflict of interest, explaining that it's a tricky line to tread and recommended

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conflict of interest training for everyone on council, as she was uncomfortable with the situation and preferred to abstain from voting. Mr. Warner asked if the purchase of jackets had been discussed in committee, to which both Ms. Klockowski and Mr. Myerholtz responded, "No." Stephanie (Clerk) clarified that Kathy (EMS Chief) had made the purchasing decision, explaining that committee approval is not required. Ms. Klockowski expressed wanting to understand why the business was selected for the jacket purchase, and Mr. Myerholtz explained that it had been used previously. Ms. Susor reiterated her discomfort and preference to abstain, and Mr. Warner also shared his preference to abstain from the vote. Mr. Easterwood expressed confusion, which Stephanie acknowledged, clarifying that the invoice had already been paid following the last meeting's vote, and Kathy proceeded with the purchase based on the existing purchasing policy. Some council members, initially thinking the invoice was a proposal, expressed surprise. Mr. Myerholtz pointed out that it had been included in the bills packet, explaining why he had abstained from voting. Concerns were traced back to Paul Skaff's initial question, prompting further review. Ms. Klockowski added that new information had come to light after the previous meeting. The Mayor asked if the jacket order was nearly complete, to which Mr. Myerholtz replied that it was close. Mr. Myerholtz encouraged Paul Skaff to contact him directly to address any remaining concerns. The example of Shad Kendall's abstention was brought up again, with some council members stating they were not on council at that time and preferred to focus on the current issue. The Mayor and Harold clarified that Shad was not on council when the new furnaces were put in, but Mr. Myerholtz and Stephanie both added that Shad was still on council and a proper process was followed, involving three quotes with Kendall's as the lowest bid. Ms. Susor shared that she thought the matter was settled after learning that Mr. Myerholtz's wife owned the business, but new concerns arose after noticing the invoice address and Mr. Myerholtz's committee involvement. Mr. Easterwood then inquired about who handles event signage for the Village, with it being clarified that these signs are donated. Randy Hann asked who would coordinate the recommended training, to which Ms. Susor made a motion for conflict of interest training for council and possibly staff. The Mayor suggested that the Administrative Process Committee should review and arrange details, which Ms. Susor accepted. Mayor asked for a motion to look into that training through the Administrative Process committee. Mr. Easterwood questioned whether Mr. Myerholtz should ask his wife to cancel the jacket order. Stephanie clarified that payment had already been made. The Mayor then requested a motion to separate the Third Generation bill from the rest, but Mr. Easterwood noted that this bill was already paid. Ms. Susor made a motion to separate the Third Generation bill from the other bills, seconded by Ms. Klockowski. Stephanie then requested a pause, explaining that the separation and approval had already been addressed at the last meeting and that the process felt unnecessarily repetitive. She added that while she understood her role wasn't to influence council voting, it would be simpler for Mr. Myerholtz to abstain without separating the bill and repeating the previous steps. If necessary, she asked for the motions to proceed more slowly to ensure accurate documentation. The Mayor pointed out that separating the bill would allow the other bills to be approved normally, resolving the specific concern. Mr. Easterwood noted that this approach required them to vote again on an item already addressed at the last meeting. Ms. Susor then suggested that the project be paused, citing a precedent where a project with a similar conflict was put on hold. She asked if there was a way to keep the order intact while gathering more information. Mr. Myerholtz explained that the jackets were customized through a special process that had already been completed. The Mayor asked Stephanie if the check had been issued, and she confirmed that it had. Ms. Susor sought clarification on the approval process related to the separated billing folders. Stephanie explained that one folder contained invoices yet to be paid, while the other provided a summary of bills, including previously approved invoices and bills automatically paid for obligations like utilities. This separation enhances transparency, as recorded in the minutes, outlining the total amounts for both payment listings and outstanding invoices. Ms. Susor asked if a vote would be taken. Stephanie noted that a motion had already been put on the table to remove the Third Generation bill, with Ms. Klockowski's second; Approved - 5, Opposed - 0, Abstained - 1, Mr. Myerholtz. Mr. Easterwood made a motion to approve the remaining bills minus the Third Generation item, seconded by Ms. Susor; Approved - 5, Opposed - 0, Abstained - 1, Mr. Myerholtz. Mr. Easterwood next made a motion to approve the Third Generation bill, stating that the approval process was consistent with prior purchases managed by department heads. Ms. Susor attempted to abstain, but council members reminded her that abstention was not allowed on a second motion. No one seconded. Mr. Easterwood asked about the next steps regarding the invoice, noting that EMS Chief had already approved it, similarly to how the Administrator manages purchases. The Mayor suggested seeking legal guidance for further clarification on procedural concerns. Mr. Easterwood also inquired if EMS could cover restocking costs, but Mr. Myerholtz confirmed that the jackets were custom and non-returnable. Mr. Easterwood reiterated that the EMS Chief's involvement was consistent with the Administrator's authority in similar situations. Ms. Susor emphasized the importance of conflict of interest training for council members and staff. Stephanie then asked about the approach for contacting Paul Skaff, which council agreed that Stephanie would take responsibility for reaching out to Paul Skaff.

Miscellaneous Business

The Suburban Natural Gas Community Development Grant application was presented, with a proposed funding amount of \$1,476. Council brainstormed possible uses, referencing previous projects like downtown beautification, flower pots, street banners, and mulch. It was noted that funds allocated to the TNR program remain unused, as no one has utilized the program despite being informed about it. As a result, a pause on additional TNR funding was suggested until there is greater demand. Other potential

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ideas included speed signs (estimated at \$3,000 each) and cemetery steps. No final decisions were made, and it was agreed to bring additional ideas to the next meeting.

Citizens & Visitors

Howard Lashuay, Gary Betz, Randy Hann, Ron Dallas (Virtual)

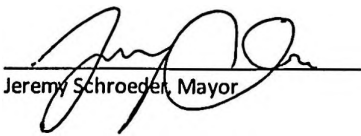
Howard Lashuay expressed frustration over what he perceives as selective focus on conflicts of interest. He suggested there are conflicts related to various projects, including the baseball diamond, which he feels are overlooked. He voiced dissatisfaction with the council's approach, implying it prioritizes personal interests. Howard strongly conveyed his frustration, stating he did not want a private meeting to discuss his concerns with the Mayor and Ms. Susor, and concluded by suggesting that several council members, including the Mayor, should consider resigning.

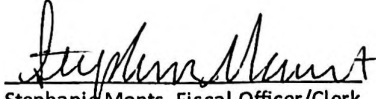
Gary Betz raised a safety concern with the council regarding the unsafe practice of lifting people in a makeshift basket attached to a backhoe, noting that OSHA would not approve of this method. He emphasized the need for a proper scissor lift for tasks such as hanging flags and banners. He mentioned that used lifts, based on a quick search, could range in cost from \$5,000 to \$10,000. It was noted that this issue had come up previously, with inspections posing a possible challenge. Stephanie suggested exploring the potential for a safety grant to help cover the cost.

Randy Hann inquired about the status of plans to relocate the train depot, asking if progress was still being made or if the idea had been abandoned. He emphasized the importance of informing the community and gaining approval before spending any taxpayer funds on the project. The Mayor clarified that the Historical Society, a separate entity, is moving toward formal organization. Randy reiterated the need for clear communication to ensure community support if public funds are involved.

Ron Dallas addressed the Mayor with concerns about the K&K church property, which the council had approved to be rezoned from R1 to R2. He pointed out that this rezoning was originally intended for apartment housing, but the property has now become a migrant camp. Ron also raised concerns about the nuisance the camp has created, mentioning that groups of people gather in front of the Marathon station, drinking and causing disturbances. People are seeking clarification on why the council was informed about apartments, yet a migrant camp has appeared instead. The Mayor mentioned that Ken has been working on this issue, investigating how state approval could override their local laws. Ken reported at the last meeting that the Ohio Department of Agriculture had approved the property as an agricultural labor camp, allowing it to house up to 36 people in dormitory-style accommodations. The setup includes a single living unit with shared kitchen, bathroom, and laundry areas for up to 37 people. Ron also questioned the legal status of the residents, and it was clarified that they are legal, with green cards. Tax payments were also questioned, specifically whether these residents pay local or school taxes, with Mr. Warner vaguely referencing a Facebook comment claiming they did. Mr. Easterwood noted that there's no specific rental law in place requiring landlords to report tenants. Ron expressed that the council had been misled, as they didn't receive the apartment setup that was originally presented. Stephanie explained that there was no stipulation in the rezoning that would allow the council to limit how the property could be used post-zoning change. Jeremy added that while stipulations can be applied to variances, this rezoning didn't qualify for that level of restriction. Ron pushed back, stating it was inconsistent that storefront owners are held to high standards to maintain a certain amount of viable space. The Mayor responded that the commercial district doesn't permit first-story residential spaces, and a variance was given to one specific property because it lacked a second story. That particular property was allowed to use part of its ground floor for residential purposes, with the stipulation that a certain amount of space remained commercial. Ron expressed frustration over the strict requirements for storefronts and advocated for more relaxed rules to make downtown more attractive, questioning why he would consider investing downtown if he couldn't reasonably make use of the space. The discussion then shifted to whether downtown properties should be open to unrestricted residential use. Ron also suggested implementing tax incentives to encourage downtown businesses. Mr. Warner mentioned a previous proposal from Penny Taylor to fine property owners with empty storefronts. The Mayor suggested continuing this discussion in the Community Development Committee.

A motion to adjourn at 8:01PM was made by Ms. Susor, seconded by Mr. Babcock; Approved unanimously.


Jeremy Schroeder, Mayor


Stephanie Monts, Fiscal Officer/Clerk