

Building Committee Meeting
Thursday, March 21, 2019 8:31

Present: Chairman Schloss, Councilman Porter, Building Inspector Hocevar, Mayor Koons, Administrative Secretary Leslie Galicki

Schloss addressed old business, which was the long-term plan for the Building Department. He stated that he had been spending a lot of time at the Building Department observing, and that Kris Wilson was working hard, but there was not a flow of traffic and the contractors were not coming in; there was not that much going on. Wilson, however, was doing her best to take care of business. He added that Dave Hocevar is doing a great job with part-time inspections and addressing zoning issues. Schloss proposed that the Building Department remain part-time until the end of the year with Hocevar performing zoning and Building Official duties. Porter added that this would depend on whether Hocevar was willing to extend his contract. Schloss replied that Hocevar stated he was willing to do this.

Porter addressed Building Department revenue including construction deposits, which he stated would be returned. He said if the Building Department did this year what it did last year, it would clear \$40,000 - \$50,000, which would offset the cost of the Building Department Secretary and the building or zoning official they would want to have. If Hocevar continued to work as an independent contractor, this was the least expensive way to go. He questioned what would occur after the end of the year and in the long term. Porter suggested the options would be to hire a part-time Building or Zoning Inspector to begin work January 1st. He also suggested that Hocevar might want to continue.

Porter questioned whether Hocevar would be willing to sacrifice his private business dealings to do this, considering the potential financial impact. He added that this would be a good arrangement for the Village. Regarding a part-time zoning position, Porter stated that the current salary would be between \$40,000 and \$50,000, which would not be much of a savings compared to the salary of the former Village Building Inspector at \$75,000. Porter suggested the possibility of promoting the current Building Department Secretary to the Zoning Inspector position as Heilman did, and then replace the secretary position. He wondered if Wilson was interested in becoming a Zoning Inspector.

Schloss asked if there was enough work for a full-time zoning position. Porter stated there was not enough work for a full-time Zoning Inspector. There would be enough work for a full time Building Inspector who could do zoning and building inspections. Porter added that it comes down to control by the Village over construction and renovations over the long term. Schloss suggested meeting with Hocevar in the next couple of weeks. Porter added that Hocevar has a \$2,000 monthly retainer and bills above this depending on the workload. Porter thought the Village would be spending \$50,000 no matter the course of action.

Regarding finding qualified individuals to fill the part-time Building Inspector position, Porter stated they were few and far between. He added that Geauga County had four electrical, safety qualified individuals, but one was retiring. To really save money, the Village could close the Building Department and turn everything over to the County, but then services would be more limited to include no roof inspections, and the Health Department would inspect septic systems. It is more of a convenience issue. Schloss added that the Village would still need a Zoning Inspector. Porter added it needed at least part-time zoning. Porter suggested that it should be determined what a part-time Zoning Inspector's salary is.

Schloss advised that an individual submitted a resume, and that he would call the applicant.

Porter stated that most anyone could do zoning, but not building inspections because that requires qualifications and certifications. He added that the salary of a part-time Building Inspector should also be determined, but it would not include benefits.

At 8:42 am Dave Hocevar joined the meeting. He reported he had been at a meeting regarding the Citizen's Bank project and a dispute between the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) and Planning Commission (PC). He advised that Gary Neola took exception with a decision made by Jim Flaiz from PC. It was determined by the Solicitor that ABR and PC have overlapping authority.

Porter told Hocevar that he and Schloss were discussing his contract. Hocevar stated he just wanted Council to continue in a positive direction with regard to resolution of the Building Department. He said he could not see closing the Building Department but didn't know if it needed to be completely full-time. Regarding zoning, Hocevar said that there are no requirements for zoning but that the average person might take a long time to learn it because it is complicated. He added that Wilson does not know zoning yet, and it took Heilman years to learn it as it did him. Porter reiterated that there was no certification required and a Zoning Inspector could learn the job while doing it. Hocevar commented that it would be a piece of cake to do zoning in Chesterland, Russell, and Bainbridge, but not SRV. He felt it would be good to have someone tied in with building who could oversee what was being built by ABR and PC's requirements and still comply with the zoning. He stated that is why the Village has the community it has, and he felt it was not appreciated.

Hocevar addressed a house on E. Washington Street that is near Panini's and is obscured by overgrown plantings. A certified letter had been sent to the owner. Hocevar addressed a house on Fernwood with a car on blocks, which would be sent a letter. Schloss asked about resolution of the trailers parked at the residence on Maple Ridge and Bell Rd. Hocevar relayed that the Mayor tried to get in contact with the owner, but he was out of town. Hocevar thought he should also be sent a letter but was told the Village does not want to offend him because he is a Boy Scout Leader and a nice guy. Hocevar told Schloss and Porter that they needed to explain to the Mayor the necessity to issue the letters. Porter stated the trailers conform to the code. Hocevar

and Schloss told Porter that they do not. Hocevar explained that the residents were not in compliance as previously stated by Heilman when she was Building Inspector because the zoning rules were not properly interpreted. He added that the front yard setback rules for corner lots is different. His point was that zoning can be confusing and cannot just be easily picked up and learned.

Porter asked Hocevar if part-time was feasible, and Hocevar thought it was. Hocevar stated that if the Village was looking for someone part-time, and wanted to save money, they should get somebody who has a certification for residential building. He said it may not be the easiest thing to do but it was doable. This would allow the Village to keep the control it had in the past. He added that he recently had a number of issues with reputable contractors who were not installing furnaces and hot water tanks according to manufacturer installation instructions.

Porter asked if Hocevar was willing to stay on after his contract expired in December, and Hocevar advised that he was willing to do whatever was necessary with or without a contract. He further explained that he is currently only charging his hourly rate and not individual inspection fees. Schloss asked if this was fair to him. Hocevar said he enjoyed his work with the Village. Additionally, Hocevar had recently observed contractors taking serious short-cuts, and had identified the projects through construction dumpsters outside the homes. He doubted the contractors would have corrected the work if he had not been a presence.

Porter suggested that the current Building Secretary could possibly become the part-time Zoning Inspector candidate. Hocevar stated that he wanted to make sure people on Council were on the same page. He added that there were some people on Council who want to eliminate the Building Department because they feel it is a waste of money. He did not think this was true. Porter said he did not see it this way, and Hocevar acknowledged he wasn't talking about Porter. Schloss advised he likewise did not want to eliminate the Building Department.

Porter stated he found out that there was no permit pulled for his roof and there was no inspection as a result. Hocevar said this is really the responsibility of the homeowner and the contractor. Porter noted that on the contract it reflected that the contractor was responsible for obtaining the permit, but Porter noted that he was not charged for one. He added that likewise there was no permit for Galicki's roof and no inspection. Nairn's roof had a permit and inspection. If it is necessary to identify these contracts by having someone drive by, then someone needs to be driving by. Heilman used to do this. If the Village must rely on the County, there would be no roof inspections. Hocevar added that the county does not have time to do foundation inspections. Porter said that the County covers the entire county where there is one person with the Village.

Hocevar addressed foreign contractors and questioned their ability to read plans if they don't speak English. He discussed a home in Paw Paw Lake with foundation issues and ended up

having a discussion with the owner and builder. He let them know the Village would charge the owner for extra inspections, which is allowed.

Schloss verified that Hocevar was willing to continue until told otherwise, and Porter stated he would recommend to Council to continue Hocevar's contract at the current rate. Hocevar added he was there to work together.

Porter asked about the status of the rental house and questioned whether the Village should sell it though it brought in revenue. Hocevar said the rental was fine when he was the Building Inspector but did not know if the Village was set to have rental property. It was not getting market value rent. Porter agreed, but said it was good to keep the property in case the cemetery needed to be expanded. The anticipated plot sales did not occur, and Porter did not think the Village would be getting its money back on the project. Hocevar speculated that if it had been put on the ballot it would have been voted down. Porter asked if more money was needed for the rental property and added that Hunting Valley has rental properties.

The Mayor joined the meeting at 9:15 a.m. He stated he had just interviewed John Hershey who wanted to be the Building Inspector for the Village. Hocevar advised that the Mayor needed to be sure the individual had appropriate certifications, because when the Mayor posted the job opening online, he omitted necessary qualifications and was getting responses from unqualified individuals. The Mayor stated that Hershey had the qualifications. Schloss relayed that Hocevar was willing to stay in his position. Porter asked the Mayor to send Hershey's resume to him, and the Mayor said Hershey is into management and had a packet of information.

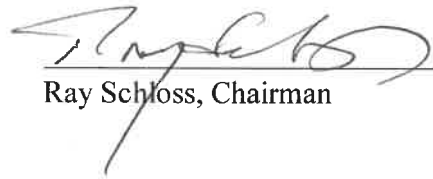
Hocevar asked the Mayor about the house near Panini's.

The Mayor stated that the owner of the trailers on the Leopold property (615 Bell Rd.) told him to "pound salt". He said there were others in violation in South Russell and he would not address his issue until others addressed theirs. The Mayor named other persons with whom the Village has attempted to contact regarding violations. Mrs. Brown, he said, ignores his attempts to contact her. Chuck Mason responded and asked the Mayor about getting two trees cut down because he could not afford to do so. The Mayor proposed that First Energy could take the trees down. Another resident, Donna Bauman, is living in deplorable conditions and cannot afford the taxes. She is appealing to Geauga County to get her property reappraised. The Mayor offered to call Chuck Walder if she required additional assistance. The Mayor mentioned another individual, Bucky, who had been assisted by Chief Rizzo in the past. He said that there were services with the County that could possibly help some of the individuals the Village is dealing with. Hocevar asked the Mayor to identify to whom he should send certified letters and said he needed direction. The Mayor told Hocevar not to do anything with sending letters until the end of April. Porter disagreed and said letters needed to be sent now. The Mayor asked that Hocevar give Chuck Mason 30 days. The Mayor repeated that Mrs. Brown was ignoring correspondence from the Village. He said the Leopold property was on Maple Ridge near the McSherry

property. Porter verified that a letter would be sent to them. Schloss verified a letter should be sent to Brown. Hocevar offered that there were County services could help her as well. The Mayor stated he had been putting letters in her mailbox. Porter again verified that a letter should be sent to the Leopolds, but that Hocevar should hold off on sending one to "Bucky" - possibly sending one in 30 days.

The Mayor also reported that Rolling Ridge did not have an ABR and that there was a complaint about a new home in this neighborhood. Both Hocevar and the Mayor agreed the house was fine. Hocevar verified that both Brown and Leopold would be issued letters and added that a letter would be sent to "Wilbur".

Schloss adjourned the meeting at 9:30 a.m.



Ray Schloss, Chairman

Prepared by Leslie Galicki