

**STREET COMMITTEE MEETING
PAW PAW LAKE ROAD
MAY 22, 2020 9:00 P.M. (VIA ZOOM)**

Present: Mayor, Councilman Carroll, Councilman Galicki, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Engineer Haibach, Solicitor Matheney, State Representative Grendell

Absent: Chairman Mark Porter

Visitors: Paw Paw Lake residents Richard Haber, Kent Kristensen; Heidi Baumgart, Virginia Dix

The Mayor explained to Rep. Grendell that the purpose of the meeting was to talk about the Paw Paw Lake private road. He asked Grendell if she would prefer to make opening comments or have the participants ask her questions about how she could help with the matter. Grendell stated she was present to listen and try to help both sides work together because she was aware that both sides wanted to work together. She added that this could be instrumental in plans across the state showing that the Homeowners Association (HOA) and Village were helping each other out with the monies available. She stated she knew that Paw Paw Lake community was willing to work hard to keep things good, straight, and clean in the roads and ditches, and that they were hoping to use some of the taxpayer money. Kristensen complimented Grendell in her summary of the issue.

The Mayor stated that the situation at hand was that Paw Paw Lake was a private road and was in need of repairs. The residents would like it to become a public road. The estimated cost ranged from \$800,000 to \$1.2 million. South Russell has a \$3 million budget and Paw Paw Lake has 42 homes, according to the Mayor. He stated it would take some very creative financing to pull it off. The Mayor asked the Engineer to provide an update and explained that the Engineer marked the road.

The Engineer stated he marked the proposed edge of pavement on May 19. The marked road represented a 20-foot-wide paved roadway width. He also marked a 60 foot right of way, which consisted of 30 feet on each side of the center line. On the main section of the road running north and south, he was able to mark the proposed pavement edge and the right of way. On the road section going east and west that hooked around the lake, the Engineer stated that the terrain was challenging with steep slopes and wooded lots. He was only able to mark the edge of the road. The right of way marks in many cases would have been in the water, down a steep slope, or in the woods, and it would not have been visible. The Engineer stated that this represented a graphical depiction for people walking or driving by to see where the proposed roadway edges would be.

Grendell asked what was most urgent to repair. The Engineer stated that the roadway was in pretty poor condition, and he did not think much of the existing roadway could be saved. He advised that it required widening in some places, as much as two to two and a half feet on each side. He added that the utility poles were extraordinarily close in a lot of cases to the proposed edge, and that the utilities would have to be relocated as well. Grendell asked the participants if

they understood what the Engineer was talking about, and the participants responded that they did. She asked if they agreed that this was the most important thing. They agreed and stated the road was a mess.

The Mayor asked if Grendell had examples of successful public private partnerships that the Village could explore. The Mayor stated he did not see Paw Paw Lake HOA handling a \$1 million project without support from the Village. Grendell stated that this would be new and a great example, but she stated she did not know of any. She said she could check across the state and added that she had not done this yet. Grendell added that it was a good question and she would like to see if it had been done. To her knowledge this would be the first time. Grendell added that it was so outstanding that South Russell was willing to work with Paw Paw Lake and that this showed what a good community it is.

The Mayor explained that they were trying to figure out how to do this and said the community had been wonderful in proposing what needed to be done, which included utility, cable, and all the wiring. The Mayor verified with the Engineer that the markings were done to the very end of Paw Paw Lake. The Engineer stated he stopped short of where it was proposed to have the cul de sac turn arounds because they were big, and the marks would have been way off into the wilderness. He marked the straight main line until he reached the end of respective road. Kristensen thought the markings were good and anyone driving down the road would have a good sense. Baumgart added that she spoke with a few neighbors who saw the markings. Their reaction was that the markings made sense. She did not see anything wildly alarming and thanked the Engineer for marking the road.

Carroll stated that he too drove the road to see the markings. He asked the Engineer if there would be a ditch on either side of the marked roadway. The Engineer stated that there would need to be a ditch or some sort of drainage structure on each side of the road. From Bell Rd. to the water treatment facility at the end of the road, the water generally flows from east to west towards the lake. The Engineer explained that there would need to be intercepts like ditches or storm sewers on the east side of the road with catch or inlet basin intercepts which would cross underneath the road in several locations to get the water across the road. He explained there was a substantial amount of grading and storm sewer piping that would be included in the roadway reconstruction. Carroll asked the Engineer whether sewer work would be the most advantageous and not an open ditch due to the tightness of the area to work within. The Engineer stated that an open swale would probably be as effective and more cost effective than piping the whole thing. Carroll asked if this would widen the area, and the Engineer verified it would. The Engineer stated the swale would be a couple of feet off the edge of the road and in the marked right of way section. Carroll clarified the additional required space, and the Engineer estimated five to six feet off the edge of pavement on either side would be affected by drainage considerations.

Carroll stated that the Village had heard estimates between \$800,000 and \$1.2 million and asked the Engineer what he thought the costs would be. The Engineer stated it was included in his estimate.

Grendell stated that to her knowledge, this was the first time that people were working together with taxpayer money. She added that she would certainly focus on what would be the most beneficial to the Village as far as the different aspects of the proposed project. She understood water was a problem, that it was getting thick and there were particulates and sediment. Grendell asked if water would be the first issue and thought that both sides needed to say what they thought was the most important issue that would help the Village the most. Kristensen replied that safety was an issue because they had a very narrow road right now and had seen situations where an ambulance or firetruck came in and blocked the road completely. He concluded that widening the road would resolve a safety issue. Other benefits Kristensen noted would be the ability to bring in the school busses and to plow the roads with a safe margin so cars could pass. Safety was the most important issue to Kristensen. He added that this was another reason moving the utility poles was discussed. In some areas the poles were close to the pavement edge. Kristensen thought moving the poles and/or putting them in the ground would be critical but acknowledged this was a cost. Grendell said she liked putting them in the grounds, but the cost was usually prohibitive. Kristensen stated that he had started getting quotes from electrical contractors, and said they were willing to offer good pricing. Kristensen stated that the other benefits would include improvement of the neighborhood and potentially increasing tax revenue. Grendell clarified that this would be due to bringing people in and there would be high fees for houses. Kristensen stated that currently, new residents were coming in and either tearing down homes and building new, and others are renovating.

Haber stated that what the community was seeing a hindrance to home sale transactions because of the uncertainty associated with the roads. A house deal fell through recently because of the rumor and concern of huge assessments coming to fix the roads. Haber stated this had never been the plan and the HOA was not looking to ultimately burden the homeowners with unsustainable costs. He said that it impacted home values and potential sales. Haber added that when construction had been done, the trucks involved further damage the roads. He sited this as a reason that a sustainable road would be important to the community.

Concerning safety and wear and tear on the road, Baumgart noted that with the trend of online shopping, delivery truck traffic had increased.

Kristensen relayed a conversation he had with another neighbor about utilities relating to getting better telephone and/or cable service like fiber optics. This would help people who work at home. Kristensen stated that Rural American would be getting a lot of funding from the Federal Government relating to broadband, so this might be something for which Paw Paw Lake qualified since they were in Geauga County. He surmised this would help the community at large because there would be competition, and not just Spectrum and Windstream. Grendell said it sounded like a good idea especially with the home teaching.

Grendell thanked the Mayor for helping to bring everyone together and supporting this matter. She asked if both sides had made a list of priorities so that they could see if there was something both sides agreed on, like safety or fiber optics. Kristensen said he had a bullet point list, and he would provide it. Grendell asked the Mayor for his list of what would be beneficial to the Village with regard to the project. The Mayor stated he first wanted to ensure that sewers were

not going to be extended into this neighborhood. He added that nothing would be worse than to put in a new road and then have to tear them up to put in sewers. Secondly, looking at the roadway, he questioned doing it all at once. Instead, he suggested doing it in sections because there was a bridge, a dam, and three isolated houses. He questioned the expense involved in providing a 20-foot road to those three homes. The other issue, according to the Mayor would be financing. He said it would be a big chunk, and he did not know how it would work. The Mayor stated they were not anywhere near a proposal. He said they had been having good honest face to face conversations of where everyone stood. He knew something had to be done and he knew the Village would like to help but questioned how the Village could maintain and help a private road. This was where he saw the matter.

The Solicitor addressed Grendell and explained that there were some examples of the public private partnership, but these projects were on a much larger scale like the Cleveland innerbelt project, and a bridge in Portsmouth. She explained that the Village was trying to determine what this project would look like if the Village and Paw Paw Lake had a partnership or agreement. She was trying to understand how this would work and asked if there was certain funding available, like municipal bonds. Grendell asked the Solicitor if she would like them all to meet to determine how they managed it. The Solicitor agreed and added that the project was on a much bigger scale and involved Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), etc. She did not see how ODOT would be involved in the Paw Paw Lake project unless it was through some grant funding or something of which she was not aware. The Solicitor stated this would be helpful.

Grendell suggested the Village determine what was most important and Paw Paw Lake do the same and work together to focus on this step by step. She thought the Mayor's suggestion of going in sections was good to ensure they would not run short of the budget. The Solicitor said there was some sort of bridge improvement project between the Ohio River and Kentucky that was another agreement, but large scale. The Solicitor added that she did not know a lot about the public private partnerships, adding that they were new. She stated that with the ODOT projects, there was a private investment where they were receiving toll money to maintain the road. Grendell stated that ODOT had been used to help with money for reservoirs previously when she was a State Representative.

Kristensen stated that regarding the public private partnerships, there was a group called Ohio Lake Association which had received help with dam remediation and repair. He added that Lake Lucern had been rated as a dangerous dam that could break at any time. Grendell stated she was not aware of this. Kristensen stated it was on the Federal Waterway Problems List. He thought with the events in Michigan, there would be a lot of attention to this. Grendell said she would look into this and acknowledged how serious this could be.

Kristensen stated that his point was that this would be a new initiative and it might not be possible to model it after a railroad bridge or road bridges. It was not the same thing because Paw Paw Lake did not have the same public benefit involved in terms of a common bridge. What they do have is the water management issue with the dam, lake, reservoir, etc., which he thought were of greater public benefit.

Carroll agreed with Kristensen and advised that some of the other public private partnerships were of greater public benefit like the Opportunity Corridor and even work on the lakeshore in Euclid which may have involved a public private partnership. He added that these were both much larger scale projects. Carroll asked Grendell if she was aware of any direct funding at this point for such a public private project or roads. Grendell stated no. Additionally, she stated that because of the Corona Virus, there would be a \$3.2 billion shortfall with the budget, and funds were being pulled from different areas. This would not stop her from trying to find out if there was some money that had to be used before the budget cycle that would be voted on in June. She reiterated that she was not aware of any money except that for safety, waterworks, water clarity, and working with the dam issue, she had been able to get money from some organizations previously. She added that she pursued it. Grendell stated that there were some things for safety and cleaning up water, and that there were several different funds. Carroll stated some of these were narrowly focused and specific to water clarity or dam work, and not necessarily for putting in a road, utilities, and everything else currently being discussed. Grendell agreed and said not yet, but she could try to see. She added that she had a guru that worked on the budget who knew all the different funds. Grendell would work with him on this but advised she must be provided with the specific topics.

Kristensen said he had conversations with the State, and that the Department of Transportation had an Infrastructure Loan Fund, in which there was more than 20 million dollars with no apparent takers. Kristensen said they thought this project would be perfect for it and that it could be approved within one to three weeks. However, Kristensen advised the Village had to be involved and it must be requested by the Village. It required creative structuring. He reiterated that the money was there and that they liked the project. They had watched the community work through its issues for about a year. Kristensen said the lady who approves the funds knew of Paw Paw Lake HOA. He gave the name of this contact to the Mayor. He concluded that the funds were there, and this could take care of phase one, which might be road and utilities. Grendell asked if a meeting could be set up with this individual on Friday of the following week. The Mayor stated he would do this.

Carroll asked Kristensen for clarification of what was meant by having the Village involved. Specifically, Carroll asked if this meant that the Village would have to take out a loan and then somehow recoup the cost from the Paw Paw Lake community. Kristensen said the discussion had not reached this point because what he was told was that it was a loan that the Village could take out. He clarified that there was a discussion of ODOT loaning the money to the Paw Paw Lake HOA, which the HOA thought it would be doing. However, in a recent conversation, ODOT personnel expressed that they wanted the Village involved. He said he would not be surprised if they could grant a portion of the funds if this were to be a new example of how it could be done. If the Village and Paw Paw Lake could show that other monies were coming in and funds were leveraged with private and local funds, who knows? Kristensen thought it was important to stay open minded and have a conversation with them because they have the money and no projects. Carroll stated that being a pass through for a loan for Paw Paw Lake could be problematic because of liability concerns and the concern of negatively impacting the Village's financials five to ten years down the road. He added that the Village would have to address Bell

Rd. east in the next five to seven years. Carroll stressed the importance of being aware of other aspects the Village must consider. Kristensen stated the community had explored private financing.

The Mayor stated he would try to set up a meeting the following week for the infrastructure loan fund. In the meantime, he would speak to Kristensen to identify the points of contact. The Mayor and Grendell agreed to another meeting on June 1 at 9:00 a.m.

Grendell thought progress had been made and said she planned to do everything she could. She agreed to work with the Solicitor to identify how the other communities obtained funds to work in a partnership.

The Mayor stated that at this point, the Village and Paw Paw Lake would continue to talk back and forth with no commitments from anybody, but options being explored. He asked Kristensen to send the ODOT contact information and he would work on that for the meeting on June 1.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 a.m.

Mark Porter, Chairman

Prepared by Leslie Galicki