

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS  
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
MONDAY, JUNE 16, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.  
MAYOR WILLIAM G. KOONS PRESIDING**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bell, Canton, Cavanagh, Galicki, and Porter

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Berger

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Police Chief Rizzo, Street Commissioner Young, Solicitor Matheney, Engineer Haibach

**VISITORS:** John Buda, Leaview Ln.

The Mayor called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. The Fiscal Officer conducted the roll call. Berger was absent.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Canton made a motion to amend the 2026 Tax Budget. The budget includes estimated revenues for the General Fund of \$1,473,361 with estimated expenses of \$1,655,849; Safety Fund revenues of \$2,024,243 and expenses of \$2,100,524; Operating Fund revenues of \$564,287 and expenses of \$609,330; Road and Bridge Fund revenues of \$243,541 and expenses of \$59,500; Special Revenue Fund revenues of \$3,632,653 and expenses of \$3,424,395; Capital Project Fund revenues of \$2,931,975 and expenses of \$2,640,711; and Fiduciary Fund revenues of \$120,000 and expenses of \$120,000, seconded by Porter. **Voice vote – ayes, all. Motion carried.**

**STREETS COMMITTEE:** The Mayor described the search for the new Service Department employee and asked for a motion to employ Ronald Quinn as the new Service Department employee pending the completion of the background check and drug screening. **Cavanagh made a motion to hire Ron Quinn for the full-time position for the Street Department, seconded by Galicki. Voice vote – ayes, all. Motion carried.**

The Mayor addressed a motion to create a Service Department Clothing Policy. He distributed the proposed policy and changes to the Employee Handbook. The Mayor suggested making a motion to get the discussion going. Galicki asked for clarification as to whether this was a motion to create a policy, or adopt the policy provided by the Mayor. The Mayor said the policy would not be adopted tonight because some people were just seeing it for the first time. Galicki asked why a motion was needed to create a policy when HR and Streets Committees were already in the process of developing one. Bell agreed. Porter thought perhaps they would need a motion to adopt a policy. Cavanagh said there were a lot of varying opinions on the proposed policy. Bell explained that the HR Committee had a lengthy discussion on this topic at the last meeting, but he did not see any of the suggested revisions in the current proposal. As a member of the HR Committee, he could not support the proposal without digging deeper into it. The Mayor reiterated he just wanted to get the discussion started. He explained that his policy was simply an adaptation of the Police Department Policy for the Service Department. It had some features that the Mayor wanted Council to consider. The program would be managed by the Street Commissioner and would allow the employees to get certain uniforms from certain providers for a startup cost. After that year, they would receive a maximum of \$300 to order what they would want to maintain their uniforms. The Mayor utilized a sample order to determine the startup cost, which came out to about \$1,171. The only other big difference between the Police and Services Department policies would pertain to boots. Boots and

shoe related items, such as laces and waterproofing, have been added to the policy and two pairs of boots per year are allowed. Bell noted that the current policy allows for one pair a year for \$250 and the proposed policy is \$500 per year for two pairs. The Mayor said it would be up to the employees as to whether they chose top of the line or cheaper footwear.

The Mayor expressed his confusion about what would and would not be taxed with the uniforms, and suggested having the Solicitor look at it. Utilizing Orange Village as an example, each employee is given a packet listing everything that he/she can buy, allowing the employees to order what they need for a total of \$300 per year after the startup. Canton asked if the receipts from the purchases would be given to Admin. The Fiscal Officer stated that HR's recommendation was that it would be the Street Commissioner's responsibility to track the amount spent by each employee, and then provide the Fiscal Officer with the invoice to pay the bill. Porter asked if this would be a reimbursement. The Fiscal Officer explained that it would be through an account with Arborwear and each employee would have so much to spend that the Street Commissioner would track and then submit the bills. The Street Commissioner said he originally suggested using Arborwear. He had spoken to a number of surrounding municipalities and said that there is one list supplied to employees and there is one purchase order sent to the company that handles it all. There is no cash going from the Village to the employee and then back. The company invoices the Village. Cavanagh clarified that there would be a deadline to order per year, and the Street Commissioner concurred. Cavanagh noted that the Village rarely hears people complain about what it spends to make any of the employees comfortable. With knowledge of feet, old age, hard workers, and being outside, \$400 to \$500 is not excessive for boots. They are on their feet all day. She felt it was important that they are comfortable.

The Mayor suggested a joint HR and Streets Committee meeting before the next Council meeting so that they could present a proposal at the July meeting. He advised that the Service Department employees have not seen this final version of the policy. The Mayor reiterated that he wrote the proposed policy and it needs some work. Porter asked what the allowance would be for part-time employees. The Mayor explained that right now, that would just muddy the issue since there are no part-time employees with the department. However, he did put it into the revised Employee Handbook changes. Porter explained that the proposed policy indicates that it pertains to full and part-time employees. Bell agreed to find a date for a joint meeting.

The Mayor said that next, the proposed changes to the policy will go right to the Solicitor. They were written by him because he wanted to move the process along because it seemed to be taking a lot of time. He would provide copies to the Street Commissioner for the employees, and he can handle it with them.

**ENGINEER:** The Engineer provided an update to the proposed salt building. The Village received proposal packages from three interested parties that all passed the initial qualifications check. The Streets Committee coalesced around the proposal package from CMG with a base amount for the building and two options for the concrete surrounding the building of 6-inches or 8-inches. They also proposed a \$20,000 electrical allowance, which was conservative in the Engineer's opinion. With existing electrical, he thought the amount would be much less, and the Village would only be paying for what it uses. With the electrical allowance, 8-inch concrete slab, and the building, the proposed cost is \$689,704.

Canton thanked all those involved with the salt structure process thus far. He stated that the Village needs this because the salt dome is about to collapse. Secondly, Canton said he had spoken to Jim Mueller with Russell Township as well as the Russell Township Road Supervisor about their road miles and salt usage. They used 1,600 tons of salt last winter and they have about 108 lane miles. The Village has 50-52 lane miles of roads and used about 1,000 to 1,300 tons of salt per year. He did not see the Village increasing its lane miles but thought future councils would be thankful that the Village replaced the building when it did since it would only cost more to do so in the future. Cavanagh said she appreciated the Engineer's efforts and the Street Commissioner adding the extra wings for equipment. Bell asked what the timeframe would be, and the Engineer thought CMG would be building it in the fall.

Cavanagh addressed Fairview/Hemlock at the Streets Committee meeting that day. The Engineer clarified that this pertained to the culvert replacement at Fairview and Hemlock and said that he is in the process of preparing the bid documents. The County Engineer asked that the Village do a little more expansive storm water study to size the pipe properly and determine what properties and parcels are ultimately draining to the culvert. The County Engineer wanted an expanded scope as to the downstream impact in relation to the proposed pipe size. The Engineer had considered everything that would be coming to the pipe, but did not as thoroughly investigate the impact downstream. He did not perceive that there would be issues but needed to compile an analysis for the County Engineer. This would take a couple of weeks but not necessarily more money. The Village should be able to bid the project out in July, with construction projected for fall and winter with the final grading and restoration in spring 2026. Cavanagh clarified that this expanded scope pertained to impact on the Russell Township side, noting that the Village will ultimately be splitting the local share. The Engineer thought the request was fair.

Ultimately, the project should be a two-week job. A detour route will be posted. The Chief would provide a notification on social media. Porter thought the Street Commissioner was going to distribute flyers and asked if instead TextMyGov would be used. Porter suggested that a flyer in the mailbox would be good with an update that the bids had been made, description of the work, and when it might be done, etc. The Mayor suggested a letter describing what had been done in the past few years to control water, but to be prepared. Notifying the school districts was also discussed because the project would be occurring after the start of school. Cavanagh agreed that the Street Commissioner should distribute flyers because not everyone has TextMyGov. There was further discussion on resident notification. The Street Commissioner said he preferred to go door to door and speak to the residents. He would do that on Fairview and distribute flyers on Countryside Dr. The Mayor told the Chief to double the cruisers coming up and down Fairview. The Chief concurred.

Cavanagh stated that advertising for bids for the Road Program is targeted to take place on June 27<sup>th</sup>. The Road Program will consist of Countryside Dr., miscellaneous repairs, and application of Reclamite. The Engineer said the first date of advertising would be June 27<sup>th</sup>, the second would be July 4<sup>th</sup> and bid opening would be July 11<sup>th</sup> in advance of the July 14<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. The budget for Countryside Dr. is \$320,000 and with the miscellaneous repairs and Reclamite, the total would be \$350,000. About \$27,000 of this is budgeted for Reclamite for which the Village will contract directly with an authorized provider.

**PROPERTIES COMMITTEE:** In the absence of the Properties Committee Chair, Galicki stated he would be making a motion concerning the corner property. As background, the corner lot was

previously occupied by a dental office and insurance building. The committee has been considering the matter and there have been questions by Council about the removal of trees. **Galicki made a motion to direct the Street Commissioner as time and schedule permit to landscape the southeast corner lot, the former art studio, by removing three trees currently marked with yellow caution tape, removing all asphalt, brick, and curbing surfaces, and curbing on the east side of the property, leveling the property so that all the land is level. After leveling the corner lot begins, the corner lot will no longer be used for parking for any events, and the lot will be circled with yellow caution tape to prevent vehicles driving on the new landscaping. Such work will be completed no later than 31 December 2025.** As a note, and not as a part of the motion is that Farmers' Market vendors and shoppers will be directed to park behind the Police Department once the demolition begins. The Mayor will contact Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Verdantas to verify there are no future or possibly unknown plans for the corner lot and intersection. The Properties Committee will discuss phase two of this property at future committee meetings for completion targeted in 2026. **Seconded by Porter.** Bell hated to see the trees taken down now, but he thought removing the black top was important for storm water mitigation. He hoped phase two would include trees. Galicki said this has been part of the discussion. Cavanagh proposed installing a wildflower garden to give the corner a modern look. **Voice vote – ayes, all. Motion carried.**

The Mayor proposed that when taking down the trees on the corner lot, three other trees on the campus will also be cut down. Galicki conveyed that the Properties Committee wanted work to begin as soon as possible, schedule allowing, and not necessarily to delay it until early fall. He reiterated that as time permitted, the process should be started immediately.

**SAFETY COMMITTEE:** Bell advised that a letter of retirement was received from Lieutenant Todd Pocek. He offered that details would be discussed in executive session at the end of the meeting.

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMITTEE:** With regard to the Fairview/Hemlock culvert replacement, once the Village goes out to bid, Porter will visit the Russell Township Trustees. At this point, the Village will have a real dollar amount to present. The Engineer said the estimate on the project is \$92,400 and Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) was willing to give the Village half of that, \$46,200, in grant money. The remaining local share of \$46,200 would be split with Russell Township.

Porter discussed the Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste District Management Plan. There was a mandate by Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) to update the plan, which involves increasing the amount collected from the recipients of their recycling by \$2.00, from \$5.50 to \$7.50. This would generate more revenue to encourage recycling. The new plan also supports curbside recycling but does not address private trash haulers. An ordinance is requested in support of the new plan. Galicki asked for clarification about the increase in fees to encourage recycling. It seems incongruous. Porter explained that the facilities that receive the recycled material from Geauga Trumbull will be paying \$7.50 per ton under the plan rather than \$5.50. Money raised will be used for trucks, and in general improved services.

**PARK COMMITTEE:** Galicki explained that a Park Committee meeting was held last week, largely to discuss the Fall Festival. It appeared that the majority of the committee supported the Fall Festival being held on October 5<sup>th</sup> with no rain date. The Chair of the Parks Committee met

with the Mayor to discuss this issue and provided Galicki with a modified motion to have the Fall Festival on September 28<sup>th</sup> with an alternative rain date on the following Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup>. Galicki stated that the Properties Committee has taken the Parks Committee's recommendation under advisement. **Galicki made a motion to approve the Fall Festival for September 28<sup>th</sup>, and an alternate rain date the following Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup> and to direct the members of the Parks Committee and Village employees to commence their work in organizing the vendors, party supplies, food stuff, in support of the Fall Festival, accordingly, seconded by Porter.** Cavanagh stated that Ted Kruse who has volunteered a lot with time and money historically to the park was fully in favor of it being held on October 5<sup>th</sup> and Council needs to respect him for that. Secondly, the Fall Festival is exhausting for the committee, and they were in favor of the October 5<sup>th</sup> date with no rain date. She raised the issue of the difficulty in determining the availability of vendors in the event of cancellation. Canton added that he had been working with the Parks Committee for nine years and they have given the Village excellent advice. If Council were to go against their recommendation, it would be the first time, even though they are an advisory board. He did, however, see the relevance of a rain date but also recognized the logistics with it. Galicki added that the Parks Committee seemed to be in favor of not supplying food this year and instead having food trucks. That would eliminate the problem of what to do with the food if the event were canceled. He acknowledged that the Parks Committee unanimously agreed on the one date. Cavanagh added that in the past, employees have handled the food, which is a lot of work. The Fiscal Officer reminded Cavanagh that she would not be available this year to help, and Cavanagh said she appreciated all the Fiscal Officer and her husband had done. Galicki offered that the Mayor and Councilman Berger discussed that there was something American and homey about having hot dogs for the festival, but there seems to be a difference of opinion with the committee. Bell said that out of respect for the volunteers on the Parks Committee, he was hesitant to go against their wish for October 5<sup>th</sup>. He invited the Mayor to explain why the date change was being proposed. The Mayor said that when he saw the Brown's schedule, he contacted the Parks Committee and proposed October 5<sup>th</sup> because there would be no conflict with a game and ultimately no conflict with Ted Kruse. Kruse was the Fall Festival for many years and is still a big part of it. If Kruse wants October 5<sup>th</sup>, which he does, he supported that as did the Parks Committee. The idea of not needing a rain date because they would not be cooking food was another good thing. He always had a problem with three of the Village's guys making \$50 dollars an hour for cooking hotdogs. The Mayor had spoken to other mayors who have gone to festivals with food trucks, while some still provide food. He added that it was time for a change. The Mayor said his greater concern was with the hay wagons in light of the fatality with the City of Green parade. Galicki offered to withdraw the motion if Council preferred to support the original date. Porter suggested having October 5<sup>th</sup> as the date and October 12<sup>th</sup> as the rain date. Galicki explained that the committee discussed that the further into October, the more chance of inclement weather, which is why the Parks Committee was not in favor of any rain date beyond October 5<sup>th</sup>. **Voice vote – aye, Cavanagh. Nay – Galicki, Porter, Bell, and Canton. Motion failed.**

**Galicki made a motion to approve the Fall Festival 2025 for Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup> and to direct the members of the Parks Committee and Village employees to commence their work in organizing the vendors, party supplies, and food stuffs in support of the Fall Festival accordingly, seconded by Porter.** Porter stated that there were times the Village had no backup date, had inclement weather, and ended up eating the expenses because the vendors had to be paid. The Fiscal Officer added that it was about \$10,000 for the Fall Festival. He was in favor of a rain date. Galicki added that the event to which Porter referred precipitated the Village modifying the way the contracts are written, and the Fiscal Officer concurred. She explained that depending on

the notice, some vendors will reimburse everything and some will reimburse nothing. For example, the last couple of years, it was too windy, but the Village still had to pay for the bounce houses even though they could not be inflated. Porter asked that the committee reconsider scheduling a rain date. **Voice vote – ayes, Galicki, Porter, Bell, and Canton. Nay – Cavanagh. Motion carried.**

The Mayor stated that at the Parks Committee meeting, there was discussion of providing funding in the amount of \$350 for Kruse's apple press display. It costs him about \$500 every Fall Festival. Porter said he would be very willing to entertain that motion. Bell commented that it would be no different than any other vendor.

The Mayor further stated that last year, there was no LifeFlight, no bounce houses, no hayrides, and no one complained.

#### **ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS:**

Porter introduced an ordinance approving the Solid Waste Management Plan for the Geauga-Trumbull Solid Waste Management District and declaring an emergency. Porter made a motion to waive readings, seconded by Canton. Roll call – ayes, all. Motion carried. Porter made a motion to adopt, seconded by Canton. Roll call – ayes, all. Motion carried. **ORD 2025-37**


Cavanagh introduced an ordinance awarding the proposal for the salt storage building project to CMG Contracting, LLC, subject to an acceptable contract between CMG Contracting, LLC and the Village of South Russell and declaring an emergency. Cavanagh made a motion to waive readings, seconded by Galicki. Roll call – ayes, all. Motion carried. Cavanagh made a motion to adopt, seconded by Galicki. Roll call – ayes, all. Motion carried. **ORD 2025-38**

**At 8:00 p.m. Bell made a motion to enter into executive session to consider the employment of a public employee pursuant to Section 121.22(G)(1) of the Ohio Revised Code and invite the Mayor, Police Chief, Fiscal Officer, and Solicitor, seconded by Porter. Roll call – ayes, all. Motion carried.**

**Bell made a motion to reconvene at 8:14 p.m., seconded by Porter. Voice vote – ayes, all. Motion carried.**

**Bell made a motion to acknowledge the retirement of Lieutenant Todd Pocek effective June 10, 2025, seconded by Galicki. Voice vote – ayes, all. Motion carried.**

**ADJOURNMENT:** Being that there was no further business before Council Porter made a motion to adjourn at 8:14 p.m., seconded by Canton. Voice vote – ayes, all. Motion carried.

  
William G. Koons, Mayor

  
Danielle Romanowski, Fiscal Officer

Prepared by Leslie Galicki