

**RECORD OF PROCEEDING
SPECIAL MEETING – 2025 BUDGET WORK SESSION
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2025 - 5:30 P.M.
MAYOR WILLIAM G. KOONS PRESIDING**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bell, Berger, Canton, Cavanagh, Galicki, Porter

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Chief Rizzo, Street Commissioner Young, Solicitor Matheney

The Mayor called the Special Council meeting to order. The Fiscal Officer read the roll.

Police Department/Safety Fund

The Chief provided a summary sheet to Council that showed increases and decreases in the Police Department budget. The difference between 2025 and 2026 is about \$8,000 which does not include the salary and benefits. Big projects for 2026 include the body worn and in-car camera systems and will be purchased from Motorola. There will be an up-front cost in the first year of \$8,000 and then annually it will be just under \$25,000 per year for both body cameras and in-car camera systems. Other anticipated basic expenses include replacement of two-way radios, radar unit, building maintenance, and a new cruiser. Bell noted that the replacement of the body cameras had been delayed for two years, and the Chief explained that it is now a subscription-based system resulting in annual costs. However, during the five-year contract period, the department will receive an automatic refresh of all the equipment after three years. This will save on the repair of older equipment. The equipment will belong to the Village and the subscription provides a cloud-based program. Berger asked about the purchase of a new cruiser, and the Chief stated that a new cruiser is typically purchased each year, and the oldest vehicle used by Admin will be sold or traded in. The cruiser cost is \$48,000 and added equipment brings the total to \$75,000.

The Chief addressed the Village phone system. He obtained quotes but advised that Council would need to decide what direction it wanted to take. Currently, the Village has an onsite phone system controller. The choice would be to either keep a similar system or go to a cloud subscription. A phone system like the current system would cost \$25,000 - \$30,000 up front with a \$3,000 annual cost. For a cloud equivalent, it would be \$5,000 - \$10,000 up front with \$7,000 to \$10,000 per year in annual maintenance. The existing phone system utilizes Windows 10 and will no longer be supported. The Village previously used the Warwick Communications Mitel Office 250 system. It was purchased in 2017. The Chief offered that a cloud service would be available through a local service like Windstream, or the Village could use ADP. He cautioned that with ADP, there could be a delay for service calls. He was happy with the current vendor's level of support and suggested upgrading with a new system. Berger asked whether this would be cloud based, or server based, and the Chief said it could be either. An advantage to a cloud-based system is that it would only be necessary to upgrade the handsets but would be a little more money annually. He concluded that the current system has functioned well, and he has been able to make changes by logging onto the system. Cavanagh expressed concern about the system being usable for the employees. Bell asked if the phone system would conflict with the ADP system, and the Chief did not think there would be issues but could check with ADP. Discussion continued comparing the financial implications of both types of systems. It was concluded that the cloud-based version would cost the Village more over the 8 years of use it could expect from the other system.

The Village Hall chambers microphone system upgrade was discussed. The proposal is to replace the current microphones with microphones suspended from the ceiling, which should be cleaner audio signal and better for the external feed to YouTube. The current system was purchased in 2020.

Regarding the traffic study of Chillicothe Road, the Chief described it as an optional project recommended by the Safety Committee to go forward. The traffic study is necessary for ODOT to consider a speed reduction on Chillicothe Road and was quoted by the Engineer to cost \$12,000. Based on the traffic study, the Chief explained that ODOT could recommend a 5 mph drop, but could also recommend an increase. With the crosswalks, however, he hoped they would at least reduce it by 5 mph and hopefully 10 mph. There are other towns along Chillicothe Rd. where speed limits have been drastically reduced from 45 to 35 to 25.

The Mayor addressed the proposed Police Department addition costing \$110,000. The Chief said this would be an optional budget item. Drawings were made and an estimate of \$110,000 was provided. It would include the addition of two ADA bathrooms with a shower and storage for the Police Department. It would connect the Police Department with the new garage.

The Mayor concluded that it would be \$2 million to run the Police Department.

Street Maintenance

The Mayor suggested starting with the replacement of the plow truck estimated at \$180,000. The Street Commissioner said that the 2001 truck was taken out of service last winter due to safety concerns, rust, and rot. The truck would be cost prohibitive to repair in his opinion. It could be sold on GovDeals, and the Mayor asked the value. The Street Commissioner said it was really difficult to determine for a truck that age because of the way the markets are fluctuating everywhere. The Police Chief advised that the Village was able to sell the last truck, a 1998 International, with 53,000 miles for \$13,100 in 2021. The Street Commissioner explained that he wanted to replace the truck with a downsized truck but would still maintain two of the large Village trucks. Going forward, the next truck would also be replaced with a smaller truck which would be a 600 series. There are still a couple manufacturers he would like to get the guys in before getting a firm exact number rather than just the verbal quotes. These trucks have better maneuverability with the cul-de-sacs and on tighter streets. Additionally, it keeps the GDW weight under CDL, so it allows someone without a CDL to operate it. The Chief, for example, could get in the truck and operate it legally. He suggested purchasing a standard dump truck similar but smaller than what the Village has, and a hook lift truck that could switch bodies to accommodate a variety of applications like salting and hauling material. The system turns one truck into five. For plowing, the size of the blade would be about one foot less, which would not have a big impact. The style of spreader would be more efficient by using less salt. Berger asked what the \$180,000 represented in terms of the type of vehicle. The Street Commissioner said it would be the truck and chassis, and the upfit swap order system with the salt body and the plow. Berger clarified that this is not what the Village currently has. The Street Commissioner explained the truck without the body on it would just be a cab and chassis-looking truck. The upfit would be the swap loader which would make it possible to pick up any body like a dumpster, dump body, or salt body. Any one of those three can go on this truck within three minutes. Cavanagh asked if the other bodies are included in the \$180,000, and the Street Commissioner said the \$180,000 includes the salt body and plow. The other bodies that were available could be ordered for around \$3,000 each, which is the rough estimate he has seen across the board depending on what is wanted and the configuration. They are very affordable. Those bodies will fit any other truck with the swap body system. The truck chassis is about \$70,000, but the hook lift system could be transferred from that truck to a new chassis. This can be done about three times before it is necessary to determine whether everything needs to be changed out. Going forward, instead of spending \$180,000 when the

proposed truck is worn out, it would cost \$70,000 at today's prices to put a new truck in place. He reiterated that the bodies would fit. Other benefits included the availability of a dumpster container for Village use when not being used on the vehicle, the ability to transport equipment, and the ability for one truck to perform several tasks as a multipurpose vehicle. Porter asked what equipment was necessary to change the bodies, and the Street Commissioner said they were self-sufficient. He had worked with similar vehicles in Pepper Pike and Independence.

Galicki verified that the Street Commissioner had budgeted for a single purpose truck. It may have other capabilities, but none of the other options were budgeted. The Street Commissioner said he budgeted worse case scenarios. Galicki clarified that it is still budgeting for a single use truck, and the Street Commissioner responded that it is at the moment. Porter offered that the truck could become multiuse with the purchase of other bodies, Berger suggested putting these additional funds in the budget and proposed increasing it to \$190,000. Porter asked where the bodies would be stored, and the Street Commissioner said outside, possibly under the wings of the new salt structure.

Berger asked the Street Commissioner how much it would cost to replace an exact replacement of what the Village currently has. The Street Commissioner thought it would be about \$270,000. Berger recalled that the last truck purchased was \$153,000. The Street Commissioner said this was five years ago and everything has skyrocketed since then.

Galicki recalled that at the last Street Committee meeting, he asked for a cost benefit of the old-style vehicle and the new but did not see any hard numbers. That kind of information would be helpful in supporting the Street Commissioner's budget.

Porter asked about the availability of the truck bodies, and the Street Commissioner said that they are made to order and can be ready within two weeks. They are a standard size and can be purchased from a variety of vendors. The Mayor asked the Street Commissioner to get some pictures of the equipment he is requesting. Porter questioned whether \$190,000 would be enough to get the truck and three different bodies.

The Street Commissioner explained that in the past, a larger skid steer had been rented. The department demoed a smaller model that he thought was more suitable. It accepts a variety of attachments from augers to mowers to forks, etc. which are readily available to rent for cheap. It is standard for the skid steer to come with bucket and forks. There are many manufacturers, and he thought it best to ultimately narrow it down to three. However, the ones he had already looked at were about \$45,000. The Mayor asked if the skid steer would be used to stack salt in the salt dome. Bell pointed out that this mini skid steer is not very big, and the Street Commissioner said it would not be appropriate for this use. It is designed for smaller landscape sized projects.

The requested excavator would provide what the backhoe does but more efficiently. The Street Commissioner felt that by purchasing the excavator and skid steer, there would be no need to replace the backhoe, which would cost \$143,000. He would keep the backhoe until it became cost prohibitive to repair. Porter asked if the excavator could be used for grave digging, and the Street Commissioner said it could and would have less ground impact. Berger asked for a model number of the excavator the Street Commissioner was proposing, and The Street Commissioner said CAT 304, which they had demoed with a project on Cascades. The size would enable them to stay out of traffic lanes.

The Mayor said he was surprised to see a request for a pickup truck. The Street Commissioner said this would be in lieu of replacing the 2012 one-ton dump truck. He suggested replacing it with a pickup

truck because of the salt truck being a swap loader, which can replace the duties of the one-ton dump truck. The Mayor offered that the employees have a love affair with the one-ton, and the Street Commissioner agreed. He asked if this would be better, and the Street Commissioner said it would be because it is more versatile and for a minimal difference in price. Porter asked what size pickup he was considering, and the Street Commissioner said another F-250. The Mayor clarified that the one-ton would be sold. The Street Commissioner concurred and said it would bring \$20,000 - \$25,000. The Mayor indicated that the Village put a new body on it a few years ago.

The Mayor concluded that these were big numbers and the current ask was at \$375,000 but there is \$600,000 in the reserve fund. He then asked about the garage door replacement. The Street Commissioner wants to replace the six remaining garage doors this coming year. One is being replaced this year as an emergency because it does not work, but the others are also worn. He will go with the same company and door for all of them. Replacing all of the doors this year was discussed, but the Street Commissioner explained that it was a matter of waiting to see the cost of the salt structure. Berger explained that the idea was to repair what needed to be repaired, but to put the rest into the 2026 budget out of caution. Once the Village knows the cost of the salt structure, which should be within the next 90-days, if there is money left over at that point, he would be fine to replace them all. Cavanagh advised that nothing was put in the budget to repair the brick pillars between the garage doors. The Street Commissioner explained that he wanted to get the doors installed first. The brick is more aesthetic and the cinderblock behind it is structural and in good shape. Berger asked the Street Commissioner to ballpark the cost of doing the brick work, and he thought it would be a couple hundred dollars per column, \$2,000 to \$3,000 total. Cavanagh questioned whether the work could be done in-house, and the Street Commissioner thought that replacing the brick would not be out of their scope. Berger asked him to get a quote for the brick work.

Bell acknowledged that the requested equipment would help make the department more efficient but asked the Street Commissioner to identify what was a 'have to have.' The Street Commissioner said the salt truck. Bell clarified this would be the swap loader. Bell explained his concern was the result of the Village's infrastructure projects, EMS increases, etc. Porter countered that the equipment would come from a reserve fund. If it is not used, eventually it will go back to the General Fund. The Fiscal Officer explained that the Village had until the end of 2028 to use these funds before they go back to the General Fund. Porter said the money was earmarked for precisely this kind of thing. The Street Commissioner stated that in looking at the replacement schedule, and knowing what he knows about equipment, the next purchase would be the replacement of the 2008 large salt truck with another swap body truck. The remaining two trucks are from 2018 and 2020 and have a lot of life left. The recommendation is 12 years for a salt truck.

The Mayor thought that Bell had a good point and perhaps they should only spend \$200,000 this year and \$200,000 the next year, etc. The Fiscal Officer asked if she should include all the requested items in the draft budget, or just \$190,000. The Mayor said to put it all in, and they could always take it out. The salt truck would stay in.

Porter noted that the line-item he requested for storm water, specifically for dredging, reflected \$33,000. The Fiscal Officer confirmed that she added the line item in the amount of \$32,950 as requested by the Public Utilities Committee. Galicki asked what the intended purpose was with the dredging. In the past when the Village has supported dredging, it was generally because there had been a connection with either utility work or Village work which may or may not have contributed to the silting of the particular pond. He asked if Porter was suggesting that this fund be used for general dredging of all ponds. Porter thought that ultimately, dredging would be done on a Village wide basis for the 41 ponds that were either

individually, or HOA owned because dredging is becoming more and more of an issue. The \$33,950 represents the likely cost of the Sugar Bush incident that occurred as a result of Manor Brook Phase I project. This was a Village project that in some form or fashion led to the silting of the Sugar Bush silt pond and then spilled over into the lake. From the Public Utilities Committee perspective, the Village played a part in that silt build up. Galicki understood this but expressed concern about expending public funds on private property. Moving forward, is the consistent dredging of privately owned ponds a business that the Village should be in or thinking about getting into? Porter responded that 15 years ago, the Village's response was that it did nothing on private property. Galicki thought this is the way the law is written not just the Village's opinion at that time. The use of public funds for private purposes is prohibited by law. Porter said he took the viewpoint that silt build up and storm water issues are a public purpose, which is why the Village did the Manor Brook Phase I project which was entirely on private land and benefited the people to the east and west in terms of storm water. He also described a culvert replacement that helped one homeowner but also helped drainage to the north. The Mayor interjected that this matter would not be solved in the next few minutes and asked to move on.

The Mayor addressed **street maintenance**. The Fiscal Officer explained that Bell Road paving is the program for next year, hopefully. It will be divided between the Road and Bridge Fund, the Permissive Tax Fund, and the Bell Rd. east fund.

Under the **Operating Fund**, the Fiscal Officer noted the addition of \$50,000 under improvements for the replacement of the garage doors.

There was nothing further to add to the **State Highway Fund** expenses. There was discussion about cemetery wages consisting of the time spent by Service Department staff in maintaining the cemeteries.

Regarding the **Permissive Tax Fund**, the Fiscal Officer explained that she can apply to use these funds for Bell Road east paving. The same pertains to the funds in the Road and Bridge Fund.

Regarding the **Bell Road East** expenses, the Fiscal Officer explained she had the Bell Rd. east project as well as the bike path for the budget.

For the **Large Equipment** fund, the pickup will be changed to \$50,000, the plow truck to \$190,000, the excavator to \$90,000, and the mini skid steer for \$45,000. The new total is \$375,000.

Parks and Recreation

Under **Parks and Recreation**, under Misc/Other – Maintenance was changed to \$12,000. Berger explained this was for additional maintenance costs for the restroom and playground mulching.

General Budget

The Fiscal Officer stated she had no significant changes for next year. During the course of transitioning to the state software, she noted that water monitoring and testing and Stormwater Phase II are in the General Fund but should be moved to the Street Maintenance Fund with the other water related items. She also addressed how the Bell Road Paving project will be divided among the different funds. Regarding the mitigation of collections of the Road and Bridge Levy relative to property revaluations, Council will need to decide whether to continue this, change the amount mitigated, etc. by the end of the year when the legislation expires. The health insurance renewal was received and there will be a 0% increase. Those numbers were not reflected in this budget yet. The trails have been put in the budget as a place holder. According to NOACA, the project may have to be pushed out to 2027. The Large

Equipment Reserve fund will have \$600,000 in it by the end of 2028. It can be moved back to the General Fund before that if Council were to choose. The garage bay doors were included in the Special Land and Building budget. The Police Department needs flooring for \$3,000 which was also put in Special Land and Building budget. A place holder was put in for the Fire and Ambulance agreement for the 12% increase. It will also be necessary to adjust the revenue collection for the ambulance fees since it will be phased out over three years. Last year the Village received \$132,000 in EMS collections. It would be a 12% increase plus a third of the EMS collection. The Fiscal Officer put the new telephone system in the Special Land and Building fund with \$20,000 earmark for it. The storm water dredging line item was added to the Street Maintenance Budget for \$33,950. She also had a list of items discussed by committees over the past year that did not find their way into the budget such as the park burn, crosswalk, etc. Cavanagh asked if the people interested in bocce courts were planning to come back to the Village with a proposal. The Mayor told them to come back in October when the budget was done.

Porter asked about the Mapleridge sewer project in terms of the budget. The Fiscal Officer explained that she came up with her list through review of the committee minutes and asked that going forward the committees' report projects to her that will affect the budget. Porter recalled that the Mapleridge project was the one whereby all the underground piping would be torn out and replaced with new. He thought it would be \$500,000. The Fiscal Officer clarified that this was Hazelwood, and Galicki and Berger concurred. Porter maintained it was Mapleridge. Fairview and Hazelwood would be \$96,000, but Mapleridge would be half a million dollars. Through discussion, Council clarified that Fairview/Hazelwood was the Hemlock Culvert project with Russell Township. The Fiscal Officer just received the bid specs from the Engineer, and the bid opening will be October 3rd. The Hemlock project is this year, and the Village has OPWC funding for 50% up to approximately \$46,000.

Healthcare expenses were discussed and Canton asked if all the employees took advantage of the yearly \$250 incentive to have a physical, and the Fiscal Officer said most did. Council will need to consider whether they want to make a motion to continue this program for next year.

General Fund expenses, Berger asked about the line for the Human Resource consultant. The Fiscal Officer explained this was for Mansour Gavin and may need them to update job descriptions since that wasn't done this year.

The Fiscal Officer explained that under Communications and News, TextMyGov replaced the newsletter. With the geofencing letter that was sent to residents, close to 200 residents signed up for the service.

Service Fund was discussed and consisted of electricity, utilities, and property maintenance items.

Regarding **Fire and Ambulance** expenses, the Fiscal Officer included the 12% increase as a placeholder. Bell asked about the EMS billing refund, and the Fiscal Officer explained that expenses are currently being discussed and CVFD does the EMS billing, which is the only way the Village can get the Medicare portion. The Village pays the fire department 2% to do the billing, and Lifeorce 7%. She will have to make an adjustment to revenues for this, but that cannot occur until after January 2026 due to the Tax Budget. The Mayor said that the Village can expect a \$500 increase to Hazmat.

Deferred Benefits, pertaining to retiring employees, and the Chief said there will be one retirement in the first quarter of next year. The Fiscal Officer would add this.

Under **Special Land and Building**, the Mayor noted replacement of the Service Department Garage doors and phone system are reflected. The Fiscal Officer said she had \$50,000 for garage doors, but the Street Commissioner presented \$43,200. She asked about his confidence in this number, and the Street Commissioner said he had received a quote for \$44,000 but was waiting on refreshed quotes for the current door.

Regarding the **Building Department Fund**, Cavanagh said that the computer expenses include the new iWorQ program.

The Fiscal Officer would compile the information to see what the budget looks like and then get it out to Council.

Canton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:52 p.m., seconded by Cavanagh. Voice vote – ayes, all. Motion carried.


William G. Koons, Mayor


Danielle Romanowski, Fiscal Officer

Prepared by Leslie Galicki