

The Village of Walton Hills

Committee of the Whole Meeting

Date: July 11, 2017

Time: 6:44 p.m.

Location of Meeting: Council Chambers

Mayor Hurst called the meeting to order. The roll call was taken by Katie Iaconis, Fiscal Officer. Present: Councilpersons Mary Brenner-Miller, Paul Rich, Gloria Terlosky, Don Kolograf, Brian Spitznagel, and Denny Linville. Mayor Hurst also wants the record to reflect that our law solicitor William Mason and Katie Iaconis as our Fiscal Officer and Clerk to Council.

Persons having business before council. Mayor Hurst opens up the floor to anyone who wants to come forward and ask questions of council. Mary Alice Moran from 7500 Linda Lane stands and introduces herself. She wanted to point out that she had seen written and heard that in the police contract that there was a recommended number of officers. She had the opportunity to look through it and she did see that. She did see the minimum number, which to her, is different than the recommended minimum number. She thinks it is a radically different concept for the recommended number that she had heard from one of the councilmembers. She wants to make it clear that minimum number, by no means, means recommended number. The second thing she wanted to point out that from her view, they received a letter circulated in the Village from one of the residents and this painted a very rosy picture of how wonderful things used to be. She did not agree with the bulk concept of the letter. It sounded the same from some of the members of council that she talked to where we are talking about how we only needed a few police. There was a lot of talk about what we used to have and how great it was when he only had so few. She thinks this is the same type of thinking that was in the letter. She thinks this could hold us back. She thinks that a decision to go back to numbers that were in the past is very erroneous thinking. It is not forward thinking. It is not safe. In this day and age, certainly the demands of police officers and the risks that they take are far greater than they ever were back in that time. She just wanted to say that she is tired of hearing what we used to have and how we managed with so few. She certainly hopes that we don't go back to that.

Josephine Wardl from 17850 Egbert Road. She states there are terrible times out there and people are desperate. Once they know our guard is down and we do not have multiple backups, we may have a different situation in the Village. So, she wishes they would reconsider this and, in addition to this, we have to put the tax levy back on. It is not the comment that Mr. Kolograf made regarding us not wanting to pay more taxes. The people in the Village do not want to pay any taxes. She feels the focus was put on the wrong thing. It was put on the total tax bill and it should have just been put on what we pay. She states that residents should be ashamed of the fact that they want all these services for practically nothing. She states that even the high-end homes cannot go out to a good restaurant for what they are paying in property taxes. She is not asking the council to risk their life and fortune, she is asking them to have the backbone to work on reinstating this. She says this is the best for our community. She states that no one is going to want to buy homes in a community where residents do not care enough about the community to pay their fair share of taxes. She wants it back on the ballot.

Tom Nowicki- 17612 Egbert. He hears what the other residents have been saying. He does not think that council will have less than two officers on duty per shift. He thinks that is plenty. He would like 2 mills to be on the property taxes next year. He says we need the help. He said if we were 600 before these cuts, even with these cuts, we are still going to be short. This is economics. We will have police coverage one way or the other with two per shift. He does not see a problem with two per as we are a small Village. We do have backup from other cities. He thinks that if it is not this year, next year, we are going to need the couple of mills. He would like us to raise it next year.

Sarah Blondin – 16883 South Meadowpark. She asks if the Village Engineer is allowed to interact directly with the residents if there is a project going on, or does that need to be routed through council and the Mayor, etc. Mayor Hurst answers her saying that if there is a project on the resident's property, they are usually carbon copied, but it is usually turned over to the service garage or legal counsel or the engineers because there are so many variables that the council does not have time to micromanage every project. Sarah states that that is perfect. She clarifies that a typical response from an engineer if reached out to would be a week, two weeks, or three weeks, etc. Is there like an expectation? Mayor Hurst says at least 5 to 10 business days. That is what the building department turnaround is – anywhere between 10 to 30 business days. That is what it is by state law, but we try to do everything immediate response.

No more comments from the audience.

Item D – Discussion for tax budget for 2018. Mayor Hurst states that this is housecleaning. We do this every year in the month of July. He was under the impression that the deadline was July 31, but it is actually July 15. This is why we are having a special council meeting tonight after the COW to pass this information and we have two other items on the agenda for the special council meeting. He states that this is our typical tax budget for estimation of what we are going to collect next year in property taxes. If there are any comments or questions, he is sure that Katie can answer them or himself. No questions or comments from the councilmembers. Mayor Hurst opens it up to the audience for comments or questions. None are seen. Mayor Hurst states that this will be on tonight's special council meeting after this meeting.

Item E – Discussion to go out for bids for the South Meadowpark Stream Restoration Project. Mayor Hurst states that everyone should be totally aware of this. He says this is a shared project where the homeowner shares the cost as well as we do. We are going through the Northeast Ohio Sewer District to gather money. Of course we have been approved through the Northeast Ohio Sewer District to allow this project to go forward and they will pay for our portion of that project. That money will be collected by December. This is why we are going through this process now. We will go out for bids and then we will come back with a resolution accepting the bids, hopefully in the month of August. We will then start working on the project and it will take them six weeks; I am not sure; and hopefully we can turn in our receipts and get our money back before the end of the year to the Northeast Ohio Sewer District. This is the same as we did the project here on Walton Road in the back.

Councilman Spitznagel asks the Mayor which stream this is. Mayor Hurst says this is the stream where the culvert is caving in and the Blondin's property. Mayor Hurst says this will also be on the special council meeting so we can start that process and move forward. Council has no further comments or questions. Mayor Hurst opens this up to the audience for comments or questions. Sarah Blondin from 16883 South Meadowpark stands and states that she has a concern regarding the comment she heard earlier. With the anticipated schedule of it being August that the bids will come back in and those will be awarded with the six weeks left, avoiding having that go too far into the winter and having that project completed by the end of the year, when we had the meeting back at the end of April/May where the five of them sat down, we had the green light that we could work back with Joe on any conversations. It has been going on three weeks since we emailed him questions in regard to the estimated amount that was estimated for the bid for the vegetation. They have received no response back in three weeks. Her concern with that six-week deadline that this is going to push it out near to the winter. She is asking if there is any way this can be expedited with Joe or if there is another way that they should be interfacing with him. She is looking for some guidance on that. Mayor Hurst states that he will look into that tomorrow. He will talk with Joe personally myself. He asked if every time she had a concern, did she get a response immediately? Sarah said that was the case until we took it over to the engineers. Mayor Hurst said that they did the designing work and Sarah met on approval of the designing work. He thinks that everything was approved of on the vegetation that she is talking about or the final landscaping. These are minor details that we can do during the process. He does not think it is anything that will hold her up as far as time. He knows there are going to be a lot of rocks in this creek. Sarah says that when they looked at the estimate for the planning for the vegetation, that was a substantial

number. So, when they agreed and signed the MOU of that shared cost, we anticipated that that would have been factored in. When they met with Joe, he mentioned that he would not necessarily recommend vegetation at this time and she just questions why there is such a dramatic switch in the estimation and then they don't hear anything back from him. Katie got back to her regarding legislation and Sarah thanks Katie on that. Sarah just wants to do everything she can to move it forward. Mayor Hurst says they will work on that tomorrow. He will call Joe himself and they will get the ball rolling. Sarah thanks him. Councilman Kolograf states that he has every faith in Joe and Don Sheehy. They are excellent. If they don't get back to you right away, they will. This is not their only project they are working on so they have always been nothing but straightforward in trying to get the job done, so if they haven't gotten to you, they will. No other questions or comments.

Item F – Discussion on Budget Reduction – Mayor Hurst states that we did have this shared with the council last week and without any big debate about it, we did make reductions in the overall budget for 2017. Our recreation budget is estimated to be a 4.2% reduction. Our service department is 10.6, so that number is actually going to be a higher reduction in our service department. Our administration is at 15.4%. Our police department reduction is at 9.2%. So, if the council knows the numbers, we have been able to manage to reduce our budget by almost \$300,000. He says the council will have the final calculated numbers in front of them. This is not being voted on tonight. These are things that everyone approved of. These are the recommendations from the department heads and his administration. The council has been informed through Executive Session because of personnel involved and the details.

This will be in our Walton Hills Journal for the month of August with the exact numbers to show that the service garage and administration has taken a far bigger hit than anything in the police department. There is still negotiations and discussion for giveback of the gun allowance and giveback for the clothing allowance. Those have not been solidified, but those are things that we are looking at with the police department reduction. These are things that are in their union contract and their offering back. These are some of the difficulties we are discussing as well as the ordinance about longevity. Most of our residents do not know that we give our police longevity after seven years. They get a percentage amount of money. It is somewhat substantial. Our police receive well over \$100 every month for being here for good employees. He said this is taxed. This was negotiated in back in 1990. These are the things on the budget. He opens up the floor for comments of council. Councilman Rich says he knows we have done a lot to get to this number, and he knows we would like to get something significantly higher. He knows we are going to fall short of what our initial goal is and without splitting hairs, we are going to have to try and do something else in Executive Session. He has nothing to discuss on the floor right now.

Councilman Linville comments and says that in terms of our safety, there has been no daily reduction in our safety effort. We still have two patrolmen out. We have a crossover person who comes on for the shift change. At least what he encourages is that every time there is a stop, especially in a more potentially troubling area, we want a second police car there with the first police car as we do not want that police person there by themselves. There has been no reduction in our effort to keep this Village safe. He is hoping we can make this perfectly clear to everybody. He says we will not make this Village any less safe. Councilman Spitznagel states that the roughly \$285,000 is for the rest of this year. So, this is five or six months. This is pretty good for five or six months. This is not for the entire year, but for the rest of the year. No other comments. Mayor Hurst opens up the floor to the audience for questions or comments.

Josephine Wardl from 17850 Egbert Road stands and comments on the comment that Councilman Linville made. She states that we cannot cover the same amount of area with less people. She knows that the Councilman is trying to make us feel confident, but you cannot do it if you have less people do the same job. She said that if there is an incident and you need another officer, but there is no other officer because we don't have any other officers, there is no way we are going to have the same coverage that we now have. Councilman Kolograf comments and says that people multitask in any other industry, including police officers, more than they ever have. So, to give an example, let's say there is a police chief that is in the office

eight hours a day and there needs coverage, that police chief could go out and cover, which happens in a lot of small communities our size. Or there is a lieutenant or captain who is in the building eight hours a day doing administrative work, but cutting back, they gave them duties to go out. Say a person does not show up that day and they cannot get another officer to come in, that person could go out on the road. They are commissioned. They are licensed. They are familiar with going out on the road, which we have done in the past. Our chief has gone out on the road. Our detective has gone out on the road. So, we are doing this here. Maybe we will do that more. Other communities are doing that. So, with Councilman Linville's statement that you could have two people on the road, that could be very true especially if some of those people are doing administrative stuff. They could be pulled from the office and be out on the road. This is not uncommon to go on in police departments. One more comment is made by Councilman Kolograf. When they put that article in the paper about a 17% reduction, they did use numbers. They used five officers, five part timers and two full timers. What they didn't state in that, which is very important, is how many hours those part timers work. You can have 10 officers and if they work two hours a month, all 10 together might not even add up to one FTE. Where the Councilman comes from, it is FTE, which is a full-time employee or a part-time employee, based on hours because that is really what is being talked about. We have a couple of full-time officers who work eight hours a month. Does it sound like we are losing two part timers? Yes. What they fail to say is that some of those officers are working eight hours, which is 16 hours, versus 64. So, there is a lot there. There is a lot more than simply throwing out numbers like that. We are constantly looking at all that.

Mary Alice Moran from 7500 Linda Lane. She did not get all the percentages and she wonders if they could repeat them. She also wonders if it was a percentage of their particular department budget or is it a percentage of the entire budget that the council is talking about. Mayor Hurst says it is their department budget. Mayor Hurst repeats the percentages for Mary Alice.

No other comments or questions.

Item G – Discussion of ordinance to charge for ambulance service. Mayor Hurst asked Mr. Mason to give us a draft of this ordinance and this ordinance will be presented to the councilmembers in the month of August. Mayor Hurst explains that basically it is not unusual for a community to charge a business such as a nursing home or assisted living for ambulance calls. This is why they have private ambulance services many times. We have close to 300 calls a year going to Walton Manor, our only nursing home in the Village, and if we pursue the opportunity to build another nursing facility on the 16 acres on Walton Road, this will give us another opportunity. He explains that if you go \$300 a service, this is just a number he throws out because that is what they charge in Beachwood; most people charge \$800 every time they go out. If we charge \$300 and we do 300 calls, that is close to \$90,000 of revenue to our Village. He asks if everyone is okay with that.

Mayor Hurst says that this will be presented, talked about, and discussed in the month of August. Councilman Spitznagel asks who pays that bill. Mayor Hurst says the owner of the company. It would be billed to Walton Manor and then it would probably be put on the insurance of that particular person. He clarifies that we would not become insurance collectors or anything like that. This would be a fee that we would charge. He said that most communities throughout Ohio like ours, they call it a soft bill where whatever my insurance pays is accepted as payment in full and they don't go any further with that. He does not want to see senior citizens themselves getting a \$300 bill. We will see how that proposed legislation ends up. Mayor Hurst states that most communities like Bedford or Bedford Heights, they charge their residents. Even though it is a soft bill, they still charge the residents. If the insurance company does not cover it, then the residents have to pay that no matter what. Councilwoman Terlosky asks if this pertains to the residents of the Village or just the nursing home. Mayor Hurst states this is strictly toward our business section, probably the nursing homes is what we are looking at right now or if we go into assisted living or something of those natures. He is only looking at putting an ordinance together and seeing what everyone discusses and see what the options are. No other comments or questions from the council. Mayor Hurst opens up the floor for comments or

questions from the audience. None are seen at this time. Mayor Hurst says this will be discussed in the month of August.

Item H – Discussion in proposed overlay zoning. Mayor Hurst states that he passed out the proposals of legislation that is being proposed in planning commission. As soon as planning commission is going to have another meeting because they are not happy with the first draft language and so we are going to do some more modifications, and we also have another business that is coming with a plan. So, when we do the planning commission meeting for business to relocate to Walton Hills to show their plans with us, we will also discuss the overlay zoning at that same meeting. We are looking at probably another meeting before the month of July is out. So, when that happens, then we will have the overlay zoning on discussion in the month of August, if everyone is okay with that, if the planning commission makes the recommendation. Mayor Hurst states that it is basically as he described. He is sure there is going to be some modifications to the language of exactly what we want to let happen and how we want to let it happen. He has gotten a lot of interest in the First Energy property and he has gotten some interest in the Gospel House property. There are people talking as we speak. No comments or questions from council. Mayor Hurst then opens up the floor to questions or comments from the audience. None are seen. Mayor Hurst points out to council that we have been talking about this for a little over 2-1/2 to 3 months. Now it is being considered in most of the Village. No matter what we do, someone is always looking at our stuff. He states this will be in the month of August for discussion if we take it out of planning.

Item I – Discussion on lot split of 14660. This was in planning commission and everyone in planning commission unanimously agreed to have this split off as a one acre tract. If everyone is in agreement with that, he wants to put this on our council meeting next week on the 18th to approve this and go through the plot through the county and everything, and then hopefully by the month of August, we can put this on for sale maybe, or maybe in September for residential. No questions or comments from the council. Everyone saw the map and understands what they are trying to do. He says it comes out to a 1-acre lot. Mayor Hurst opens up the floor to questions or comments to the audience. None are seen.

Item J – Discussion to donate or pass a resolution on the home on Alexander Road, our old service garage on Creek Road, and the First Energy property that we purchased beside MPK, the 2-1/2 acres, and have that all moved over into our CIC, our nonprofit organization. Mayor Hurst states that this gives the CIC, the Community Improvement Corporation, the opportunity to negotiate a deal and then it comes back to the council for the final approval. As Mr. Mason explained, this is the way you handle it. A lot of the communities use the County CIC, but we decided to do our own CIC because it was more in-house and we can control the negotiations, the beautifications, the buffer zones, and all the different things related in economic growth. Mayor Hurst would like to do this as a resolution in the month of August after everyone gets a grasp of what we are doing.

Councilman Rich asks what the process is. Mr. Mason says that we would transfer those title of interests to the Community Improvement Corporation. The Community Improvement Corporation would hold it and negotiate for economic development opportunities as the organization sees fit. If they found something that was interesting to sell and to work with, they would make a recommendation to make that transfer to whatever that new body would be and send it back to Council for approval. Councilman Rich asks if there is a cost. Mr. Mason says no major cost. Mayor Hurst clarifies that there would be no major cost or anything. It is just paperwork. Basically, what it is is that none of these properties are going to be in the overlay zoning or anything like that. These are just properties that we have that we can negotiate. Now, the property on Walton Road, someone did approach me about a nursing home already. He thinks that Mr. Mason and himself could put together the best deal and then it comes before planning commission and goes to council for that. He does not think we need to put that particular piece of property into a CIC because we are going to have to do the overlay zoning on that and this way, council can control the beautification, the makeup, and everything else on that particular 16-acre track. No more questions or comments from council. Mayor Hurst opens up the floor to questions or comments to the audience. None are seen.

Item K - Other Business. Mayor Hurst states that he gave the council the reports of all of the directors and he also gave them the court receipts for the month of May because he was unable to find it at their last council meeting when he usually reads it into record. So, they have a printed copy of it. There were 145 citations of the month of May; 35 citations written for speeding; 15 citations written for expired plates; 12 arrests for driving under influence; and three arrests for OVIs. Councilman Spitznagel asks about the 12 arrests for driving under suspension. He asks if we are keeping track of where these people are coming from that are getting these OVIs because he knows we have made the statement before because of the Rocksino when we were seeing an increase. He wants to know if we have confirmed data that shows that these people are in fact coming from there. This is just another argument that we can make with showing a need on our police department and our Village because these people are coming from this place. Most of the OVIs are on Route 8. Most are coming from the Northfield south side. Sometimes, they will be on Alexander leaving, heading away from Route 8. Almost all of the police reports when I read the reports, it does say they were at the Casino or they were out celebrating a birthday with open containers where they were drinking in a car. He says that 80% of our problems are coming from there. No other comments or questions from the council.

Item L – Adjournment. Mayor Hurst asks for a motion for adjournment. Councilwoman Brenner-Miller makes a motion to adjourn the COW meeting of July 11, 2017, seconded by Councilman Rich. Six ayes approved. The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Katie Iaconis, Fiscal Officer