

**ST. BERNARD VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 28, 2021**

The regular meeting of the St. Bernard Village Council was held Thursday, January 28, 2021 in Council Chambers.

President of Council, Mr. Steven Asbach – The meeting was opened with a prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call showed that six members were present: Mr. Ray Culbertson, Mr. Schildmeyer, Mr. Bob Culbertson, Mrs. Bedinghaus, Mrs. Miller and Ms. Hausfeld. Mr. Tobergte was absent.

A motion by Mrs. Bedinghaus, seconded by Mr. Ray Culbertson to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Motion passed 6-0.

REPORTS OF VILLAGE OFFICIALS

MAYOR, Mr. Stuchell – First, I would like to thank our incredible Service Department for the awesome job they did with last night’s snow and I truly appreciate what they do for the community.

This last Friday, 1-22-21, was declared Corey Kiner Day in the village of St. Bernard. Corey was presented with a proclamation for his outstanding athletic achievements and for being a true man of character. He was named Ohio Mr. Football for the 2020 season, Division V All-State First Team for the second year in a row and the Division V Offensive player of the Year, MaxPreps Ohio High School Player of the Year, and on the same day that he received his proclamation, he was named the Penn Station Player of the month for January. During the 2020 season, Corey rushed for 1,866 yards and had 35 touchdowns, leading the Spartans to a regional championship and a berth to the state final four, and an impressive 10 win season. When Corey previously asked as an incoming Freshman what Franciscan value meant most to him, he replied “Humble”. He truly is and as quoted by Cory, “You know who you are and where you came from” it was a great day in St. Bernard and thank you to everyone who participated.

As you probable have already heard, I requested that the parking lot in between 4509 Vine Street and WesBanco be changed to 2 hour parking to accommodate the businesses on the South end of Vine Street. I understand that this restriction puts some additional stress on the teachers and employees of St. Clement but I have to be conscious of the parking situation for our businesses. Without the new restriction, there would not be any parking available for the patrons of the Five

Stars Mediterranean, the future location for I Am Coffee, Ellerbusch Instrument Service, and those visiting St. Clement School or Church. The municipal lot located immediately off of Martin has plenty of room for those that previously parked in this lot and I recognize that there is a longer walk but this will help our business district.

I have requested that the pay Ordinance for the part-time employees be tabled and I would like to be put on the agenda for the next COW meeting to present changes to the hourly compensation that are more than just those who are making minimum wage. I would also like to be put on the agenda to discuss the contract between the Village of St. Bernard and the Village of Elmwood Place for Emergency Services.

AUDITOR, Mrs. Brickweg – There are not enough words to express how grateful I am to be a part of the St. Bernard Community. If you have not heard, two weeks ago I hit ice and skied into a tree, my injuries are severe, but thanks to God I will be able to walk again. I am in an amazing rehab facility where they set me up an office to work. I am going home tomorrow and will continue to work from home until I am able to return to City Hall. I will try to come in during the week to check in. Thanks to all of you for the prayers and kind words. I have never experienced this much support and love ever. It means the world to me. St. Bernard sure is a special Village with very special people. Now for my report.

The Auditor's Office provided the end of the year revenue and expense spreadsheets to Council and the Administration. At the end of year, the Village revenues were up \$1,425,878.85 compared to 2020. The expenses were down \$279,015.88 compared to 2020. Both of these include the money we received for COVID and the money we spent.

The Auditor's Office prepared Ordinance No. 1, 2021 for tonight's meeting. This Ordinance transfers \$1,100,000.00 from the General Fund to various funds so we can pay invoices from those funds. Resolution No 1, 2021 has also been prepared for tonight's meeting. This is the annual meals and refreshment Resolution that allow us to use Village funds for various functions such as purchasing treats for Girl and Boy Scout night.

DIRECTOR OF LAW, Mrs. VanValkenberg/Walden - No report, but I would like to go into Executive Session following the meeting to discuss continuing litigation.

TREASURER, Mr. Ungruhe – This evening I have the statement here from First State Bank for the Memorial Fund that we have down there. At the end of the year the bank total was \$5,656.35.

SAFETY/SERVICE DIRECTOR, Mr. Paul – The new electric truck is in and we now can reach all our own lights. Thank you! It was needed.

I hope you did not need to go anywhere this morning; the ice and snow were a problem. If you did, however, then you noticed once again that our streets were cared for by top notch saltshakers. Thanks again to our Service Department. Job well done!

To My Community:

Have you noticed that the friends you chose because they were filled with love are perhaps looking more like strangers with a touch of hate? If you find this to be true, then ramp up your feeling of peace and love. Then say a prayer to revive any peace and love that have died in them and in you.

TAX COMMISSIONER/ADMINISTRATOR, Mrs. Helmes – My morning commute was rough today until I reached St. Bernard. I want to give kudos to the St. Bernard Service Department for the great job they did on the streets!

Which brings me to my next point:

Salt on our icy roads and the people who make it happen in our wonderful Service Department are all paid for by St. Bernard tax dollars.

There are many people who have ignored their obligation to file and pay their 2019 St. Bernard taxes and have now shouldered the burden to their neighbors to keep our city safe and operating.

The city now has to use resources to assess 379 tax returns and send notice by certified mail, which costs tax dollars.

If you receive an assessment, you have 60 days to amend your tax return. After 60 days, we will be sending your outstanding balance to the OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE for collection.

Letters are also going to each of the 259 people, who are not in our data base, living in St. Bernard as reported by the State of OH. Please do not ignore this letter as your income will be assessed if we do not hear from you.

Moving forward: St. Bernard tax return assistance is available by appointment only. We are transitioning away from drop-in preparation. To avoid COVID crowding in the halls, privacy issues, and eliminate long waits: We will not be able to assist in St. Bernard tax preparation THE WEEK OF APRIL 12-15. So, please plan accordingly and file early.

Our online filing system should be available in early February. All of the tax forms are available on the city's website.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

FINANCE, Mr. Tobergte – Absent.

SAFETY, Mr. Ray Culbertson – I have the Fire Department Report for December, 2020. There was a total of 49 fire incidents; 7 structure fires, 5 auto accidents, 2 hazmat incidents. Mutual Aid was given 6 times to Norwood, 3 times to Elmwood and 3 times to Miami. Mutual Aid was received once from Elmwood Place. EMS Incidents; 101 total; 5 non-breathers, 6 unconscious, 6 auto accidents and 2 overdoses. Mutual Aid given 28 times to Elmwood Place, 1 to Little Miami, 1 to Cincinnati, 1 to Norwood and 1 to Green Township. Mutual aid received; 1 from Little Miami.

I also have the Police report for December 2020. 429 total calls for service, 31 traffic citations were issued, 30 stop warnings, 5 traffic stops for speeding, 1 DUI, 4 juvenile complaints,, 2 railroad complaints, 3 motor vehicle thefts.

Like everyone else, hats off to the Service Department once again. When I turn out of my subdivision I look left up Ross, streets are clear. I turn right into Cincinnati and it's a mess. So, thanks again to the Service Department.

SERVICE, Mr. Schildmeyer - I have the 2020 Annual Report for the Service Department. Items recycled; curb side pickup 433.07 tons, steel 44.9 tons, Aluminum .36 tons, 184 tires and 81 Christmas trees.

The St. Bernard recycling program diverted 478.33 tons of material from going to the landfill in 2020. The City's savings and receipt of funds are as follows:

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| 478.3 tons @ \$50.93 | \$24,361.35 |
| Recycling money | \$ 3,849.94 |
| Residential recycling incentive program | \$ 6,307.82 |
| Total | \$34,519.11 |

- 4,634 special pickups
- 347 trucks spotted
- 327 dumpsters spotted
- 1,417 overtime hours
- Trash taken to the landfill 2,266.78 tons
- CSI 30 yd. Roll offs 4,380 cubic yards
- 7 part-time employees working 5,404 hours.

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT, Mr. Bob Culbertson – As everybody is aware the CIC had their meeting this past Tuesday. The CIC used the Village website so you can capture that replay. Coming out of the CIC meeting, discussion about the Long John Silver's property, looks like the timing's going to meet sometime in mid March getting everything wrapped up and transferred over to the CIC so, hopefully it looks like springtime demolition of that building.

“We Thrive” that was scheduled to happen at that meeting has been postponed because the County is purple, they are hesitant to get out give a presentation at this time.

I would like to thank Mayor Stuchell for confirming that the Village is looking into speed humps, deterrents on Greenlee and Tower are going to be much appreciated.

LAWS, CONTRACTS AND CLAIMS, Mrs. Bedinghaus – We are still waiting for the time when we will be able to call a meeting for the Anti-Discrimination Ordinance we have been working on. Until then I have nothing.

Again, thanks to the Service Department, I love St. Bernard and my thanks to everybody.

MARKETING, Mrs. Miller - I would like to remind the citizens that Recreation will be hosting sports sign ups this Saturday, January 30 and next Saturday, February 6 from 11:00am until 2:00pm at the Recreation office. The deadline for summer employment applications is tomorrow, January 29. I sent out the request today for the 2021 Newsletter submissions. I have included Council on everything. The Newsletter will go out next Friday, February 5. I would also like to thank the Service Department and their due diligence for keeping our streets safe.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY, Ms. Hausfeld – Tonight I have the Building and Zoning Department, 2020 December Activities Report. 7 residential permits. Total fees for residential permits, \$1,669.88. Amount paid back to the Treasurer, State of Ohio (residential) \$16.70 there were no commercial permits in December.

Mrs. Kathman – The COW report has been submitted to Council and the Administration and reads as follows:

Committee of the Whole
January 14, 2021

Roll call showed that all members were present: Mr. Tobergte, Mr. Ray Culbertson, Mr. Schildmeyer, Mr. Bob Culbertson, Mrs. Bedinghaus, Mrs. Miller and Ms. Hausfeld.

Motion by Mrs. Bedinghaus, seconded by Ms. Hausfeld to approve the written minutes of the December 17 Council Meeting. Motion passed 7-0.

Mayor, Mr. Stuchell – Hamilton County is now in the purple level of alert for COVID exposure. Please limit activities as much as possible and follow all health orders. We will keep everybody updated if there is any change.

We are in the middle of collective bargaining with the Police Department for their contract. Everyone has copies so you are all aware. The Ordinance has also been provided. This contract is expected to bring the Police Department back into retention since we have had substantial turnover recently. I feel this contract will put us in a much better position.

Our Council meetings are still open to the public. There has not been a Hamilton County wide shut down due to the COVID.

The next consideration is to work on the part-time workers' wages. Also, if necessary, look at the minimum wage salaries.

Motion by Mr. Tobergte, seconded by Mrs. Bedinghaus to put Ordinance No. 2, 2021, the Police Contract, as well as to increase wages of any part-time employees who are not at minimum wage on the table for the next Council meeting. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion by Mr. Tobergte, seconded by Mrs. Bedinghaus to put Resolution No. 1, 2021 for meals and refreshments on the table for the next Council meeting. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion by Mr. Tobergte, seconded by Mrs. Bedinghaus to put Ordinance No. 1, 2021, additional appropriations and transfer of funds on the table for the next Council meeting. Motion passed 7-0.

Treasurer, Mr. Ungruhe – The Star Ohio bank account, the balance at the end of the year totaled \$5,818,150.36.

Tax Commissioner/Administrator, Mrs. Helmes - December Monthly Report:

- Tax collections for December were: \$1,440,014.
- Tax refunds for December were: -\$29,488.
- The Village is down -6.79% in tax revenue from December of 2019.
- Total 2020 yearend tax collection is up 2.82%.
- Total 2020-year tax collections: \$10,653,594.
- \$62,816 in delinquent tax is with Capital Recovery.
- \$102,875 in delinquent tax is with our Attorney for judgement/garnishment collection work.

Tax Office Housekeeping:

- o 2019 Non-filers.

- o In November, the tax dept. mailed 610 letters to those who have not filed 2019 city income taxes. As of today, 379 taxpayers still have not filed.

- o Assessments will now be made, and unpaid balances will be sent for Judgement/Garnishment.

§ How do assessments work?

- The tax office will assess your income using average wage earning for Hamilton Co. to get your tax balance. (The median household income is \$57,212- tax amount would be \$1201 plus; penalties and interest will be included).

- You will be sent a bill for the tax and penalties with instructions on how to amend your tax return. You will have 60 days to respond. You may file the correct information to amend your tax return and lower your tax liability during this time.

- After 60 days, your balance will either be sent to Capital Recovery, our Attorney, or the Ohio Attorney General's office where a Judgement will be sought and then a wage garnishment or lien will be placed against you. This will also include and forfeit any Federal/State tax refunds you may receive.

- o The Ohio State list was received on Friday, there are 259 people listed as living in St. Bernard who are not in our tax data base. Most of these people are renters. I want to remind landlords that the law states they must report their tenants. I will be citing landlords who do not cooperate to our Mayor's Court. Please call me if you have any questions regarding landlord reporting responsibilities in St. Bernard.

- o Tax Returns will not be prepared in person on 4/15/2021 or the week prior. Due to COVID and crowding at the window and hallway, we are shifting away from drop-in assistance. Assistance is a courtesy and not required by law as the law defines the duty of the tax office is to audit the returns. So, if you need assistance or help filing your St. Bernard tax return, we ask that you make an appointment with the tax office. Other cities have gone to this method of appointment only.

- o Our software providers are still working on our Web portal for filing. It should be available soon.

- o Heidi will be helping me with our website tomorrow. I will have all of the new tax forms for 2020 and 2021 available tomorrow. I want to thank her in advance.

o We will only be mailing out tax forms by request this year. So, call the office if you need one mailed to you.

I think the Administration and Council should review the 2020 Census numbers. I think we may be considered a City again and should investigate this report.

Service, Mr. Schildmeyer – I have the Service Department report for December 2020. There were 27 trucks placed at residences, 20 dumpsters placed at residences, 317 special pick-ups at residences and 189.79 tons of garbage taken to the landfill.

Recycling report; 43.05 tons of recycling material, 140 pounds of scrap aluminum, pounds of brass and 2,960 pounds of scrap metal.

Public Improvements, Mr. Bob Culbertson – The next CIC meeting will be January 26 in Council Chambers at 6:00pm. It will be televised.

We will be taking up the issue of speeding on Tower Avenue also at this meeting.

Laws, Contracts and Claims, Mrs. Bedinghaus – The Ordinance for Non-Discrimination has still not been finalized. When we can meet again we will bring this up to date.

Marketing, Mrs. Miller – Reminded everyone to sign up for the Newsletter. The January 2021 issue has been sent out. The business featured is Woodstone Wine and Whiskey which is located at 4712 Vine St. The business is open for pick up with a \$50.00 order. They remain open during COVID. You can call them at (513) 569-0300 or email at woodstonecreek@yahoo.com. Make sure you leave you phone number.

Business and Industry, Ms. Hausfeld – Thanked the Department responsible for the clean up on Tower Ave.

Audience Participation

The Mayor will look into raised areas of streets around the Village.

The Mayor is also finalizing the legal issues for the transfer of property at the Franklin Park area.

HIP letters are being tracked and contact needs to be made and there will be follow up before any warrants are issued.

We are in the final stages of the Long John Silver property and will be able to move forward as soon as the CIC has the ownership on paper.

Resolutions and Ordinances for the next Council meeting.

Resolution No. 1, 2021, authorizing meals and refreshments.

Ordinance No. 1, 2021, authorizing additional appropriations and transferring funds.

Ordinance No. 2, 2021, the Police Department contract.

Potential Ordinance if the minimum wage needs to be increased.

The next Council meeting will be Thursday, January 28 at 7:00pm. and the next COW will be February 11 at 7:00pm.

Motion by Mr. Ray Culbertson, seconded by Ms. Hausfeld to adjourn. Motion passed 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Kathman, Clerk

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES

RESOLUTION NO. 1, 2021. AUTHORIZING THE USE OF VILLAGE FUNDS TO PURCHASE MEALS OR REFRESHMENTS FOR VILLAGE EMPLOYEES OR OTHER PERSONS AS SERVING A PUBLIC PURPOSE, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Mrs. Bedinghaus, seconded by Ms. Hausfeld to suspend with the second and third reading of Resolution No. 1, 2021. Motion passed 6-0.

Motion by Mrs. Bedinghaus, seconded by Mr. Ray Culbertson to adopt Resolution No. 1. 2021 as read. Motion passed 6-0.

ORDINANCE NO. 1, 2021. AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE AUDITOR TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS AND TRANSFER FUNDS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Mrs. Bedinghaus, seconded by Ms. Hausfeld to suspend with the second and third reading of Ordinance No. 1, 2021. Motion passed 6-0.

Motion by Mrs. Bedinghaus, seconded by Mr. Ray Culbertson to adopt Ordinance No. 1, 2021 as read. Motion passed 6-0.

ORDINANCE NO. 2, 2021. ACCEPTING AND APPROVING THE TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT MADE BY AND BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF ST. BERNARD AND ST. BERNARD POLICE DEPARTMENT OFFICERS AND LIEUTENANTS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Mrs. Bedinghaus, seconded by Ms. Hausfeld to suspend with the second and third reading of Ordinance No. 2, 2021. Motion passed 6-0.

REMARKS

Mayor Stuchell read the breakdown of the cost of the potential obligation for the pay increase. The total cost for the year is \$89,523.59. This includes \$3,962.96 for the Police Chief, \$43,066.13 for the regular police, \$2,454.50 for holiday pay, \$19,240.00 for differential, \$20,800.00 for OPEDC. We keep losing employees that we have trained, and we are having a hard time attracting employees because they worked approximately without any increase in compensation, we fell into the lower tier of law enforcement. This contract will bring us up to a more competitive level. Our goal is to attract and retain our officers.

Motion by Mrs. Bedinghaus, seconded by Mr. Ray Culbertson to adopt Ordinance No. 2, 2021 as read. Motion passed 6-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Motion by Mrs. Bedinghaus, seconded by Ms. Hausfeld to go into Executive Session to discuss continuing litigation. Motion passed 6-0.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

AUDIENCE WISHING TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

None.

Mr. Asbach - The next COW meeting will be Thursday, February 11 at 7:00pm.

Motion by Mrs. Bedinghaus, seconded by Mr. Ray Culbertson to excuse the absent member. Motion passed 6-0.

Council went into Executive Session to discuss continuing litigation.

Motion by Mr. Ray Culbertson, seconded by Ms. Hausfeld to adjourn. Motion passed 6-0.