

Village of Gates Mills  
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL  
January 8, 2013

A regular meeting of the Council of the Village of Gates Mills, Ohio was held on Tuesday, January 8, 2013 at 6:30 P.M. in the Village Hall.

Councilmembers present: Barnes, Bletcher, Reynolds, Schneider, Sogg, Turner, Welsh.

Councilmembers absent: None.

Mayor Riley presided.

Mayor Riley presented a Proclamation conveying to Harvey Buchanan gratitude and appreciation for all the years he volunteered in Gates Mills Village.

It was moved by Councilmember Welsh, seconded by Councilmember Turner, that Councilmember Karen Schneider be elected President of Council Pro Tem for the ensuing year.

Roll call: Ayes: Barnes, Bletcher, Reynolds, Schneider, Sogg, Turner, Welsh.

Nays: None.

Motion carried.

The oath of office was administered to President of Council Pro Tem Schneider by Law Director Charles Riehl.

Mayor Riley announced the following appointments to Administrative offices:

Robert S. Reitman, Income Tax Administrator.

Charles Riehl, Law Director.

Vincent Feudo, Asst. Prosecutor.

Jo Ann Lechman, Finance Administrator and Asst. Tax Administrator.

Gail Palmer, Assistant Treasurer.

Steven Szeredy, Police Chief.

Ronald Whitmer, Executive Lieutenant.

Dave Biggert, Service Director and Building Inspector.

Tom Robinson, Fire Chief.

William Murfello, Service Manager.

It was moved by Councilmember Schneider, seconded by Councilmember Bletcher, that the Mayor's appointments to Administrative offices be approved and confirmed.

Mayor Riley announced the appointments to Boards, Commissions, and Committees as detailed in the list attached to these minutes. It was moved by Councilmember Welsh, seconded by Councilmember Bletcher, that the Mayor's appointments be approved and confirmed, and that the detailed list be attached to and made a part of these minutes.

Roll call: Ayes: Barnes, Bletcher, Reynolds, Schneider, Sogg, Turner, Welsh.

Nays: None.

Motion carried.

The minutes of the meeting of December 11, 2012 were presented by the Clerk. It was moved by Councilmember Sogg, seconded by Councilmember Reynolds, that the minutes be approved.

Roll call: Ayes: Barnes, Bletcher, Reynolds, Schneider, Sogg, Turner, Welsh.  
Nays: None.  
Motion carried.

Pay Ordinance #1149 in the amount of \$559,321.06 was presented by the Clerk. It was moved by Councilmember Welsh, seconded by Councilmember Sogg, that Pay Ordinance #1149 be approved.

Roll call: Ayes: Barnes, Bletcher, Reynolds, Schneider, Sogg, Turner, Welsh.  
Nays: None.  
Motion carried.

The financial statement for the period ending December 31, 2012 was presented by Councilmember Barnes. He reported that operating revenues in 2012 were \$4.5 million compared to the budgeted \$4.3 million. This was due primarily to the fact that the city income tax was \$250,000 over budget and slightly more than last year. Operating expenses were just under \$4 million, about where they were last year and \$200,000 less than budgeted. That was because there was good control by the department heads. Inheritance tax came in at \$368,000 which was over the budgeted amount of \$350,000. It is about a million dollars less than last year. Capital Improvement was about \$810,000 below budget due to the postponement and deferral of the Mayfield Culvert project (\$400,000), the 911 update (\$125,000) and the stormwater EPA service yard project (\$100,000). Cash investments were slightly less than last year. The Budget Committee is meeting this Saturday and will look at the budget and Capital Improvement. The cash investments were almost \$4.8 million which is slightly more than at the beginning of the year. He pointed out that the cash balance is down since the money was moved to STAR Plus. The FDIC insurance was raised to unlimited levels in 2007. Beginning 2013 the level is \$250,000.

Councilmember Bletcher said there was an article in the Chagrin Valley Times about Chagrin Falls who like Gates Mills is going to lose about \$1 million in inheritance tax revenue. They put a tax levy on the ballot in November and it failed. They are conducted a comprehensive review looking for every possible line item to see where they could cut costs and still maintain their services. They looked at line items as low as \$3000. They came up with \$1 million in cost savings. Councilmember Bletcher said some of the areas of savings that Chagrin Falls found may not apply to Gates Mills but the concept is perhaps something the Budget Committee could consider.

Mayor Riley said the Department Heads should look at the line by line items. Councilmember Barnes said the Department Heads, especially the Service Department, have looked at line items with him and Finance Administrator Lechman and eliminated that which is not essential.

Councilmember Turner asked about the Building Permits revenue which is significantly lower than budgeted and lower than 2011. Finance Administrator said a permit is issued when a new house is being built or an addition is being put on a house. There were only a few in 2012.

Mayor Riley asked about the cost of a permit. Service Director said \$2 per square foot.

Councilmember Turner said she is being asked by residents that given the anticipated loss of the Inheritance tax, how we are doing on the Budget. She said she can point to the \$150,000 savings in EMS but that leaves \$850,000. Looking at the Financial Statement she sees there are deferred capital improvements. Councilmember Barnes said projects in the Capital Improvement budget were deferred but not in the operating budget. He said the Department Heads have been very judicious trying to allocate their dollars as wisely as possible. If a culvert fails you have to fix it. Page 7 of the Finance Statement is the best exhibit that shows the Department Heads are managing the budget.

Councilmember Bletcher said probably the next big operating budget potential savings, that he knows of, has to do with the potential of combining dispatching with a couple other communities. At present we are waiting on a County study. Police Chief Szeredy said the kick-off meeting has been scheduled. Councilmember Bletcher said even if we combine with one community (and Lyndhurst made a very good proposal) there was some potential savings. A bigger savings would happen if we combined with even another community (making 3). It would give us \$150,000 to \$200,000 in savings a year plus a significant improvement in services. Whether this can happen in 2013 is out of our control.

Councilmember Welsh said the Cemetery Committee is planning to spend some money this year to expand the North Cemetery. Councilmember Bletcher asked if the Village has a legal obligation to provide a cemetery for someone who dies here and has no plot. Councilmember Welsh said it is a nicety. The residents spend a lot of money for taxes and he feels they should have an opportunity to be buried here. Maybe we could increase the cost of the lots. Most communities provide a cemetery. It shows respect to our citizens. Law Director Riehl said there is a State law that provides for the indigent or homeless. If they are in the hospital, the hospital will look to the community for burial cost.

Councilmember Schneider reported the Positively Gates Mills Committee met. There is a committee meeting scheduled for later this month. She tried contacting a young man who wants to help as his school project and he did not return her call.

Councilmember Turner had no report for the Gas Well Safety Committee.

Councilmember Turner reported that the Mayfield School Liaison Committee will have a meeting at the end of the month. They will see the new facilities at the high school and meet the new superintendent.

Mayor Riley said the Mayfield Business Alliance has an annual event on Ground Hog Day. This year it is January 31, 2013 at Landerhaven. Cocktails and conversation is at 5:30 p.m. and the program is at 6:30 p.m. It features the Mayors from the various communities.

Treasurer Robert Reitman said those who attend the Gates Mills Improvement Society dinner on Friday night will have a chance to meet the new Mayfield School Superintendent. Mayor Riley said at the dinner he is going to preview his State of the Village letter which he is going to send to all Villagers yet this month.

Mayor Riley said he has received one volunteer for the traffic control auxiliary idea.

Mayor Riley said as a result of the Proclamation at the last Council meeting, Ann Missal sent a very nice thank you card.

The Clerk had no report.

Police Chief Szeredy presented a written report for the Police Department for the preceding period. For the entire year there were 14 theft reports, 9 fraud reports, and 5 burglaries. These numbers are small compared to the other communities. The officers conducted 55,000 house checks last year.

Service Director Biggert submitted a written report for his department for the preceding period. Mayor Riley asked if there was any word on when the State would start work on Mayfield Road. Service Director Biggert said April.

Fire Chief Robinson presented a written report for the Fire Department for the preceding period.

Councilmember Turner said there has been a Christmas Tree ceremony in the Village for the last 87 years. Some residents would like a Menorah Ceremony starting in 2013. Mayfield Village has had a Tree Lighting Ceremony for 30 years and a Menorah Ceremony for 10 years. Councilmember Schneider said it would be great. Mayor Riley asked if it would be indoors. Councilmember Turner said it could be outdoors. Councilmember Sogg said there are several ceremonies; you can't light up the whole Menorah in one night. Councilmember Turner said we could get a group of people to help with the correct procedures. Treasurer Reitman said there could be a committee formed to raise money to buy a Menorah. It would be housed by the Village and used every year.

Business from the audience:

MaryAnn Kish said she received a telephone call from a resident reporting that there were residents from Chesterland attending the Christmas Eve celebration. She said residents contribute toward the expenses. How can we keep it just for residents? Mayor Riley said if a few people crash our party it might be a good thing. It shows that it is a good function. He doesn't want to get into the practice of looking at identification. Councilmember Schneider said this happened a few years ago. It handled itself.

There being no further business, it was moved by Councilmember Reynolds, seconded by Councilmember Welsh, and unanimously carried, that the council meeting be adjourned.

Roll call: Ayes: Barnes, Bletcher, Reynolds, Schneider, Sogg, Turner, Welsh.  
Nays: None.  
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth DeCapite, Clerk

Approved:

Shawn M. Riley, Mayor