

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2023
REGULAR MINUTES/JOURNAL**

PLEDGE

President of Council Paolone announced that the judge called him before dinner and he moved the swearing in to 11 for all of them that were complaining about 10, the swearing in will be at 11 for the new year.

ROLL CALL

| | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|---------|
| PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL | MR. REYNALD J. PAOLONE | PRESENT |
| FIRST WARD COUNCILMAN | MR. KEITH SCHUBERT | PRESENT |
| SECOND WARD COUNCILMAN | MR. MARK STANDOHAR | PRESENT |
| THIRD WARD COUNCILMAN | MR. JEFF KAY | PRESENT |
| FOURTH WARD COUNCILMAN | MR. THOMAS GRUMLEY | PRESENT |
| COUNCILMAN-AT-LARGE | MS. LILY MARTUCCIO | PRESENT |
| COUNCILMAN-AT-LARGE | MR. JOHN MOLITERNO | PRESENT |
| COUNCILMAN-AT-LARGE | MR. SAM ZIRAFI | PRESENT |

COMMUNICATIONS

ADDITIONS & DELETIONS

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

MOTION MOLITERNO SECOND ZIRAFI TO ACCEPT THE AGENDA OF DECEMBER 11, 2023 AS WRITTEN.

SCHUBERT
STANDOHAR
KAY
GRUMLEY
MARTUCCIO
MOLITERNO 1
ZIRAFI 2
MOTION PASSES 7-0

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

MOTION MARTUCCIO SECOND KAY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 27, 2023 AS WRITTEN.

SCHUBERT Abstain
STANDOHAR
KAY 2
GRUMLEY
MARTUCCIO 1
MOLITERNO
ZIRAFI
MOTION PASSES 7-0

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Sal Ponzio, 1136 N. Ward Avenue, Girard, Ohio. Mr. Ponzio said this question is for the fire chief. His wife and he recycle every week and he went the last time to recycle and he noticed they have a giant gasoline storage tank on the side. He hasn't been retired that long from the fire department to know that that can't be acceptable. He asked the fire chief if they got a state permit for that? Chief Petruzzi said not as of yet. The city is applying for a variance through the state to have that be allowed but as of right now it is not. Ponzio asked the mayor if they have gasoline in that yet? Mayor Melfi said not to his knowledge. The mayor said it is important to note that the reason for that tank being there is because our midnight shift of our police department has nowhere to go for gasoline. The places in Girard are closed during the midnight hours and Sheetz, as probably everyone knows, has been torn down and that is where we

normally go so it is a stop gap effort to try to make sure that there is fuel there but he doesn't believe there is in there as of yet, no. Ponzio asked if Shell was open in Girard. The mayor said Shell closes. They are not open between midnight and 8 a.m. or whenever they open. Ponzio said he thinks the city owns a lot of property like the city street department, isn't there an area down there that would be a place safer for our community? Chief Petruzzi said that as far as distance perimeters go, code states certain distances from buildings, property lines, public ways and even impact protection, things of that sort. Mr. Ponzio asked if that is within the amount of feet? The chief said no. Ponzio said it is not within code then? Petruzzi said no.

Randy Emery, 102 W. Liberty St., Girard, Ohio. Mr. Emery said he wanted to commend Mayor Melfi of 24 years of service and also wanted to get an update on the theater. The mayor said he would be giving that during his report.

REPORT OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS OF THE CITY

MAYOR

JAMES MELFI

PRESENT

Mayor Melfi stated this past Friday, as city council and administration are aware, the city applied for 3 different projects concerning the Appalachian grant money that is coming to the area. One was a complete street improvement program which will be sidewalks, which will be lighting, electrical, and of course the other one is the long-anticipated Leatherworks bike trail, Trailhead. Just to give you a little history of that, they put together a committee in 2000 and then they went through a couple of decades of litigation in trying to acquire both the Leatherworks and of course the Shortline Railroad property, both which they have been successful. They own the Leatherworks property. They have a 99 year lease on the railroad property. They are ready to go from that standpoint. Everybody is aware of the cleanup at the Leatherworks. That should be completed, actually there was a little bit more, they discovered a section that had a little bit more in it, a couple of small barrels. That should be finished tomorrow. Nonetheless, since 1969 that site has been abominable and now it is ready to go for development and whatever council deems, whether it be commercial. The mayor said he would like to see of course a blend of commercial and recreation at that site. The Wellman Theater is on that list as well. Keep in mind, he wants everyone to understand, this is a competitive list. This is not a guarantee. There is a lot of money forthcoming, but let's understand this is competitive grants. There is a list of, looks to be about 59 projects, so he is confident this is the start. Whether or not we get funded immediately, but it is the start of those projects going forth without a large financial commitment from the city. Mayor Melfi said he has been working on these things for 20 years. They all know that the Wellman Theater is a recent development, and they are excited at the fact that they were able to get it into the Appalachian program. The Appalachian program serves mostly downtowns so anything that downtowns can use it really is geared towards cityscapes and downtown improvements, so he is excited about the possibility that something that is just a recent idea that he brought forth to council, council passed and purchased the Wellman, so they are pretty excited about that possibility. The mayor said he was there for the sendoff at Eastgate last Friday and it is exciting for the whole valley. The mayor said he has to tell them that the Mahoning River Mayor's Association, which he has been the chairman for three years, has known about this grant money coming. The is over \$500 million. They have been working on it, and he has to say that what is so good about this from the very beginning is that everyone, all of the communities are participating, all of the communities are going to gain. They hear it all the time, big, they hear small, they hear this they hear that, and everyone is going to gain from this Appalachian grant and that is exciting because they all live here and they want to see everybody prosper.

Mayor Melfi said this is his last council meeting after 35 years of council meetings. The mayor said he has to say without much ado, he has said it many times as mayor and he means it, it has been an honor to serve. When you're the mayor it is an unusual position. It is lonely at the top. You have heard that phrase before. Mayor Melfi said he has a few other phrases but they are not so politically correct as they were when he was a kid, but if you recall, when they came into office this city was in horrible financial shape. Immediately put into fiscal emergency. They had to deal with all of that and that was an unbelievable experience. When you have to lay off people you grew up with and friends, cemetery employees, whatever it maybe it was a very difficult experience, but one that had to be done. If that wasn't enough, right away out of the gate they lost Indalex. A lot of younger people might not remember Indalex. They were their largest employer by far. \$300,000 in income tax, a couple \$100,000 in water and sewer and 300 jobs down the drain. The mayor said when they were just getting their head above water with fiscal emergency, they closed, but they made it out. They made it out very well. Mayor Melfi said he has to tell them he thanks everybody for working with them all of these years. There are a few other people to

mention. Of course Jerry has been a brother to him. There have been a lot of dedicated employees and he means that. There is always a little cat and dog kind of friction between management and union. They had to do a job. They have to do a job, but he has to tell them he hopes the public recognizes the fact that there are a lot of dedicated people here and they are enthusiastic about making Girard better. The mayor said he thinks so. He thinks that most of the public knows that. Every once in a while, he knows that government employees get a bad rap. He thinks it is very important for them to know that and he would be remiss not to mention people who.....Cookie Scirroco. 94 years old on his next birthday, still working. He worked for minimum wage for 20 of his 24 years with him. Minimum wage. Opened the gym at night. Closed the gym at night. Closed the bathrooms at the park. Never complained. Not once. Dennis Meek. Very few people know him. Very dedicated engineer. Knows every nook and cranny. Nobody understands what's underground. Nobody knows what's underground in every corner and they have discovered so many things over the years. Melfi said these are people that have to be thanked. He dealt with council and he appreciates all of their positive input and guidance over the years. Sam Zirafi in his previous role of city auditor. He was a great auditor and during the most difficult times. The law director, former law director Mark Standohar. Great law director. Great guidance. Coined a couple of phrases about him and one he could say, advisor to the unadvisable, and probably can't say much about the others. Melfi said he couldn't have gotten through two decades plus without all of these people. The mayor said he wishes the new administration luck. He will always wish the city luck. They are going to leave it in good shape. A hell of a lot better shape than he found it. Melfi said he obtained a lot of gray hair by trying to make it right. Over the years you try to say what's it like. He said he has three children. He guesses this is his fourth child. He tried not to neglect his children because his son who is now 30 was six years old when he became mayor, so he tried not to neglect his children as he had this responsibility, but he will admit that the city was his fourth child and they always had that as a concerning part of their lives. Mayor Melfi said once again, he wishes everybody the best. Merry Christmas. Happy New Year.

COMMENTS:

Everyone applauded the mayor.

SAFETY/SERVICE DIRECTOR

JERRY LAMBERT

ABSENT

COMMENTS:

LAW DIRECTOR

BRIAN KREN

PRESENT

Attorney Kren said the fire levy was filed with the Board of Elections for the May primary. Ordinance 51-93 tax code updates are changes mandated from changes from the state law and they asked that it be passed by the end of the year so he would ask that it be suspended and passed tonight. Kren said finally he wanted to say that he took office as a councilman of the third ward January 1, 2000 and in his office downstairs there is a picture of he and the mayor getting sworn in. The mayor's hair was a little darker and he had a little less pounds on in that picture, but he was on council during fiscal emergency and he knows there were a lot of difficult decisions that had to be made that no other previous administration really had to face and then when he became law director in 2012 he knows he's gotten a few more gray hairs by being the city's attorney, but he's always enjoyed working with the mayor. He knows that they didn't always agree, but any disagreement they had was when they were doing what they thought was best for the city. Attorney Kren said he wanted to thank the mayor for his decades of service and leadership in the community.

COMMENTS:

AUDITOR

JULIE COGGINS

PRESENT

The auditor said she had no report. Ms. Coggins said she also would like to say as being the city auditor the past four years that it has been an honor to work with Mayor Melfi and Jerry Lambert and she would like to thank them both for all their years of service and their dedication and the many, many accomplishments that they have achieved over all of those years.

COMMENTS:

TREASURER

MARK ZUPPO

ABSENT

COMMENTS:

FIRE CHIEF

JAMES PETRUZZI

PRESENT

Chief Petruzzi said their calls to service to date were 2,290. All members recently went through pediatric advanced life support and cardiac life support through their partnership with University Hospitals. These classes were free of charge. Chief Petruzzi said to the Mayor and Jerry both, thank you for the partnership over the last couple of years since he has taken over in this role. It is appreciated.

COMMENTS:

POLICE CHIEF

JOHN NORMAN

ABSENT

COMMENTS:

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCES-MOLITERNO-GRUMLEY-ZIRAFI

Councilman Moliterno said no report. Moliterno said that he had the pleasure of being sworn in for his first term as a councilman at the same time as the mayor was being sworn in as his first term as mayor. He told the mayor it goes back a long way. There certainly have been ups and downs, there's no question about it, but where they are at as a city today, and again, is in no small part to the work he has done over those last 24 years. Councilman Moliterno said the mayor should feel good about what he is leaving to the next administration and the next council because they are able to smile a little bit and deal with different problems than they had to deal with back then. Councilman Moliterno congratulated Mayor Melfi. Mayor Melfi thanked him.

COMMENTS:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-KAY-MARTUCCIO-MOLITERNO

No report.

COMMENTS:

BUILDING & GROUNDS-SCHUBERT-STANDOHAR-KAY

No report. Councilman Schubert said that he would also like to comment on the administration, the mayor and Jerry and the entire administration on a great 24 years and thank you. Schubert said he is much younger than these guys and himself, but he has definitely left them in a better place than when you found it and they appreciate it.

COMMENTS:

HEALTH & SAFETY-GRUMLEY-MOLITERNO-MARTUCCIO

No report. Councilman Grumley said he himself would like to thank the mayor for everything he has done over the years. Grumley said he has been around for a lot of it. He wished him the best of luck and told him to enjoy his grandkids.

COMMENTS:

STREETS SIDEWALKS & EMPLOYEE WELFARE-STANDOHAR-KAY-GRUMLEY

Councilman Standohar said he would like to acknowledge Mayor Melfi for 24 years of service as the mayor and Jerry Lambert as the safety service director at that time as well. Standohar said he has been honored being part of that administration for 12 years. Certainly, they went through some legendary battles together between the Valorec negotiations which was pivotal in getting the city out of fiscal emergency, and certainly the battle with the landfill situation over on 422. They were one of the very few communities to defeat that powerful industry down in Columbus, so a lot of great memories from those tough times but they have emerged strongly as a city, fiscally. Councilman Standohar thanked Mayor Melfi for all of his service to our town.

Councilman Standohar said they had a caucus at 6:30 with Zalusky Insurance. Michael Zalusky, the President, was there to talk about the city's healthcare renewal presentation and he answered numerous questions from council regarding the same. He offered all councilman to call him at any time with any questions they may have and they may have him back again possibly in January for another discussion, but the city does have a deadline of the 2nd meeting in January. They are going to have to get something in place because he said there was a February 1st deadline for this renewal so council needs to keep that in mind certainly. Standohar said he will be asking for legislation to be added for the first meeting of January regarding this. If the law director does not feel that that can be done then they can wait until...Attorney Kren said they can do it as an addition...President of Council said he wasn't going to do

any new legislation tonight...there was further discussion regarding this. Attorney Kren said they will do it as an addition in January.

COMMENTS:

UTILITIES-ZIRAFI-SCHUBERT-STANDOHAR

No report. Councilman Zirafi said he wanted to echo what everyone else said. It has been an honor serving with the mayor. He had the unfortunate position to be the auditor here when he walked into it and they told him the city was bankrupt, but he is proud of a lot of what they did. He is proud that the city went from being several, and he means several millions dollars in debt, to having the balances they have now. Zirafi said he hopes that in the future everybody concentrates on the finances. They need to continue to be frugal because you never know. Don't count on money coming in. They control none of their revenues. Their revenues are basically economy and certain other aspects that bring their revenues in and that's it, so don't spend money you don't have as he told the mayor many times. The mayor reiterated many, many times and apologized for interrupting.

COMMENTS:

ZONING-MARTUCCIO-ZIRAFI-SCHUBERT

No report. Councilwoman Martuccio said she would also like to echo the sentiment and thank Mayor Melfi for his years of service and dedication, and she thinks she has said this, his story is not over yet, and she wanted to wish he and Jerry the best in their future endeavors.

COMMENTS:

ORDINANCES

51-89

THIRD READING

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE & SAFETY TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS FOR THE PROVISION OF GARBAGE AND REFUSE COLLECTION IN THE CITY OF GIRARD, OHIO.

President of Council gave the specs for the garbage to the sergeant at arms to give to the law director because he will be the liaison.

MOTION MOLITERNO SECOND ZIRAFI FOR PASSAGE OF ORDINANCE 51-89.

SCHUBERT
STANDOHAR
KAY
GRUMLEY
MARTUCCIO
MOLITERNO 1
ZIRAFI 2
MOTION PASSES 7-0

51-90

THIRD READING

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CODIFIED ORDINANCE NUMBER 307.11 ESTABLISHING THE ALLOCATION OF CIVIL PENALTIES OF THE TRAFFIC PHOTO-MONITORING PROGRAM FOR THE CITY OF GIRARD, OHIO.

MOTION MOLITERNO SECOND STANDOHAR FOR PASSAGE OF ORDINANCE NO. 51-90.

Attorney Kren said he should have said this in his report, and he wasn't here at the last meeting, but they don't have a bike trail capital improvements funds per se which would have to be created by council, which council could do, but he thinks he talked to the auditor and they can do a line item for the bike trail so if they wanted to amend that where it reference a special capital improvement fund which doesn't exist to the bike trail fund. Councilman Moliterno said they talked about this at the last meeting. Julie brought that up that there was no fund. Moliterno asked if they can, there are a number of hoops they have to jump through to form a fund? The auditor said correct. Moliterno asked that makes a line item much better? She said yes. There was discussion regarding making the change. The motion and second were withdrawn. There was more discussion regarding the wording of the amendment.

MOTION MARTUCCIO SECOND MOLITERNO TO AMEND ORDINANCE 51-90 TO READ 1% TO LINE ITEM 214-3030-52445 IN THE RECREATION DEPARTMENT.

SCHUBERT
STANDOHAR
KAY
GRUMLEY
MARTUCCIO 1

MOLITERNO 2
ZIRAFI
MOTION PASSES 7-0
MOTION MARTUCCIO SECOND MOLITERNO FOR PASSAGE OF ORDINANCE NO. 51-90.
SCHUBERT
STANDOHAR
KAY
GRUMLEY
MARTUCCIO 1
MOLITERNO 2
ZIRAFI
MOTION PASSES 7-0

51-93

SECOND READING

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CODIFIED ORDINANCE CHAPTER 181 ESTABLISHING AN INCOME TAX FOR THE CITY OF GIRARD, OHIO.

MOTION MOLITERNO SECOND ZIRAFI TO SUSPEND THE THIRD READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 51-93.

SCHUBERT
STANDOHAR
KAY
GRUMLEY
MARTUCCIO
MOLITERNO 1
ZIRAFI 2
MOTION PASSES 7-0

MOTION MOLITERNO SECOND ZIRAFI FOR PASSAGE OF ORDINANCE NO. 51-93.

SCHUBERT
STANDOHAR
KAY
GRUMLEY
MARTUCCIO
MOLITERNO 1
ZIRAFI 2
MOTION PASSES 7-0

President of Council Paolone said he'd see everyone on the 1st and the 3rd and he gestured to Mayor Melfi-Jimmy from the heart.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION SCHUBERT SECOND ZIRAFI TO ADJOURN THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 11, 2023.

SCHUBERT 1
KAY
GRUMLEY
STANDOHAR
MARTUCCIO
MOLITERNO
ZIRAFI 2
MOTION PASSES 7-0

REYNALD PAOLONE, PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

MONICA URBANIC, CLERK OF COUNCIL