

Buckeye Lake Village Council Meeting Minutes
Held in Council Chambers, streamed live on Facebook
October 9, 2023

Call to Order: By Council President Linda Goodman at 7:07p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence: Led by Council President Goodman.

Roll Call: Present: Don Cable (0,0), Linda Goodman (0,0), Kellie Green (0,0), Deb Julian (0,0),
(Consecutive, Total Absences) Sue Wadley (0,1), Tom Wolfe (0,3)
Absent: John Lemmon (0,0)

Staff Present: Mayor Jeryne Peterson; Samantha Torres, Clerk of Council; Police Officer Virgil Weilbacher;
Rex Adkins, Code Enforcement Officer.

Approval of Special Council Meeting Minutes: Motion by Councilor Wadley, seconded by Councilor Cable, to approve the September 19, 2023 regular council meeting minutes.

Roll call vote: Yes: Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman, Green, Julian

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 6 – 0

Approval of Regular Council Meeting Minutes: Motion by Councilor Cable, seconded by Councilor Wolfe, to approve the September 25, 2023 regular council meeting minutes.

Roll call vote: Yes: Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman, Green, Julian

Abstain: Julian; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 5 – 1 – 0

Approval of Clerk Treasurer's Report: No report.

APPOINTMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS – None.

COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee: Council Clerk Torres read the Finance Committee report submitted by Committee Chair Lemmon who was absent for this meeting. The report can be found in the meeting minutes binder. Next Finance committee meeting will be October 23, 2023 at 5:45pm. Council President Goodman stated that what is being asked for tonight is not for additional legal expenses. It is to pay an invoice. Council had appropriated \$5,000 for this invoice; when the final bill came in, it was \$7,500, so the \$2,500 is needed to make up that difference to pay that invoice.

Public Safety Committee: Nothing to report since the last meeting.

Public Service Committee: Meeting held last Monday October 2nd. Much of the discussion was about ongoing project updates. Chair Cable thanked the citizens who showed up to the committee meeting and those who listened. Union Avenue has now been paved, with some work to be done on the curbs there. Next committee meeting will be the first Monday in November.

Rules Committee: Nothing new to report. Next Rules Committee meeting to be held at 6:15pm on October 23.

Community Development Committee: Chair Wolfe stated that council needs to touch base on where they are on the Charter and the Charter Review. He stated they had a presentation and because of some conflicts of times, it did not make it to the November ballot. He thinks as a community, we need to revisit putting together the Charter Review group. He stated this discussion could move to the next meeting. Council President Goodman stated it would go on the ballot in May and we need to do that right. Councilor Wadley stated the timeline also needs to be talked about for that and if it is achievable.

Personnel Committee: Next Personnel committee meeting to be held November 13th after the Finance Committee meeting / 6:15pm.

Report of Council President: Trunk or Treat / Trick or Treat will be held on October 26th from 5:30-7:00pm. The Harbor Community Center's Trunk or Treat is also that evening. The whole village is a great atmosphere on that night. There is an open fiscal officer position in the village. There have been a couple of interviews and the position is still open. Parks and Recreation Commission had an open position that was filled today by Mary Schumaker who will be a wonderful addition to that group.

Report of Mayor: Written report submitted.

ORDINANCES

President Goodman asked for a motion to rescind Ordinance 2023-43 (AN ORDINANCE PETITIONING THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LICKING COUNTY, OHIO, TO ADJUST THE BOUNDARY LINES OF LICKING TOWNSHIP TO EXCLUDE THE ENTIRETY OF THE TERRITORY NOW WITHIN THE CORPORATE BOUNDARIES OF THE VILLAGE OF BUCKEYE LAKE EXCEPT ANY PARCELS ANNEXED PURSUANT TO ORC 709.023), stating that the ordinance had been voted on and approved, however, since then, the village has received more information and that does not need to be done nor can the village do it, so council needs to rescind the fact that they voted on that and passed it. What Licking Township's boundary lines are is what they are, per Licking County.

Motion by Councilor Wolfe, seconded by Councilor Green to rescind Ordinance 2023-43.

Roll call vote: Yes: Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman, Green, Julian

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 6 – 0

Motion by Councilor Wolfe, seconded by Councilor Julian to table Ordinance 2023-51.

Discussion: This ordinance on the agenda tonight would have provided tax payments to Licking Township and since the boundary changes are not happening now, the money does not need paid. Councilor Cable questioned the action of tabling, to which President Goodman stated that we cannot rescind something that has not been voted on, so tabling is the action.

Roll call vote: Yes: Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman, Green, Julian

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 6 – 0

Ordinances for 3rd Reading – None.

Ordinances for 2nd Reading – None.

Ordinances for 1st Reading –

Ordinance 2023-52 (AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING ARTICLE 14 (PLANNED MIXED-USE DISTRICT) OF THE ZONING CODE FOR THE VILLAGE OF BUCKEYE LAKE AND THE DECLARATION OF AN EMERGENCY) has been moved to the next council meeting and will not have its first reading until then.

Ordinance 2023-53 - AMENDING ORDINANCE 2023-08 PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Councilor Cable, seconded by Councilor Julian to suspend the rules.

Roll call vote: Yes: Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman, Green, Julian

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 6 – 0

Motion by Councilor Wolfe, seconded by Councilor Goodman to amend Ordinance 2023-53 fund range from 340-349 to 341-0342.

Roll call vote: Yes: Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman, Green, Julian

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 6 – 0

Motion by Councilor Wolfe, seconded by Councilor Cable to adopt amended Ordinance 2023-53.

Discussion: Councilor Julian said that, as it was brought up in the Finance Chair's report, the fund should remain as is and if there are other expenses, those would be allocated when needed.

Roll call vote: Yes: Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman, Green, Julian

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 6 – 0

RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions for 3rd Reading – None.

Resolutions for 2nd Reading – None.

Resolutions for 1st Reading –

Resolution 2023-18 - A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE SELECTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN GROUP, AND INTENT OF THE VILLAGE OF BUCKEYE LAKE, OHIO TO ENGAGE IN FEE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE FIRM FOR ENGINEERING SERVICES REGARDING THE SAFER STREETS 4 ALL (SS4A) ACTION PLAN PROJECT FOR THE VILLAGE OF BUCKEYE LAKE.

Motion by Councilor Cable, seconded by Councilor Green to suspend the rules.

Roll call vote: Yes: Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman, Green, Julian

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 6 – 0

Motion by Councilor Cable, seconded by Councilor Wolfe to adopt Resolution 2023-18.

Discussion: Councilor Julian stated that there was a committee of people who looked at the data and scored three different groups and this group won out by a little bit.

Roll call vote: Yes: Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman, Green, Julian

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 6 – 0

Resolution 2023-19 - A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND/OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM(S) AND TO EXECUTE CONTRACTS AS REQUIRED AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Councilor Cable, seconded by Councilor Wolfe to suspend the rules.

Roll call vote: Yes: Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman, Green, Julian

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 6 – 0

Motion by Councilor Wolfe, seconded by Councilor Wadley to adopt Resolution 2023-19.

Roll call vote: Yes: Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman, Green, Julian

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 6 – 0

Resolution 2023-20 – A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE POLICE CHIEF OR HIS/HER DESIGNEE ATTEND ALL COUNCIL MEETINGS AND THE DECLARATION OF AN EMERGENCY.

This has been moved to the next council meeting and will not have its first reading until then.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS -

Councilor Wadley wishes to keep the discussion of the sale of village-owned property in everyone's mind.

NEW BUSINESS –

President Goodman stated that there has been an additional written formal complaint from an employee. She asked for a floor motion on how council wishes to address this. She stated that they can attain Mr. Downes as attorney again or, according to Charter Section 3.12(b)(4), council can investigate it themselves. Councilor Julian stated that absolutely it should be outside of this council. Councilor Wolfe stated he was open to allocating up to \$3,500 to hire the same law firm with Mr. Downes. Councilor Wadley agreed with Councilor Julian that it is in the best interest of everyone to have it on the outside. Councilor Cable asked what would be the purpose of outside. He stated that obviously we have had one inquiry and there were findings / discussions / observations, do we need another? President Goodman stated that this is a separate complaint. Councilor Wadley stated it has to be reviewed from a legal standpoint; the question is, do we want to keep it in-house or do we want to have someone who is independent? Councilor Wolfe suggested making it a certain amount and then if more is needed, that can be appropriated.

Motion by Councilor Wolfe, seconded by Councilor Wadley, to allocate \$2,500 and send the second formal written complaint to H.R. attorney Jonathan Downes.

Discussion: Councilor Julian stated there were recommendations that were put forward from the previous investigation and, to her knowledge, they have never been addressed to date. Her concern is, if they spend \$2,500-\$7,500 more, at what point do we get to have the opportunity for our recommendations to be reviewed and addressed, because that is not something we can do as council. From the perspective of the taxpayers paying for this, there has to be action at the end of this. President Goodman stated that, after three months, she did receive a phone call from the mayor. She was very happy to get it and the mayor wanted to know could they sit down and have a mediation. Absolutely, that is what we asked for and what was recommended from the last incident. They could not get it scheduled last week. They had it scheduled for this week and it would have been with Personnel Chair Julian, President Goodman, and the mayor and they asked to have a mediator. President Goodman stated that she found out late today that the mediator is actually an attorney with the law firm that was here at our last special council meeting that had been proposed as our new prosecutor / solicitor for the village. Councilors Julian and Goodman decided they would not meet under those conditions. Though he would have been acting as a mediator who was very gracious and very nice, he was an attorney and you do not go into it that way so they will have to regroup on that. Mayor Peterson stated that they will reschedule and she has requested a meeting. She stated she will be our mayor for the next two years and three months and she wants nothing more than to work with the council and to work smoothly. She also wants to work through what has happened inside the administration and she wants to find out what these issues are and what they were and have those addressed appropriately. She said she will reach out, starting tomorrow, to find a mediator, not an attorney, that was her error, she did not know this. She stated this will take a while to correct. It is not going to happen overnight and she is aware of that but she really does want to work with this council. She has no qualms about it as far as the staff on the other side of the room. She is not saying there are not issues, but she will not say anymore than that. She thinks that is the time to discuss with President Goodman and Councilor Julian and have a mediator in the room at that time and review everything together. Mayor Peterson stated she has attended an H.R. meeting held in Newark through the Licking County Chamber of Commerce. It was good for her to attend, she liked it, and feels she walked away from it with something positive to use. She will be joining that organization in order to start attending those. She will work on looking for a mediator. Councilor Wadley suggested finding a mediator who is impartial who can come in and does not already have an opinion formed and can guide us.

Roll call vote: Yes: Wadley, Wolfe, Cable, Goodman, Green, Julian

Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Motion Passed 6 – 0

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS -

Casey Clark – 241 Lakeview Drive – Casey read a comment voicing her support for the Buckeye Lake Council and staff. A copy of this comment can be found in the meeting minutes binder.

David Torrens - 10740 Weaver Road Utica, Ohio – David read a comment to show support for his wife, Lissann Torrens, office and zoning clerk for the Village of Buckeye Lake. A copy of his comment can be found in the meeting minutes binder.

Angela Woodrow – 7896 Winding Run Road St. Louisville, Ohio – Angela stated that she understands that Mayor Peterson was speaking that she went and had the H.R. classes. Angela said the only thing she could hear was that she wanted to work with council, not with employees who report to her and that is sad.

Karen Cookston – 113 Anchors Way – Karen spoke to say, as many people know, she has been involved in the village for a very long time. She has seen a lot of different administrations go through different realities. She would suggest that this is probably the greatest disappointed she has ever seen Buckeye Lake Village. She would also suggest that we have, in her opinion, the best council she has ever seen, as far as working together and trying to forward this village to the next step. She has also worked with a lot of the office folks and this is some of the best staff you have ever had. She thinks it is incredibly disappointing that our village is spending their much-needed money on HR events and the loss of well-trained and excellent staff members. It takes over a year to train someone new to take over that space and the history that we are losing potentially with Lissann and that we have lost with our fiscal officer she thinks is, as one of her good friends would say, deplorable. She would hope that the mayor, before we lose our entire staff and we lose the integrity of the village, makes other choices to help the village to be whole.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Councilor Wadley: Thanked everyone for their comments. Sometimes it takes a lot of courage to do that and she appreciates them coming forward and sharing their thoughts with them. She personally hopes that we can move forward in a lot of different ways. Key words that come to mind: communication, transparency, respect. You have to give respect to get respect. She hopes we can rebuild the trust and do what is best for the village and their employees.

Councilor Wolfe: A lot of turn out tonight and thanked them for their comments and for their comments throughout the days in between meetings. We will get together a little more on the proposed charter changes. Please reach out to any council members with your thoughts on that; May will roll up quick.

Councilor Julian: Thank you to everyone who came to the meeting. Trunk or Treat, she is sure we will have lots of residents put together some things. Cranberry Bay usually has a group of people and last year they did pizzas so she will get together with the Police Chief to see if they can help provide that again. Councilor Wolfe is really good about getting with the food pantry to bring a truckload of items. Earlier when talking about mediation with Mayor Peterson, Councilor Julian did not think that her and President Goodman and the mayor needed mediation but the more that she thinks about it, it really is for them to help provide the framework and catalyst to help move the village forward and specifically with the employees. She has had the opportunity in the last couple of years to get to know many of our staff members pretty well and we do have some really quality employees. In any of her supervisory positions, it is about nurturing, communication, appreciating, and taking a back seat if you are the supervisor. It's about appreciating and teaching and setting expectations and accountability. She thinks that is where we need to come back to in the next very, very short period of time. We need to resolve this in less than 30 days and not go into the end of the year.

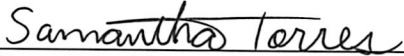
Councilor Cable: No comment.

Councilor Green: She is glad to hear that the mediation is going to take place. She agrees that it needs to be something that is done sooner than later. Her fear is that we will walk into our village office and have zero employees. She has not been around in this position for very long but she has been on Parks and Recreation Commission and she knows how the different employees within this building have gone out of their way to help us. She has also worked in other environments and she knows how long it takes to train someone and she also knows how gut-wrenching it is when you feel like you are a part of an organization and you feel devalued. She is glad that we are trying to resolve this and she does not want us to lose any more people.

Councilor Goodman: Thanked everyone who came tonight and everyone who spoke. Appreciate them coming and representing their thoughts and their take on what is going on with the village. Whether we agree or disagree, we need to hear from all of them. She has a hard time talking about the staff because they are great. They do a great job. She and all of council want to improve the situation for them. It would be a great loss to this village to lose them. We have already lost one. We have got to get through this. She agrees, 30 days max. She wishes they could snap their fingers and say it is going to be okay tomorrow. It has taken a while to get here. As far as the mayor meeting with her and Councilor Julian and a mediator, she would also encourage staff meetings that have not been happening, that have been scheduled and have been cancelled. She thinks they are very important. Not only does the transparency and communication need to be good with council and with the residents, but also 100% with the staff. That is her hope. There is a lot of business going on in the village. We have got to get in here everyday and do business and take care of things. The only way we can do that is to get healthy. We are still working. The doors are still open and things are happening but we have to make things better.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Councilor Cable to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Councilor Julian. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:56pm

NEXT MEETING: Regular Council Meeting: October 23, 2023


Samantha Torres, Council Clerk


Linda Goodman, Council President