

**Regular Session of Council  
Village of Georgetown  
February 10, 2022**

The Georgetown Village Council convened in regular session on Thursday, February 10, 2022, from 7:00 p.m. until 8:28 p.m. in the Municipal Building, Council Chambers. Mayor Dale Cahall called the meeting to order with the pledge of allegiance.

Mayor Cahall asked for an attendance roll call with the following Councilmembers present: Mark Anderson, Kelly Cornette, Mike Mays, Nancy Montgomery, Jeremy Varner and Steve Wolfe. Employees present: Chief Robert Freeland, Solicitor Joe Braun, Administrator Owens, Fiscal Officer Natalie Newberry and Chief Joey Rockey. Clerk of Council Brian Faught was absent. Attendees present: Travis Bonar, Mr. Kingsolver, Sally Mount, Delbert Aicholtz, Beth Staggs and Nick Owens.

Councilmember Montgomery requested that Mayor Cahall caution the public about talking amongst each other. She stated that sometimes it gets a little loud and makes it difficult to concentrate on what is being said. She also wants the audience to be warned against shouting out.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Nick Owens: Mr. Owens first acknowledges all of the hard work of the Village employees, especially during the previous weather event. He stated that the citizens of this Village are lucky to have such hard working caring individuals working for our community. Mr. Owens addressed the upcoming police assessment. Mr. Owens stated this is a waste of taxpayer money and is a solution in search of a problem. He said, "the actual problem in this Village is the childish behavior of this Council." Mr. Owens believes Council should be prioritizing "known Health and Safety Risks" to Village employees. The street and water building is in disrepair and Mr. Owens believes all Councilmembers are aware of the problems that need to be addressed. Mr. Owens addressed the actions of a particular Councilmember as evidence that the assessment/investigation of the police department isn't well-intentioned. He believes it is designed to serve personal vendettas. Mr. Owens further requested that as the scope of that assessment is determined, that it should happen in Council Chambers within public view. Mr. Owens believes, according to the Open Meetings Act, it would be unlawful to conduct a meeting of Scope in executive session.

Delbert Aicholtz: Mr. Aicholtz stated he agreed with what Mr. Owen said. He further stated he started coming to Council meetings. To see if council is using common sense and logic and if things are transparent. He asked if those that voted for this assessment if they would spend their own money on the same assessment. He said if you wouldn't spend your own money on the assessment then it probably isn't common sense.

Mr. Kingsolver: Suggested a contest with entry fee for a Christmas light contest. He recommended 75% of the money raised would go towards 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prizes and the additional 25% would be retained by the Village to buy new Christmas decorations.

Beth Staggs: Apologized to Mayor Cahall for speaking out of turn at the previous meeting. She stated that as a spouse it is difficult to sit by while someone is trying to create problems that don't exist. She stated that although Councilmember Anderson said he didn't mention anyone by name there is only 1 Assistant Police Chief. She asked what right her husband has for keeping his medical information private. She further asked if it is common for a Village employee to provide that information to a Council member. Her husband has consulted with his doctor and will work within his limitations. She states that her husband was instructed not to come to the Village Offices or the PD and to not take calls from other officers while he is off. She believes the only people this hurts are the other officers that look to him for guidance. She stated the ongoing executive sessions, Councilmembers questioning the worth of the Assistant Police Chief and the manner in which Councilmember Anderson talked to Chief Freeland at a recent Council meeting is hurting the morale of the Police Department. She doesn't believe the Police Assessment is well intentioned.

Sally Mount: She stated that during the recent snow and ice emergency and what a great job they did. She thanked Art Owens for directing all of the work. She presented him with 2 awards.

Tom Mays: Attorney Mayes thanks Administrator Owens for his help on the Land Bank Project.

#### **GENERAL BUSINESS:**

The minutes of the regular Council meeting held on January 27, 2022, were reviewed. Councilmember Anderson and Councilmember Wolfe made several recommendations for changes. Councilmember Wolfe identified on page 3 the word "is" that should have been "isn't." His statement from the previous meeting was to say that "Mayor Cahall isn't requesting" a review of the police department. Then on page 4, Councilmember Wolfe questioned a statement by Councilmember Varner that stated, "Councilmember Wolfe doesn't really know what this is all about." This statement was actually almost verbatim. Next correction request by Councilmember Wolfe was also in reference to a comment by Councilmember Varner. The wording of Varner's quote seemed more so to attribute the quote to Chief Freeland rather than Varner. Lastly, Councilmember Wolfe wanted the comments of Solicitor Braun included whereby he said that the scope of an assessment of the Police Department would be determined by the Council and further that the level of the scope would determine the overall cost.

Councilmember Montgomery made a correction on the spelling of the name of the person being appointed to do the assessment of the Police Department.

Councilmember Cornette thought it was better for these minutes to be corrected and brought back to the next Council meeting for approval at that time.

Review of the Budget Committee Meeting Minutes.

Review of Special Council Meeting on February 3, 2022, for the Weather Emergency.

Councilmember Anderson commented that Councilmember Cornette did a good job leading the meeting.

Councilmember Montgomery made a motion to approve the Minutes for February 3, 2022, with a second from Councilmember Anderson. Mayor Cahall called for a roll call vote with Councilmembers Anderson, Cornette, Mays, Montgomery, Varner, and Wolfe voting yea. Motion carried.

Mayor Cahall asked for a motion to rescind Resolution 1291 since the Winter Storm Emergency has ended. Councilmember Wolfe made a motion to rescind with a second by Councilmember Mays.

Councilmember Anderson asked why Council would rescind the emergency without worry that another storm could come through requiring a new emergency resolution. It was explained that the Emergency Order was specific to the February 3 – 4, 2022 storm.

Mayor Cahall called for a roll call vote with Councilmembers Anderson, Cornette, Mays, Montgomery, Varner, and Wolfe voting yea. Motion carried.

**AN ORDINANCE APPROVING, ADOPTING AND ENACTING AMERICAN LEGAL PUBLISHING'S OHIO BASIC CODE, 2022 EDITION, AS THE CODE OF ORDINANCE FOR THE MUNICIPALITY OF VILLAGE OF GEORGETOWN, OHIO AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY** was brought to the table and read by title only.

Solicitor Braun in response to questions by Council Members explained the Ohio Basic Code addresses for the most part, traffic and criminal matters with would not necessarily be related to Village Ordinances, Resolutions and the Charter.

Councilmember Varner made a motion to approve with a second by Councilmember Montgomery. Mayor Cahall called for a roll call vote with Councilmembers Anderson, Cornette, Mays, Montgomery, Varner, and Wolfe voting yea. Motion carried.

**Chief Freeland:** Provided an overview of Offences in January. Addressed a homeless female who attempted to enter a residence and did enter another. She has been located and incarcerated for burglary and attempted burglary. Chief Freeland is hoping she will get treatment. Chief Freeland also addressed a couple other specific incidents.

**Chief Rockey:** Requested guidance for buying smoke detectors that can be given to residents or installed in a residence that don't currently have a smoke detector. Where would money come from and how can we implement? Chief Rockey would like to start the project with 100 smoke detectors. It was determined that Chief Rockey would discuss with Tony Applegate on pricing. Administrator Owens recommended approval for \$2000 that he could approve purchase as needed. Councilmember Mays made a motion to approve. Seconded by Councilmember Varner. Mayor Cahall called for a roll call vote with Councilmembers Anderson, Cornette, Mays, Montgomery, Varner, and Wolfe voting yea. Motion carried.

Chief Rockey also recommended bring back a cadet program to the Fire/EMS department. This is a good recruiting tool for 16- to 18-year-old.

Councilmember Varner asked if there is an association with the JVS.

**Administrator Owens:** Has several grants written and waiting for responses. We have a grant in the amount of \$250,000 that will help with engineering fees for the stormwater problems in certain sections of town. The engineering drawing will be complete a ready when the Village is prepared to move forward on the project. He also thanked Council and the public for concern and patience over the last few weeks and to all the people that picked up the slack in his absence. He also gave credit to all of the employees that worked hard for 3 days in the nasty winter weather during the weather emergency.

Councilmember Montgomery asked for more information on the code enforcement report and types of infractions and dates, where they are in the process, how many were settled.

#### **ROUND TABLE:**

**Councilmember Cornette:** Need to set a date for a Budget Committee meeting. Set meeting for February 24, 2022, from 5 PM to 7 PM. Asked again about the tree that continues to be a problem on Ohio Street.

**Councilmember Wolfe:** Referenced the motion for the assessment for the Police Department. He asked how the process worked to determine price and scope.

Solicitor Braun indicated that the contract hasn't yet been signed since Mayor Cahall was out of town. He further indicated that Mrs. Madsen must first be retained and then Council could set the parameters for the assessment. He provided various options for how Council may set the scope of the assessment.

Councilmember Wolfe said that he agreed with Nick Owens that the scope of the assessment should happen in public view and would be opposed to Mrs. Madsen going to each Council member individually.

Councilmember Montgomery stated, "The way I see it, we're kind of spending unnecessary money if she (Sue Madsen) is going to talk to each of us individually anyway. Why do both?"

Councilmember Mays asked if there is recourse for him to serve his constituents by getting the Police Department assessment reversed.

Solicitor Braun said this isn't an Ordinance that can be overturned by referendum.

Councilmember Anderson said someone may have some thoughts on the assessment that they want to keep to themselves and not reveal in open forum.

Solicitor Braun suggested maybe limiting the scope to a few broader topics such as operations, personnel, facilities, etc.

Councilmember Wolfe discussed Resolution 1218 which is the Code of Conduct for Council and how best to have a broader discussion amongst the Council members so as to maintain more decorum in meetings.

He also addressed that the Police and Fire Chief provided reports at Council meetings while other departments simply send in reports which happen to be well written. Councilmember

Wolfe is concerned about the conditions of the water building. He is having a hard time getting behind any other Village projects while this project remains incomplete.

Administrator Owens asked about finding an office space in or around the Village to lease for the water department. He further committed to have them out of the offices by the end of the following week.

Councilmember Cornette was upset to find out this hadn't yet happened. She explained this was a plan from some time ago that was supposed to have been completed.

**Councilmember Mays: No Comments**

**Councilmember Anderson:** Councilmember Anderson feels that the \$10,000 for the Police Department assessment is an investment. While some may see this as a waste of taxpayer money, he sees 500 hours of overtime as a waste of taxpayer money. He accused the Police Department of not caring and having a blank check.

**Councilmember Varner:** Personally apologized to Travis Bonar regarding the offices they continue to work in. He took responsibility as the chair of the Utilities Committee. Reminded community of the March 4, 2022, deadline to submit entrance sign proposals. He isn't editing proposals.

Councilmember Wolfe wants it to be announced that the community meeting on the signs is also a time to voice opposition to the signs.

Mr. Varner acknowledged the skill and hard work of the Village crews during the Winter Weather Emergency.

**Councilmember Montgomery:** Councilmember Montgomery thanks the crews and organizers as well for the Weather Emergency.

Grant Mural Dedication is February 21, 2022, at 2 PM on Cherry Street.

Under "In Meetings" in the Code of Ethics, Council Members should avoid comments that could offend other Council members. If a Council Member is personally offended by the remarks of another Council Member, the Offended Council Member should make notes of the actual words used and request to speak. The offended Council Member can object to the remarks. The other Council Member may justify or apologize for the language used. The Mayor will maintain control of the discussion. In our last meeting on January 27, 2022 during the round table discussion, we were talking about the Police Assessment and Council Member Mays leaned forward toward me and said why don't we go through them, meaning the other departments, to make them better Nancy? Why is it not suggested by you to go through all the departments? Did you not have a problem with them personally? I started to answer but he started talking over the top of me saying, does the police not have...I reminded him I was talking. He said again, does the police department not have supervisors? The Mayor told him to let me finish. I refused after being interrupted and treated so rudely. In his comments, Council Member Mays implied 2 things. Number 1, he implied I had a personal problem with the police department and number 2

he implied that I was the one who suggested the Investigation. Neither one of those things are true. I was and am still offended by his behavior and his remarks. That's all I want to say.

Councilmember Mays responded by saying that he would like to say that the people watching don't see and hear the same things as Council in the backroom meetings.

Mayor Cahall suggested conducting business in a cordial manner and toning down the rhetoric.

**Facebook Comments:** Suggestion for a stop sign on Pleasant at Cherry Street. Chief Freeland stated that when Court is in session and all of the parking spaces are full, making a left turn onto Pleasant, you can't see oncoming traffic and they do not have a stop sign. He further stated that they don't have a lot of accidents there, but he has personally had some close calls in the cruiser.

Councilmember Montgomery stated, "not regarding that but I'm still offended by Mike's remarks."

Mayor Cahall, said, "Well, if Mike cares to apologize, I guess that has to be his decision."

Councilmember Montgomery responded, "I don't expect an apology but I would like it for him to quit, quit making innuendos, implications hoping some people take that as a certain way, when what he says is not accurate. That's all I ask."

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mayor Cahall announced the next regularly scheduled Council meeting would be Thursday February 24, 2022, at 7:00 PM.

The Budget Committee will also have a meeting February 24, 2022, at 5 PM.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Councilmember Wolfe made a motion to adjourn the meeting with a second from Councilmember Varner. Meeting adjourned by voice vote.

  
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Georgetown Mayor

  
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Clerk of Council