

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
Lithopolis Village Council Meeting Minutes
August 13, 2019

Council Members Present: Michael Belek, Amy Brown, Sarah Kidwell, Michael Long, Terra Wynkoop, and Andrew Zircher

Council Members Absent: None

Officers Present: W.J. Barton- Chief of Police, Jon Browning – Village Solicitor, Joe Taylor – Mayor, Ed VanVickle – Interim Village Administrator, Amanda Wolin - Interim Fiscal Officer.

General Public Present:

Brandon Pontious, Ferguson Waterworks
Alex Drovcheski, Ferguson Waterworks salesperson
Blake Pilus, Ferguson Waterworks support team
Mike Phillips, Master Meter
Eric Sandine
Josh Lafferty

Meeting begins at 7:30

Roll Call, Pledge of allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

Public Comments:

- Water Meter System Upgrade Proposal:
 - VanVickle: “To give some background, out of our 900 or so meters currently in the field, approximately 500 of them are more than 15 years old. The industry standard is to replace meters every 10 years. In general, what happens is that meters slow down when they get older, so the village is losing money from the older meters. We are looking at buying Master Meters from Ferguson to replace the older Badger and Hersey brand meters.”
 - Pontious: “Our meter does things a little differently than your current meters making it less likely to jam or have a decrease in accuracy. In our system you can become a manager of your asset with a Microsoft cloud-based platform. Every meter has a radio built into and readings are sent up to a station where it goes to the internet through the cloud. Anybody with internet would have the ability to look at their usage.”
 - Phillips: “Meters you already bought from Ferguson in the past five years can be retrofitted with a new head to give it the same functionality, so you don’t need to change the entire meter.”
 - Pontious: “A big portion of uncountable water is tampered meters, which is something the EPA is going to look at when they ask how much water you are billing versus how much water you are producing. This product is very technologically driven, and the water usage is easily accessible even when folks are away from home. A resident can set it up to notify them when it goes beyond normal usage. It is accessible through smartphone apps and through a desktop computer using a website. The warranty is 20 years consisting of a 10-year full warranty and 20-year prorated warranty for the electronics. We also have an accuracy warranty on the meter body.”
 - Phillips: “What you currently have which is a 15 year and 1.5-million-gallon accuracy warranty. We have a 20-year & 2.5 million gallons accuracy warranty that will stay within American Water Works Association (AWWA) requirements. If you test one of our meters at year 18 and it isn’t accurate enough, we will take it back and ship out a new meter.”
 - Pontious: “We are offering a turn-key proposal where we utilize contractors that can get the system completely installed in about 3 months. You get the cost saving benefits up front and you can pay for it with financing. Some communities like to do it a bit at a time, but we can also just get it all done right away.”
 - Brown: “What is the cost per yours versus what the cost of ours now?”

- VanVickle: “They prepared a quote for the whole turnkey proposal but had some inaccurate information. The quote was about 500 meters too high and we will need to update it. The quote also included costs of installation which I think we can do ourselves to save money.”
- *Discussion on the quote costs, whether or not to have contractors install the meters, current water bill increases, financing option, return on investment with time saved.*
- Pontious: “People with slower meters are effectively getting their water at a subsidized rate. With accurate meters everyone will be paying their fair share. We typically don’t see a complaint when rates go up, we feel that customers that do the system are happy and the community utilizes the tools such as the customer portal.”
- VanVickle: “The EPA is also pressing us on showing our water loss in the system and currently I can only estimate it.”
- Pontious: “With this system we can set up district metering zones to help figure out where a leak is happening. There is a backup system so if there is an issue with cloud uploads you can go back to a drive by mode like you have now. It keeps track of the data and backfills it once connected if there was a loss of connectivity. We don’t guarantee 100%reads because it’s not always feasible but you can keep track of errors so you can check them out.”
- Phillips: “If you don’t have the most recent read you will have the previous one. The system is designed to do two reads per day. The benefits in cost savings also comes from not having to send an employee out to read daily. This time saved allows maintenance employees to work on other important projects and preventative maintenance.”
- *(29:20) Informational / Promotional Videos Shown*
- *(41:40) VanVickle: “One of the significant factors that started all this is that in the last month we have spent 3 days reading meters for one person and two days for two people.”*
- Lafferty: “After about 5 months of reading meters it now takes me 2 days. For one of the other employees it will take 3-4 days because they don’t know firsthand where all the various meters are. With the system we have, 60 or so reads are endpoint failures which gives a reading but doesn’t save it so we have to manually input the data. In many of the reads we get an audit failure where we need to enter the house to check out the actual meter to fix it. Another 50-60 meters don’t read at all, so I have to go back out and enter the property to physically look at those meters as well.”
- VanVickle: “So it’s at least 5 entire days per month, to do these reads. Things are failing and it could be the box, the register, or the handheld machine.”

Old Business:

- Health Insurance:
 - VanVickle: “The quote we got is not accurate as it doesn’t cover all of our people. This quote expires Thursday at noon and getting another quote before September 1st is probably not possible. It costs around \$1,800 to extend the coverage for another month. Each of the insured, being Chief and his 2 officers, are paying \$277 because of the inability of the village to execute an insurance policy when needed. The quote we have, which includes 5 people, came up to \$501 per person. One person was excluded so it is inaccurate and adding that person in will change the rates by 180% according to the insurance company. The total cost before the renewal was \$1,418 per month. The new quote is \$4,189 per month without covering the employees that are currently covered.”
 - Sandine: “So adding 3 more people results in \$20,000 more per year that we aren’t budgeted for at \$501 per person.”
 - VanVickle: “As of this time I can’t sign a contract for the quote that was submitted because it does not cover all of the village employees who need covered under the existing ordinance. We have the option of redrafting the ordinance and prespecifying who is eligible for village insurance. We can do that in several ways such as excluding people or defining categories of employees. According to this plan we have to pay 50% of the cost of the employees, we are currently paying 80% of that cost. I suggest figuring this out at a finance committee meeting as soon as possible because every month we delay it is costing the village \$1,800 and costing each of the police officers \$277 more than what they were paying.”
 - Browning: “According to consulting, everybody in the village employee office has to participate in the insurance. However, according to our understanding, we can offer exclusive insurance to discrete units of the office such as the police officers. By doing this we may be able to substantially reduce the overall cost of insurance. We need to come up with a way to either pay another \$20,000, or, if we want to offer insurance benefits to everybody, we may have to cut salaries. There might be ways to get folks to get on other insurance

policies such as that of a spouse. Going forward we simply need a new ordinance; the last ordinance is inadequate.”

- *Finance meeting set for the next Monday the 19th at 6:15 PM to discuss the issue.*
- Ordinance Adopting a New Policy and Procedure Manual:
 - Taylor: “Chief had some concerns regarding an officer being a council member in another community and I’m not sure that this is addressing everything. Village employees are prohibited from being appointed or elected to any partisan position. I think that is just regarding village employees being appointed to a position in Lithopolis itself, not in other communities. Also, village employees are prohibited from using paid leave to participate in any political activities but elsewhere it says a village employee can work as an election official.”
 - VanVickle: “They just won’t be receiving paid leave while working as a precinct official.”
 - Sandine: “It just has to do with partisan politics, you can’t be paid to do something for a political party, which is part of state law.”
 - Long? *Makes motion to accept 1st reading of ordinance, Brown? seconds. Yes, from Belek, Brown, Kidwell, Long, Wynkoop? (too quiet to tell what she said). Zircher abstains.*
 - Taylor? *Makes motion to waive the rules regarding number of readings required, seconded by Brown? Yes from Belek, Brown, Kidwell, Long, and Zircher. No from Wynkoop.*
 - Browning: “I think you should make a motion to approve the ordinance and read it by title.”
 - Taylor: “An ordinance adopting the attached Village of Lithopolis Policy and Procedure Manual and repealing ordinance 10-06 and any & all previous policies and procedure manuals. Can someone make a motion?”
 - *Motion made, unclear who, seconded by Brown? Yes, from Belek, Brown, Kidwell, & Long. No from Wynkoop. Zircher Abstains.*
- Ordinance to Accept Bid from Columbus Asphalt Paving:
 - VanVickle: “Bids opened on Friday and there were 3 bidders. One of them was outside of the state mandated 110% of estimate so we have 2 viable bids. They are roughly \$3,000 apart from each other with Columbus Asphalt being the lower of the 2. The total from Columbus Asphalt was \$245,859 which is the one the CT recommends we accept. This covers everything on the original bid, no items were excluded.”
 - Taylor: “We have an ordinance to accept the bid of Columbus Asphalt Paving 1196 Technology Dr. Gahanna, OH 43230 for the 2019 Village Paving Project and declaring it in an emergency.
 - *Motion is made and seconded, motion passes.*
 - *Motion to suspend rules for second and third reading is made and seconded, motion passes.*

New Business: None

Officer Reports:

Chief of Police W. J. Barton: “We had an officer hit a mailbox with his sideview mirror, which we will have to pay for, nothing else.”

Council Round Robin

- **Belek:** “Last week Ed, Amanda, and I went to county tax commission and pitched our case for adopting our tax budget for the year. We told them about our effort to put it on the ballot and what the money would be used for. They agreed that it was a good idea and, they approved our millage.”
 - Wolin: “They were pleased with how the village is improving and that we have put some of our bad habits behind us. They had questions about appropriations that we were able to answer. When we were leaving, Mr. Slater thanked Mr. Belek for coming, it is unusual for a council member to come.”
- **Brown** – “I’m a little bit frustrated that all of these emails went out inviting discussion then at the meeting we end up with a lot of arguing and bickering over things that could have been resolved during the week. Can these things be solved before things are brought to council?”
 - *Discussion between VanVickle, Taylor, and Brown on what should and should not be worked out beforehand versus discussed at an open meeting and how soon information should be presented to council members.*
- **Kidwell** – “Nothing to add.”
- **Long** – “Nothing to add.”
- **Wynkoop** – “Nothing to add.”
- **Zircher** – “Nothing to add.”

Motion to adjourn is made and seconded. All council members then approve the motion.