

VILLAGE OF ST. BERNARD
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

February 13th, 2025

The St. Bernard Village Committee of the Whole was held on February 13th, 2025 in Council Chambers.

Roll call showed all seven members were present: Mr. Moreton, Mr. Stuchell, Mr. Edwards, Ms. Hausfeld, Mr. Schildmeyer, Mr. Culbertson, and Mr. Estep.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Ms. Hausfeld, to approve the written minutes of the January 23rd council meeting. Motion passes 7-0.

REPORTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIALS

Mayor, Mr. Stuchell- Thank you Mr. President. I wanted to give a brief update for the CIC after receiving a request for a town hall meeting to discuss the shopping center redevelopment project. All of the CIC meetings are open to the public and broadcasted by ICRC just as our council meetings are. There's also a portion that is made available for citizen discussion and questions at the end of the meetings for open discussion items so I encourage anyone who is who has a curiosity as to what is going on with the CIC questions or concerns to please come to the next regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday February 25th at 6:00 PM here in council chambers. Now for an update on what's happening with the shopping center. Bids for the demolition for both the old bank building and the strip mall have been received and the lowest bidder was in the amount of \$266,000. We'll be going under contract with O'Rourke Demolition once necessary ordinances are passed and we'll be scheduling the new phase demolition project immediately. As you're also probably aware there was an existing business that is in the shopping center that is still under lease and we're actively working with our relocation specialist to find a suitable alternate location for them. This is currently delaying the demolition of the strip mall portion of the project. If an alternate location cannot be agreed upon we will demo right up to this smaller 3 storefront building and continue with our vision for the mixed-use development project that would include residential and retail space. We are working with Civitas Development Group on this vision and in the process of securing a development and operating agreement. If you're wondering how we are paying for the demolition and site preparation of this project, Saint Bernard received a Hamilton County revitalization grant in the amount of \$339,000 and the CIC received an Ohio development building demolition and revitalization program grant in the amount of \$456,443. We have been actively pursuing resources for this project. I know in the eyes of some that we're not doing anything or we may not appear to be moving fast enough, but there's a massive amount of planning that's going on between the CIC and the developer to bring this project to into fruition. I will also tell you that that there is no one more impatient than

myself and I want to make sure this project gets underway. I want to make sure that everyone knows that the demolition redevelopment does not include the building that houses Skyline and Biggby or the professional building. We hope that this project enhances the clientele for both of these dedicated businesses in our community. Lastly, I want to remind everyone again of the Annual Day of Caring pancake breakfast that directly benefits the St. Clement food pantry on Sunday February 23rd from 10:30 AM 2:00 PM in the St. Clement school cafeteria. That concludes my report.

Auditor, Ms. Brickweg- Thank you Mr. President. I've asked for an ordinance and a resolution to be discussed tonight. The first one being Ordinance 4 2025. This is transferring \$8,000 from the general fund into the criminal act forfeiture fund. It also is the grant money and additional appropriation of \$339,000 into master plan 10A for the demolition. The second thing is Resolution 2 2025. It is that time of year again that every five years we have to put the levy on the ballot. We have the operating levy, seven mill, and I can tell you five years ago it brought in \$538,250. I'm sure it'll be more because property values have gone up. I'm not asking if you're for or against the levy, that's your choice, but this is to put it on the ballot for the citizens to decide. I will add to that, with some of our businesses leaving and this amount of money, this is a very crucial levy to pass to keep operating the village the where we are. I'm asking council's permission to put it on the table. This is the first resolution and if this is voted and passed, I send this to the county. The county sends back how much money we could generate if the if the levy passed. Then you'll have a second resolution to vote on and it will be for the August ballot. Then we will, as we have done in the past, prepare the resolution for the November ballot, if necessary. Are there any questions on that? If not, I will prepare the ordinances and resolutions. That concludes my report.

Mayor, Mr. Stuchell- I just want to remind everyone that the grant money from Hamilton County will be reimbursed back to us once the demolition is completed and paid. Again, the grant will be made payable to us.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Moreton, to place Ordinance 4 2025 and Resolution 2 2025 on the table for the next council meeting. Motion passes 7-0.

Law Director, Ms. Van Valkenburg- No report.

Treasure, Ms. Darrenkamp- Thank you Mr. President. As of the end of January 2025 our revenues were \$767,419.21 and our expenses were \$1,306,876.04. As for the Star Ohio account, our total shares in there is \$10,678,547.65. That concludes my report.

Safety and Service Director, Mr. Werdmann- Thank you Mr. President. As a follow up to my report last month regarding information that Alloy asked the village to designate 2 representatives to the Hamilton County tax incentive review. I wanted to see if there are any volunteers from council to fill the slots. The commitment is limited to attendance at one annual meeting where the existing enterprise zone agreements and community reinvestment area

agreements are reviewed for compliance. The designees have to be residents of Saint Bernard and have to be approved by council. It seems to me that a member of either the Business and Industry or Finance Committee would be a logical choice. On Tuesday February 12th, as the mayor alluded, we had bids opening for the RFP for the demolition of Saint Bernard square site. We did receive 9 bids for the work and the lowest bid came in from O'Rourke wrecking. As a result, I'm going to be asking that legislation be passed on the table to allow the Director of Public Services and Safety to enter into a contract with O'Rourke wrecking company for the demolition of the buildings located at 4901 and 4932 to 5021 Vine Street and declaring an emergency. The reason I'm asking this to be treated as an emergency is due to the deadline that is fast approaching for the use of the grant funds that the mayor also referenced uh that will answer this demolition contract. As was discussed at the Finance Committee last night, I made contact with representatives for the Ohio Risk Management Program and they will be taking over much of the village's liability insurance. They provide public entities with risk management consulting services in addition to just insurance and they do offer rebates on certain public trade safety training services that the Police Department already uses and the Fire Department has expressed an interest in using. I think that's a win for everyone. Finally, in consultation with the mayor and Auditor Brickweg, we've put together a draft wage ordinance for temporary seasonal positions. This is required to be updated annually due to changes in the State of Ohio minimum wage statute. As well as remain competitive for certain positions such as lifeguards that can be difficult to recruit. I would ask that an ordinance be placed on the table and treated as an emergency to assist with the recruitment of summer seasonal positions. That concludes my report.

Council Member, Mr. Moreton- Mr. President, I would like to volunteer as a representative for St. Bernard for the Hamilton County tax incentive for Alloy pending, I do not have anything unmovable the day of the meeting. Would anyone like to be a back up?

Safety and Service Director, Mr. Werdmann- I do not need anything formal, I will report back that Auditor Ms. Brickweg and Councilman Moreton will represent St. Bernard.

Council Member, Mr. Moreton- Mr. President, I just had one question about Ordinance 3 2025, and I think I already know the answer to this. I noticed that the amount on ordinance 3 is \$266,000 associated with the demo but the amount in ordinance #4 is \$339,000. Is that because the difference is covering costs that are going to be associated with other folks other than O'Rourke wrecking company?

Safety and Service Director, Mr. Werdmann- The grant that we received from Hamilton County is a reimbursable grant that can be used for eligible expenses. The \$266,000 bid is only for the buildings. There is additional demolition that will need to be done including parking lot demolition and site prep work. That has not yet been bid and will require additional funding and in accordance with whatever the terms of that grant from Hamilton County are there's more funds that can be available to use for advancing the project as a whole.

Motion made by Mr. Moreton, seconded by Mr. Culbertson, to place Ordinance 3 2025 and Ordinance 5 2025 on the table for the next council meeting. Motion passes 7-0.

Tax Administrator, Ms. Helmes- January 2025 end of month receipts:

Tax collections for January 2025: \$648,798.

January 2025 is down -4.70% or \$31,987 from January 2024.

Refunds for January: -\$2,010.86

Delinquent tax collected with Capital Recovery: \$1,054.44.

Delinquent tax collected with the Ohio Attorney General's Office: \$3,720.44.

As a reminder:

2024 St. Bernard tax returns are due 4/15/2025. All returns must be signed and have documentation attached to them. This includes w2's, page 1-3 of your federal tax return and any federal schedules, if you have them. The tax returns are not complete and cannot be audited without this documentation.

Please visit the St. Bernard website for access to the easy-to-use e-file system.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance, Mr. Moreton- Thank you Mr. President. The Finance Committee met last night to discuss vacation payout policies and an alternate insurance option before our renewal. I want to say thank you to our Safety Service Director Tim Werdmann for bringing these topics to the committee and to the many other folks that were also there and attendance to contribute to our conversation. The committee unanimously agreed to advance both of these proposals the minutes have also been shared with committee members for review and will be submitted next week. The next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday March 19th at 6:00 PM in City Hall. That concludes my report as it pertains to the Finance Committee. I would like to open discussion on the advancement of energy aggregation via the Ohio Energy Alliance, our presenter from last month. As a reminder the first stage of this process of approval is just to put certification on the ballot. So even when this gets on the ballot the public electorate could still vote no and deny this and if it's passed on the vote on the ballot, we still have another opportunity to not advance it if the bids come back more expensive than what folks are already paying through Duke. So, in other words I'm just seeking approval to put this decision in the hands of our residents and then to later be again reviewed by council in I guess that November December time frame after the general election.

Majority of council members are in agreement to place energy aggregation on the ballot. Law Director stated she will prepare a resolution for a vote.

Service, Mr. Stuchell- The Service Department will be closed on Monday, February 17th in observance of Presidents' Day. There will be no trash collection next Monday. Next week's trash collection will be as follows:

- Monday pickups will move to Tuesday.
- Tuesday pickups will move to Wednesday.
- Thursday and Friday collections will remain unchanged.

As a reminder, please mark on your calendars for the following events. Clean Up St. Bernard Day will be held on Saturday, April 26th and our next shred day will be held on Saturday, May 24th down at the Safety Center from 9:00am-12:00pm. Lastly, the Service Department is now accepting applications for seasonal employment. Applicants must be at least 16 years old and hold a valid driver's license. Forms are available for pickup at City Hall. As a former seasonal employee, I highly recommend this opportunity. It provides valuable hands-on experience in general labor while contributing to the upkeep and prosperity of St. Bernard as a great place to live.

Public Improvements, Mr. Edwards- Thank you Mr. President. Last night, February 12th, the Public Improvement Committee meeting met concerning the road projects planned this year for Langley and Greenlee avenues. The meeting was attended by several residents as well as the committee members, the mayor, the auditor, safety service director, the president of council and John Geode from JMA the company that's doing the project it was a very good meeting with great input from our residents Mr. Geode answered all the questions to everyone had the meeting did primarily focus on Langley Ave. but a few concerns were voiced by our citizens regarding Greenlee Ave. I would like to thank everyone who came to the meeting. Your attendance made the meeting very productive. The minutes of this meeting have been submitted to the clerk of the village for review by the public. Thank you, Mr. President, this concludes my report.

Safety, Ms. Hausfeld- No report.

Laws, Contracts and Claims, Mr. Schildmeyer- No report.

Marketing, Mr. Culbertson- Thanks Mr. President. The next Historical Society program will take place on Monday, February 17th at 7:00 PM. The topic is Presidents and our Past presented by Peter Bronson. The rec department is now accepting applications for summer employment at the Aquatic Center. They are desperately in need of lifeguards. The German Luau committee is looking for new members. If you would like to get involved, please e-mail the recreation department at recreation@cityofsaintbernard.org. This year's luau will take place on Friday August, 1st and Saturday, August 2nd. Lastly, I would like to welcome Keith Geraci to the recreation staff. That concludes my report.

Business and Industry, Mr. Estep- No report.

No audience participation.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Estep, to move the February 27th council meeting to February 20th. Motion passes 7-0.

Council Member, Ms. Hausfeld- I do not know if I have coverage for my mom. I do have coverage on the 27th. I know we only have so many meetings we can miss now. I do not think it is fair for those of us that show up to almost every scheduled meeting, if that meeting is rearranged to accommodate a couple people, those rescheduled meetings that are missed should not count against us. I do not know if I can make the next meeting or not, but I want to voice my opinion, that we should not be held accountable if we cannot make a rescheduled meeting.

Council Member, Mr. Moreton- That attendance ordinance we passed last year is for regularly scheduled meetings, and is specifies between excused and unexcused. I also would not be able to make the meeting if it were pushed to the 20th. I would hope our fellow council members would be understanding that sometimes we can't adapt our schedule with a week's notice.

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- Yes, the attendance ordinance is for regularly scheduled meetings. The meeting on the 20th would not be a regularly scheduled meeting. But with two people missing, we cannot pass the ordinances we need to get passed, we would need six members present. So, if Ms. Hausfeld is not here, next week would not go against her, but we would still have to have a special meeting anyway to get these emergency ordinances passed.

Motion made by Mr. Culbertson, seconded by Mr. Estep, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passes 7-0.

Meeting is adjourned.