

Present: President George; President Pro-Tem Hrydziuszko; Members: Abboud, Kecskemeti, Mooney, O’Gorman, and White

Absent: None

Also Present: Village Manager, Campbell
Village Clerk/Assistant Manager, Rutkowski
Village Attorney, Ryan
Public Safety Director, Torongeau
Deputy Public Safety Director, Davis
Public Services Director, Johnston
Interim Public Services Director, Trice
Finance Director, McCarthy
Planning & Zoning Administrator, Stec

ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President George called the special Village Council meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. in the Village Council Chambers located at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road, Beverly Hills, MI 48025. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance.

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Mooney, second by Abboud, to approve the agenda as published.

Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

1. FINANCE

McCarthy provided an update. She stated that the Village is doing well financially. The pension obligation is funded at 86% and retiree health care is funded at 68%. She said that the Village is in its second year of the ten-year millage. Everything is on track with tax revenue and the budget. She said that there may be a potential trash millage increase which should be revisited during the budget session. She went over the status of the major funds. She said if a sidewalk is part of a road project then it could be paid for from the road fund, otherwise it would come out of the capital fund. She said the Public Safety Command contract will be coming up for negotiation this year, so to keep that in mind for the budget session. She said at the end of Fiscal Year 22, there was about a \$4 million Fund Balance and \$4.5 million in cash. She talked about transfers from the General Fund to Local Roads.

2. PUBLIC SAFETY

Torongeau thanked the Council for their continued support. He said that agencies are having difficulty hiring officers nationwide. He said that Beverly Hills Public Safety Department continues to police. He said Beverly Hills is a great community. He noted the biggest issue facing the department is hiring and retaining staff.

3. PLANNING & ZONING

Stec commented on the Zoning Ordinance and Village Master Plan. He said there may be some possible Zoning Ordinance amendments forthcoming to clean up some of the language after the Municode review. He noted that reliability and stability are important for processes. His goal is to digitize plans and the application process. He would like to get the building permitting process online. He stated that the Village is working on updating Short Term Rental regulations. He reported that Carissa Brown is serving in a new economic development role and that they recently met with the Oakland County Planning staff. He commented on the Redevelopment Ready Communities Program that the Village will participate in. He said that staff is meeting with businesses and learning about their needs.

Keckskemeti suggested beautification and streetscaping along Southfield Road.

O’Gorman asked about relationships with neighboring communities. He suggested putting more consistency in ordinance enforcement.

Mooney said that bringing the Village into the 21st century with online permitting is a priority.

Abboud asked about utilizing drones for the department.

White stated that Bed, Bath, and Beyond may not continue at their Beverly Hills location, so Administration should be keeping an eye on that property.

4. PUBLIC WORKS

Johnston stated that there are punch list items and restoration work for the 14 Mile Road project that will be completed in the spring. He reported that the generator at Village Hall will be installed next week. The Marguerite and Hummel project will begin this spring. He discussed the water service line verification process. Initial letters will go out to the randomly selected 354 residences soon. He said an updated PASER study will be conducted this spring. He reported that the Greenfield Road roundabout plans are complete. He said that a sidewalk inspection and grinding program will begin this spring as well. He also commented on the need for street sign replacements. He commented on bridge and dam inspections. He reported that the City of Southfield submitted a project proposal for 13 Mile Road east of Southfield Road for the 2026-2027 Fiscal Year and the Village would need a \$100,000 match.

O’Gorman inquired about the condition of the DPW facilities and salt shed.

Council discussed improvements needed for the Riverside Bridge façade.

5. CADENCE OF DEPARTMENT UPDATES MOVING FORWARD

Council and Administration discussed having quarterly updates from departments. They agreed that a one-pager provided with the Manager’s Report would suffice. They also talked about department heads providing staggered quarterly reports at Council meetings, so Council would receive reports regularly.

ITEMS FOR COUNCIL DISCUSSION

1. INFRASTRUCTURE

The Council and Administration discussed Water & Sewer, Roads, Sidewalks, and how to use the balance of the Oakland County Planning Grant funds.

There was discussion about water main breaks and the cost to fix them.

There was discussion about the need for a capital improvement plan and budget. Trice stated that an asset management plan is needed. He advised that the Village start looking toward the future. He stated that the American Water Works Association is a good reference for best practices.

Campbell stated that the Water Resources Commission (WRC) handles water billing for most of its communities, besides Beverly Hills. He said that Administration is waiting to receive quotes from WRC for this service and to provide a water rate study.

George suggested doing a comparison or cost-benefit analysis between WRC and the Village performing water services and billing.

The Council discussed the options of monthly or quarterly billing.

O’Gorman stated that a sewer back-up program should be a priority this year.

George provided an overview of how the Oakland County Planning Grant funds have been allocated so far. He suggested continuing the discussion with the Engineers, HRC.

The Council discussed the backflow prevention program that had previously been discussed in 2021 and then tabled. Kecskemeti discussed the need for a public engagement component on this topic. O’Gorman and Kecskemeti agreed to follow up on this item.

George said that 2023 should be the year for infrastructure planning. He would like to see an interactive map on the Village website.

Kecskemeti noted that the dam is part of the Village’s infrastructure and should be included in planning.

It was the sense of Council to install a sign at the Beverly/Greenfield intersection displaying the roundabout plans and conceptual park plans.

The Council and Administration discussed possibilities for calming traffic at the Beverly and Southfield Road intersection.

The Council agreed that there should be some local road resurfacing performed this year.

Council discussed funding for sidewalk programs. They discussed the TAP grant and Safe Routes to School grant, and it was noted that both projects would likely begin in 2024. There were questions about whether the Village’s match portion could be completed in 2023.

George suggested that the Village get a loan from the State Infrastructure Bank to help fund these projects.

O’Gorman talked about seniors who live on a fixed income and suggested that the Village be proactive in helping those who cannot maintain the new sidewalks.

George called for a recess at 11:56 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 12:03 p.m.

2. PARKS AND AESTHETICS

There was discussion about whether the Parks & Recreation Board, Council, or Administration make the final decision about park related items, depending on the spending.

George talked about a resident who offered to plant trees on the side of the sled hill at Beverly Park where there seems to be some erosion after the buckthorn removal.

Hrydziuszko discussed priorities for the parks this year including a new pavilion roof, the Beverly Park playground replacement, continued buckthorn removal, and filling in the understory after buckthorn removal. She also talked about having a cohesive design at Beverly Park and Beverly Green, specifically with the fencing. She said that there should be a recorded maintenance schedule for the parks. She said that the trees near the playground and the 8 that will have buckthorn removed from around them are in need of maintenance.

O’Gorman stated that there should be a beautification plan for the parks.

Mooney suggested having the sled hill steps inspected. He said the green growth in the playground needs to be removed. He suggested expanding the bathrooms and removing the portable restrooms. He said there are piles of fallen trees in Beverly Park. He suggested refilling the woodchip path.

Hrydziuszko suggested hiring a dedicated part-time park employee who would have the availability to be at the parks more often than Administration.

The Council discussed Beverly Green.

George would like a sign made with a QR Code so residents can obtain more information about the plans. He said there should be trees planted at the location in fall 2023.

The Council discussed placing a welcome sign at Beverly Green.

The Council agreed that more public input should be sought. It was suggested that there could be a presentation by the Road Commission regarding the roundabout and by resident George Ostrowski who created the conceptual plans for the park.

Council talked about sponsorship opportunities for the development of the park. They also talked about development grant opportunities.

Hrydziuszko talked about having a controlled burn at Riverside Park to eliminate the rest of the invasive buckthorn.

The Council discussed the Wendbrook property which, if acquired by the Village, would become a public park.

George stated that the Village is looking at about a year timeline for the acquisition process. He said that the Village received \$1 million of the \$1.5 million Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant it applied for.

The Council talked about other ways to generate the remaining \$500,000 to be able to acquire the property such as grants and contributions. Abboud stated he was not in favor of using General Fund dollars to make up the difference.

Council discussed obtaining community input. George would like a concept or rendering of the property on display for residents.

O’Gorman suggested holding a public forum at the Beverly Park pavilion in May to gain more community feedback. He said conceptual plans could be on display at that forum.

Mooney stated that any legal issues and funding deficiencies should be figured out prior to the public forum. He said he had concerns about financing this acquisition.

Keckskemeti offered to serve on any infrastructure subcommittee or help with parks outreach.

Keckskemeti left the meeting at 1:06 p.m.

The Council talked about having standing subcommittees under the Parks & Recreation Board to help with special events and special projects. They are looking for more volunteers.

3. PUBLIC SAFETY

A subcommittee consisting of members O’Gorman, Abboud, and George will work on finding a consultant to perform a policy and procedure review for the Public Safety Department.

The Council and Administration talked about available accreditations that the Department may work towards.

The Council discussed communication from the department. Campbell stated that there will be a communication overhaul internally and externally and that he will present a strategy to Council.

4. STAFFING/PERSONNEL/SERVICE DELIVERY

Campbell talked about standardizing policies, procedures, and performance reviews internally with Human Resources.

There was discussion about the importance of the community knowing who the leadership team is in the Village and the importance of attending meetings.

Council discussed seeking proposals for professional services, such as legal, planning consultant, auditor, and Comeau. It was the sense of Council that the Personnel Committee would meet and report back to Council about RFP of contracted professional services.

5. OTHER

O’Gorman volunteered to work on communications and signs in 2023. He noted that there is not a dedicated Communications Director or Parks Director. He suggested that the Village hire interns or participate in a co-op program.

Mooney suggested including Council contributions or Groves High School contributions in the quarterly Villager newsletters.

O’Gorman suggested that Administration send out the Council meeting packet two Fridays prior to the regularly scheduled meetings.

The Council discussed developing a new tree permitting process, specifically for new construction and tree replacements.

O’Gorman commented on the Village Master Plan and thinks it should be reviewed. He would like to see it get honed in and establish more realistic goals.

Abboud would like to work on updating the welcome signage throughout the Village. He would like to see the Short Term Rental regulations progress. He suggested adding poles with changeable banners around public property, adding street lighting, and burying utility lines along Southfield Road.

6. COUNCIL MEMBERS’ WORK FOR 2023

White volunteered to serve on a water & sewer/infrastructure subcommittee with Kecskemeti. He also said he would like to help with the welcome signage.

O’Gorman expressed desire for a dog park in the Village.

Abboud reiterated that he would work on Short Term Rentals and signage. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting and thanked Council for their work week in and week out.

Mooney thanked Administration.

Hrydziuszko commented on the importance of having dogs vaccinated and licensed. She said she would work on parks planning and engagement. She also said she would help with work about trees and outreach. She suggested that the Village host safety trainings, such as a CPR class, for residents.

George thanked all of the staff who attended the meeting. He said they all had a good discussion during this meeting. He said there are a lot of projects on the horizon. He wants to talk about the philosophy around the Code and development with Stec. He said he will focus on the final piece needed for the Safe Routes grant and how to obtain the remaining \$500,000 for Wendbrook. He said he is available to Administration if they need any help.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mooney, second by Hrydziuszko, to adjourn the meeting at 2:22 p.m.

Motion passed.

John George
Council President

Kristin Rutkowski
Village Clerk