

# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Meeting

DAYTON LEGAL BLANK, INC. FORM NO. 10148

Held

July 15

20

24

**The Village of Weston  
Council Meeting Minutes**

July 15, 2024

Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Jeremy Schroeder at 6:00PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and presentation of the agenda. A roll call was taken: Mr. Craig Warner, Mr. Rob Myerholtz, Ms. Jessica Susor, Mr. Rick Easterwood, Ms. Brittney Klockowski. *A motion to excuse Mr. Dean Babcock was made by Mr. Easterwood, seconded by Mr. Warner; Approved unanimously. A motion to approve July 1, 2024 council meeting minutes as written was made by Mr. Easterwood, seconded by Mr. Warner; Approved unanimously.*

**Old Business**

Mayor opened the floor for discussion of the grant writer proposal. He explained there is a line item in the budget that allows hiring of a grant writer. A candidate was interviewed about a month ago and a committee has been working through that process, the next step is to vote on the proposal. Deanna Couch (DJ) made a comment "nobody knows how to do an RFP" (Request for Proposal). Mayor responded that we already write grants but see value in having someone to dedicate their time to that. There was no further discussion. The background check came back fine. *Ms. Klockowski made a motion to approve the 7 month contract with Kristi Galarza, seconded by Mr. Warner; Approved unanimously.*

Currently, there is no grant proposal from Zach Schmidt. His professor recommended waiting until our new grant writer is settled. However, there is always an opportunity for him to submit a proposal in the future.

**Reports**

Attendance: Stephanie Monts (Fiscal Officer), Harold Boggs (Village Administrator), Ken Taylor (Code Enforcement)

*Mayor:* Thanked Ms. Susor for performing the ribbon cutting and presenting a Proclamation for the new local business, Por Vida Tattoo.

*Fiscal Officer:* Special Assessments are due to the county by September 9th, which does not provide enough time for three readings. The assessments include a street lighting assessment, approximately five mowing assessments, and one junk nuisance assessment. Legislation will be presented at the August meeting.

*Administrator/Maintenance:* JPX will be using concrete instead of asphalt around the repaired catch basin, with the work expected to be completed next week. Photos were taken of the base, revealing brick underneath the pavement, and sent to Bob Desmond. Mr. Easterwood requested tracking the time spent on certain tasks throughout the Village, such as mowing. He also noted a 50-foot washout/hole when heading south on 235 that needs to be reported to ODOT. Mr. Myerholtz raised concerns about the location of the new volleyball net at Alumni Park, as it is the designated life flight landing zone. Ms. Susor suggested bringing this issue to the Safety Committee to designate an appropriate location, with Ms. Klockowski agreeing.

*Code Enforcement/Zoning:* An email was sent to Paul Skaff regarding structures without permits and the lack of response to follow-up attempts. He agreed that there is sufficient information on the property for him to take action from his office but requested additional photos. A list of properties that require letters regarding grass and junk was emailed to Stephanie. Ken asked about plans for the goats next year, noting that the kid is still in 4H. Ms. Klockowski shared goats have been identified as an agenda item. Mr. Easterwood mentioned there are ducks on Maple Street, though no specific address was given, indicating it was "the same property owner as before". He also inquired about the oil cans at his neighbor's property, but it was pointed out that it is not necessarily a code violation. Ken was invited to the Community Development & Public Affairs meeting and shared that he is available only on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

Before moving to committee reports, Mr. Myerholtz suggested seeking more public input before proceeding with any further actions, specifically regarding the native prairie. He mentioned that two people had approached him with concerns. He noted that research indicates this will attract coyotes and deer. Mayor clarified that the plan does not include grass but features native plants that are not dense, designed to avoid obstructing views, and will grow to a maximum height of 12-18 inches. Additionally, there is a plan for a labyrinth. It was noted that the native area is relatively small. DJ commented that a co-op, such as a community garden, would be a nice addition.

**Committee Reports**

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**Administrative Process:** The need for an additional part-time maintenance position was discussed. Stephanie was tasked to prepare a budget for the part-time maintenance position for the remainder of the year as well as for 2025. It was preferred to use the seasonal cemetery workers for some village maintenance tasks when needed. A draft ordinance to reallocate funds for the Main Street and Silver Street road projects was reviewed; this realignment would leave a road budget balance of \$130,300. A resolution for the Silver Street paving project was also reviewed. Due to the Fiscal Officer's salary increase, appropriations need to be amended for the remainder of the year. The background check policy will be updated by combining the old and new versions. We are waiting on Kleinfelder for the scope of projects for the SIB application. Ms. Klockowski proposed using the Rural Business Development Grant to repair Van Tassel near the grain elevator. Some 2025 budget requests from the Village Administrator, including Kubota tires and a box blade for grading alleys, were also discussed.

The part-time position was discussed in more detail, considering two options. Option 1 involves reallocating \$2,500 from capital outlay to hire seasonal maintenance employees for the remainder of the year. Option 2 suggests waiting to budget for the position in 2025 and including a job description. The Mayor supported creating a small pool of funds for minor projects, such as weed eating, mowing, and curb cleanup, to get a feel for the position. This would allow time to work with the Administrator on how the seasonal position would be utilized next year. Ms. Susor expressed support for additional help to be used in various ways but wanted a plan that includes work on an as-needed basis, not just specific roles like mowers or snow plowers. She also emphasized the importance of reviewing current job descriptions and voiced concerns about potentially complicating the process and developing bad habits. Harold agreed that it would be best to start fresh in 2025. Mr. Warner suggested that it seems logical to follow Harold's recommendation to wait and include a job description. Mr. Myerholtz added that if there is an immediate need, it should be brought to the council. The discussion moved to Silver Street with a suggestion to use chip and tar. It was mentioned that the bid for Main Street residential came in higher than the engineer's estimate, necessitating further amendments to the road paving budget to accommodate both Main Street and Silver Street with the current low bid of \$122,000. Mr. Warner, speaking on behalf of Administrative Process, stated that Public Works needs to decide how to proceed with Main Street and Silver Street. Mr. Myerholtz noted that a Township Trustee mentioned the bid threshold was increased to \$125,000, which could impact the Village. The Clerk indicated that the current threshold is \$75,000, a change made just last year that has an increase built in each year.

**Rec Board:** The remaining W.I.L.D program days are June 20th for Dog Safety, August 7th for Frogs & Turtles, and August 17th for Cosmic Wonders. The Walking Path Celebration/Ribbon Cutting has been officially rescheduled to July 17th from 6-8 PM. There is approximately \$4,700 left in the Parks & Rec budget for programs and events. A community bike wash event is planned for July 21st from 1-2:30PM on Locust Street between the Maintenance Building and the Library. Rules and safety guidelines prepared by Samantha were reviewed, and approval needs to be requested for the road closure. A budget of \$350 for this event has been approved. A Block Party is scheduled for August 17th, which will be similar to last year's event but with more water activities. It will include attractions such as Dunk the Mayor, games, a bike wash, music, possible tie-dye, and a potluck. There was a discussion about renting versus purchasing a bounce house, leading to the approval of \$460 for its purchase and a \$150 budget for the block party. The discussion continued with project ideas for grants, including a Story Book Trail, a Shelter House at Alumni Park, climbing wall and obstacle course features, a birdhouse area, and a paved path.

*Mr. Easterwood made a motion to approve the road closure for the bike wash on Locust Street between the maintenance building and library, seconded by Mr. Warner; Approved unanimously.*

Mr. Easterwood inquired whether anyone had approached the library to see if they were interested in hosting community events. The Mayor noted that Parks and Recreation were not seeking others to take over their events. Samantha Wick sought clarification on Mr. Easterwood's question, explaining that if the library had events, Parks & Rec already coordinated with them to avoid scheduling conflicts. Mr. Myerholtz expressed that while it's commendable Parks & Rec is involved, the library, which is also funded by taxpayers, could host events. He pointed out that the library has more funds and suggested they could handle more events, allowing the Village to use its funds for park maintenance. Samantha asked if this was Mr. Easterwood's intention, to which he replied, "in general." She clarified she was referring to scheduling, not event hosting. It was mentioned that the library runs the summer reading program, similar to Parks & Rec's W.I.L.D program. Mr. Myerholtz suggested that the W.I.L.D program could be managed by the library. He also advocated for Parks & Rec to have a more comprehensive budget rather than drawing from the general fund, proposing it operate like the cemetery board. The Mayor asked if he was suggesting a levy; Mr. Myerholtz clarified not necessarily, but funding shortfalls might necessitate one. The Mayor pointed out that the current

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Parks & Rec budget is already managed this way, excluding items like mulch and mowing, which come from the general fund. Mr. Myerholtz emphasized the need for transparency with a specific line item for mowing costs. Mr. Easterwood sought clarification on the \$4,700 left in the Parks & Rec budget. The Clerk explained this was for events and programs, with other line items covering maintenance, porta pots, and insurance. Mr. Myerholtz noted that two-thirds of the budget was spent on events, not maintenance. Ms. Susor added that it isn't just events, and it includes equipment purchases, like the volleyball net. Mr. Easterwood asked about new equipment plans, which were addressed in a recent report. Mr. Myerholtz cited other entities with Parks & Rec levies, suggesting community input on such wants. The Mayor, with Samantha agreeing, noted that Parks & Rec regularly seeks community input. DJ remarked that not everyone has little kids, and Samantha explained that programs are geared towards families. Mr. Myerholtz reiterated the need for Parks & Rec to operate like the cemetery board and to seek a levy if needed. The Mayor questioned if Mr. Myerholtz thought the town hadn't improved, to which he responded that the issue was about prioritizing expenditures without drawing from the general fund. Ms. Klockowski appreciated Parks & Rec's contributions, sharing positive feedback from the surrounding communities. Mr. Myerholtz interrupted, demanding these people be brought in to express their feedback. Ms. Klockowski continued, noting the openness of Parks & Rec to volunteer assistance and adult programs if volunteers were available. DJ, having lived in the town for 30 years, called for more community input on tax dollar usage and agendas, with the Mayor reminding her meetings are open to the public. Mr. Myerholtz compared the town to Bowling Green, which holds community input meetings. Ms. Klockowski clarified this is due to the lack of public committee meetings. Mr. Myerholtz mentioned public frustration with tax dollar prioritization and challenged the Administrative Process to find \$35,000 for a storm sewer project. Ms. Klockowski asked which committee should handle this, with the Mayor emphasizing all committees should work on budgets. Mr. Myerholtz suggested the council should direct committees' focus. DJ stressed the need for community collaboration, more senior programs, and addressing food insecurity, advocating for rotating locations like the fire station and library. The Mayor agreed on collaboration but noted some suggestions were outside their authority. DJ reiterated her concerns about tax dollars and expenses. The Mayor redirected the meeting back to the agenda, allowing DJ to speak further during the citizen portion.

**Cemetery:** Jane Spoerl attended the board meeting to address questions regarding currently owned burial sites and potential headstone exemptions. The sexton reported the purchase of lawnmower blades and provided a quote from Rowe's Tree Service for \$1,125 to remove trees discussed last year. Options for disposing of tree remnants were considered, with plans to revisit the topic in September. Currently, there is one mower and one weed-whipper, with plans to acquire an additional weed-whipper for the season. A small order of concrete will be made for spring foundation pours. A community member's request to move cement urns that are not filed was referred to the board, which stated that the urns are owned by the patrons and cannot be relocated for general use. Jodie reported that the sexton position has been finalized, and levy documentation has been approved by the council and submitted to the board of elections for the Fall 2024 ballot. The board and Jeremy reviewed past events related to the Allen foundation. Moving forward, cemetery matters presented to the board will be referred to the board and/or upcoming board meetings, and emails and letters received by the Village will be copied to the board. Additional revisions were made to the drafted rules, which will be updated once finalized by the board and passed by the council, with updated signage to follow. The lantern tour is being organized, with a preference to coincide with the Parks & Rec fall event, ideally on October 5th or 19th.

**Upcoming Meetings:** Community Development & Public Affairs 7/16 at 6PM, Safety 7/22 at 6PM, Public Works 7/23 at 6PM, WSIB 8/6 at 5:30PM, Cemetery 8/8 at 6PM

### New Business

An ordinance to realign appropriations for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2024, to cover current expenditures for road projects was presented for approval. However, due to the Main Street Residential bid exceeding the engineer's estimate, the ordinance is being deferred until a decision is made on how to proceed with the road paving projects. This will be revisited at the next meeting.

An ordinance making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2024, to cover the cost of salary increases as specified in Ordinance 2024-8, received a first reading.

A resolution approving the Weston Silver Street Improvement Project, authorizing the Mayor and Village Administrator to sign the agreement was deferred until a decision is made on how to proceed with the road paving projects in relation to the Main Street Residential bid exceeding the engineer's estimate. This will be revisited at the next meeting.

### Approval of Expenditures

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Mr. Myerholtz expressed concern about items being delivered to home residences. The Clerk explained that deliveries usually occur after hours, so the delivery address is entered for the department head. There were questions about inventory, and it was noted that larger items are logged (such as electronics), while Samantha Wick mentioned that Parks & Rec inventory is labeled within boxes and regularly reviewed. It was also pointed out that the Clerk handles all ordering based on departmental requests.

Council reviewed a summary of the bills (\$23,389.90) and outstanding invoices (\$11,190.46). A motion to approve the summary of the bills and payment of outstanding invoices was made by Mr. Myerholtz, seconded by Mr. Warner; Approved unanimously.

### Miscellaneous Business

The engineer (Feller & Finch) is reviewing the bids from Gerken and Morlock for the Main Street Residential project and will provide a low bid recommendation.

### Citizens & Visitors

Deanna (DJ) Couch, Samantha Wick, Randy Hann, Josh Tschappat, Ron Dallas (Virtual), Jigar Patel (Virtual)

Josh Tschappat recommended the Gerken bid, highlighting the difference in quality by noting that Gerken works on highways with ODOT certification, whereas Morlock primarily focuses on driveways.

Mr. Myerholtz reiterated his earlier request for the Administrative Process to seek \$35,000 for storm sewer projects. The Mayor added that there are grant opportunities available for storm sewers, suggesting that these projects could be presented to the new grant writer. He also emphasized the need for further exploration in this area.

Ron Dallas inquired whether the village mows the outskirts of town on Sandridge. It was confirmed that the village mows near the sign and along the sides of the road, with mowing patterns currently under review. Ron also raised concerns about the baseball fees paid by the kids and where the money goes. The Mayor explained that the fees are managed by the sports initiative board and set through collaboration among the four Otsego communities, known as Otsego Town Ball, to ensure equal costs. These fees cover expenses like umpires, equipment, and uniforms, and are kept in a fund separate from the general fund. The village handles the mowing of the outfield under lands and buildings, as the field is maintained for broader use beyond just the ball program. The baseball program, however, pays for the concession stand utilities. Ron also asked about the adult league fees, which are managed by an individual who donates a portion back to the village. This donation is allocated to the sports initiative board to cover additional costs for field lining and concessions. All these transactions are recorded in the village's accounts payable and receivable ledgers, making them public knowledge.

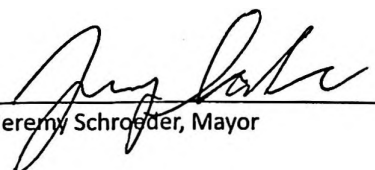
Jigar Patel had a question on behalf of DJ, who had to leave for another appointment. He mentioned that most of her questions were addressed, but she specifically wanted to know where the money for the sports initiative board is allocated and how she could obtain a copy of the collected and spent amounts. The Mayor suggested submitting a public records request for this information.

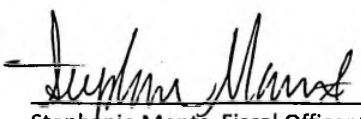
### Executive Session

A motion to enter into executive session regarding the investigation of a complaint at 7:36PM was made by Mr. Warner, seconded by Ms. Susor; Roll Call: Mr. Warner - Yes, Mr. Myerholtz - Yes, Ms. Susor - Yes, Mr. Easterwood - Yes, Ms. Klockowski - Yes.

Regular session resumed at 9:02 PM following a motion by Mr. Easterwood, seconded by Mr. Warner, Approved unanimously. The executive session included a discussion on a complaint and council rules for addressing such complaint, but no formal action was taken.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03PM.

  
Jeremy Schroeder, Mayor

  
Stephanie Monts, Fiscal Officer/Clerk