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**JULY 15, 2024 – REGULAR MEETING**

Tiffin City Council met for its first meeting of the month in accordance with Codified Ordinance Section 121.03. Council President Bridget Boyle opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. The invocation was given, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**ROLL CALL:** Clerk of Council Ann Forrest recited roll call and seven councilmembers were present: Aaron Jones (1st Ward), Scott Hoernemann (2nd Ward), Kevin Roessner (3rd Ward), Dennis Snay (4th Ward), Cheyane Thacker (At Large), John Hays (At Large) and John Kahler (At Large). Also attending were Mayor Lee Wilkinson, Director of Law Zachary Fowler, City Administrator Nick Dutro, Director of Finance Kathy Kaufman and Fire Chief Rob Chappell.

**JOINT PUBLIC HEARING:** A Joint Public Hearing with Tiffin City Council and the Planning Commission was opened at 7:01 p.m. for the consideration of Ordinance 2024-48, AN ORDINANCE zoning 79.506 acres of land, more or less, owned by David J. Wagner and Alan T. Wagner, Trustees and Ann E. Forrest and Clair M. Forrest, Jr., co-executors of the estate of Martha Ann Forrest in the Second Ward of the City, as Zone M-2 Heavy Industrial District, compatible with adjacent land use, and meeting requirements of the Tiffin City Charter and the Codified Ordinances, as well as Ordinance 2024-49, AN ORDINANCE to enact residential infill development standards in the Zoning Code and amend sections 1167.03, 1169.03, 1181.01, and 1181.05 of the Zoning Code. Dan Brickner took roll call of the Planning Commission, and there was quorum. There being no public input about either ordinance, the joint public hearing closed 7:03 p.m. The Planning Commission was scheduled to meet the following day at 3:00 p.m. in Council Chambers for its recommendation.

**PETITIONS**:Petition No. 2024-03 vacating the alley off of Front Street running east/west between Lot #409 on the south and Lot #285 on the north and terminating at the Sandusky River, all in Heming’s Resurvey in the Fourth Ward of the City of Tiffin, Ohio. *Referred to Streets, Sidewalks & Sewers Committee.*

**MINUTES:** The July 1, 2024 Regular and Committee of the Whole meeting minutes were approved as written.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Councilmember Kahler reported that the Law & Community Planning Committee met in City Chambers on July 8, 2024 starting at 5:15 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss Mayor's Request for Legislation #24-30, Mayor's request for Legislation #24-31, the TMAC Wing Project, as well as any other business to come before the committee. Attending were committee members John Kahler, John Hays, and Dennis Snay. Also attending were Mayor Lee Wilkinson, Law Director Zachary Fowler, Council Member Scott Hoernemann, Council Member Aaron Jones, and Council Member Kevin Roessner, City Engineer Matt Watson, Parks Director Bryce Kuhn. Attending from the public was Nick Consolo and Ryan Poignon. Council Member Kahler started the meeting by addressing Mayor's Request for Legislation #24-30 wherein the Mayor requested Council's approval to have legislation prepared and passed to accept bids for the wetlands project at Hedges-Boyer Park. This project is fully funded by a grant from the State of Ohio. The wetlands project would consist of a break wall and grassland being installed on the “sledding hill” at Hedges-Boyer Park. There would still be room for sledding in the winter time. The wetlands would be primarily knee-high grass. Parks Director Bryce Kuhn is hoping to start construction in September or October and therefore asks Council to declare and emergency and to suspend Council's three-reading rule. Council Member John Hays moved to recommend that the Law Director draft legislation to accept bids for the wetlands project at Hedges-Boyer Park, to declare an emergency, and to suspend Council's three-reading rule. Council Member Dennis Snay seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of 3-0. Mayor's Request for Legislation #24-31 asks the committee to recommend that City Council pass a resolution authorizing the Mayor to apply for, accept, and enter into a Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) Agreement on behalf of the City of Tiffin for the design of the Benner Interceptor, CSO 9-13 & 15 Inflow Reduction, and High Rate Treatment Projects. City Engineer Matt Watson clarified that he was seeking three separate resolutions, one authorizing a loan for each of the three projects. City Engineer Matt Watson also requested that Council declare and emergency and suspend the three-reading rule due to the time constraints for these projects to be completed.

The cost for the design phase of the High Rate Treatment Project is $1,723,714.00. However, the loan for the High Rate Treatment Project through WPCLF includes a principal forgiveness policy. Therefore, the loan would be more like a grant than a loan that the city would actually have to pay back. The total cost for the construction of this project is approximately $19.5 million. Council Member Dennis Snay moved to recommend that City Council pass a resolution authorizing the Mayor to apply for, accept, and enter into a Water Pollution Control

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Loan Fund (WPCLF) Agreement on behalf of the City of Tiffin for the design of the High Rate Treatment Project,

to declare an emergency, and to suspend Council's three-reading rule. Council Member John Hays seconded the motion. The Motion carried with a vote of 3-0. The cost for the design phase of the Benner Interceptor Project is $1,612,712.00. There would be no principal forgiveness for this loan, however, the loan rate is very favorable and below market interest rates. This project would see the installation of new sewer pipes that are needed to control flow and prevent the flow of sewage into the river. This is required by the EPA. The total cost for the construction of the project is approximately $25.8 million. Council Member John Hays moved to recommend that City Council pass a resolution authorizing the Mayor to apply for, accept, and enter into a Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) Agreement on behalf of the City of Tiffin for the design of the Benner Interceptor Project, to declare an emergency, and the suspend Council's three-reading rule. Council Member Dennis Hays seconded the motion. The Motion carried with a vote of 3-0. The cost for the design phase of the CSO 9-13 & 15 Inflow Reduction Project is $3,192,940.80. There would be no principal forgiveness for this loan, however, the loan rate is very favorable and below market interest rates. This project would see the installation of storm sewers and maintenance on existing sewer lines such as point repair, spray application of lining, full pipe replacement, and manhole rehabilitation. The total cost for the construction of the project is approximately $38.8 million. Council Member Dennis Snay moved to recommend that City Council pass a resolution authorizing the Mayor to apply for, accept, and enter into a Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) Agreement on behalf of the City of Tiffin for the design of the CSO 9-13 & 15 Inflow Reduction Project, to declare an emergency, and the suspend Council's three-reading rule. Council Member John Hays seconded the motion. The Motion carried with a vote of 3-0. Next, the committee addressed the Tiffin Municipal Arts Committee (TMAC) Wing Project. The Wing Project would see the construction and placement of various wing-themed sculptures throughout the City of Tiffin. The sculptures would be designed by local artists. TMAC representatives Ryan Poignon and Nick Consolo addressed the committee. TMAC is requesting $32,000.00 in funds for the project. They suggested that the funds be taken from the City's “Squirrel Fund.” The “Squirrel Fund,” as it is informally known, is an endowment that the City of Tiffin created years ago. The endowment started with $10,000.00. There is currently a little over $30,000.00 in the fund. Certain questions were brought up by Council members and members of City Administration. Are we in support of the project? If we are in support how to we want to fund it? Do we deplete the Squirrel Fund or use money from the general fund? How much oversight does the City want to have on the types of sculptures that will be installed? At what locations will the sculptures be installed? Etc. TMAC representatives indicated that they would get details to City Council as to concept art and sculpture locations. The committee took no further action on the issue. Mayor Lee Wilkinson expressed some concern about what TMAC was doing with excess funds. More specifically, he was concerned that TMAC had given excess funds to a non-profit organization, Tiffin Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts (TFAA). His main concern is that when a non-profit organization such as TFAA is given the funds the City of Tiffin loses control over how that money is spent. Council Member Kahler disclosed to the Committee that he currently sits on the board of directors of TFAA. No further action was taken. With no other business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m. Report respectfully submitted by John Kahler, Chair.

No additional Committee of the Whole was scheduled.

**REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS:**

**MAYOR LEE WILKINSON:**

Mayor Wilkinson reported the following:

* Last week the Youth Fire Academy was held at Hedges-Boyer Park, where youths ages 12-15 were able to witness the Jaws of Life cutting through a car, the Life Flight helicopter, how to intubate a patient, insert an IV, and apply a tourniquet, and all kinds of other things that they would need to know if they want to pursue a career as a firefighter and EMT.
* July 18 will be the Third Thursday Christmas in July with nutcrackers and a scavenger hunt downtown. It is a fundraiser for the Operation Hallmark which is the group of volunteers that put up the Christmas lights at no cost to the City. Our Police and Fire Departments are participating as well.
* Paving of Rebecca and Schonhardt Streets should be finishing up this week and next. Charlotte St. and First, Second, Third and Fourth Streets will follow.
* Aqua Ohio will be working on Melmore St. starting July 22 and there may be some lane closures.

Mayor Wilkinson introduced Fire Chief Rob Chappell, who provided supporting details to Mayor’s Request for Legislation #24-25 for the FEMA Fire Grant. The Tiffin Fire/Recue Division received a FEMA Fire Assistance to Firefighters Grant totaling $265,050.00, specifically allocated for the purchase of new Self-Contained Breathing

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Apparatus (SCBA) to replace current outdated units more than 10 years old. They plan to purchase up to 30 new SCBA units to ensure that all frontline personnel have the proper safety equipment. The FEMA notice was received just last Friday, and we have only 30 days to accept the award. He joined the Mayor in requesting suspension of this ordinance at the August 5th meeting in order to receive the new equipment next year.

Mayor Wilkinson spoke about Rich Focht, who served as a City Council member and President of Council, President and CEO of SIEDC (now TSEP) for over 24 years. He worked as project manager on the first Ella Street Bridge rehab project that was constructed by Focht Bros. in 1979. During his recent illness, he could be found riding his electric bike around town and checking in on the Ella Street Bridge which was recently reconstructed. Focht’s passing was a profound loss to Tiffin, but his numerous legacies will endure through the impact of his hard work, dedication and love for this city. It is fitting and proper to honor Rich Focht’s memory and his enduring contributions to the City of Tiffin by dedicating and renaming the Ella Street Bridge in his honor. The Mayor proposed that the bridge on Ella Street be hereby rededicated renamed as the Rich Focht Memorial Bridge. He then introduced former county commissioner Mike Kerschner, who presented a peoples’ petition to Council with over 125 signatures and the endorsement of Senator Bill Reineke, Representative Gary Click and the three Seneca County Commissioners, asking that the Ella Street Bridge be renamed in honor and in memory of Richard A. Focht. .He described Focht as a man with a servant’s heart: he served his country, his church his family and the citizens of Tiffin and Seneca County. He noted that he got many things done with little praise or acknowledgement, and that was how he wanted it. He asked that Council approve the petition before them and rename the bridge in his honor and memory. Former City Council President Rich Cline noted that he had served on Council with Rich Focht for many years and said he echoed Kerschner’s comments. He added that they had served together on the Seneca Chaplains Corps, and part of that mission was to help addicts in recovery. He was always working in the background to better the community and its citizens. Cline said he would be forever grateful for their friendship and the mentorship that he provided to him as a young man. He encouraged Council to vote in favor of the petition. *(See Motion A)*

**CLERK OF COUNCIL ANN FORREST:** No report.

**DIRECTOR OF FINANCE KATHY KAUFMANN:**

Director of Finance Kaufman explained that Ord. 2024-46 to appropriate funds in the Budget for the firefighter position was up for its third reading. Suspension has been requested of Ord. 2024-56 for the Wetlands Project at Hedges-Boyer Park to make sure that we are able to keep everything moving forward and meet all the necessary deadlines. Ord. 2024-57 moves the Budget around from one department to another, from the Director of Communications to the Mayor’s Budget in order to start looking for an administrator’s assistant. Suspension is also being requested for Ord. 2024-58 for an Ohio FEMA Grant that has a time limit.

Director of Finance Report for the month ending: JUNE 30, 2024

Total Receipts for the month: $4,288,384.03

Total Expenses for the month: $4,798,358.90

The General Fund unencumbered balance: $5,439,314.78

The income tax receipts for June 2024 were $1,144,819.59. The total annual increase in income tax receipts in June 2024 compared to June 2023 is $125,536.26. Annual year to date receipts are up 7.25%.

The .25% portion of income tax receipts that was transferred into fund 215 for public streets for June 2024 is $141,103.57.

The unexpended balance for all funds is **$39,282,253.60** which is the same as the bank balances for the same time

period.

Councilmember Roessner moved to accept the June 30, 2024 financial report as presented, as well as the bank reconciliation emailed to Council; Councilmember Snay seconded. On a voice vote motion was approved 7-0.

**DIRECTOR OF LAW ZACHARY FOWLER**:

Director of Law Fowler reported that Ohio HB 47 passed requiring defibrillators at all parks where there are sports activities and swimming pools. Parks Director Bryce Kuhn is checking on where to put them. The bill goes into effect in 90 days, and additional funds will be required for their purchase.

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**WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

Mayor’s Request for Legislation #24-32 – Ordinance Updates

*Referred to Streets, Sidewalks & Sewers Committee.*

Mayor’s Request for Legislation #24-33 – Amending easement for 11 Indian Lane

*Referred to Streets, Sidewalks & Sewers Committee.*

Mayor’s Request for Legislation #24-34 – Funding for Skating Rink

*Referred to Finance Committee.*

Mayor’s Request for Legislation #24-35 – FEMA Fire Grant

*Referred to Finance Committee.*

Mayor’s Request for Legislation #24-36 – Ohio EMA Grant Agreement

*On file in Clerk of Council’s Office; legislation prepared under Ord 2024-58.*

Finance Director’s Request for Legislation #F24-37 to amend the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate

funds into the Police and Parks Budgets. ($937.50+$20,000.00)

*On file in Clerk of Council’s Office; legislation prepared under Ord 2024-55.*

Finance Director’s Request for Legislation #F24-38 to amend the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to reduce funds

in the Director of Communications budget and increase funds in the Mayor’s budget.

*On file in Clerk of Council’s Office; legislation prepared under Ord 2024-57.*

Letter from Director of Law Fowler to Members of Council and the Planning Commission - Zoning Code

Amendments - *On file in Clerk of Council’s Office.*

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

**MOTIONS:**

1. Councilmember Hoernemann moved to rename and dedicate the Ella St. Bridge in honor of Richard Focht, Jr. for his years of dedicated service to the City of Tiffin; Councilmember Roessner seconded. Director Fowler asked that anyone who had something to share about Rich Focht to please forward it to him.

*On a voice vote, motion was approved 7-0.*

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**Resolution 2024-31**, introduced by John Kahler and read for the first time.

A RESOLUTION authorizing the Mayor to apply for, accept, and enter into a Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) Agreement on behalf of the City of Tiffin for the design of wastewater facilities involving CSO Basins 9-13 & 15 Inflow Reduction Project, designating a dedicated repayment source for the loan, and declaring an emergency.

Councilmember Kahler moved for suspension of the three-reading rule and passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

*Discussion: Councilmember Kahler explained that suspension was requested due to time constraints for this loan agreement.*

Roll call votes were taken on the suspension, emergency, and passage, and each was approved 7-0.

**Resolution 2024-32**, introduced by John Kahler and read for the first time.

A RESOLUTION authorizing the Mayor to apply for, accept, and enter into a Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) Agreement on behalf of the City of Tiffin for the design of wastewater facilities involving the Benner Interceptor Project, designating a dedicated repayment source for the loan, and declaring an emergency.

Councilmember Kahler moved for suspension of the three-reading rule and passage; Councilmember Snay seconded.

*Discussion: Councilmember Kahler explained that suspension was requested due to time constraints for this project.*

Roll call votes were taken on the suspension, emergency, and passage, and each was approved 7-0.

**Resolution 2024-33**, introduced by John Kahler and read for the first time.

A RESOLUTION authorizing the Mayor to apply for, accept, and enter into a Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) Agreement on behalf of the City of Tiffin for the design of wastewater facilities involving the High Rate Treatment Project, designating a dedicated repayment source for the loan, and declaring an emergency.

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Councilmember Kahler moved for suspension of the three-reading rule and passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

Roll call votes were taken on the suspension, emergency and passage, and each was approved 7-0.

**ORDINANCES:**

**Ordinance 2024-45**, introduced by John Hays and read for the third time.

AN ORDINANCE authorizing the purchase of real property on Water Street.

Councilmember Kahler moved for passage; Councilmember Roessner seconded.

*Discussion: Councilmember Hoernemann explained that the plan for the acquisition of this property is to put a high-rate waste treatment facility there. and it will reduce the cost of the entire sewer project very significantly by not having to lay as much pipe, Director of Law Howard added that the contract will still have some contingencies typical of a real estate purchase, such as giving us clean title and removing any liens, but we also including ones for an environmental study that is to begin soon as well as Ohio EPA approval. Next Monday the EPA will hold a public hearing on the project at 6:00 p.m. at the library. If any of those contingencies aren’t met, it would stop the contract unless it was brought back to Council.*

Roll call vote was taken on the passage, and it was approved 7-0.

**Ordinance 2024-46**, introduced by John Hays and read for the third time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate funds into the Fire Department Budget.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Hoernemann seconded.

*Discussion: Councilmember Hays explained that these funds were the Fire Department to hire an additional firefighter into 2025.*

Roll call votes were taken on the passage, and it was approved 7-0.

**Ordinance 2024-55**, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to appropriate funds into the Police Budget and Parks Department Budget.

**Ordinance 2024-56**, introduced by John Kahler and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE authorizing and directing the City Administrator to prepare plans and specifications, advertise for and receive bids, recommend and execute a contract for the development of a wetlands at Hedges-Boyer Park, and declaring an emergency.

Councilmember Kahler moved for suspension of the three-reading rule and passage; Councilmember Roessner

seconded.

*Discussion: Director of Law Fowler explained that the project needs to be approved quickly in order for it to be finished by the end of the year.*

Roll call votes were taken on the suspension, emergency and passage, and each was approved 7-0.

**Ordinance 2024-57**, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2024 Budget Ordinance 23-94 to reduce funds from the Director of Communications Budget, appropriate funds into the Mayor’s Budget, and declaring an emergency.

Councilmember Roessner moved for suspension of the three-reading rule and passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

*Discussion: Councilmember Roessner explained that this ordinance was moving money from the former Director of Communications position to a Mayor’s administrative assistant position.*

Roll call vote was taken on the suspension, emergency and passage, and each was approved 7-0.

**Ordinance 2024-58**, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE authorizing all actions necessary to accept the Ohio Emergency Management Agency State Disaster Relief Program – State Public Assistance Grant and ­­­­­­­­declaring an emergency.

Councilmember Roessner moved for suspension of the three-reading rule and passage; Councilmember Hoernemann seconded.

*Discussion: Councilmember Roessner explained that suspension was needed to meet the July 31 deadline for this grant and get the work started.*

Roll call vote was taken on the suspension, emergency and passage, and each was approved 7-0.

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**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Councilmember Roessner announced a Finance Committee meeting to be held Friday, July 19, 2024 at 5:15 p.m. in Council Chambers to discuss Mayor’s Requests for Legislation #24-34 (funding for skating rink) and #24-35 (FEMA Fire Grant), and any other business that may come before them.

Councilmember Thacker announced a to be held Monday, July 29, 2024 at 5:15 p.m. on site at 34 Front St. regarding Alley Vacation Petition #2024-03 and any other business that may come before them.

Councilmember Thacker announced a second Streets, Sidewalks and Sewers Committee meeting on Monday, July 29, 2024 at 5:45 p.m. in Council Chambers to discuss Mayor’s Requests for Legislation #24-32 (Ordinance Updates) and #24-33 (Amending easement for 11 Indian Lane), and any other business that may come before them.

Director of Law Fowler explained that the Planning Commission would be meeting the next day to discuss the tabled zoning ordinances, and upon their recommendation would be taken off the table for consideration at the next meeting in August.

**ADJOURNMENT**: 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Ann Forrest, Clerk of Council.

Approved this \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­­\_\_\_\_, 2024

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Presiding Officer of Council

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Clerk of Council