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JANUARY 6, 2025 – 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) and John Hays (At Large)); and John Kahler (At Large). Also attending were Mayor Lee Wilkinson, Director of Law Zachary Fowler, City Administrator, Nick Dutro and Director of Finance Kathy Kaufman.

MINUTES: The December 16, 2024 Regular and Committee of the Whole meeting minutes were approved as written.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilmember Hays reported that a Personnel & Labor Relations Committee meeting was held in City Chambers on December 30th, 2024. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss Mayor's requests for legislation #24-48, #24-49, #24-50, and #24-51. Attending were committee members John Hays, Cheyane Thacker, and John Kahler. Also attending were council member Scott Hoernemann, Mayor Lee Wilkinson, Law Director Zach Fowler, City Administrator Nick Dutro, Police Chief Dave Pauly, and Fire Chief Rob Chappell.

Councilman Hays called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. The meeting started with Legislation #24-48 – Changes to Police Promotions. Chief Pauly explained the requested change is to allow previous experience as a Military Police Officer to count toward the experience threshold for applying for the rank of Sergeant. Pauly stated the change is strictly for the rank of Sergeant. Law Director Fowler confirmed that current language would not allow for time as Military Police to be counted for requirements toward promotion to the rank of Sergeant. Test and assessment for the position will begin in February, necessitating this legislation be passed with an emergency. Hays motioned to have the Law Director draft legislation accepting the changes described by the Police Chief and declare an emergency. Kahler seconded and the motion passed 3-0. Fire Chief Chappell started the discussion of Mayor's Request #24-49. Chappell explained that current language states the department is to send a new hire with the Level 1 Firefighter certification to the Ohio Fire Academy. Chappell said a new option, at EHOVE in Milan, has opened up for accrediting a Level II Firefighter Certification. This is a better fit for our firefighters who already have the Level I accreditation. The requested change will allow for other options in choosing the accreditation for new hires. Kahler motioned to have the Law Director prepare legislation to accept the changes outlined in the request. Hays seconded. The motion carried on a vote of 3-0. Hays read the list of reappointments being requested on Mayor's request for Legislation #24-50. Mayor Wilkinson confirmed all appointees were happy to continue serving in their same capacity. Thacker motioned to have the Law Director prepare legislation to accept the reappointments. Hays seconded. The motion carried on a vote of 3-0. Request #24-51 was made to appoint Dr. Nathaniel Beres to the Seneca County Board of Health. Wilkinson read the past and current experience of Dr. Beres relevant to serving on the Board of Health. Wilkinson said he met with Dr. Beres and discussed the appointment. Hays motioned for the Law Director to draft legislation accepting the appointment of Dr. Beres to the Seneca County Board of Health. Thacker seconded the motion and the motion passed 3-0. In other business, Fowler asked for a councilmember to introduce a resolution authorizing the sale of city personal property, and councilman Kahler volunteered. With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:41 p.m. Report respectfully submitted by John Hays, Chair.

No additional Committee of the Whole was scheduled.

REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS:

MAYOR LEE WILKINSON:

The Mayor reported that since its recent opening, the Sutton Bank iceless skating rink at Oakley Park has had 1,280 users. There have been 19 free-skate sponsors and three private rentals.

On January 3rd he participated in the swearing in of new police officer Kade Garrett.

He introduced Bryce Riggs, recently appointed interim CEO of TSEP. Riggs said he was actively working with the team and Administration so that there was no interruption in services. He noted that he had previously worked

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for SIEDC and on downtown development committees and felt that the relationship with the City was important. Mayor Wilkinson thanked him for stepping up and said he looked forward to working with him.

The Mayor then introduced Municipal Judge Damon Alt and Common Pleas Judge Rhonda Best who gave Council an overview of their courts' Pivot Recovery Program, a structured court program approximately 420 days long that supports participants in various areas of addiction recovery. They reviewed the benefits, program provisions, structure and the five compliance phases. They said that the Seneca County Commissioners have committed two-thirds of all future opioid settlement funds received through a OneOhio Foundation grant to the PIVOT program and asked that the City do the same. Mayor Wilkinson said he had attended PIVOT court sessions and supported this important program. Upon reviewing the possible future funds that would be allocated to the City and wanting to continue to support the newly reinstated DARE program to address the problem from a preventative viewpoint, he said he would give consideration to their request and see what the City could do to support the important PIVOT Program as well.

CLERK OF COUNCIL ANN FORREST: No report.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE KATHY KAUFMAN:

Regarding the requested suspensions, Director of Finance Kaufman explained that Ord. 2025-1 covers carryovers purchase orders for December bills not yet received that will need to be paid timely, Ord. 2025-4 covers the state minimum wage that was recently increased. She also stated that the Finance Department is now handling the quarterly Credit Card Compliance Reports via the Tax Commissioner.

DIRECTOR OF LAW ZACHARY FOWLER:

Director of Law Fowler presented his annual report covering the criminal and civil responsibilities of his job. Criminal: Fowler acts as the prosecuting attorney for the City, and his offices include an assistant director of law/prosecutor and an administrative assistant. There is also a contract with the county prosecutor's office for a part-time prosecutor which ends in June 2025. With the return to direct oversight from the county to the law director, they added new furniture and computers, as well as a cloud-based law practice management software to allow for electronic files and better organization. The office was very busy, with approximately 4,700 criminal cases, some of which were traffic or pleas at arraignment. They closed over 250 cases and 150 remain open. He read a letter from a police officer highly commending prosecutor Andy Bowsher for his great communication and support that makes their jobs so much better. Civil: Fowler is responsible for drafting legislation, delivering opinions on the constitutionality of same, and meeting with Council for consultations when required. In 2024 his office prepared 107 ordinances and 43 resolutions. He also supervises civil lawsuits or administrative claims and in 2024 closed the Deutsche Bank vs Clark Desbin, et al lawsuit. Regarding real estate matters, his office handled the City's purchase of land on Water St. for building a high rate treatment facility, the annexation of an 80-acre farm on Tyber Road, four alley vacations and one sewer easement on Indian Lane to correct the location of a sewer pipe. In addition, various written and oral opinions were given to City officials upon request, and numerous contracts were reviewed and approved as to form or prepared. He attended several seminars and has been slowly converting his files to electronic, averaging 30-35 hours per week working for the City. His goals for 2025 are to continue keeping the Codified Ordinances updated; preparing a welcome packet for new members of a board, committee or commission; a new council member packet and training; reducing paper files; and hiring/contracting for a part-time prosecutor in June. Mayor Wilkinson said Fowler's rendering his advice and opinions in meetings was greatly appreciated.

Fowler reminded Council of the annual financial disclosure required by May 15, and anyone running for Council Member at Large must submit their petition by February 5. The State Auditor now requires fraud training for any incoming board and commission members. The competitive bidding requirement has increased 3% to \$77,250. State HB 315 now requires defibrillators in parks only for organized use and not 24/7. Under the Public Records Law and requests for copies of body cam or dash video that need to be redacted for things not allowed to be disclosed, the Police Department can now charge up to \$75 per video up to a maximum of \$750 per request for editing. There were two carve-outs for municipalities regarding drone operations, in which Tiffin can craft rules for Tiffin or government use and use by hobbyists at public properties. Virtual meetings will be allowed for certain bodies, but Council is not included.

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WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-01 – Mobile Food Unit Vendor's License

Referred to Law & Community Planning Committee

Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-02 – Road Salt Competitive Bid Acquisition

Referred to Streets, Sidewalks & Sewers Committee

Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-03 – Street Sweeper Lease

Referred to Streets, Sidewalks & Sewer Relations Committee

Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-04 – Curb Lawn Restoration Program

Referred to Streets, Sidewalks & Sewers Committee

Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-05 – 2025 River and Creek Wall Rehabilitation

Referred to Law & Community Planning Committee

4th Quarter 2024 Credit Card Compliance Report - *Councilmember Roessner moved to accept the report;*

Councilmember Snay seconded. On a voice vote motion was approved 7-0.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

MOTIONS:

- A. Councilmember Hays moved to have Res. 2025-3 through Res. 2025-11 be read and then voted on as one; Councilmember Thacker seconded. All are board and commission reappointments of people who are currently serving. On a voice vote motion was approved 7-0.

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 2025-1, introduced by John Kahler and read for the first time.

A RESOLUTION authorizing the sale during calendar year 2025 of municipally owned personal property which is not needed for public use, or which is obsolete or unfit for the use for which it was acquired, by internet auction, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code section 721.15(d), and declaring an emergency.

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

Discussion: Councilmember Kahler said suspension was needed to prepare items for the next auction in March. Law Director Fowler noted that this legislation is done annually for personal property we no longer have use for. Roll call vote were taken on the suspension, emergency and passage and each was approved 7-0.

Resolution 2025-2, introduced by Cheyane Thacker and read for the first time.

A RESOLUTION declaring the necessity of an election on the question of approving the passage of an ordinance to amend Sections 197.012 and 197.013 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Tiffin, Ohio, in order to provide for the continuation of an existing one-quarter percent (1/4%) municipal income tax increase for a continuing period of time to provide funds to pay certain costs of maintaining, repairing and improving public streets in the City, and declaring an emergency.

Resolution 2025-3, introduced by John Hays and read for the first and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's reappointment of Mark Somodi to serve a three-year term on the ADA Advisory Committee from January 1, 2025 until December 31, 2027.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

Roll call vote was taken and it was approved 7-0.

Resolution 2025-4, introduced by John Hays and read for the first and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's reappointment of Amber Clason to serve a three-year term on the Architectural Board of Review from January 1, 2025 until December 31, 2027.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

Roll call vote was taken and it was approved 7-0.

Resolution 2025-5, introduced by John Hays and read for the first and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's reappointment of David Culp to serve a five-year term on the Julia M. Weller Memorial Commission from January 1, 2025 until December 31, 2029.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

Roll call vote was taken and it was approved 7-0.

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Resolution 2025-6, introduced by John Hays and read for the first and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's reappointment of George Fretz Jr. to serve a four-year term on the Park and Recreation Board from January 1, 2025 until December 31, 2028.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

Roll call vote was taken and it was approved 7-0.

Resolution 2025-7, introduced by John Hays and read for the first and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's reappointment of Danny J. Iannantuono to serve an unexpired term on the Park and Recreation Board from the date of this resolution until December 31, 2027.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

Roll call vote was taken and it was approved 7-0.

Resolution 2025-8, introduced by John Hays and read for the first and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's reappointment of Jeff Kuhn to serve a six-year term on the Sewer Review Board from January 1, 2025 until December 31, 2030.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

Roll call vote was taken and it was approved 7-0.

Resolution 2025-9, introduced by John Hays and read for the first and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's reappointment of Christy Wisner to serve a five-year term on the Tree Commission from January 1, 2025 until December 31, 2029.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

Roll call vote was taken and it was approved 7-0.

Resolution 2025-10, introduced by John Hays and read for the first and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's reappointment of Dr. Susan Carty to serve a five-year term on the Tree Commission from January 1, 2025 until December 31, 2029.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

Roll call vote was taken and it was approved 7-0.

Resolution 2025-11, introduced by John Hays and read for the first and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's reappointment of Joan Martin to serve a four-year term on the Tiffin Recreation & Beautification Endowment Fund Board from January 1, 2025 until December 31, 2028.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

Discussion: Councilmember Thacker noted their qualifications to continue to serve, and Councilmember Hoernemann thanked everyone for their service.

Roll call vote was taken and it was approved 7-0.

Resolution 2025-12, introduced by John Hays and read for the first and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's appointment of Dr. Nathaniel Beres to serve a five-year term on the Seneca County Board of Health from January 1, 2025 until December 31, 2029.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Roessner seconded.

Roll call vote was taken and it was approved 7-0.

ORDINANCES:

Ordinance 2024-105, introduced by Cheyane Thacker and read for the second 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 Court Street Streetscape Project, and declaring an emergency.

Ordinance 2025-1, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2025 Budget Ordinance 2024-94 to provide funds for expenditures approved in 2024 for projects which were not fully completed in that year and must be carried over into 2025.

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

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Discussion: Councilmember Roessner explained that this was funding for 2024 expenditures not yet completed for existing purchase orders.

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

Ordinance 2025-2, introduced by John Hays and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE to amend the Civil Service Regulations for the Police Department’s promotion requirements by amending Sections 149.031 and 149.032 of the Codified Ordinances and declaring an emergency.

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

Discussion: Councilmember Hays said this change would allow for previous military police service to count towards experience for promotion purposes and that suspension was requested in order to begin testing for interviews in February.

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

Ordinance 2025-3, introduced by John Hays and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE to amend Section 143.03 of the Codified Ordinances to allow a new firefighter to obtain the Firefighter II certificate at an accredited program similar to the Ohio Fire Academy and declaring an emergency.

Ordinance 2025-4, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE amending Section 2 of Ordinance No. 2024-95, the City pay ordinance, to correct the minimum wage amount for 2025 and declaring an emergency.

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

Discussion: Councilmember Roessner explained that this was a follow up to last year’s Pay Ordinance because the state had just put in place a minimum wage adjustment.

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

Ordinance 2025-5, introduced by Cheyane Thacker and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE amending sections 197.012 and 197.013 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Tiffin, Ohio in order to provide for the continuation of an existing one-quarter percent (1/4%) municipal income tax increase for a continuing period of time to provide funds to pay certain costs of maintaining, repairing and improving public streets in the City.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Councilmember Thacker announced a Streets, Sidewalks & Sewers Committee meeting for Monday, January 13, 2025 in Council Chambers at 5:15 p.m. to discuss Mayor’s Requests for Legislation #25-02, #25-03, #25-04 and any other business that may come before them.

Councilmember Kahler announced a Law & Community Planning Committee meeting for Monday, January 13, 2025 in Council Chambers immediately following the Streets, Sidewalks & Sewers Committee meeting to discuss Mayor’s Requests for Legislation #25-01 and #25-05, and any other business that may come before them.

Councilmember Hays announced a Personnel & Labor Relations Committee meeting for Monday, January 13, 2025 in Council Chambers immediately following the Personnel & Labor Relations Committee meeting to discuss Mayor’s Requests for Legislation #24-52 and #24-53, and any other business that may come before them.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Ann Forrest, Clerk of Council.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2025

Presiding Officer of Council

Attest: _____
Clerk of Council