

FEBRUARY 18, 2025 – REGULAR MEETING

Tiffin City Council met for its second 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 Kyle Daugherty (At Large). Also attending were Mayor Lee Wilkinson, Director of Law Zachary Fowler, City Administrator, Nick Dutro, Director of Finance Kathy Kaufman and Police Chief David Pauly.

MINUTES: The February 3, 2025 Regular and Committee of the Whole Meeting minutes and the February 10, 2025 Special Meeting minutes were approved as written.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilmember Thacker reported that a Streets, Sidewalks, and Sewers Committee meeting was held on February 11, 2025 at 5:15 P.M. in Council Chambers. Attending were committee members Cheyane Thacker, Aaron Jones, Scott Hoernemann, and Kevin Roessner, along with Council Members, John Hays and Kyle Daugherty, City Administrator Nick Dutro, City Engineer Matt Watson, Law Director Zachary Fowler, Finance Director Kathy Kaufman, and Mayor Lee Wilkinson. Thacker called the meeting to order. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-08 regarding the SEN-US 224 (PID 1206160) Urban Paving Project and any other business that may come before them. Watson gave the committee information on the US 224 Urban Paving Project. We have discussed the project before. This request would grant the city to move forward with the bidding process of the US 224 paving project. The project would resurface the section of 224 that is within city limits that was recently annexed into the city. The city received an Urban Paving Grant that will cover 80% of the project costs up to 355,000.00, administered through ODOT. The current project is estimated to cost \$516,000.00 and Watson plans to bid it around May or June with the intent to get it built this fall. Funds through ODOT become available in July. Roessner reminded the committee that the expense for this road is higher because the depth is more to account for more traffic and the weight of semis. Roessner motioned to have the Law Director prepare legislation. Hoernemann seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. Committee member Dennis Snay arrived. Dutro gave the committee information about the Electric Vehicle charging stations. The City received a grant through AEP to purchase the EV charging stations in 2019 and an additional grant from Tiffin Charitable Foundation for the badging and niceties on the machine. The initial grant from AEP also covered the back end support from Chargepoint that monitors the chargers for repairs and issues. The support also manages payment. Dutro received an email that the City would now be responsible for payment of the maintenance agreement because the grant period has ended. The maintenance agreement fee is \$9,240.00 annually and does not include the electricity. Dutro told the committee he gets a report of unique users and total uses per month. For example, in January it was used 116 times by 31 unique users. However, he doesn't get specific data about the users, so we don't know how many of the people using it are local or if they are driving through town. The current rate on the machine is 13 cents per minute, but likely Dutro will increase the rate so the electricity is covered. NOPEC is willing to give a grant to the city to cover some of the costs of the EV charging station for this year, but will want a plan for how we will more sustainably cover it in the future. Dutro asked the committee to consider whether or not having an EV charging station makes sense for the city in the long run. Dutro asked the committee for the full amount up front to pay the bill due March 15th, knowing some will be reimbursed by the grant. Kaufman told the committee that when the program started, a study was done to see how many people were using it and how often to try to come up with a good price to charge per minute. The plan was to make it a perk for residents. They didn't expect it to be a revenue generator, just to break even. Kathy tried to do some research and contact another community that has similar EV charging stations to see what they were charging. She contacted Worthington, Ohio and they have had additional issues that we haven't. One of their chargers had issues where it was down for six months. Finally Chargepoint came out to fix it, but they didn't get the warranty because Chargepoint claimed it wasn't installed properly. Worthington is reassessing the project every year with their City Council. Dutro said he spoke with Public Works Superintendent Brandon Burner about whether or not city electricians could maintain the charger. The electricians do not feel they would be qualified to do that and feel busy enough just maintaining the street lights and other projects. There would also be a cost associated with the training. Dutro would like to reevaluate the program in a year. Fowler said the previous legislation passed on the charging station gave an easement to AEP to install the lines and gave the city administrator authority to set rates to cover the cost of electricity consumed at the station. We will need to add language to cover the other costs associated with

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maintenance, payment, etc., or any issues related to parking. Jones motioned to have the Law Director prepare legislation. Snay seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0. With no further business the committee adjourned at 5:48 P.M. Respectfully submitted, Cheyane Thacker, Chairperson.

No additional Committee of the Whole was scheduled.

REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS:

MAYOR LEE WILKINSON:

Mayor Wilkinson reminded residents that the Taste of Tiffin would be held Thursday, February 27th at The Chandelier.

The Mayor introduced Police Chief David Pauly who presented the following recipients of department commendations: Beth Dell for outstanding recruiting efforts; Det. Eric England for investigating internet crimes against children; Det. Justin Nowak for exceptional contributions to the Metrich Drug Task Force; Ofc. Marcus Somers for impressive patrol performance and unwavering commitment to excellence; Ofc. Kaden Wuescher for consistently exceeding expectations in patrol operations; and Sgt. Vern Keefe for his invaluable work in IT services to keep their critical systems running smoothly. Perfect attendance rewards were received by Ofc. Alex Traxler (1st), Ofc. Andrew Stevens (3rd), Sgt. Joe Feld (3rd), Sgt. Jared Watson (5th) and Ofc. Michael Moore (12th). Chief Pauly then presented Ofc. Shawn Vallery with his second Officer of the Year Award, noting his 29 years of service and setting the standard for excellence as a mentor, a leader and a professional. The Dispatcher of the Year Award was presented to Telecommunications Officer Madison Brady for her professionalism, grace under pressure and commitment to keeping our officers and community safe. Mayor Wilkinson congratulated and thanked them for their service to the City.

Chief Pauly then share the history of Tiffin's D.A.R.E. program, which was born out of the "Just Say No" era when First Lady Nancy Reagan started that movement in 1982. Officers were trained to teach students how to resist peer pressure and how to avoid drugs. He said that a lot of good things came out of the program back in the 80s, because it connected police with the community and the kids. However, that method did not have a long-term effect because students needed interactive and skill-based approaches rather than lecture-based interactions. Officers Chris Perry and Alec Traxler are the two who have brought the program back to area schools. Perry explained how D.A.R.E. now operates. They guide the lesson but make sure that 80% of the class is taught by the students themselves and have them interact fully so they understand the core concepts and reasoning behind the ideas. The program no longer focuses on "Just Say No" but on cyberbullying, making good choices, mental health and teen suicide awareness, with each grade having its own core classes. Students also have activities they take home to do with their parents, which helps to teach parents as well. The model for the program is "keeping it R.E. A.L." which stands for Refuse, Explain, Avoid and Leave. He said that D.A.R.E. no longer stands for Define, Assess, Respond and Evaluate. Ofc. Traxler explained that the program goes more in depth than just teaching kids that drugs are bad. He said that bullying can be a big issue in schools, so they can have conversations about bullying with students and let them know that they as officers can talk to them about it or other issues they may have at home. They are available to teachers as well. Traxler noted that the program allows students to deal with police officers in a positive way and in a safe environment. He said that OneOhio opioid funds jumpstarted the program. They currently give classes at Calvert and Bridges and hope to expand to the public schools this fall.

CLERK OF COUNCIL ANN FORREST: No report.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE KATHY KAUFMAN:

Director of Finance Kaufman reported that she had requested suspension of Ord. 2025-20 to cover several budget adjustments for several departments: \$9,2420 into the City Administrator's Budget for a 2025 EV charging stations contract; \$690.66 into the Police Budget for recycled cell phones and scrap sales; a \$20,000 grant from the National Recreation and Park Association into the Parks Budget to purchase day camp supplies; a \$2,000 NOPEC sponsorship grant into the Parks Budget towards the Fourth of July celebration; a \$2,037 AmVets donation into the Parks Budget; \$13,000 into the Capital Improvement Fund to replace a gas heater for the Parks Department; and \$17,300 to rehab the HVAC system and to retrofit two rapid flashing beacon signals with a solar panel and batteries for the Public Works Department.

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| Director of Finance Report for the month ending: | JANUARY 31, 2025 |
| Total Receipts for the month: | \$5,171,431.90 |
| Total Expenses for the month: | \$5,166,213.53 |
| The General Fund unencumbered balance: | \$4,919,301.23 |

The income tax receipts for January 2025 are \$1,136,345.82. The total annual decrease in income tax receipts for January 2025 compared to January 2024 is \$53,481.34 or a 4.49% decrease year to date.

The .25% portion of income tax receipts that was transferred into fund 215 for public streets for January 2025 is \$140,505.20.

The unexpended balance for all funds is **\$40,133,267.33** which is the same as the bank balances for the same time period.

Councilmember Roessner moved to accept the January 31, 2025 financial report as presented, as well as the bank reconciliation ending January 31, 2025 emailed to Council; Councilmember Hoernemann seconded. On a voice vote motion was approved 7-0.

DIRECTOR OF LAW ZACHARY FOWLER:

Director of Law Fowler explained that Ord. 2025-22 asks for Council's approval for the City to transfer the rights of the Enterprise Zone Agreement for Webster Industries due to a change in the title of the real estate to an LLC wholly owned by Webster. Suspension and an emergency are requested.

He also addressed Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-10 – Support for Tax Exempt Municipal Bonds and explained that that municipal bonds are currently tax exempt and have a low interest rate. The less we have to repay, the less local tax is required to fund our infrastructure. This legislation will be shared with the Ohio members of Congress, since Congress may be considering sunseting some tax provisions, which would put tax-exempt municipal bonds at risk.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-10 – Support for Tax Exempt Municipal Bonds

Referred to Finance Committee

Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-11 – Reappointment to Port Authority (James D. Supance)

Referred to Personnel & Labor Relations Committee

Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-12 – Appointment to Port Authority (David Koehl)

Referred to Personnel & Labor Relations Committee

Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-13 – Appointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals (Marissa Huss)

Referred to Personnel & Labor Relations Committee

Finance Director's Request for Legislation #F24-3 to amend the 2025 Budget Ordinance 24-94 to appropriate funds into the Administrator, Police, Park and Public Works Budgets.

On file in Clerk of Council's office; legislation prepared under Ord. 2025-20.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

MOTIONS: None.

RESOLUTIONS: None.

ORDINANCES:

Ordinance 2025-6, introduced by Cheyane Thacker and read for the third time.

AN ORDINANCE authorizing participation in the ODOT Road Salt Contracts awarded in 2025.

Councilmember Thacker moved for passage; Councilmember Jones seconded.

Discussion: Thacker explained that this was a way for the City to get lower pricing on road salt.

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

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Ordinance 2025-9, introduced by John Kahler and read for the third time.

AN ORDINANCE to authorize and direct the City Administrator to solicit qualifications from and enter into a contract with a professional design firm for professional design services for maintenance of the City's Sandusky River Wall and Rock Creek Wall.

Councilmember Daugherty moved for passage; Councilmember Thacker seconded.

Discussion: Thacker noted that this ordinance was to make sure the river walls were safe.

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

Amended Ordinance 2025-10, introduced by Dennis Snay and read for the third time.

AN ORDINANCE authorizing the sale of municipal real property on North State Route 101 known as the Louisa K. Fast Park by a public auction.

Councilmember Snay moved for passage; Councilmember Roessner seconded.

Discussion: Snay explained that the reason for the auction was to remove the property from City ownership so there would be no upkeep.

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

Ordinance 2025-19, introduced by Cheyane Thacker 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 SEN-US 224 (PID 120616) Urban Paving Project, and declaring an emergency.

Ordinance 2025-20, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2025 Budget Ordinance 24-94 to appropriate funds into the Administrator, Police, Park, and Public Works Budgets.

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

Discussion: Roessner stated that these funds included grants and donations from the National Recreation and Park Association, NOPEC and Am vets for the Parks Department.

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

Ordinance 2025-21, introduced by Cheyane Thacker and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE to enact Chapter 937 of the Codified Ordinances to permit the City Administrator to set the rates for electric vehicle charging stations and declaring an emergency.

Ordinance 2025-22, introduced by Scott Hoernemann and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE approving the transfer of rights of the Enterprise Zone Agreement for Webster Industries, Inc., and declaring an emergency.

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

Discussion: Hoernemann said that as the Law Director had explained, this is being done due to a change in Webster's structuring.

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

OTHER BUSINESS:

City Administrator Dutro reported that part of the City's agreement with Rumpke is that they can increase rates every year up to 4%. Rumpke has announced that a 2.7% rate increase will go into effect March 1.

Councilmember Roessner announced a Finance Committee meeting to be held Thursday, February 20, 2025 at 5:15 p.m. in Council Chambers to discuss Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-06 (Allocation of Opioid Settlement Funds), #25-09 (General Fund Carryover Balance Policy), #25-10 (Support for Tax Exempt Municipal Bonds), and any other business that may come before them.

Councilmember Hays announced a Personnel & Labor Relations Committee meeting to be held Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 5:15 p.m. in Council Chambers to discuss Mayor's Requests for Legislation #25-11 (Reappointment to Port Authority), #25-12 (Appointment to Port Authority), #25-13 (Appointment to Zoning Board of Appeals), and any other business that may come before them.

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ADJOURNMENT: 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Ann Forrest, Clerk of Council.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2025

Presiding Officer of Council

Attest: _____
Clerk of Council