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## MARCH 3, 2025 – REGULAR MEETING

Tiffin City Council met for its first meeting of the month in accordance with Codified Ordinance Section 121.03. In the absence of Council President Bridget Boyle, President Pro Tempore Cheyane Thacker 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 six councilmembers were present: Aaron Jones (1<sup>st</sup> Ward), Kevin Roessner (3<sup>rd</sup> Ward), Dennis Snay (4<sup>th</sup> Ward), Cheyane Thacker (At Large), John Hays (At Large) and Kyle Daugherty (At Large); Scott Hoernemann (2<sup>nd</sup> Ward) was absent. Also attending were Director of Law Zachary Fowler, City Administrator, Nick Dutro, Director of Finance Kathy Kaufman and Fire Chief Rob Chappell.

**MINUTES:** The February 18, 2025 Regular and Committee of the Whole Meeting minutes were approved as written.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilmember Roessner reported that a Finance Committee meeting was held Thursday, February 20, 2025 in Council Chambers. The purpose was to discuss Mayor's Requests 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. Attending were committee members Kevin Roessner and Aaron Jones. Also attending were Mayor Lee Wilkinson, City Administrator Nick Dutro, Finance Director Kathleen Kaufman, and Law Director Zach Fowler. Roessner called the meeting to order at 5:18 p.m. First, Roessner commenced the discussion on the **allocation of opioid settlement funds**, referencing past data provided by the Law Director and State Auditor. DARE and PIVOT were identified as eligible recipients, with representatives from both programs having previously presented to council. The Mayor presented various revenue scenarios, the City of Tiffin is expected to receive its share of the Opioid Settlement Fund averaging \$18,132.65, This will drop off significantly after 2032 but with a proposed contribution of 30% to PIVOT we will be able to also fund our DARE program through 2032. Seneca County will contribute two-thirds of their Opioid Settlement funds to PIVOT. Dutro suggested a three-year commitment with re-evaluation, while Jones recommended reassessing DARE periodically as it is still in its early stages. Fowler noted that the opioid settlement lasts 18 years, after which alternative funding could be necessary. He will draft resolutions based on Council intentions. Dutro emphasized the need for detailed budgeting. The current unencumbered balance in the OneOhio Opioid Fund stands at \$55,350.89. As of now, there have been no purchase orders (POs) opened for 2025 by the DARE program. Should POs be opened for the entire budgeted amount, the unencumbered balance would decrease to \$35,350.89. Kaufman has noted that PIVOT's funding is dependent on projected revenue. Presently, the unencumbered balance remains at \$55,350.89 in the OneOhio Opioid Fund. For 2025, the DARE program has budgeted \$20,000, in addition to carry-over POs from 2024 amounting to \$1,175.84. However, no funds have been budgeted for PIVOT from the OneOhio Opioid Fund for 2025. Roessner will forward details of this meeting to the Council President for discussion at a future committee of the whole meeting to gather input from the entire council and finalize any language and amounts in potential legislation. Next, for the **General Fund Carryover Balance Policy**, the Mayor recommended maintaining a minimum carryover balance equivalent to two months of operating revenues (16.7%) and proposed a 25% minimum to safeguard the city against emergencies and unforeseen expenses. A spreadsheet illustrated the relationship between the unencumbered balance and capital projects, with the river wall assessment/reconstruction cited as an example. All transfers will still require city council approval. Dutro explained that transferring funds from the General Fund to the Capital Fund is a one-time action that cannot be easily reversed. Kaufman noted that the Government Finance Officers Administration (GFOA) recommends such policies. The complete policy draft was emailed to all council members following the meeting. Jones motioned for the Law Director to prepare legislation for 25-09, seconded by Roessner, and the motion carried unanimously. Finally, Congress may sunset tax provisions for **tax-exempt municipal bonds**, crucial for infrastructure projects. The Ohio Municipal League requested our support. Dutro noted no cost involved. Jones motioned for the Law Director to draft legislation for 25-10, seconded by Roessner, and the motion carried unanimously. With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:48 p.m. Respectfully submitted, Kevin Roessner, Chairperson.

Councilmember Hays reported that a Personnel & Labor Relations Committee meeting was held in City Chambers on February 26th, 2025. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss Mayor's request for legislation #25-11 – Reappointment to the Port Authority, Mayor's request for legislation #25-12 – Appointment to the Port Authority, and Mayor's request for legislation #25-13 – Appointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

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Attending were committee members John Hays, Cheyane Thacker, and Kyle Daugherty. Also attending were Mayor Lee Wilkinson, Law Director Zachary Fowler, and Councilmember Dennis Snay. Councilman Hays called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. Hays asked the mayor about the two appointments to the Port Authority. Mayor Wilkinson started with the background of the candidate for reappointment. Councilmember Daugherty asked what the Port Authority does, and Wilkinson gave an overview of the Port Authority. Law Director Fowler gave historical background on both the Port Authority and the candidate for reappointment. Councilmember Thacker motioned to accept the reappointment. Daugherty seconded and the motion carried 3-0. Wilkinson introduced the candidate for appointment to the Port Authority and explained the reason for the open position. Thacker motioned to accept the appointment. Hays seconded and the motion carried 3-0. Mayor Wilkinson introduced the candidate for an appointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals and explained the reason for the open position. Hays motioned to accept the appointment. Thacker seconded and the motion carried 3-0. In Other Business, Wilkinson stated there will be a new appointment upcoming for the Seneca County Board of Health. With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m. Report respectfully submitted by John Hays, Chair.

Councilmember Roessner moved to hold the March 17, 2025 Committee of the Whole at 6:30 p.m. to allow time for discussion on the allocation of the opioid settlement funds; Councilmember Daugherty seconded. Motion was carried on a voice vote of 6-0.

No additional Committee of the Whole was scheduled.

## **REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS:**

### **MAYOR LEE WILKINSON:**

In Mayor Wilkinson's absence, President Pro Tempore Thacker presented a proclamation declaring March as Developmental Disabilities Month. Superintendent Lew Hurst of the Seneca County Opportunity Center, along with accompanying self-advocates, announced upcoming events such as the Bakery Bingo on March 13, the Celebrity Basketball game on March 27 at Heidelberg University, and the April 13 Palm Sunday Dinner at their CR 20 location. Hurst stated that they had purchased the Mercy Health-Tiffin Cancer Center and the Optima Building, which were converted to hold the SSA staff in one building and Adult Services in the other. He said when he first started, they serviced about 300 families and now service about 500 families. With Adult Services being moved to the new location, their main building has an empty wing that will be converted into classrooms in order to serve more students.

Thacker introduced Fire Chief Rob Chappell, who gave his annual report to Council. He reviewed the history of the department, which was created in 1893 as a full-time, paid fire department. In 1997 Tiffin Fire and Tiffin EMS merged to create the current Tiffin Fire/Rescue Division, and Chappell is the 13<sup>th</sup> fire chief. He stated that the department provides fire protection for Tiffin, along with auto-aid agreements with several surrounding townships. They are charged with protecting billions of dollars in private and commercial property, and they perform origin and cause investigations for all fires. In 2024 personnel responded to 740 non-EMS calls, including 144 traffic accidents, 34 fires, and more than 60 responses for utility issues. They also completed more than 1,400 hours of fire training last year. Emergency Medical Services provide EMS coverage to the city, Clinton Township and northern Eden Township. Thirty of its 38 personnel are certified as Paramedics, and over 1,500 hours of EMS training were completed in 2024. EMS responded to 3,005 incidents, with 3,267 patient encounters, transport of 2,317 patients, and treatment but not transport of over 800 patients. EMS billing generated almost \$780,000 in revenue for the city, and township and standby contracts added another \$61,700. Total emergency responses have increased annually, with the Third Ward having the most emergency responses due to the larger W. Market St. commercial area and nursing homes. Some increase is also due to the lack of private ambulance services. The department also does over 800 existing building inspections annually, which require an average of 350-400 re-inspections. Inspections are also done for new and renovated buildings, with plan reviews done prior to the issuance of a zoning permit, as well as the various in-progress inspections required. They can also aid in consultation with business development. He expressed his kudos to the staff, who in the last six years has handled more calls than ever with fewer people. Five new FF/EMT staff has been added to the department: Samuel Allen, Tom Band, Drew Unangst, Austin Woods and Brandon Gebauer. Two new FF/Paramedics Josh Smith and Shawn Rowlinson were hired. Years of Service Achievements Awards were given to FF/Medic Joel Margraf for 25 years; Chief Rob Chappell for 20 years; Lt. Scott Brooks and FF/Medics Isaac Heiser, Bill Hoffert, Danielle Reynolds and Travis Staley for 10 years; and to FF/Medic Jon Suter for 5 years. Chappell outlined his goals and plans for 2025: studying ways to utilize AI within the fire service and EMS; determining a plan for future stations; continuing focus on officer development training; working with the union to improve employee

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satisfaction and to improve pay and benefits; building stronger relationships with the community; and always continuing to improve their current level of service. Councilmember Hays asked if there had been any actionable steps regarding a new fire station. Chappell said that some background work has been done, such as GIS mapping to evaluate a location and determining if they should go to a two or three station model, estimated cost, and possible levies etc. for funding. His personal goal is to have it done within the next five years due to the current station constraints on equipment replacement. Regarding a possible third station, Councilmember Snay expressed his concern about staffing. Chappell said that with a minimum manning of 9 people, he would be comfortable with staffing three stations. Ideally he would like to add one person per shift, or have a battalion chief over the three stations. If there would be just two stations, he would push for a new downtown station instead of the current location.

City Administrator Dutro announced that Site Selection Magazine had again rated Tiffin as a top micropolitan city at #6 out of 550-560 similar sized cities. He said that to achieve this, it was necessary to have added significant investment, jobs, and increase plant/floor size.

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

**DIRECTOR OF FINANCE KATHY KAUFMAN:** No report.

**DIRECTOR OF LAW ZACHARY FOWLER:**

Director of Law Fowler reported that the publisher had already updated the Codified Ordinances through January 6, 2025 on their website. Ord. 2025-23 in the meeting packet authorized these replacement pages. He also referred to the Ohio State Auditor's February 25<sup>th</sup> bulletin he had distributed regarding marijuana sales. A 10% tax on all cannabis sales will be charged by the Department of Taxation and 36% will be distributed to the host community cannabis fund at the end of each quarter. Tiffin has one distributor. The Account Guidance section describes the process, and the State Auditor recommends the revenue be put into a separate fund under the General Fund. There are no restrictions for what Council decides to use it for. It can be used for general municipal purposes or for a specific purpose.

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-15 – Easement for 806 W. Market St.

*Referred to Law & Community Planning Committee*

Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-16 – Tax Incentive Review Council (TIRC) Recommendations

*Referred to Law & Community Planning Committee*

Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-17 – Appointment to the Seneca County Board of Health (Eileen Kleinfelter)

*Referred to Personnel & Labor Relations Committee*

Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-18 – Rotary Clock Project

*Referred to Law & Community Planning Committee*

Finance Director's Request for Legislation #F24-4 to amend the 2025 Budget Ordinance 24-94 to appropriate funds into the Mayor's Budget (\$27,000)

*On file in Clerk of Council's office; legislation prepared under Ord, 2025-24.*

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

**MOTIONS:**

- A. Councilmember Snay moved to nominate City Administrator Nick Dutro for the position of Acting Mayor; Councilmember Hays seconded.

*Discussion: Councilmember Roessner stated that the Mayor would just be out for a few days and the City Administrator would already be in the office. Law Director Fowler explained that when the Mayor is out of the City, per the Charter the President of Council is appointed Acting Mayor. She is currently not available, and in this case there is no provision in the Charter.*

Roll call vote was taken, and motion was approved 6-0.

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**RESOLUTIONS:**

**Resolution 2025-17**, introduced by John Hays and read for the first and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's reappointment of James D. Supance to serve a four-year term on the Sandusky County-Seneca County-City of Tiffin Port Authority from March 2, 2025 until March 1, 2029.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Roessner seconded.

Roll call votes were taken on the passage, and it was approved 6-0.

**Resolution 2025-18**, introduced by John Hays and read for the first and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's appointment of David Koehl to serve an unexpired term on the Sandusky County-Seneca County-City of Tiffin Port Authority from the effective date of this resolution until March 1, 2027.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Roessner seconded.

Roll call votes were taken on the passage, and it was approved 6-0.

**Resolution 2025-19**, introduced by John Hays and read for the first and only time required.

A RESOLUTION approving Mayor's appointment of Marissa Huss to serve an unexpired term on the Zoning Board of Appeals from the effective date of this resolution until December 31, 2025.

Councilmember Hays moved for passage; Councilmember Roessner seconded.

Roll call votes were taken on the passage, and it was approved 6-0.

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

A RESOLUTION approving the adoption of a General Fund Carryover Balance Policy.

**Resolution 2025-21**, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the first time.

A RESOLUTION supporting the preservation of the federal tax exemption of municipal bonds, and declaring an emergency.

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

*Discussion: Roessner explained that suspension was requested in order to show support the federal tax exemption of municipal bonds, which Congress is at risk of sunseting.*

Roll call votes were taken on the suspension, emergency and passage, and each was approved 6-0.

**Resolution 2025-22**, introduced by Dennis Snay and read for the first time.

A RESOLUTION appointing the City Administrator as Acting Mayor of the City of Tiffin during the Mayor's temporary absence, and declaring an emergency.

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

*Discussion: Snay explained that this was needed that to keep city government going.*

Roll call votes were taken on the suspension, emergency and passage, and each was approved 6-0.

**ORDINANCES:**

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

**Ordinance 2025-21**, introduced by Cheyane Thacker and read for the second 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 2025-23**, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE to revise the Codified Ordinances by adopting replacement pages thereto, and declaring an emergency.

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**Ordinance 2025-24**, introduced by Kevin Roessner and read for the first time.

AN ORDINANCE amending the 2025 Budget Ordinance 24-94 to appropriate funds into the Mayor's Budget.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Councilmember Daugherty announced a Law & Community Planning Committee meeting to be held Monday, March 10, 2025 at 5:15 p.m. in Council Chambers to discuss Mayor's Requests for Legislation #25-15 (Easement for 806 W. Market St.) , #25-16 (Tax Incentive Review Council Recommendations), and #25-18 (Rotary Clock Project), and any another business that may come before them.

Councilmember Hays announced a Personnel & Labor Relations immediately to be held on March 10, 2025 immediately following the above 5:15 p.m. Law & Community Planning Committee meeting in Council Chambers to discuss Mayor's Request for Legislation #25-17(Appointment to the Seneca County Board of Health) and any other business that may come before them.

Law Director Fowler administered the oath of Acting Mayor to City Administrator Nick Dutro.

**ADJOURNMENT:** 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Ann Forrest, Clerk of Council.

Approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Presiding Officer of Council

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of Council