

Village of Arcanum Council Meeting
November 21, 2023
5:300 p.m. Special Session

Call to Order – Mayor Bonnie Millard opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance along with all present members of Council.

Roll Call – The following council members were present: Eric VanHoose, David Hartley, Ryan Burns, and Jerry Boolman, and Calli Means. Also in attendance were VA/Police Chief Marcus Ballinger, Fiscal Officer Karen Deao, Admin. Specialist Julie Miller, Tammy Bruner, and Kurt Troutwine.

Council Member Boolman moved to excuse Council Member Genovesi. Council Member Hartley seconded. All present council members voted yea. Motion passed.

Amendments to Agenda – None.

Comments from the Public – None.

Work Session –

- **Health Insurance-**

Julie Miller advised that the employee survey on having higher deductibles & lower premiums vs lower deductibles & higher premiums showed that it was a 50/50 split on the employees that did respond. Several employees advised it would just depend on how much of a higher deductible it was going to be, and that if the deductible was going to be no more than \$1,000 higher than they would rather have lower premiums. VanVleet Insurance advised that once Form Fire was completed by the employees, it would take a few days for the carriers to get the Village the completed renewal options. Council Member Boolman expressed his concern on not having the health insurance finalized at this point in the year. Julie Miller advised that for budget purposes the current Anthem plan renewal figures were used, so at this point, the budget would not go higher, just comparable, or lower. Julie advised that with the current plan renewal that going with a plan that is 20% out of pocket after deductible is not beneficial to the employees. Mayor stated that she thinks staying between a \$5,000 - \$6,000 deductible would be reasonable. VanVleet Insurance advised that they would be shopping Medical Mutual of Ohio due to how competitive their rates are, which is not a carrier the Village has shopped before. Council Member Burns discussed the difference in the out-of-pocket max for the plans. Council Member Boolman would like for next meeting to have the breakdown of how many employees are in each tier of coverage and the out-of-pocket maximums for each. Council Member Hartley questioned if we would be pushing completion of open enrollment. Julie advised yes & no, with having less than 20 employees it is easy to have them all completed within 1-2 days. Council agreed that, if possible, they would like to find a plan that could save the Village some money, but still be a good plan for the employees. Council agreed to have a Finance Committee meeting the following Tuesday at 6:30 before the regular Council meeting to review all the Health Insurance plans, provided VanVleet can provide them by then.

- **HSA –**

Julie Miller spoke to Council in regards to changing how the 2024 HSA would be distributed to current and new employees. The Fiscal Officer and Julie Miller suggests that the Village's contribution of \$500 for current employees be deposited in January. New employees after completion of 90 days would receive \$125 deposited into their HSA at the beginning of the next quarter and the beginning of every quarter after that until 2025.

- **HRA –**

Discussion on how the HRA works for employees and how to budget each year for the HRA program. The HRA is currently set up, that once an employee has paid out of pocket \$1,500, they are able to begin submitting claims for reimbursement for any further medical expenses up to \$3,500. Employees can use the Village's portion of HSA towards their \$1,500 out of pocket, leaving them only paying \$1,000 out of pocket towards a single deductible of \$5,000. Mayor asked if the 2024 budget was appropriated with enough funds. It was stated the fund was budgeted per position, not per person on insurance. Council Member Boolman stated that he was okay with this type of budgeting that way if a current employee leaves who doesn't current take the Village health insurance, but the new employee does, funds would already be available.

Council Member Boolman moved to have legislation prepared for the Villages' HSA contributions for new employees be given in January of 2024, and new employees will receive \$125 at the beginning of each quarter after completion of 90 days. Council Member Hartley seconded. All present council members voted yea. Motion passed.

- **Levies –**

Mayor provided council a levy history handout, and reiterated that the two replacement operation levies that were put on the November ballot both failed. Darke County Auditor had reached out to the mayor to advise that with 2024 being a presidential election year, the Special Election would be in March instead of May. Mayor reviewed the handout figures with Council on what a renewal and/or replacement would generate. VA Ballinger provided a funding breakdown handout to council members that showed what each levy currently brings in. The handout showed that an Income Tax increase of 1.5% would bring in approximately \$387,000 and would go up over time. VA stated that adding an Income Tax would allow the Village to grow with the population, and the income that the population makes. VA also showed on the

handout an additional 5-year 1% Income Tax for the new pool that would bring in approximately \$3.8 million. VA advised that with a higher Income Tax the Village would be able to accomplish more than a just a few minor street repairs, but could tackle many streets that are in dire need of work, especially side streets and alleys. VA stated that the side streets are never going to qualify for grants because they don't have water and sewer running down them, and when you're not replacing water and sewer you are not going to get the infrastructure grant, but these roads, at some point in time, are going to need to be repaved. VA stated that placing an Income Tax on the ballot would help with that. VA feels that the Village can promote the additional income tax to the community if the residents are shown that there is a plan in place for the funds, and there is a longevity purpose for the funds. In regards to the additional 1% income tax for the pool, the VA feels that there is a good population that comes to the pool, but due to the age of the pool and what other surrounding pools have makes a difference. More amenities that are provided at a pool, generates more interest from patrons. VA feels that the community has to want the pool to become more than it is. VA states that even though he is passionate about putting on an Income Tax, it may be best to place the replacement levies back on the ballot for March and educate the public on those to pass, and then a year later, after Motes & Associates has had time to create a mock design for the community to view, approach them for a 5-year 1% additional Income Tax to fund the new pool. It would be imperative to let the Community know that the additional Income Tax would do away with current Parks & Pool levies. Council Member Means asked with what the VA has proposed for the Income Tax and the dropping of the levies what would the new income tax be. VA stated that it would be 2.5% for 5 years, and then it would drop to 1.5%. Council Member Hartley asked if the original idea of putting in a splash pad for the community would be part of the new pool. VA stated that the splash pad itself would be a standalone project outside the pool, but the pool would have a few smaller splash pad type features within the kiddie section. Council Member Hartley commented that a 2.5% Income Tax was a lot to ask of somebody, but you could always ask and see what happens. VA said that he understood, but the Village must show them, that if they agreed to the income tax increase, they would be relaxing their property costs a little by getting rid of the current levies. Council Member Boolman said that it is just nickels and dimes. You are taking a little off from their property taxes, but you're doubling the income tax. VA stated that running a Village on 1% is becoming less and less common, with most cities well over 1-2%, with communities the size of the Village moving to, or are already at 1.5%. These communities had the forethought years ago that if they wanted to grow and provide amenities and have nice streets and neighborhoods that they were going to have to have the funds to do so. VA stated that we can still do small projects here and there staying at the current income tax, but it is not consistent because there is not enough revenue to be consistent. Member Boolman said that a lot of the residents are going to be looking for tax credits for this type of tax rate, and he doesn't feel that the Village could offer those, because there is not enough jobs in Arcanum, with the majority working out of town. Fiscal Officer Deao advised that is where they get the credit. She stated that Versailles gives up to .5%, or 1% credit. VA stated the resident would never be paying more than 1% for both communities, not that the resident would get 1.5%, but they would never pay more than a total of 1.5%. Mayor stated that it would still be a reduction to the Village Income Tax. Council Member Hartley asked if the pool income tax should be a separate item for vote. VA feels that it is a package deal, but it could be discussed as a separate item, but if the pool 1% gets passed, there would be no way the residents would agree to a separate .5% later for the streets, etc. Council Member Burns asked if we know what the median income trend line is for Arcanum. VA stated that he did not have that, but it goes up every year. Council Member Burns thinks some residents will think that they are not making enough income to justify this type of tax. Council Member Boolman asked whether the Village would be receiving more revenue since the property values have all went up, and the Village receives a percentage from Real Estate Taxes. Mayor stated that it is not a significant amount, based on what was shown from the County Auditor. Mayor said that retirees would be relieved from the property tax, and with not working they would not be paying into the additional income tax. She looks at it both ways where the older residents may vote for it since it would not adversely affect them, but then those who work may say, "Why do they have to support, because the retirees are still benefitting from it." Solicitor stated that the income tax increase may discourage young families from moving into town. Fiscal Officer stated that after 5 years 1% of the increased tax would come off, and families would have a nice pool for their kids to enjoy. VA said some may feel frustrated, but that is why you have to give it to the community to decide, and let them know that there are no huge grants out there for a pool, and if they want it then it comes with cost. Mayor said that the residents may not want a fabulous aquatic center, they just want a pool with a smaller cost. Council Member Burns asked the VA who his target market would be for this pitch, since the majority of the burden is going to fall to those who are working. VA said is target market is families with kids, and a younger generation that desires to live in a community that is beautiful and maintained. Mayor told Council that the County Auditor said to keep in mind if a business/factory closes then there is more loss of income. Mayor stated that there are a lot of facts to consider in the decision. Council Member Hartley questions whether residents really want a pool they can only use for a few months out of the year, with a 5 year tax increase. It was brought up about issuing a survey to the community to find out answers to those types of questions. VA would like Council to consider his proposal if not now, but in the near future. Council Member Boolman advised he doesn't like trying to fund things off of working people, as he would rather it be more from real estate/property taxes.

Council Member Hartley questioned if a splash pad would be more feasible for the community than a swimming pool. VA is confident in saying that the community likes/wants a pool, and they would be willing to pay for a new pool. Council Member Burns expressed that a lot of residents work in higher taxed cities, but choose to live in Arcanum, because of lower taxes and affordability. Adding higher taxes, may cause younger families to move closer to their jobs for one higher tax rate and shorter commute versus paying two high tax rates; people will trade time for money. Council Member Boolman stated that utilities, etc., are all going up, and where does it end before Arcanum is no longer affordable to live in for the working person. VA agreed that people come for the lower taxes, but once they are here, they stay because it is safe, they know that they will be taken care of. He doesn't feel that 1.5% is that much to be able to live in a nice community. Council Member Boolman believes that the school is also going out for a levy in 2024. VA stated that their levy would be in the fall, and is why he would like the Villages to be in March. Council Member Boolman stated that he is a servant of the people, and he can't make a decision without some type of information of what the people want. Council talked about what would need to be put on the survey for wording and how to get it to Village residents only. Julie Miller advised that there are several ways to make sure that surveys are only tallied by Village residents, there may be some time involved in the process, but it is doable. Mayor said that Council should ask the question to themselves if they would vote for the increased Income Tax. Council Member Burns asked the VA if he thinks making the Income Tax a package deal would increase the chances of getting it passed. VA stated that it is. Part of the .5% would be for continued pool maintenance after the 1% goes off in 5 years, and it would dramatically increase funds for the parks & nature preserve. Resident Tammy Bruner asked if instead of building a new pool, if the current one could be repaired. Mayor and VA stated that the Village has looked at putting a liner in, however, it isn't a long-term fix, due to the pipes having issues behind the pool that is problem. Council Member Burns thinks doing a package deal, may hurt the chances of it passing versus separating it all out. VA does not totally disagree, but does believe that in a few years the Village will need to go out for at least a .50% increased Income Tax regardless. Solicitor expressed that it would be a big risk for the Village not to put the existing levies back on, even as a replacement. Chief Troutwine said it may go a long way with the community to apologize for not educating and putting information out there for November election. For the fire levy, he said that he didn't have great turn outs for their town hall meetings, but door to door was more fruitful. He mentioned that the pool has been a big topic for 15 years, and is it worth all the aggravation. Council Member Boolman felt that it was in the best interest of the Village to not put on an Income Tax increase on the ballot in March, but to put the two operation levies back on. Council Member Boolman moved to authorize legislation be prepared to place the .5 and 1.6 operation replacement levies on the March ballot. Council Member Hartley seconded. All present council members voted yea. Motion passed.

Old Business -

1. Ordinance 2023-36 – An Ordinance Repealing Ordinance 2023-35. (2nd Reading). Council Member Boolman moved to waive the three-reading rule for Ordinance 2023-36. Council Member Hartley seconded. All present council members voted yea. Motion passed. Council Member Boolman moved to adopt Ordinance 2023-36. Council Member Hartley seconded. All council members voted yea. Motion passed.
2. Ordinance 2023-37 - An Ordinance Establishing New Waste Collection Rates For The Village Of Arcanum. Exhibit A. (2nd Reading). Council Member VanHoose moved to waive the three-reading rule for Ordinance 2023-37. Council Member Hartley seconded. All present council members voted yea. Motion passed. Council Member VanHoose moved to adopt Ordinance 2023-37. Council Member Hartley seconded. All council members voted yea. Motion passed.
3. Ordinance 2023-38 – An Ordinance Confirming The Appointment Of Village Fiscal Officer. (2nd Reading). Council Member Boolman moved to waive the three-reading rule for Ordinance 2023-38. Council Member Hartley seconded. All present council members voted yea. Motion passed. Council Member Boolman moved to adopt Ordinance 2023-38. Council Member Hartley seconded. All council members voted yea. Motion passed.
4. Ordinance 2023-39 - An Ordinance Providing For The Appointment Of A Village Administrator/Chief Of Police. (2nd Reading). Council Member Burns moved to waive the three-reading rule for Ordinance 2023-39. Council Member Hartley seconded. All present council members voted yea. Motion passed. Council Member Burns moved to adopt Ordinance 2023-39. Council Member Hartley seconded. All council members voted yea. Motion passed.
5. Ordinance 2023-40 - An Ordinance For Appropriations For Current Expenses And Other Expenditures Of The Village Of Arcanum, Darke County Ohio, During Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2024. Exhibit A. (2nd Reading) Council Member Boolman moved to waive the three-reading rule for Ordinance 2023-40. Council Member Hartley seconded. All present council members voted yea. Motion passed. Council Member Boolman moved to adopt Ordinance 2023-40. Council Member Hartley seconded. All council members voted yea. Motion passed.
6. Ordinance 2023-41 - An Ordinance Providing For Wages For The Village Of Arcanum Employees For Calendar Year 2024. Exhibit A. (2nd Reading). Council Member VanHoose moved to waive the three-reading rule for Ordinance 2023-41. Council Member Hartley seconded. All present council members

- voted yea. Motion passed. Council Member VanHoose moved to adopt Ordinance 2023-41. Council Member Hartley seconded. All council members voted yea. Motion passed.
7. **Ordinance 2023-42** - An Ordinance Authorizing The Transfer Of Funds To Various Funds As Provided In The 2022 Annual Appropriations Ordinance, And Declaring An Emergency. (2nd Reading due to lack of quorum). Council Member Hartley moved to waive the three-reading rule for Ordinance 2023-42. Council Member VanHoose seconded. All present council members voted yea. Motion passed. Council Member Hartley moved to adopt Ordinance 2023-42. Council Member VanHoose seconded. All present council members voted yea. Motion passed. Council Member Hartley moved to declare Ordinance 2023-42 an emergency. Council Member VanHoose seconded. All present council members voted yea. Motion passed

Announcements – None.

Adjournment – Council Member Hartley moved to adjourn. Council Member Burns seconded. All present council members voted yea. Meeting adjourned at 6:48 pm.

ATTEST:



Bonnie L. Millard, Mayor



Karen L. Deao, Fiscal Officer



Jerry L. Boolman, President Pro-Tem