The regular meeting of the South Point Village Council was called to order at 7:00 PM followed by Mayor Jeff Gaskin with the pledge of allegiance. Village Chaplain, Jerry Boggs, led in prayer.

Members Present - Brad Adkins David Classing

Marlene Arthur Mary Cogan Absent

Chuck Austin Mike Lynd Absent

Village Solicitor, Randy Lambert was present.

Mr. Austin made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held May 3rd, 2022. Mr. Classing seconded. Roll call: Mr. Adkins-yes, Mrs. Arthur-yes, Mr. Austin-yes, Mr. Classing-yes.

Mr. Classing made a motion to approve payment of the approved invoices. Mr. Austin seconded. Roll call: Mr. Adkins-yes, Mrs. Arthur-yes, Mr. Austin-yes, Mr. Classing-yes.

**Old Business**:

An Ordinance regulating the use of Mobile Homes or similar structures for homes for the conduct of business within the Village of South Point, Ohio. Repealing any legislation in conflict herewith. Ordinance #22-04 -*Tabled until next meeting time*.

**New Business**:

Mr. Adkins made a motion to approve the following transfer of funds for the month of

June with Mr. Lynd seconding. Roll Call: Mr. Adkins-yes, Mrs. Arthur-yes, Mr. Austin-

yes, Mr. Classing-yes. Transfers are as follows.

From: To: Amount:

General Fund 2904 Police Dept. Fund 42,673.00

Sewer Fund 5721 Solida Sewer Bond (2017 LCNI) 4,375.00

Sewer Fund 5701 Sewer Improvements Bond (OPWC-2009) 3,380.00

Sewer Fund 5761 Sewer Reserve 4,500.00

Sewer Fund 5723 WWTP Clarifiers Rehab Loan (OWDA-2018) 4,305.00

Water Fund 5762 Water Reserve 1,667.00

Street Fund 3101 Street Repaving Bond (2015 LCNI) 456.00

Vehicle Permissive Tax 3101 Street Repaving Bond (2015 LCNI) 3,750.00

Fire Dept. Fund 3102 Fire Truck Bond (2020 PNC) 2,500.00

Sewer Fund 3103 Vacuum Truck Bond (2021 US Bank) 7,995.00

Sanitation Fund 5201 Sewer Fund (reimburse salary) 125.00

Sewer Fund 2903 Village Retirement Fund (ORC 5705.13(B), Ord 12-08) 2,200.00

Water Fund 2903 Village Retirement Fund (ORC 5705.13(B), Ord 12-08) 1,400.00

Street Fund 2903 Village Retirement Fund (ORC 5705.13(B), Ord 12-08) 394.00

Mr Austin made a motion to approve the Clerk/Treasurer's Financial Report, Revenue/Expenditure Account Status Report, and the Bank Reconciliation ending May 31st, 2022 Mr. Classing Seconded. Roll Call: Mr. Adkins-yes, Mrs. Arthur-yes, Mr. Austin-yes, Mr. Classing-yes.

Village Administrator - Russ McDonald reported the water department pumped 20 million gallons of Water and 29 million gallons of Waste Water for the Month of April. There have been 6 water main breaks. The waterline project is reported at 65% of the line in installed. Mr. McDonald stated its “moving right along pretty good”

Police Dept. Report – Chris Majher reported that they have been notably addressing the ordinances with the target problem areas with code enforcement. There are public here to address problems with weeds etc. 8 people have been served with issues.

Increase of patrol is returning to normal with all staff back. Theft is increasing in the area with catalytic converters being taken, so staffing will be increased at evening and midnight hours.

Fire Dept. Report – Chief Mark Goodall -Absent

Misc. Business:

Mr. Classing made the motion to approve the -Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Resolution Number 22-05 That Mike Boster (Director of Lawrence Co. Emergency Management) Prepared. Mrs. Arthur seconded. *Copy on file for review*

Roll Call: Mr. Adkins-yes, Mrs. Arthur-yes, Mr. Austin-yes, Mr. Classing-yes.

Per Mayor Gaskin, Minutes in the past could not go on the website until Council Approval.

Per Solicitor Randy Lambert we can post “Unofficial Minutes” to the website going forward as a recording of what happened to notify the public of what’s happening a month earlier.

Mayor Gaskin stated that paving is on hold for now due to Oil Pricing Per Barrel. We will pay off our loan this year and will save in hopes that pricing is reduced. We will continue to cold patch.

Mr. Adkins stated that something had been “pushed down the road a little bit and it has to do with the retention of police officers and so forth.” He stated he would like to make a motion to go ahead due to trying to stay with other towns that are taking our officers and inflation. I would like to move to non-supervisory a $2.00 per hour raise and supervisory a $2.50 per hour raise. Mr. Austin seconded the motion. The Mayor stated “if you want, you are Council if you want it. Can we afford it?” Have you looked to see if we can afford it? The Mayor directed the question to the finance committee. Mr. Austin stated that yes we can. Mr. Austin continued by saying he was going look the guy in the eye in a minute and he’s going to tell how we can do it. The Mayor stated and you are willing to do this without your two other council members present? The reply was we have a quorum. Mr. Austin continued by saying We’ve been kicking this down the road and we need to go on with it. Roll Call: Mr. Austin-Yes, Mr. Adkins-Yes, Mrs. Arthur-Yes, Mr. Classing-Yes.

Mr. Austin continued by asking the Chief of Police how are we going to pay for this without taxing our residence? What mechanism can we put into place?

Chief Majher stated that we start from the beginning especially when the police committee was started, that is when the “Can started being kicked down the road” We have watched a trend since covid hit, a complete fall off of people not wanting to get involved in police work. It has been a landslide and any retention problems we are having are exasperated at other departments also. Ultimately, everyone chases a dollar. Officers are looking for who pays better. Through our discussions we have talked about many different options. How can we retain the current officers we have because we are losing ours. Ours are losing to Scioto County and Scioto County is losing to other agencies as they are paying substantially more. Their budgets are more because of the higher tax base. So our tax burden has been put on the people we look at the milage we have right now at 9 and we are allowed 10. That burden (looking at guests present) has been thrown on you for everything. He is a believer of where does the offender come into this? The offender needs to take a step up and that needs to be a big portion of the offset that pays for that protection. We have went for a long time with limited patrol on the highway. We have used that as a I guess a no go zone. But, if you go out there during the day, as I’m out there quite frequently during the day, it’s a complete mad house. We focus on in town with most days 2 people out for most patrols. If someone is out we have to bring in someone on over-time. Yet again it is more money to maintain that redundancy. If we would broaden our scope a little bit and allow a little bit more patrol on the highway, allow that ticket flow to come in you will see ticket increases to increase. Subsequently you are going to see those fee amounts to go back into our general fund. It won’t be a zero tolerance attitude but, to get back into what we did 20 years ago, which we had the inner management of the police dept regulated based upon what we saw and everything going on with the safety of the highway. We based the direction of the police dept. on what was happening on the highway. Just today, this evening at 3:00 o’clock there were 2 wrecks on the highway due to possibly construction or increase speed of vehicles going 67-75 mph due to no police presence. Allowing us to navigate the highway a little bit more still if we have one officer out, picking up our patrol in town, kinda goes back to the theft then if it picks up, we need to keep our patrols more at the targeted areas. It’s through my math and Lenny’s math that you will see a 25-30% increase across the board of total citations just based on highway patrol just getting out and patrolling the highways. That’s on a limited basis. Years back we managed it fairly well.

I think its our mainstream. I think it would be an increase in the revenue stream that would offset that cost and not burden the people that live in town. Because the only other option you have is taxation. I don’t want it, my parents don’t want it, I don’t want to speak for people here but, I don’t think they want it. Nobody wants that with gas prices. That’s another thing our budget got hit hard with gas prices. So where are we going to find the revenue. That revenue stream right now and its only option is the highway. So allowing more patrol out there with the understanding that it is part of our patrol area and standing behind that will offset that.

Mr. Austin asked Chief Majher what he thought the revenue would be obtainable if you have someone out there without sacrificing the safety and security of this Village?

Chief stated it would be hard to speculate but, you’re looking at increasing revenues across the board in a year’s time of $100,000.00 that you are losing out on if not more, that just on traffic citations and revenues. These are issues like you said taboo and nobody likes to talk about them but, that’s not what the main direction is but, you have to address the elephant in the room that’s part of it when you write a citation, some of the best life lessons like my dad taught me come from your back pocket. So if it weren’t tickets wouldn’t have dollar signs on the bottom of them. So that is our revenue stream. That is the way to keep from taxing the people and giving our officer’s $2.00 per hour raise, and giving them $2.50 per hour raise on the supervisory end still isn’t addressing that half of my police staff don’t have insurance and I don’t think the public knows that. They worked all the way through covid and didn’t have one stitch of insurance and half did. Mr. Austin stated, let us work on that if my math is halfway close, we are looking on these hours at around $70,000.00 and that’s based upon $3.00 cost. At 50 hours a week 9 people 10 hours a day, 5 days a week it costs somewhere around that amount. Chief said that he wanted to throw out there that the supervisory role, I’m not included in that. The way I look at raises, that is between the Mayor and myself. That is my standard of doing things. So that will save money. This is about the agency. We have officers looking for other jobs. The Academies are not getting filled up 30 required but only about 7 are showing up. It’s getting worse and worse

It's because places within an hour away are paying $30-$35.00 per hour. I guess I don’t want to get too wordy with it, but there’s no other way to say it but that’s the only way we can pay for it is to increase revenue stream based upon citation numbers. So we have prepared ourself over the last couple of months- we’ve done court twice a month to get ourself more into a way to handle if it came to fruition. To handle the influx and where it’s not something that’s overbearing once a month. You will see a drastic increase in people coming to court.

Mr. Classing stated that in in his observation that he’s sure the public doesn’t know that ODOT is requiring us to maintain the highway, cut the grass and if we are having to go out there and use the limited resources we’ve got. That has been my philosophy for awhile. The Mayor pointed out that may change but, he will speak on that later.

Chief Majher stated he wanted to leave no question unanswered. He feels very secure in those numbers. In past history when we speculated numbers, we’ve hit them or over achieved them. He stands behind that fact it would get us over the hump and as said earlier there are still things we need to address. We have done the math 2 or 3 months ago and in order to do this step and to give the part-timers insurance it was going to be upwards of $200,000.00 increase on my budget and where are you going to find the money and as we did the math we felt that realistically it could be done out there without a problem. So the numbers I am giving you are in the safe area so I don’t have to eat crow. So I feel very very secure in that.

Mr. Austin Stated there has been some reservation sitting around this table and I must say we have worked hard as a group for the best interest of South Point and even in the times when we are campaigning the safety and security of this Village is top priority for everybody here. We have spent a lot of money in our police dept., we have spent a lot of money in places where we could save money. I think this is a good investment especially during these trying times and I personally know how hard it is to retain people and what speaks is when it hits the paycheck. We got other issues Chief that we have been talking about for over a year that merits careful consideration but, we still have to pay for it. On the other hand, I know Mayor you have had some heartburn regarding how much time is spent on the highway there are other council members that have had heartburn about that, I get it but, I think these trying times that we are trying to manage through, we are going to have to relook at that someway somehow and keep our group together as we move forward to solve the problems that this Village has elected us to solve. So you are the Mayor and we want to do this in a way that we move forward in a positive manner. What are your thoughts on this?

The Mayor stated well let me say that unless this group orders it, the Mayor runs the police department. It’s been my policy that during once per shift if the Village is quiet, an officer may make one circuit on the highway looking for broke down vehicles and if you happen to catch a speeder, okay. I hear more than once if you’re on the highway you are not in front of my house. I don’t care if there were 7 people patrolling the village you weren’t in front of my house you were on the highway and they stole my catalytic converter while you were on the highway. But, you guys write the rules. Now then, David brought it up about ODOT and the grass and paving. ODOT paying 2.7 million dollars to pave our street and they are going to fix our slip, they want us to cut the grass or we can pay them. They’re fee is $6000.00 to cut the median. We already cut 14 acres out there so that number is going to come down. I told them no. I have testified in front of the house transportation committee about just this. Hanging Rock, Coal Gove, South Point. If it weren’t for tickets Hanging rock probably wouldn’t have anything. There is a bill called house bill 16 which essentially says what has been happening for the last 60 years now we need to take care of it for whatever reason. There could be legal reasons. House bill 16 say in 17 pages ODOT takes care of the highway. In that bill is taking the highway way from Hanging Rock, Coal Grove, South point. We will not be able to patrol the highway if the transportation committee has their way. It could be gone. It’s already been told to me that is what they want to do. Now I have told them I can’t allow that and Chief knows, I’ve been in contact with Hanging Rock to tell them to warn them to get them to band with me to go places. So if you are on the highway are aren’t in front of my house. The Mayor asked if there was anything else regarding this (Raise motion) Mr. Austin said yes, how are we going to pay for it? The Mayor replied it’s passed you figure it out. Mr Austin’s recommendation is we give the Chief the decision making ability to make sure this excess money is taken care of through whatever he has to do on the highway for whatever time it takes to do that.

Chief said let me give you some numbers… if we are writing 3 tickets a day per shift 9 tickets in a 24 hour period, at 56% pay ratio or just 5 tickets per day it comes up to

$175,000.00. We know numbers will be greater than that. If we have to speculate how much we will have, I have to sell myself to you based on trends of what we have done in the past. I have been doing this almost 3 decades and I have watched a lot of trends and I watch them closely, I know where we will be. I think we will be fine, I think what you are trying to get to and me and the Mayor have discussed, that open the highway up to a little bit more frequency as the complaints come in the people need to know we are managing that just as we are in any other targeted area We don’t know where the next catalytic converter is going to be cut off, we have to come to reality in the aspect of law enforcement, the thief likes to hide in shadows, he’s not going to jump out in front of my cruiser and say hey here I am, I’m getting ready to steal this catalytic converter. I have cameras on my job site that didn’t keep it from happening. So we can speculate what could have happened if the police could have stopped if they were in front of their house but, we won’t speculate on the money we are going to make that obviously has history of being true. I have made these speculations before and they have come to fruition.

Mr. Auston stated that in respect to the Mayor’s time, without de-regulating your authority in anyway whatsoever, you still need to run the Village, that’s not what we are here to do.

I don’t care what the motion needs to say, it just needs to give us the flexibility. The Mayor said you don’t need a motion to do that. If that is what you want then that’s what he can do. Mr. Lambert said the Mayor oversees or supervises the Police dept. however council can set regulations. The Mayor said if that is what you want, that’s what will happen. The Mayor asked is that what you (Council) want? You want him to write tickets on the highway? Mr. Austin said that’s right the Mayor asked around the table… Marlene is that what you want? Marlene said no. Mr. Classing said that’s not what I want but, if it’s what we need then I vote yes. Mr. Adkins said yes. The Mayor said that’s 3 to 1-Chief have at it. My policy will change and I will work with the Chief on the policy.

Public Present:

Roger Watkins praised the police regarding a hit and run that happened to his truck in front

of his residence. The Police found the vehicle and cited them into court.

Dr. Jay Farley wanted to ask about interest in fluoride being added to the system. He was

referred to the Village Administrator for further discussion.

Tony Fetters from the Lions Club was present to let council know they were there and if

anything was needed, he left his contact information

Sandy Williams wanted to praise the work of the police dept for monitoring 9th and

Washington for traffic concerns.

Issue brought to council by several residents on Kitts Lane area with invasive plants

growing. Chief of Police is sending an officer to the area to meet with residents.

Debra Fitzpatrick asked about the water issue on Tiffany Lane. The Mayor responded with

estimate of $900,000.00. Work will start at the bottom of the road to correct drainage.

Mel Yopp questioned the dog ordinance regarding aggressive dog in the Foodfair parking

lot. He stated it attacked him. The Chief recommended that he use pepper spray or call the

police and the owner will be cited.

After completing all items on the agenda, Mayor Gaskin dismissed the meeting at 8:00 PM

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Tracey Lobaldo, Clerk Jeff Gaskin, Mayor