

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**  
Minutes of Bellbrook City Council Meeting  
April 8, 2019

**PRESENT:** Forrest Greenwood  
Darryl McGill  
Dona Seger-Lawson  
Mike Schweller  
Mayor Robert Baird

**GUESTS** John Dorn  
Gregg Sparks  
Doug Cozad  
Merna Herzog

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Baird called the City Council meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**ROLL CALL**

Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mr. McGill, yes; Mrs. Seger-Lawson, yes; Deputy Mayor Schweller, yes; Mayor Baird, yes.

Mr. McGill made a motion to excuse Nick Edwards from the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Greenwood. The Clerk called the roll. Mr. McGill, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mrs. Seger-Lawson, yes; Mr. Schweller, yes; Mayor Baird, yes. The motion carried 5-0.

Mrs. Seger-Lawson made a motion to excuse Elaine Middlestetter from the meeting. This was seconded by Mr. Schweller. The Clerk called the roll. Mrs. Seger-Lawson, yes; Mr. Schweller, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mr. McGill, yes; Mayor Baird, yes. The motion carried 5-0.

**FORMAL APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

After polling members of City Council, as there were no corrections or additions to the regular meeting minutes of March 11, 2019 Mayor Baird declared the minutes approved as written.

**MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/SPECIAL GUEST**

Mayor Baird welcomed Mr. John Dorn from the Lion's Club.

Mr. Dorn explained that baseball and softball is growing in the area with 27 teams of different age groups on the existing eight fields. Bellbrook and Sugar creek Township do not have enough fields at

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Sackett Wright Park. The fields flood every spring. Current pictures showed the park covered by water. The practice schedule is already full. The school has kindly allowed teams to practice on the High School and Junior High fields. The Lion's Club plans to develop Berryhill Park, formerly the Austin Farm. The Parks District owns the 40 acres and is working with the Lion's Club to develop them. The plan is to build nine baseball fields over three phases, three fields at a time. They are trying to pay for the project with private money. The fields will be similar in style to the ones in Centerville that are multi-use fields. They can be used for baseball t-ball through 15 year's old and for softball through high school age. Concrete will be poured around structures to eliminate the need for trimming. The Lion's Club through its 501c3 organization has \$110,000 to begin the project and they plan to search for grants.

Mayor Baird commented that it is a good plan and he is glad they are working with the parks district. There is definitely a need for fields that do not continually flood.

Mr. Schweller wished the Lion's Club success in their endeavor.

Gregg Sparks from the Lion's Club added that he has been supporting Mr. Dorn in this project including financing and making sure the plans take drainage and other considerations are into account. He explained that the Lion's Club is doing the contracting and does not face the same restrictions that government construction requires. Ernst Concrete has already been contacted for the project's needs. Another Lion's Club member who owns Tom's Mulch has acquired a fence company. These connections should help with the cost and timing of the project.

Mr. Sparks also announced that changes are going to be made for this year's Festival. Traditionally the festival took place Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights. Thursday night's attendance has been dropping due to school being in session. Starting this year, the Festival will run Friday night through Sunday at 6:00 PM. The parade on Saturday has been moved up to 2:00 PM to eliminate some of the traffic issues. They are adding some craft vendors similar to the Sugar Maple Festival. Changes to the infrastructure have included putting utilities underground. Setup is also being streamlined to be more efficient.

Mrs. Seger-Lawson asked if the Club will still be asking the high school football players to help with set up. Mr. Sparks answered that those arrangements have already been set up. May 7 is the date for a meeting to finalize those plans. They will be moving away from setting up on Sunday and will now do set up on Monday and Tuesday nights. Tear down will be on the Monday night following the Festival.

Mrs. Seger-Lawson asked how someone could donate to the Festival. Mr. Sparks said people could contact the Lion's Club or any of the members to do that.

Dr. Douglas Cozad, Superintendent, Bellbrook Sugarcreek Local Schools presented information about the school levy on the May 7 ballot. It is a 7.5 mil replacement levy. It will replace the current levy that was passed in 1981. A replacement levy's purpose is to bring the amount of the levy up to today's

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value. The effective millage is about 1.6 that originally collected about \$500,000 and is now collecting about \$1,000,000. The replacement levy will increase it up to about \$4,000,000. This equals an additional \$3,000,000 to the school district a year. When the school board looked at their five-year forecast, as required by OBE, there would be about a \$3.2 million deficit by fiscal year 2022. To avoid that, the board felt it was critical to put a levy on the ballot. School districts cannot operate in the red. The revenue for a school district is fairly flat with only a small increase for new construction. Last year the school received about \$280,000 from new construction. This is not much when you have a \$28 million-dollar budget. These factors led to the board's plan to put this levy on the ballot. If the levy does not pass this year, the school loses a whole year of the money, approximately \$3,000,000. The levy will be used for operating the school district including continuing the great things that are going on. Some of these are the STEM program (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), great curriculum materials, and enhanced technologies. The state categorized us as a very successful school. Out of the 608 school districts in Ohio, Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools was one of the 28 school districts to receive an A. That is a testament to the students, teachers, parents, community, and the schools. All of whom must work well together. The school only receives 27% of its funding from the state. The state looks at school districts and the wealth of the area. We are one of the wealthier school districts. The state average is 44%. Other contributing factors are rising costs and under-funded and unfunded mandates. The state and federal mandates requirements but only pay a small percentage of the cost, if any at all. One example is the College Credit Plus program where high school students are allowed to go to college during their high school years. Students can take classes at Wright State, Sinclair, or college classes taught at the high school. These are free to the students and their parents but not free to the school district. Last year the school paid \$40,000 for this program. Charter schools cost about \$250,000 out of our budget.

There is a lot of good information available from the school district. For example, the expenditure per pupil is below the state average and below many similar districts. Auditor of State award five years in a row. He explained that this and more information is available on the school district's website.

The cost to the taxpayer will be \$211.13 for a \$100,000 house, which breaks down to \$17.59 per month. Spending has been reduced by \$500,000 in an attempt to avoid the levy. Staff was reduced by two high school teachers, one teacher at Steven Bell, and one at BCI. Switching to LED lighting led to a savings of \$140,000 each of the last two years.

Mr. Greenwood asked if Dr. Cozad could explain the problem with the state funding. Dr. Cozad explained that in 1997 the way the state funds education was declared unconstitutional and three times since, but since then the legislature has only provided a little money toward the problem. They won't fully fund what it actually costs to educate a child in Ohio. The school board did meet with the state legislatures on March 19 about funding. Representative Perales admitted that he knows about it. These leaders need to be hearing from their constituents. The public should contact their senators, such as Senator Hackett and Senator Lehner who is from Kettering and is the Chair of the Senate Education Committee. Mr. Greenwood commented that the people here need to contact their state representative not the school board about the funding issues. He opined that the Ohio lottery was supposed to solve the school funding issue but has not.

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Mr. Greenwood asked how long this money would be sufficient before the school board brings another levy to the public. Dr. Cozad said that was a difficult question to answer. One reason for this is that the state is currently working on its biannual budget which begins on July 1. So, the schools do not even know what the true amounts will be for this coming year. In addition, that budget is only for two years where the school districts must budget for five years. Many changes can happen in five years. He answered that the school board will push out the need for an additional levy out as far as possible.

Mr. McGill commented that he has spent time in the schools. He urges that the leaders of the community need to support the schools and the great programs taking place there. Youth are the breath of this community and they will ultimately give back to that community. Excellence in education starts there.

Mrs. Seger-Lawson added that it was the strong schools that brought her here from Huber Heights. She explained that she has two children in the school district and knows that parents want to move here. This is what keeps our property values rising. Dr. Cozad agreed that nine years ago that is what brought his family here.

Dr. Cozad added that people can forward any questions to him or Treasurer Kevin Liming.

Mayor Baird read **Proclamation: April-Safe Digging Month**, at the request of Ohio 811 and Common Ground Alliance. He added that for himself and his company, Vectren, and Mrs. Seger-Lawson's company, this is a very important issue. Mr. Baird said that in his 30 years working for a utility he has seen many accidents that could have been avoided. This is a great program and Mrs. Seger-Lawson added that 811 is very fast to respond to requests.

Service Department Director Ryan Pasley presented the 2018 Annual Report. First item was water production of almost 300 million gallons with only 14% unmetered. Anything under 20% is considered reasonable by the EPA. The city has changed how they flush hydrants. They now flush water mains which helps get the old iron out and make the water cleaner. The Service Department responds to utility location requests like the OUPS 811 requests. The city made 12 water main repairs. Mr. Pasley thanked the Council for allocating money for the replacement of fire hydrants. At least 15 will be replaced in 2019. The 11 fire hydrants that were replaced during the Upper Hillside project will be repurposed in other areas of the city. Snow removal was required for 22 snow events this winter. The roads scheduled to be re-milled and paved this year have been identified. Tyler Bond was hired as Maintenance Worker 3. The staff holds five Water Supply 1 licenses and one Water Supply 2 license. Another employee is preparing to take the Water Supply 2 test. Mr. Pasley again thanked the Council for their support.

Mrs. Seger-Lawson asked if the Department had received any complaints. Mr. Pasley answered that they had received a few complaints about a drop in water pressure but those have gone away.

Mr. Schweller asked if there were any big changes coming with the EPA and other issues. Mr. Pasley answered that lead and copper sampling. The Service Department has been testing for phosphates for

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a year. Lead comes from older solder and is being tested yearly now because a few times we were close to an action level. They do not know of any other changes. EPA began focusing on the lead and copper issue after the problems in Michigan.

Mr. Greenwood asked about \$150,000 a year for paving is adequate? Mr. Pasley said he could always use more. Evaluations are done in November and December to choose which streets are in the most need of repair.

Mr. Baird asked how the 10-cent gas tax will affect the road fund. Mr. Pasley explained that they will always fix the worst first.

Mr. Schweller likes having a plan that does not require assessments.

**PUBLIC HEARTING OF ORDINANCES**

Mr. Greenwood read **Ordinance 2019-7 An Ordinance Establishing Section 1060.09 “Billing” of the Bellbrook Municipal Code.**

City Manager Dodd explained that the city did not have procedures in place for garbage collection when there were no water charges.

Mr. Greenwood made a motion to adopt **Ordinance 2019-7 An Ordinance Establishing Section 1060.09 “Billing” of the Bellbrook Municipal Code.** Mr. McGill seconded the motion. The Clerk called the roll. Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mr. McGill, yes; Mrs. Seger-Lawson, yes; Mr. Schweller, yes; Mr. Baird, yes. The motion carried 5-0.

Mrs. Seger-Lawson read **Ordinance 2019-8 An Ordinance Establishing Section 1060.10 “Operation Fees” of the Bellbrook Municipal Code.**

City Manager Dodd explained that this ordinance put fees in place.

Mr. Schweller asked if the amount was enough to cover the costs. Mrs. Dodd answered that they were sufficient. In cases involving garbage pickup only a phone call to Rumpke is required, while shutting off water required work by the Service Department. This fee is standard for other local municipalities.

Mrs. Seger-Lawson made a motion to adopt **Ordinance 2019-8 An Ordinance Establishing Section 1060.10 “Operation Fees” of the Bellbrook Municipal Code.** Mr. Schweller seconded the motion. The Clerk called the roll. Mrs. Seger-Lawson, yes; Mr. Schweller, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mr. McGill, yes; Mr. Baird, yes. The motion passed 5-0.

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**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES**

Mr. McGill read **Ordinance 2019-9 An Ordinance Amending Section 220.01 “Rules of Council” of the Municipal Code of the City of Bellbrook, Ohio.** Mr. McGill thanked the city staff for identifying these items that need to be cleaned up in the City’s code.

Mr. Schweller commented that he appreciated staff’s attention to detail in making sure the City’s code is correct and up-to-date.

Mr. McGill made a motion to introduce **Ordinance 2019-9 An Ordinance Amending Section 220.01 “Rules of Council” of the Municipal Code of the City of Bellbrook, Ohio.** Mrs. Seger-Lawson seconded the motion. The Clerk called the roll. Mr. McGill, yes; Mrs. Seger-Lawson, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mr. Schweller, yes; Mr. Baird, yes. The motion passed 5-0.

**RESOLUTIONS** - none

**CITY MANAGER REPORT**

City Manager Dodd began by giving an update on the Little Sugarcreek Road project. The engineers will be placing the sensors under the road April 15 through 17 for the geotechnical analysis.

Sugar Maple Festival is almost here. The Police Department held a training for 18 volunteers who will be selling alcohol at the festival. Concrete barricades will be placed at the entry and exit points for safety.

Mrs. Dodd said she and Mr. Green are working on a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) submission. The proposal is for funds to repair the sidewalks along the east side of North West Street along the side of Road Dog gas station. A cost estimate will be shared with Council as soon as possible.

The Service Department repainted the old firehouse garage building a neutral gray color and painted the light fixtures black. Mrs. Dodd opined that this is an improvement from the previous paint. A temporary mural is being planned by the Wednesday morning community business leaders. The plan is to make a temporary selfie spot for the Sugar Maple Festival. A more permanent mural will be planned for the future.

The Downtown Beautification Project has already been a huge success according to Mrs. Dodd. In just 10 weeks all nine benches and 10 bike racks were sold. This project raised \$14,100 to date. One person donated \$4,000. The check will be received on April 25 at Greene Giving’s annual meeting. The plaques are on order. As soon as the plaques are put on the items they will be installed. Mrs. Dodd thanked everyone who made this such a success. A new project will be identified soon to keep the momentum going.

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Mrs. Dodd has contacted Miami Valley Lighting who owns our downtown street lights about the possibility of upgrading them to decorative lighting. There will be more information to come on this idea.

Mr. Schweller congratulated the City Manager and the staff on the city newsletter that just came out. He noticed changes and thinks it looks great and is very informative.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Service:** none

**Safety:** none

**Finance/Audit:** Mr. Schweller reported that the auditors completed their field work and were in the office for less than three days. The audit should be complete in June.

**Community Affairs:** Mr. McGill reported for Mrs. Middlestetter. The Little Miami River Cleaners are celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ohio Scenic Rivers Act. A meeting of legislators and local policy makers is scheduled her for July 19. Mrs. Taft is involved with the planning.

Mrs. Seger-Lawson announced that the dates for the Sugar Maple Festival are April 26, 27, and 28.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

Clerk of Council Pamela Timmons was named as the designee for City Council for Certified Public Records Training.

**OPEN DISCUSSION**

Mr. Greenwood reported attended the Russ Research Center presentation hosted by the Greene County Commissioners. The center was created due to a shortage of SKIF space and high bay areas in the Miami Valley. Some of the need is driven by the base but there are other needs as well. There is growth in high tech fields.

Mr. McGill thanked Service Director Pasley for the outstanding work.

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**ADJOURN**

Being no further business to come before this regular session of the Bellbrook City Council, Mayor Baird declared the meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.

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Robert L. Baird, Mayor

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Pamela Timmons, Clerk of Council