VILLAGE OF PHILLIPSBURG

COUNCIL MEETING

JULY 15, 2025

Mayor Simpson: Meeting called to order.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Simpson: The meeting is going out of order of the Agenda because Mr. Steiner will be late to the meeting.

Wendell Harleman stated that Derek Shell (water engineer) was supposed to attend the meeting but did not show up. Wendell informed the Council that he got a new pull-behind mower attachment and it's working well. It cuts 112" inches. Street signs – has a couple more to go. Route 49 cannot be worked on anymore. He will reach out again to ODOT. Just able to patch in the meantime, because of the old water main. Councilwoman Heather Craft asked who did original paving. It was a company from Indiana and they are no longer in business. Councilwoman Hope Hoard questioned who is actually responsible for work on State Route 49. Wendell has a hydraulic leak on the tractor that needs to be fixed.

Chief Mark Wysong discussed the police department budget. He has been fiscally responsible in the past. Some newly created positions are drawing money from the police department. Three salaries are taking a portion of money from the police department fund. Will discuss further if needed. Chief Aldrich: Fire department is also paying money to people that don't work for the fire department. Mayor Simpson states those monies should come out of general fund.

Chief Mark Wysong discussed unregistered and unlicensed vehicles on the streets of Phillipsburg. He is seeing side by sides and ATVs on the streets. That goes against the Village ordinance. Councilwoman Heather Craft asked can we renew the restriction? If they can drive legally in another jurisdiction, is it also legal here? Chief Wysong stated that the law is clear on what is legal, and he has no authority to change the law. We must follow the Ohio Revised Code. Illegal vehicles are a safety concern. Councilwoman Hope Hoard asked how is the law going to be enforced? Chief Wysong stated letting the public know the laws and that they will get a citation if they break the law. Mayor Simpson stated posting notice with BMV link to make vehicles street legal.

Chief Wysong stated that zoning violation letters have been sent out. Only one has been signed for via certified mail. Follow-up letters will be sent out. Serving notices is costly due to certified mail postage, etc. Getting the zoning violation letters out and second notices are a work in progress.

Solicitor Ben Mazer gave an update on the school. Working with Chief Wysong, second notice to be served on owner of building. We are going through the administrative process. After no action on the part of the owner, we can go to court. Land Bank funding was also discussed re demolition of the building.

Chief Aldrich suggested that there is a need for an amendment to the pay scale. POC gets paid once a year, but rate needs to be increased. Council approved a raise in September 2024. Chief suggests raising minimum pay to $11/hr for paid on call. EMT will be paid $13/hr, advanced EMT will be paid $14/hr, and a medic will be paid $15/hr. so there is no subjectivity to it on the part of the Chief. It is all merit based. The Chief provided a color-coded chart regarding positions and pay. Need pay raise retroactive to January 2025.

Chief Aldrich stated that there are applicants he would like to hire tonight as trainees per SOG3-16. Their rate of pay would be the adopted rate of paid on call pay. Alisa Henninger is in an EMT class which she is paying for herself. Carter Davis is attending a fire class, which he is paying for himself. Carter is present at the meeting. A motion to hire is needed based on results of background check and drug screen.

Mayor Simpson asked for a roll call before voting on anything.
Councilwoman Heather Craft – here, Councilwoman Hope Hoard – here, Steiner, here. Guests: Solicitor Ben Mazer, Street/Water Commissioner Wendell Harleman, Fire Chief Pat Aldrich, and Police Chief Mark Wysong.

Chief Aldrich filled in Chris Steiner on pay raise issues and hiring new trainees.

Councilwoman Hope Hoard motioned to adopt the $11/hr pay scale for the firefighters and interim EMT. Councilwoman Heather Craft: Second. All in favor – yes. All opposed – none. Motion unanimously passed.

Councilwoman Hope Hoard motioned to hire Carter Davis as a paid on call at the fire department at the $11/hr rate of pay when he completes his classes. Councilwoman Heather Craft: I second. Mayor Simpson: All in favor – yes. Opposed -none. Motion unanimously passed.

Councilwoman Hope Hoard motioned to hire Alise Henninger as a trainee at minimum wage, and then an EMT at the completion of her class at the rate of $13/hr. Councilwoman Heather Craft – Second. Mayor Simpson: All in favor -yes. Opposed – on one. Motion unanimously passed.

Chief Aldrich stated to the swearing in of the lieutenants that were hired at the last regular council meeting. Lieutenant Sheri Widner, Lieutenant Andrew Porter, and Lieutenant Nathanial Davis.

Swearing in of Sheri Weidner, Andrew Porter, and Nathanial Davis. (Oaths attached)

Chief Aldrich on equipment: Engine 80 back in service. Equipment purchase. Chief needs clarification on what he can spend without approval and with approval. Need a motion to purchase a Thermal Imaging Camera from All American Fire Equipment for $1,139 plus the applicable shipping charge. This was the best of three quotes that have been included in the list presented to the council. We have appropriated $20,000 in calendar year 2025 for machinery, equipment, and furniture. None of which has been spent to date on any of that. So this unit will be installed on Engine 80. The future goal is to have one on every engine. The purpose of the TIC is that it gives an image based on heat differential. It shows what is going on in a smoky room and can identify someone in the room that is not visible to the naked eye.

Councilwoman Heather Craft motioned to purchase the Thermal Imaging Camera from All American for $1,139. Steiner: Second. Mayor: all in favor – yaes. Opposed – none. Motion passes.

Chief Aldrich: The fire department was awarded a $6,970 grant from the Bureau of Workers' Compensation to purchase firefighter gear. This is called the "Exposure to the Elements Grant." From this grant we have purchased two sets of gear - gloves and hoods - in this last cycle. Prior to that we purchased helmets, so this was a little bit of money that was left over. The plan is to have two firefighters fitted this Friday for the gear. It should take 6 – 8 weeks to be made. So now 18 of the 25 members of the department will be in the correct safety gear. The ones that are not, we have some gear to reallocate to get them fitted. And the rest are EMS only.

Mayor Simpson thanked Chief Aldrich for getting the new gear.

Chief Aldrich states that the previous fiscal officer left the department in a good financial position regarding bills and bill payments, payroll processing. The transition to new mayor, Josh, has been seamless. Had a meeting with temporary fiscal officer, Richard Ford, and he answered all questions, gave advice on what procedures need corrected, and they have been corrected. The Chief is working on a 5-year plan for equipment repair and replacement. He explained current equipment and usage and the costs of used equipment vs. new equipment.

Councilwoman Hope Hoard discussed park status. She asked for $22,000 to replace park equipment and basketball court. The Village is participating in a community event for August 9 that will include food and entertainment. She asked for $1,000 for supplies. Mayor Simpson explained that the Park Department would donate the meat purchased for the event to the Fire Department Association, which will cook and sell it as a fundraiser. Discussion about set up and clean up. Mayor Simpson stated that levy money was raised for updating park equipment. The Village will get quotes on updated basketball court and park equipment and also look at grants. Councilwoman Heather Craft wants to table the request for $22,000 until quotes are obtained for equipment costs. Councilwoman Heather Craft motioned to table the request for $22,000, Steiner second. Motion passed.

Councilwoman Heather Craft motioned to approve $1,000 expenditure for community event. Steiner second. Motion passed.

Councilwoman Heather Craft brought up zoning and maintenance costs. Solicitor Ben Mazer looked into zoning code updating. Ben spoke about legal input for zoning and maintenance codes. Councilwoman Heather Craft asked if we could model an updated code from another city. Councilwoman Heather Craft asked Mark Wysong when second notices will be sent out regarding code violations. Mark stated they would be sent out the end of July or first of August.

Mayor Simpson spoke about traveling fiscal officer and accessing bank account. He also stated that payroll payments will be moved from Friday after the end of the payroll term to the following Wednesday. Councilwoman Hope Hoard motioned to move payroll day from Friday to the following Wednesday each pay period. Councilwoman Heather Craft second. All in favor. Motion passes.

Mayor Simpson recommended Lori Hartman to fill the fiscal officer position.

Councilwoman Hope Hoard read Resolution 25-0062 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF A VILLAGE FISCAL OFFICER AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. (Resolution attached)

Councilwoman Hope Hoard Motioned to adopt resolution. Steiner second. All in favor. Resolution unanimously passed.

Councilwoman Hope Hoard Motioned to hire Lori Hartman as fiscal office at a salary of $25,000 per year. Councilwoman Heather Craft second. All in favor. Motion unanimously passed.

Lori Hartman sworn in as fiscal officer. (Oath attached)

Councilwoman Hope Hoard motioned to pay bills for July after review of mayor and council members. Councilwoman Heather Craft second. All in favor. Motion unanimously passed.

Councilwoman Heather Craft motioned to go into executive session in relation to O.R.C. 121.22(G)(1) to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official. Councilwoman Hope Hoard second. Councilwoman Heather Craft – yes, Councilwoman Hope Hoard – yes, Steiner – yes. Motion unanimously passed.

Adjourn to executive session.

Councilwoman Hope Hoard motioned to return to regular session. Councilwoman Heather Craft second. All in favor. Motion unanimously passed.

Mayor Simpson recommends to terminate Steve Woolf for cause. Councilwoman Hope Hoard motion to terminate Village Administrator Steve Woolf, with cause, effective immediately.

Councilwoman Heather Craft, Second Motion. Vote Councilwoman Heather Craft – yes, Councilwoman Hope Hoard – yes, Steiner – yes. All in favor. Motion unanimously passed.

Mayor Simpson asked for public comments or concerns.

State Representative Rodney Creech introduced himself. He is the state representative for this area. He left business cards with contact information.

Chief Aldrich reminded the public that there is a waffle fry on Sunday.

Councilwoman Hope Hoard Motioned to adjourn. Councilwoman Heather Craft second. All in favor. Motion unanimously passed.

Meeting adjourned.

Mayor: _____

Pro Tempore: _____

Fiscal Officer: _____

Attachments