VILLAGE OF PHILLIPSBURG
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 28, 2025

Mayor Simpson called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance

Hope Hoard was not present at the meeting. Heather arrived late.

Fiscal Officer Hartman will delay the vote on the resolution for modification of credit card policies.

FO Hartman presented special reports. She provided some financials; to the Council; cash flow by fund. The funds are slightly skewed because they do not have all of the monies that have been deposited from the county appropriated to the correct funds yet, because the fiscal officer does not yet have access to that information. It is hoped to be resolved by the end of the week. These numbers were prepared after paying for the resurfacing project on State Route 49. Even after paying for that, the fund is still in good shape. FO Hartman mentioned that there are many things that have been turned over to the state auditor's office, and those items include illegal reimbursements where tax was included. There were non-employee credit cards used to pay for pre-employment drug screens rather than using the Village account. If a CC is used for purchases, the state auditor has to verify that the owner of said card is not receiving benefits for its use (e.g. flight points). There was mileage paid for non-Village related activities. There were items that were reimbursed, but they have not been found. One is $150 worth of easels for use at the church for the water presentation, and it is not known where the easels are now. The creation of the position of village administrator, as discussed before, should have been created by an ordinance not a resolution. Council does wish to fill that position, and an ordinance must be created to do so if there is a qualified candidate for that position. There are questions and issues about discounted water rates. Information regarding low-income discounts is available in the Village offices lobby. There was an explanation of the process. The Village needs a water board or village administrator to set and review policy.

The FO mentioned a falsification of public record. There are multiple copies. There is an official record in the safe, and there is what was provided to former employee, Jessie Harsh. That record is different from the record that is in the safe. That is where Mr. Woolf received part of his disciplinary action to be terminated because he falsified those records. After a conversation with the insurance company, because he had no authority to spend the Village's money, how are we protected from that? The insurance company required us to file a police report. Mayor Simpson and Fiscal Officer Hartman originally called the Montgomery County Sheriff's Department, talked with a deputy, and the matter was referred "up the chain" and then they decided that the Village had to start with Chief Wysong. The Village filed a report with Chief Wysong, who wrote the report, and was sending it to the county, and there has been no response yet. There is no evidence that the report was sent to the county. FO Hartman will confirm that. The Mayor and FO had a meeting with Joe Braden from the Auditor's office. There has been no update from the auditor's office regarding the meeting. There was a discussion between the mayor and council regarding the process undertaken by the auditor's office regarding this matter.

There were also issues with entering into contracts without proper authority or proper announcement. One such contract was the water contract with Wessler regarding PFAS remediation. Proper measures were not taken to put a bid out to other contractors. There was a discussion about how monies are distributed from the different funds and how approval wasn't received for some expenditures.

Chief Aldrich spoke about employees who are eligible for OPERS. He also questioned why some salaries were taken out of the fire fund. FO Hartman and Mayor Simpson just wanted to make sure these issues were brought to light and the Council was informed. There was a discussion regarding various appropriations.

FO Hartman then spoke about the "passing of the torch" issues with fiscal officers. Fiscal officers must provide certain information to incoming personnel: name, account numbers, address, phone numbers, etc. for each business that the Village works with. This hasn't been done since 2022. FO Hartman has had to contact the fiscal officer from 2022 while she was on vacation to give us access to the Lowe's account. There were more questions and discussions about the passing of the torch information. FO Hartman has found information for most accounts.

FO Hartman stated that since there is a quorum, the council can address and vote on the credit card policy. Resolution 2025-0056 Modification of Any Prior Credit Card Policies.

Heather Craft motioned to waive the three-reading rule for Resolution 2025-0056. Jill seconded. FO Hartman took a vote. Heather – yes, Jill – yes, Jacob – yes, John – yes. Motion passed.

Heather Craft motioned to approve Resolution 2025-0056 Modifying any prior credit card policies. Jill seconded. FO Hartman took a vote. Heather – yes, Jacob – yes, Jill – yes, John – yes. Motion passed.

FO Hartman stated that the last item to be discussed is the original Workload Tracking and Accountability Spreadsheet. Councilman John Ritter reiterated that this was approved at the last council meeting, it's a method of getting assigned some names of people to head the projects and make progress on items that have been around for a while. This is to provide transparency for the Council and for the residents. John Ritter mentioned some issues that he feels need to be addressed. Anything that someone needs to get done, can be put on the workload tracking sheet. Jill Ritter mentioned that the Village's social media page needs to remain updated, along with the Village website. John Ritter explained the information that needs to be uploaded to the website. Everyone needs to submit information. The mayor stated that John Ritter needs to train others on how to update the website. The water bills will be able to be paid by credit card through the website.

The Village website will be updated regularly and have more information added.

John Ritter discussed that he's working on updating the zoning code for the Village. He also mentioned that new computers are needed to be compliant with cyber security laws. The office staff needs to identify what their needs are. They have to to record everything they do, so it can be determined what computer software is needed. John Ritter does not have time to meet with each one personally. Heather Craft will get quotes on new computers.

Heather Craft noted that there needs to be improvements in police presence. Residents and trucks who drive through know that there is often no police coverage. The mayor agreed and wants to make changes to the current police coverage. There was a discussion regarding the police department and what the Village needs are. Heather and Jake are assigned to update the police policy. Crystal Beavers is a resident member of the committee.

The mayor addressed the status of the land sale. We have to use a solicitor for this to take place. An ordinance must be created to show that the land is not useful. We must also take bids, after advertising five weeks in a row.

There was a discussion regarding decorating the Village for the holidays.

There was discussion regarding the new water system. The Village is getting information and bid from companies other than Wessler. Jill Ritter is meeting with the EPA. There was also discussion about potentially raising the water rates.

Mayor Simpson asked if the elementary school would be under the jurisdiction of the new zoning manager. There was discussion about that. Jill Ritter shared information on the subject.

FO Hartman suggested scheduling a second meeting each month to be more of a casual workshop meeting and not a formal council meeting. It would help keep track of progress being made on various projects.

The Council needs to add fiscal officer audit updates for each meeting.

Heather Craft motioned to adjourn the meeting. Jill Ritter seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Mayor: _____

Fiscal Officer: Lori L Hartman