

VILLAGE OF CRIDERSVILLE COUNCIL MINUTES
Regular Meeting – December 9, 2024
7:30 p.m.

Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll Call

Mayor Rick Walls called the regular meeting to order and lead with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Mayor Rick Walls, Council Members: Joe Bailey, Dorance Thompson, Steve Numbers, Stacey Cook, Dylan Lauck were present. Council member Eric West was not present at time of roll call but was in attendance at 7:35 p.m. Also present: Fiscal Officer Taylor West, Police Chief Nathan Fried, Fire Chief Rick Miller, and Village Administrator Jarid Kohlrieser. Solicitor James Hearn Sr. was unable to attend the meeting due to prior commitments.

It was moved by Thompson and seconded by Bailey to accept the minutes of the November 18, 2024, Regular Council Meeting. Motion passed 5-0. West was not present at the time.

It was moved by Numbers and seconded by Cook to accept the minutes of the December 2, 2024, Special Council Meeting. Motion passed 5-0. West was not present at the time.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Committee of the Whole:

Utilities & Surface Water: Bailey stated Toms Construction has completed our sanitary sewer project. They will be back in the spring to address any restoration items that need addressed. Global Electric was called in to troubleshoot an electrical issue that we had with one of our water filters at the water treatment plant. That issue was resolved, and the filter is back in service. Lastly, our village administrator has submitted a grant with the Ohio EPA for \$20,000 for automatic switchover equipment for our water plant generator

Planning: Lauck there is a public hearing scheduled for tomorrow, Dec. 10 at 7:00pm at the Village Hall for a zoning/building permit variance that was filed for a resident wanting to build a shed closer than what our zoning code setbacks allow and to follow-up from last month, the one outstanding violation has been resolved.

Finance: West stated after looking at the cost of certain items for next year, our Village Administrator has been able to save the village an estimated \$1,881 on chlorine expenses for 2025.

Park: Cook stated the village has received our reimbursement check from the state regarding our Legacy Park Shelter House Project for \$294,000, which now completes that project.

Streets: No Report

Properties: Numbers stated village crews installed and updated all the exterior lighting at the Village Hall and Library with new LED lighting as we were having issues with the original lights and housing.

Safety:

Fire:

Chief Miller reported that there were 72 EMS calls and 3 Fire calls for a total of 75 calls for service for the month of November for a total of 872 calls for the year of 2024 as of December 1st.

Chief Miller stated the fire department has already passed the total number of calls they received in 2023. This week is the final preparation for Christmas on Main that will take place Saturday December 14th starting at 9 a.m. The Fire Department will be holding their annual Pancake Breakfast at the fire house from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. when Santa arrives. The Pancake Breakfast benefits Right to Read Week at Cridersville Elementary School, where the fire department has been able in the past to make sure each child has a book to read. Chief Miller stated there are roughly 350 students at Cridersville Elementary School this year, making the challenge a little bit harder to achieve.

Chief Miller stated that the two pieces of equipment that the fire department has for sale has received some interest from other departments. One department out of Oklahoma is interested in the Tanker, but they are unable to purchase from entity to entity, therefore, they must bid the truck for 30 days causing the process to take a little longer than anticipated. Another department from New York is interested in the heavy rescue equipment the fire department has. The department from New York will be organizing a trip to Ohio to come see the heavy rescue and test drive it before a purchase is made.

Chief Miller also added the newest tanker that was purchased had to go back into the shop due to a manufacturing issue from Freightliner. There will be no cost to the department or the village for the services as it is a manufacturing issue.

Police:

Chief Fried reported there a total of 13 tickets issues for the month along with 32 warnings, which brought in roughly \$1600. The department had a total of 145 calls for service.

Chief Fried stated from January-December 2023 Mayors Court they collected \$17,915 and this year through November the department has brought in \$20,185 in Mayors Court.

Chief Fried also stated there were statistics printed out for council that show what other agencies pay, the different calls for service the Cridersville Police Department responds to, traffic tickets, and officer activities. Council member Cook asked if animal attacks were typically repeat offenders or if the attacks were diverse. Chief Fried stated that some are repeat offenders, but others are not. Chief Fried added the Dog Warden helps with those calls. Council member Thompson asked if welfare checks are more or less than last year as he noticed the department does roughly three wellness checks a month. Chief Fried stated he would have to look and get back with council on that figure.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Walls introduced Resolution 2501, a resolution to make appropriations for current expenses and other expenditures of the Village of Cridersville, State of Ohio, during the fiscal year ending December 31, 2025, and declaring an emergency. Fiscal Officer West explained that the Police Budget for 2025 would be \$519,010 which was almost half of the entire general fund budget. Chief Fried asked if the budget had been passed as he did not feel the budget had been talked about very well. Council member Lauck explained that this was to pass the budget and that he worked with the Chief on necessary expenses from the 2024 expenses to generate a 2025 budget and the \$519,010 came from the numbers they discussed in their meetings. Chief Fried stated he was hoping for a finance meeting to happen, but the finance meeting was canceled and never rescheduled. Council member West stated that the budget for the police department of \$519,010 was being passed of the meetings that the Chief and Council Member Lauck had. West asked Chief Fried if he had an issue with the budget that he was given. Chief Fried stated that he was frustrated with the lack of communication. Chief Fried stated that he did get to meet with Council Member Lauck to discuss budget numbers, but he thought the last meeting was regarding the budget figures for his department. Fiscal Officer West stated that the department year to date with one payroll left has only spent roughly \$453,000. Council Member Numbers asked if council could back to the discussion of the budget later this evening, which took place. After coming back to the discussion on the police budget Council member West stated he has not met with any department heads regarding budgets and it is not normally met with him, however, the department heads meet with Fiscal Officer West in

September/October to start budget figures. Fiscal Officer West explained that her and Chief Fried met to discuss budget numbers, which she did go back to him and ask him to cut some money out of his budget. Chief Fried stated he did meet with Fiscal Officer West on the budget, but he also met with Mayor Walls, and he was not alarmed by any of the figures he was proposing. Council Member West explained that finance looks over the budget that each department proposes, and they come back with other numbers as well which was communicated to the Chief in his conversation with Lauck. Council Member Lauck stated a budget is something you make by looking at what you spend for the current year, and not the current year budget. He also explained that a budget you do not inflate and increase line items just for concern. An example was budgeting \$65,000 for a new cruiser under adjustments in case we happen to go down a cruiser. If something like this happened there would be a resolution to amend appropriations later in the year. When it comes to making a budget Lauck explained you must look at what you spent this year to rebuild the budget to make sure that our budget is more accurate to what we spend instead of having a surplus of \$100,000 dollars. Lauck explained that at the end of the day, every dollar needs a job and with this budget for 2025 the village numbers should be closer than a \$100,000 surplus. West and Lauck also both explained that \$40,699.87 from what would have been in the police budget is being used out of ARAP funds, and council is not taking anything away from the police department. Lauck went on to the explanation that the village is not cutting the police department as they still have money budgeted for 2025. That figure is more than they are going to end up spending in 2024. Lauck stated he would take responsibility as things got hectic communication may have fallen off a little bit, but there have not been cutbacks. David Reichelderfer, resident of 307 Sunrise, stated that when he worked with the county each department head submitted a budget to the County Commissioner of what they wanted in June/July to look over each line item and make changes with an explanation as to why the changes were made. Mr. Reichelderfer asked council if they had been clear that they wanted 24/7 coverage for the police department because that would be one helpful tool when the Chief is trying to make his budget. Council member West stated that the Chief has been informed multiple times that council would like 24/7 365-day coverage. Council member Lauck explained that starting the budget September/October allows each department head to anticipate what they will spend the following year as three quarters of expenditure is completed at that point in time. Council member West asked if everyone was on the same page with the budget and how the budget was figured for the police department. No more questions were asked. Mayor Walls read resolution 2501. Motion was made by West and seconded by Lauck. Motion passed 6-0.

Mayor Walls introduced Resolution 2502, a resolution to make appropriations for current expenses and other expenditures of the Village of Cridersville, State of Ohio, during the fiscal year ending December 31, 2025, and declaring an emergency. Mayor Walls read resolution 2502. Motion was made by West and seconded by Numbers. Motion passed 6-0.

Mayor Walls introduced Resolution 2503, a resolution to allocate and distribute American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds held by the Village of Cridersville, Auglaize County, Ohio for the final police cruiser payment and Flock Cameras, declaring an emergency. Mayor Walls read resolution 2503. Motion was made by West and seconded by Cook to pass resolution 2503 with an amendment to change Flock cameras to just cameras as there is also another camera company, Rhombus that Chief Fried is looking at as well. Motion passed 6-0.

Other:

Fiscal Officer West asked council if they would be okay offering the village employees an opportunity to elect to enroll in additional life insurance coverage that is offered through Principal, which the village uses currently for life, dental and vision coverage. This will not cost the village any funding as if employees elect to take additional life insurance on top of the amount that is part of their life, dental and vision coverage it would be a withholding out of their paycheck that the fiscal officer would send to Principal. Employees would be able to continue with the additional coverage after retirement, however they would pay Principal themselves, and the village would no longer be involved. Motion to allow the village to move forward with offering additional life insurance was made by West and seconded by Numbers. Motion passed 6-0

Fiscal Officer West asked council to pay the Fire Department back for \$29,000 on additional work that had to be done to ambulance that the village bought from a department in Texas. The motion was made by West and seconded by Cook. Motion passed 6-0.

Village Administrator Kohlrieser mentioned that he has been looking into a text alert system that the village could have services through. This would be like the old one call system, but much nicer and easier for residents to use. The company that Village Administrator Kohlrieser would like to go with is called Text My Gov. Kohlrieser explained that he could get this program for a one-year contract of \$1,500 which included support, QR codes to join, advertisement, and a widget to be added to the Village of Cridersville webpage. Not only would this allow residents to receive village alerts, but they could also receive community event information, and the village could send out surveys to residents as well. Council unanimously stated that they would be happy to move forward with Text My Gov as they see it being a beneficial tool for all users.

Mayor Walls opened the floor to the public.

Boy scout Troop 162 attended the village council meeting. The boy scouts asked how one would get onto council. Council member West explained that you must register with the board of elections, you must be a resident of the Village of Cridersville, and you must get signatures from a percentage of voting residents to get on the ballot. Mayor Walls explained that a term is every four years, and the terms are staggered so only three council seats are up for election every two years. Scout Master Brian Musselman asked council member West how he got to become Council President. West explained that every January council nominates an individual that they would like to be the Council President and then that position is voted on by the council members themselves. Musselman also stated that he wanted to give a great thanks to Chief Miller and the Cridersville Fire Department for being their charting organization after the Methodist Church got away from scouting. He also stated that if things do not change, this will be the final year due to having to maintain 5 boys to have a troop, and he has two of his five boys who will turn 18. Council member Cook thanked the scouts for all that they have done to help the community over the years. Council as a whole thanked Brian and Troop 162 for the last 25 years that they have been involved in the village.

Motion was made by West to go into executive session regarding personnel with action to be taken. Motion was seconded by Thompson. Motion passed 6-0. This motion was made at 8:49 p.m.

Motion to come out of executive session was made by Thompson and seconded by Numbers at 8:50 p.m. Motion passed 6-0.

Angela Knotts, resident of 313 West Main Street, stated that she did not even realize until the other day that the police department had a secretary. She asked why the police chief has so much paperwork and other work that he must get done if there is a secretary, could she possibly do some of the paperwork to help him out. Council member Bailey stated that all paperwork that comes out of the police office, the Chief of Police must sign off as it is coming out of his office. Chief Fried explained that there are some things that only he can do, but he is going to try and start to delegate more tasks and work to his secretary.

Council member Numbers thanked Angela Knotts for squashing some of the rumors that were being posted on Facebook regarding the village council and the village in general. Knotts explained that she is tired of people posting false information about council, the police department, parks, and Crossroads. She explained that communication is key, and people need to come down and see for themselves what is going on instead of getting online and complaining. She explained that someone was upset regarding the veterans' banners not being on the polls in town, to which she responded the Historical Society in Cridersville put together orders for individuals to purchase banners that go into the ground to honor veterans. Lauck explained that the Village of Cridersville does not own the polls in town like other towns do, therefore, the veterans banners that can go in the ground as garden banners were a good way to still honor our veterans. Council member West stated that the village council is a good council and they are working extremely hard for the village to be in good standing.

Council member Cook added that Christmas on Main Street would be taking place on Saturday December 14th starting at 9 a.m. and she encourages everyone to come out.

Motion to re-enter into executive session regarding personnel matters with action to be taken was made by West and seconded by Bailey at 9:00 p.m. Motion passed 6-0.

At 10:33 p.m. Council Member West and Fiscal Officer West removed themselves from executive session matters. At 10:57 p.m. Council member West and Fiscal Officer West rejoined the executive session.

Motion to exist executive session was made by Cook and seconded by Thompson. Motion passed 6-0.

Motion was made by Lauck and seconded by West to give all police officers a raise of 3%, not including John Chiles due to just being hired in October (a raise will come later), and to allow the Village Administrator to give his employees up to a 3.5% raise with an average raise between all employees being 3%. Raised to start first payroll of 2025. Motion passed 6-0.

Council member Cook made a motion to give the fiscal officer a 3% raise starting the first payroll of 2025. Motion was seconded by Bailey. Motion passed 3-2 with Lauck and Thompson voting no and council member West abstaining.

Motion to adjourn was made by Lauck and seconded by Bailey. Motion passed 5-1 with Numbers voting no.

Taylor West, Village Fiscal Officer

Rick Walls, Mayor