

**VILLAGE OF CRIDERSVILLE COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**Special Meeting –April26, 2025**  
**2:00 p.m.**

Call to Order  
Pledge of Allegiance  
Roll Call

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

Present: Mayor Rick Walls, Council Members: Dorance Thompson, Shaun Wenrick, Stacey Cook, Eric West and Dylan Lauck were present. Also, present Solicitor Jim Hearn, Fiscal Officer Darci Motter and Village Administrator Jarid Kohlrieser

**New Business**

The main agenda item was to accept Chief Fried's Resignation and pay package. Then discuss hiring a new Chief.

Bailey Motioned to accept Chief Fried's Resignation 2<sup>nd</sup> by Thompson **6-0 passed**

Jim Hearn stated anything under the old policy regarding Fried's three weeks of vacation Fried would keep. He would not retain anything once the new policy was put into place.

Bailey stated is there anyone here who thinks Fried should not get his vacation time.

West motioned to pay Chief Fried his three weeks of vacation Bailey 2<sup>nd</sup> 5-1 **Passed**

**Jim Boday 314 Lavina Ave:** Why is Chief Fried resigning? The village hired him to do better with the department, what's going on? Boday stated the village was willing to spend a certain amount on the buildings uptown why could that money not have been used to hire part-time police officers?

Mayor Walls stated: part time police officers are not applying most of the officers already work somewhere. They are a rare commodity to find currently.

Lauck stated that when the pay package was put into place the council made it where the Chief could hire up to 15 part-time officers without the approval of the council. In this time Chief has not advertised for part-time officers or brought it to council to hire any more part-time officers.

Bailey stated he believed Fried was resigning because he was sick of being micromanaged by the council.

West stated that the 2025 police budget was not cut. In 2024 the budget allocated 620K and the police department spend 480K. When the 2025 budget was made the Police department was still given more than they spent (519K) Furthermore, the PD as currently spent almost has much as they did in the entire year of 2024 in overtime in the first three months of 2025. In 2024 they spent \$7,216.51 in 2025 they spent \$6065.55. We passed a levy for the Police Department; income tax is the number one revenue for the general fund and this levy was passed to relieve the stress of the general fund to help the budget of the police department. Of the 715K in the general fund in 2025 the Police department received 519K.

A resident asked why there weren't cameras at the new park pavilion when it was vandalized. He stated that he was told all the equipment for the cameras was being stored in the village basement and haven't been installed.

Cook Stated, that was Nathans project, he was the one getting donations and having them installed.

Motter (Fiscal Officer) stated there were issues with getting internet installed at a few of the locations, extra parts had to be ordered to complete the installation, once those parts arrive, they will finish installing the cameras.

**Austin Hardin 102 E. Sugar Street:** Stated there absolutely should be 2 people per shift for a back up perspective. He stated he was recently in the police force but left when he could make \$40.00 an hour at the refinery. He wouldn't go into anything knowing the county back up is 30 minutes away.

**Beverly Wood 100 W. Sugar Street:** Asked West if he would go into a situation without back up, west said absolutely, but that's just the person I (West) am.

Bailey stated he met with the Auglaize County sheriff, and they discussed that villages like Cridersville do not get the opportunity to hire law enforcement right out of the academy because they are already working for the sheriff department while in school or a department has agreed to pay for their schooling and sign a 4 year contract to retain that deputy for their department. New officers are bought up by the sheriff departments.

Austin Hardin: stated Bailey's comment was false as he just went through the academy, and he was the only officer leaving with a job. He also stated no one wants to work for Cridersville for 23.00 an hour when you can go to lima and make 29.00 an hour.

Cook asked how they expect a village the size of Cridersville to offer the same pay as a city the size of Lima, you cannot compare those two entities.

West stated he was not familiar with the police department protocol, so he called around to get other departments views and not a single department recommended two officers per shift for a village the size of Cridersville.

Lauck stated overall budget and pay you cannot compare Cridersville and Lima, we do not have the tax dollars to pay for it. Several years ago, we were behind the time on pay and we have since improved it with the average being 25.75 an hour. He repeated there has been no advertisement for part time officers to even see if there are any available as they are easier to afford as you do not have to pay out the benefits for part time officers.

Bailey stated he does not think there are part time officers available. Other departments will not let them work for other organizations now. They have overtime in their own department that they can cover. It used to be back in the day they didn't offer overtime so deputies would get part-time gigs to help pay the bills but that isn't the case anymore.

Lauck stated there are creative ways to budget and in the past 2 years the budget has been spent more on rebranding the police department with new technology, uniforms, key fob door locks, He stated it is the Chiefs job to allocate the money where it is needed. In the past 24 months there has been a lot of

money spent in the contractual service line where that money could have been spent in the personal service (employees' salaries)

Bailey Stated: did we drop the ball absolutely but Fried did a little also. He came from patrolling Lima, he didn't know how to run a budget and maybe we should have taught him, there is fault everywhere.

**Danny Johns 309 Seneca** stated that levy was 5 years ago, maybe it is time to put in a new levy.

**Lonetta Bellman 205 Sugar Street:** asked what about Apollo's new police department program?

Bailey stated an individual must be 21 to be a law enforcement officer.

**Angela Knotts 313 W. Main Street:** Cridersville has 4 full-time officers, but the Chief cannot be on the road full time and be in the office to do the books also, Knotts suggested to run the stats to compare how many departments Chiefs are expected to be full time patrol and still do all their chief duties

Lauck Stated the biggest issue is the schedule for 24/7 is having 2 people on shift and then other shifts are left empty because of scheduling.

Wood stated the bottom line is she is very disappointed the council is so short sided making it impossible to work here and grow. She said some (council) just want to be the big boss. Nathan is trying to bring us ahead. Bev was an active council member when the levy was passed and stated it was a goal to be 24/7 not a mandate. If you are not a police officer or not in law enforcement, you cannot tell them how to run his office. She stated she wanted the council to work with Nathan, how would you (council) feel if someone told you how to do your job. Furthermore, Nathan at least thought of the camera project.

Cook Stated the council is not trying to take credit for the camera project, it was Chief Fried's project.

**Ron Mertz 217 N. Elizabeth Street:** stated the 24/7 coverage from the levy was a mandate, and secondly Chief Fried has resigned, we must move forward, Ron worked for Nathan he was a good chief but we do need 24/7 coverage.

**Elizabeth Fried 723 Woodridge:** As Chief Fried's wife over the last two years has been incredible but taxing for our family. Nathan is a people pleaser. He gets feedback from the council and is constantly changing to please them. However, she stated you cannot have full coverage with 4 officers and one part-time officer. You are cutting them off at the knees with a lot of roadblocks put in place by council 24/7, which is not practical and doesn't make sense. Elizabeth hopes for the next chief that there is an understanding and alignment in the Police department and council. These law enforcement officers know what they need to do, they are constantly questioned about any decision they made and it makes it difficult for them to do their job. There needs to be mutual respect or Cridersville will still have high turnover.

West motioned we use the job description presented to the council to hire a new chief seconded by Wenrick 6-0 passed

Wood stated she wanted to see a citizens committee established to make sure things are investigated in the village every minute, there is no transparency from the council. She stated there shouldn't have to be a new levy for the Police, just use the current levy correctly the goal was to give more money to the police department

**Other:**

Motion to adjourn was made by West and seconded by Lauck. Motion passed 6-0.

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Darci Motter, Village Fiscal Officer

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Rick Walls, Mayor