

**Village Council Work Session Minutes Date:** August 7, 2025 **Time:** 7:04 PM

**Attendees:**

- Councilpersons Pinter, Martin, Paessun, Grant, Koss, and Camara
- Mayor Southard, Village Attorney Shamp, Village Planner Fischer, Village Clerk Barb Sutton

**1. Discussion on Facility Rentals**

- **Background:** The council revisited the topic of renting out the community/municipal building, which had been previously tabled. The administration, led by Clerk Barb, was tasked with researching options regarding fees and facility management.
- **Clerk's Report:** Clerk Barb reported on her outreach to other municipalities (Westerville, Canal Winchester, London Township) regarding their facility rental procedures. Key findings included:
  - **Fees:** Blendon Township charges \$150-\$200.
  - **Inspections:** Other municipalities use their maintenance teams or a designated administrator to check the facility after each event, often on-call during weekends.
  - **Staffing:** The Village's maintenance team has limited hours and does not have an on-call system, making weekend inspections difficult. The cost of paying maintenance staff for weekend call-outs would be significant (\$25/hour with a two-hour minimum).
- **Discussion on Fees and Damages:**
  - Council members expressed concern that a \$300 security deposit is insufficient to cover potential damages to expensive furniture and equipment (a single chair is over \$500, a table over \$1,000).
  - It was noted that while most renters are respectful, a few "bad apples" have caused issues, leading to the consideration of a higher fee. Some council members felt raising the price would punish good residents.
- **Discussion on the Future of Rentals:**
  - Several council members, including Council President Camara, expressed a desire to stop renting the municipal building entirely due to the burden it places on staff, particularly the clerk, and the potential for damage to the new facility.
  - A suggestion was made to transition rental services to a future facility at the pool, which would be more durable and better suited for parties.

- A compromise was proposed to only allow rentals for village-sponsored entities or meetings (e.g., MPCA, HOA meetings), with no parties or food.
- **Proposal for a New Fee Structure:**
  - Following the extensive discussion, the council agreed to a preliminary plan to move forward with a \$300 rental fee and a \$300 security deposit.
  - This proposal will be drafted and presented for an official vote at a future meeting.
  - The council will monitor the new fee structure's effectiveness for a few months, specifically tracking the number of weekend inspections required, to determine its viability.

## 2. Discussion on Committee Meetings & Communication

- **Background:** The council discussed ongoing communication challenges and frustrations, referencing the recent decision to move a conversation to an executive session.
- **The 30-Minute Meeting Structure:** The current structure of 30-minute committee meetings before the main council session was scrutinized.
  - It was originally intended for an hour but was shortened due to scheduling conflicts.
  - Council members felt these meetings are insufficient to cover complex topics like street projects and that they lack the necessary detail.
  - The need to bring in subject matter experts (e.g., the Village Planner, Street Superintendent Mike) for in-depth discussions was highlighted.
- **Council Member Suggestions:**
  - It was suggested that committees hold separate, dedicated meetings outside of the work session to address complex issues more thoroughly.
  - The possibility of using collaborative tools like Microsoft Teams or OneNote was raised to improve communication and information sharing among council members and staff.
  - A specific plan was proposed for the Safety Committee to meet with the Chief to officially address issues and then report back to the full council.

- **Staff Roles & Responsibilities:**

- The council discussed the need for clear communication channels with staff, emphasizing that instructions for administrative tasks and projects should flow through a single point of contact, as opposed to multiple council members.

### **3. Other Items**

- **Roads:** The council briefly mentioned that street projects are going out to bid and expressed a desire for more detailed information and council input on the prioritization of these projects.
- **Police Department Property:** A council member brought up a complaint from a resident whose brand-new fence was damaged by employees dragging limbs over it. This was noted as an issue to be addressed with the appropriate staff.
- **Marquee/Traffic Light:** A conversation was held about a specific traffic light project and the removal of outdated language from the village's code regarding "cut throughs."

**Meeting Adjourned:** The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:15 PM.