

McDonald Village Council
March 5, 2025
Regular Council Meeting

Staff: Police Chief Ryan Ronghi, Solicitor Douglas W. Ross, Village Administrator Thomas Domitrovich, and Office Manager Amy Cunningham.

Visitors: Trevor Westervelt and Kenneth Miner.

Press: Erin Simonek, *WFMJ*.

1. The March 5, 2025 meeting of McDonald Village Council was called to order by Mayor Ray Lewis at 6:10 p.m.

Roll call:

Mr. Schmidt – present
Mrs. Reckard – present
Mr. Metzinger – present

Mr. Joynes – present
Mr. Jones – present
Mr. Smith – present

2. Pledge of allegiance

One minute of silence in remembrance of American troops serving throughout the world, also for the families in New Middletown, and the recitation of the Lord’s Prayer.

3. Approval of the February 20, 2025 Council minutes.

It was moved by Mr. Schmidt to approve the February 20, 2025 minutes as mailed:

Roll call:

Mr. Schmidt – aye
Mrs. Reckard – aye
Mr. Metzinger – aye

Mr. Joynes – aye
Mr. Jones – aye
Mr. Smith – aye

Motion carried.

4. Adoption of agenda:

It was moved by Mr. Schmidt to amend the agenda and add Legislation G, “Garbage Contract”:

Roll call:

4. Adoption of agenda cont'd.

Mr. Schmidt – aye
Mrs. Reckard – aye
Mr. Metzinger – aye

Mr. Joynes – aye
Mr. Jones – aye
Mr. Smith – aye

Motion carried.

5. Mayor's report – Mayor Lewis stated for the month of February, Mayor's Court had computer fund \$170, court costs \$646, additional costs \$239, Village revenue from fines \$730, Niles Municipal Court fines \$32, and parking tickets \$95 for a grand total of \$1,912.00.

Mayor Lewis talked with Tom Bellish from Buckeye Energy regarding a potential change to our contractual fixed rate on our gas aggregation. Nothing has been put into place as of right now. Our Solicitor is researching this. Mayor Lewis also spoke with Eastern Power and Gas, who is our direct supplier. They told him that there are provisions within the contract with regard to what they cite as adverse government actions that could possibly come into play. If they decide to act upon those, the fixed rate that we signed up for and locked in, would then go to a variable rate temporarily that would be at the Standard Supplier Rate minus \$.05.

Mayor Lewis stated that Mahoning Valley Spotlight did a great story on our R.E.S.T. Program. He commended Colleen Chance, who has done a phenomenal job. Mayor Lewis encouraged everyone to check out the segment. It highlights the program and all the strides that Colleen has made over the past year. Thank you to Colleen for all her hard work.

Mayor Lewis discussed the State Of the Village. In his opinion, the turnout was better than expected. Members of Council have received feedback from residents. Mayor Lewis believes that, by maintaining the transparency and being honest is something the residents really appreciate. Council is faced with some difficult decisions and keeping this Village exactly what it is and a great place to live is exactly the goal. Mayor Lewis thanked everyone that worked to make the event happen.

Mayor Lewis has a meeting scheduled with Press Strategies and KO Consulting on Friday. This is the first official meeting with our government lobbyist. They will discuss a lot of different information on how we can promote the Village on a State and Federal level. Mayor Lewis encouraged Council to share any ideas with him. The Village is in the process of applying for the ODNR Trails grant in Woodland Park. This would integrate the trails of Woodland, down Billy Goat Hill, and connect them all back

5. Mayor's report cont'd.

together. Mayor Lewis described the route of the trail in detail. The application will go in the end of next week and the grant could be for up to \$150,000.

6. Report of Village Officials:

Village Administrator Thomas Domitrovich was notified by Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste Management District that the Village received the scrap tire grant which will run later in the summer. The exact dates will be advertised on the marquee and Facebook page closer to the event.

Police Chief Ryan Ronghi stated that they will be picking up the police cruiser next week. He notified everyone that Officer Pratt was transported to St. E's today. He injured his leg while at work. Chief Ronghi will keep everyone updated.

Fire Chief Fred Marcum was not in attendance. No report.

Office Manager Amy Cunningham stated that the information for Spring Cleanup has been posted on both the message board and Village Facebook page. The dates are April 8 and 9.

Solicitor Ross stated no report.

7. Committee reports:

President Pro Tem Mr. Schmidt stated that Matthew Ellis from KO Consulting attended last evening's Committee meetings. For the month of February, they are submitting for around \$290,000 worth of grants, \$280,000 of which is for sidewalks on Second Street.

Caucus met this evening and the following items were discussed: agenda, Fiscal Officer's report, Council minutes, legislation, gas aggregation, press strategies meeting, Easter Egg Hunt and Oktoberfest dates, and the garbage contract resolution that will be discussed this evening. Mr. Schmidt wished Officer Pratt some healing.

Park & Buildings Mr. Jones is asking for approval from Council for the Easter Egg Hunt and Oktoberfest.

It was moved by Mr. Jones to grant permission for the usage of Woodland Park for Sunday, March 30 and a rain date of Sunday, April 13 for the Easter Egg Hunt along with the usage of Woodland Park on Saturday, October 11 for Oktoberfest.

7. Committee reports cont'd

Roll call:

Mr. Jones – aye
Mr. Joynes – aye
Mr. Metzinger – aye

Mr. Schmidt – aye
Mrs. Reckard – aye
Mr. Smith – aye

Motion carried.

Safety Committee Mr. Schmidt stated that Chief Marcum is still working on the revisions to Chapter 141. Chief Ronghi discussed the Niles police cruiser that the Village is purchasing. The Police Department is in need of some new computers in their offices. Lieutenant Caraway is now a notary.

Finance & Capital Improvement Mr. Smith stated that the purchase and financing of a new street sweeper was discussed. Also discussed was an update on rate increases to water and sewer. Mr. Smith stated that they are going through the process of making sure that any anticipated costs have been accounted for over the next three-year period. There are some costs that are still uncertain. These include MVSD and Niles.

Service Committee Mrs. Reckard stated that Spring Cleanup is April 8 and 9. This will be the same day as regular garbage pickup. This is free to all residents. Tires will not be accepted. There is a separate program for tires in the summer. Mr. Domitrovich worked with Jake Stewart, who is the new director at Ohio Valley Waste. The application process for federally funded roads will start this summer. This is an 80/20 payment. Employees completed their drug-free workplace training.

The bids for the paving contract were opened and, in Fiscal Officer Stephanie Smith's absence, Mr. Smith read them into the record.

Kirila Contractors	\$182,312.00
Lindy Paving	\$172,694.20
Shelly & Sands, Inc.	\$178,180.94
RT Vernal Paving & Excavating	\$168,570.50
Geauga Highway	\$205,555.85

It was moved by Mrs. Reckard to award the 2025 paving project to RT Vernal at a bid of \$168,570.50.

7. Committee reports cont'd.

Roll call:

Mrs. Reckard – aye
Mr. Joynes – aye
Mr. Metzinger – aye

Mr. Schmidt – aye
Mr. Jones – aye
Mr. Smith – aye

Motion carried.

Mr. Schmidt discussed the resolution for the garbage contract. Council has discussed this on multiple occasions during meetings. They discussed this with residents at the State Of the Village as well. Council wanted to make everyone aware that this is something they are considering to help with the budget. After long discussions, that is what the resolution is for. Solicitor Ross stated that residential garbage has been paid for by the Village, historically. We are one of the only municipalities in the State of Ohio, if not the only municipality, that still pays for the residents' garbage pickup. Procedurally, after the resolution is passed by Council, after the 30-day period when it is effective, the Village Administrator will send a notice letter to Ohio Valley to let them know that the Village is exercising its option to have the provider bill each residential unit owner for their own garbage. At that point, each residence owner will have to pay for their own garbage. This will probably not take effect until August or September at which point, Village residents will have to pay for their own garbage like, pretty much, every other residential property in the Youngstown/Warren area.

Planning Commission Mr. Jones stated that Planning Commission met this evening and discussed a possible zone change for future development in the industrial park. The Planning Commission will spend some time researching these possible changes and meet again next month.

Community Chest Mrs. Reckard stated no report.

Levy Exploration Committee Mr. Smith stated that there is a 1.5 mil renewal levy which will be a first reading. This has been on the books for quite a while and generates roughly \$26,000. This will appear on the November ballot. Also discussed was the fire and EMS. Chief Marcum provided information on preliminary discussions that the Village is having with Weathersfield Township regarding the formation of a joint fire district. This would be its own entity and have the opportunity to levy a property tax of its own.

Homecoming Festival Committee Mr. Joynes stated that all the entertainment is booked for the festival. Old Skool, 80s Proof, and Huckin' Fillbillies will be performing

7. Committee reports cont'd.

on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, respectively. The committee did plan to get another tent just for the band and their stage. The Fire Department committee will have a sign-up sheet for all the individuals that will be able to work and reach out to their families for volunteer opportunities as well. They will also be reaching out to the extracurricular programs at the school regarding any fundraising they would like to do during the festival. The food vendor contracts are due by May. Everything else with the festival is done.

8. Remarks from persons or groups present: Trevor Westervelt, 1208 Ohio Avenue, asked if the garbage contract would be negotiated by the Village. Solicitor Ross stated that this was competitively bid and the rates were established. The contract term runs through May 2026. Mr. Westervelt asked if the Village would still provide Spring Cleanup annually. Mr. Domitrovich stated that the contract remains the same. The only thing different is that residents will receive a bill. Mr. Westervelt thanked Council for the public forum. He appreciates the Village staying transparent.

9. Old Business: none.

10. New Business: none.

11. Legislation:

A. Third Reading Of A Resolution Authorizing All Actions Necessary To Accept Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) Energized Community Grant.

It was moved by Mrs. Reckard that Resolution No. 1922-25 pass third reading as read.

Roll call:

Mrs. Reckard – aye

Mr. Schmidt – aye

Mr. Joynes – aye

Mr. Jones – aye

Mr. Metzinger – aye

Mr. Smith – aye

Motion carried.

B. Third Reading Of An Ordinance For The Purpose Of Amending Chapter 1501 Of The Codified Ordinances Of The Village Of McDonald, Ohio, Entitled “BOCA Fire Prevention Code”.

It was moved by Mr. Schmidt that Ordinance No. 3312-25 pass third reading as read.

11. Legislation cont'd.

Discussion: Mr. Schmidt stated that this is to update the Village fire prevention code from 1974 up to 2017.

Roll call:

Mr. Schmidt – aye
Mrs. Reckard – aye
Mr. Metzinger –aye

Mr. Joynes – aye
Mr. Jones – aye
Mr. Smith – aye

Motion carried.

C. Second Reading Of An Ordinance For The Purpose Of Establishing Section 161.21 Of The Codified Ordinances Of The Village Of McDonald, Ohio, Which Section Is Entitled “Lateral Hiring”.

It was moved by Mr. Schmidt that the ordinance pass second reading as read.

Roll call:

Mr. Schmidt – aye
Mrs. Reckard – aye
Mr. Metzinger –aye

Mr. Joynes – aye
Mr. Jones – aye
Mr. Smith – aye

Motion carried.

D. Second Reading Of An Ordinance For The Purpose Of Amending Chapter 139 Of The Codified Ordinances Of the Village Of McDonald, Ohio, Which Chapter Is Titled “Police Department”.

It was moved by Mr. Schmidt that the ordinance pass second reading as read.

Roll call:

Mr. Schmidt – aye
Mrs. Reckard – aye
Mr. Metzinger –aye

Mr. Joynes – aye
Mr. Jones – aye
Mr. Smith – aye

Motion carried.

11. Legislation cont'd.

E. First Reading Of A Resolution Declaring The Amount Of Taxes That May Be Raised By Levy At The Maximum Rate Authorized By Law Without A Vote Of The Electors To Be Insufficient For Current Operating Expenses, And Declaring The Necessity Of A Levy In Excess Of Such Rate.

It was moved by Mr. Smith that the resolution pass first reading as read.

Discussion: Mr. Smith stated that this is the 1.5 mil renewal levy and this is the process toward getting the renewal on the ballot for November.

Roll call:

Mr. Smith – aye
Mr. Joynes – aye
Mr. Jones – aye

Mr. Schmidt – aye
Mrs. Reckard – aye
Mr. Metzinger – aye

Motion carried.

F. Emergency Reading Of A Resolution For The Purpose Of Authorizing The Village Administrator To Execute And File An Application With The Ohio Department Of Natural Resources For Financial Assistance For Public Recreation Purposes Through The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) And/Or The Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF).

It was moved by Mr. Jones to suspend the Rules of Council.

Discussion: Mayor Lewis stated that this is being read as an emergency to meet the deadline for the grant based on a timeline of March 14. Mayor Lewis thanked everyone for their hard work in getting the application put together.

Roll call:

Mr. Jones – aye
Mr. Joynes – aye
Mr. Metzinger – aye

Mr. Schmidt – aye
Mrs. Reckard – aye
Mr. Smith – aye

Motion carried.

11. Legislation cont'd.

It was moved by Mr. Jones that Resolution No. 1923-25 pass emergency reading as read.

Roll call:

Mr. Jones – aye	Mr. Schmidt – aye
Mr. Joynes – aye	Mrs. Reckard – aye
Mr. Metzinger – aye	Mr. Smith – aye

Motion carried.

G. First Reading Of A Resolution Authorizing The Exercise Of An Option With Ohio Valley Waste Service, Inc., The Village's Provider Of Municipal Solid Waste Collection Services, To Require The Provider To Directly Invoice Each Residential Unit Owner For The Cost Of The Municipal Solid Waste Collection Services, Instead Of Invoicing The Village.

It was moved by Mr. Schmidt to suspend the Rules of Council.

Discussion: Mr. Schmidt stated that Solicitor Ross discussed, in detail, on how this was going to work out for a timeline.

Roll call:

Mr. Schmidt – aye	Mr. Joynes – aye
Mrs. Reckard – aye	Mr. Jones – aye
Mr. Metzinger – aye	Mr. Smith – aye

Motion carried.

It was moved by Mr. Schmidt that Resolution No. 1924-25 pass as a first reading and waive the second and third reading as read.

Roll call:

Mr. Schmidt – aye	Mr. Joynes – aye
Mrs. Reckard – aye	Mr. Jones – aye
Mr. Metzinger – aye	Mr. Smith – aye

Motion carried.

12. Fiscal Officer's report:

In Fiscal Officer Stephanie Smith's absence, Mr. Smith stated that the bills for the Fiscal Officer's report total \$179,132.30.

I, Donald Smith, Chairman of the Finance Committee for the Village of McDonald, Ohio do hereby declare that the bills are true and correct and the money is in the bank to pay them.

It was moved by Mr. Metzinger to accept the Fiscal Officer's report and pay all bills.

Roll call:

Mr. Metzinger – aye

Mr. Joynes – aye

Mr. Jones – aye

Mr. Schmidt – aye

Mrs. Reckard – aye

Mr. Smith – aye

Motion carried.

13. Miscellaneous: Mayor Lewis read a thank you card from the Literary Guild in which they donated \$50 for the use of the Community Room for their meetings. Thank you to the Literary Guild.

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Joynes at 6:43 p.m. All voted aye.

Mayor

Attest to:

Fiscal Officer