

ORGANIZATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING  
January 6, 2021  
MINUTES

The Organizational Council Meeting of the Village of Moreland Hills was called to order by Council President Richman at 7:00 pm, via Zoom.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL: Mr. Emerman, Mrs. Kozminski-VanderHart, Mr. Richman, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Stanard, Ms. Sturgis

Also Present: Sherri Arrietta, Clerk of Council

Mr. Richman stated that the December meeting minutes would be approved at the next Council Meeting.

**Resident Comments**

There were no residents present wishing to speak.

**Update from the Mayor**

Mayor Fritz stated that the employees appreciated their holiday lunch and he thanked Council again for amending the ordinance to allow for that. He stated that he looks forward to being able to have the lunch with all the employees together next year, hopefully.

He stated that several residents have reached out to him regarding internet options in the Village. He is currently working on getting some representation at upcoming COW or Council Meetings from AT&T and Spectrum. The discussion topics could include future infrastructure projects like fiber optics in the Village, which has been a long on-going concern of ours. He is keeping track of the residents who are voicing their concerns and Council will be kept advised as well. The residents' concerns are that the internet is slow and that they only have one option. Mayor Fritz stated that residents technically have three options; AT&T, Spectrum, and Dish, however, the only real option if you want speed is Spectrum, because the Village does not have fiber optics, and therefore cannot utilize AT&T. Mayor Fritz stated that prior to COVID, a resident reached out to him regarding someone he knew in Fairlawn where they have their own internet system in place with tremendous success. That is not something that the Village may necessarily want to consider, but it is worth looking into and discussing and perhaps we could provide in conjunction with another community. Our Representative from First Energy will be attending the February COW meeting and he is hoping to have other utility representatives attend a March or April meeting.

Mayor Fritz gave special thanks to Councilwoman Kozminski-VanderHart for the third installment of the Recycling Video Series. She did a great job on the video and we look forward to our next installment from our Green Commission Chair, Kris Tesar. He stated that he feels that these videos are a great way to communicate with our residents for a very nominal cost.

He stated that he emailed Council reminding them of some things they talked about keeping on the radar this winter which include, issues related to pools (above-ground and temporary) and political signs. He met with Mr. Spencer to discuss the pool ordinance and Mr. Hunt will be working on some ideas for a starting point. This ordinance would probably be considered on three readings to give Council time to

debate and discuss it thoroughly. He stated that he informed our legal counsel that he would like a rough draft within the next month. The political signs continue to be an issue. He has received calls, emails, and comments on social media about the presence of political signs as recent as this week. There is a misconception that our temporary sign ordinance has date restrictions applied to it, but that is something we can look at potentially adding to it. There is a delicate balance as it relates to First Amendment rights of our residents. Mr. Hunt has recently gone through this recently with Gates Mills, so he working on something for us to consider. This too, would be put on three readings so Council can debate and get some input. Mayor Fritz stated we are going to message residents that starting today; the Village is going to be moving signs out of the right-of-way. We will not take the sign, but rather just move it out of the right-of-way and attach a note to the sign that informs the resident that signs are not allowed in the right-of-way per our ordinances.

Mayor Fritz stated that he spoke to Mr. Shah today and he did not have any real significant financial updates for this month. We are currently working under the parameters of the temporary budget while trying to get the permanent budget together for March. Mr. DeWater and Mr. Filarski still need to drive through the Village to determine the streets that will be included in the Road Program this year along with determining other infrastructure programs needed.

He gave an update on the Smith Farm. There may have been a change in ownership from the portion of the property that Jason Friedman had been presenting to the Planning Commission. It is his understanding that another resident may be purchasing that property. He does not have any further details at this time, but will let Council know when he does.

Cru Uncorked is ready to move forward with their expansion project; they want to start tomorrow as soon as they have their permit in hand.

Mr. Richman informed Council that the applicable Code Sections to refer to regarding the potential amendments to the swimming pool and sign ordinances would be; for pools Chapter 1323, Sections 1171.03 and 1151.13; for signs Chapter 1183, Section 1183.11 Temporary Signs.

### **Appointments and Confirmations**

Mr. Richman stated that the first order of business is to elect a Council President for 2021.

Ms. Sturgis nominated Mr. Richman to serve as Council President for 2021.

There being no other nominations, Mr. Richman declared nominations closed.

Mr. Emerman made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kozminski-VanderHart to accept the nomination of Mr. Richman to serve as Council President for 2021.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Mr. Emerman, Mrs. Kozminski-VanderHart, Mr. Richman, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Stanard, Ms. Sturgis

NAYS: NONE

MOTION CARRIED

Mr. Richman thanked Council and stated that it is his honor and privilege to continue to serve as their Council President. He thanked them for their continued confidence in him and stated that he looks forward to working with everyone this year.

Mr. Richman stated that one Council Member from the 2019 election cycle (Kozminski-VanderHart, Richman, Spencer) would need to be elected to the Planning Commission for a two-year term.

Mr. Spencer nominated Mrs. Kozminski-VanderHart to serve on the Planning Commission for a two-year term. He stated that she has done a tremendous job her first year on the Planning Commission and he feels that continuity and expertise is well served and needed on that commission.

There being no other nominations, Mr. Richman declared nominations closed.

Mr. Stanard made a motion seconded by Mr. Emerman to accept the nomination of Mrs. Kozminski-VanderHart to serve on the Planning Commission for a term of two-years.

**ROLL CALL:**

**AYES:** Mr. Emerman, Mrs. Kozminski-VanderHart, Mr. Richman, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Stanard, Ms. Sturgis

**NAYS:** NONE

**MOTION CARRIED**

Mrs. Kozminski-VanderHart thanked Council and stated that she looks forward to continue to serve on the Planning Commission.

Mr. Richman stated that one Planning Commission Member needs to be appointed as the Planning Commission Chair for 2021.

Mr. Richman nominated Mr. Stanard to serve as the Planning Commission Chair in 2021. He stated that Mr. Stanard could be best described by the same words he used at last year's Organizational Meeting. He has been incredibly capable, efficient, passionate, and prepared in his leadership on the Planning Commission.

There being no other nominations, Mr. Richman declared nominations closed.

Ms. Sturgis made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kozminski-VanderHart to accept the nomination of Mr. Stanard to serve as the Planning Commission Chair for 2021.

**ROLL CALL:**

**AYES:** Mr. Emerman, Mrs. Kozminski-VanderHart, Mr. Richman, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Stanard, Ms. Sturgis

**NAYS:** NONE

**MOTION CARRIED**

Mr. Stanard stated that he is very proud to serve the Village and the BZA/Planning Commission with a very talented staff and talented resident members. He thanked Council for their support and he stated that he looks forward to his continued service with his esteemed colleagues on Council. He thanked Council for their hard work, dedication, and their interest in what the Village does. Mr. Stanard stated that he felt honored to work with all Council members and stated that he will do his best.

### **Schedule of Council Meetings**

Mr. Richman stated that he has not heard any dissension about changing the Council meeting dates. He feels that it would be in their best interest to continue holding the Committee of the Whole on the first Wednesday of the month and Council on the second Wednesday of the month. He asked if anyone disagreed. Council members agreed to continue with that schedule. Mr. Richman asked Mrs. Arrietta if there were any holidays or other discrepancies with meeting dates for 2021. Mrs. Arrietta stated that there were not any holidays that would interfere with the COW or Council Meetings. She informed Council that she would provide Council with a list of all the meeting dates for 2021 tomorrow.

Mr. Richman asked Council what their feelings were regarding having the Council representative member or the Chairs of the Parks Commission, Green Commission, and future Diversity/Inclusion Commission give a report at Council bi-monthly and add it as an agenda item. A discussion ensued and Council decided that they will ask the Commission Chairs to give a report at Council, when needed, and if the Chair prefers, the Council representative can give the report for them. It was also determined to add the commission report as an agenda item so that it is not forgotten.

### **Committee Structure/Schedule Committee Meetings for 2021**

Mr. Richman determined the committee members and they are as follows:

Ethan Spencer, Chair of the Roads and Safety Committee  
Steve Richman, member of Roads and Safety Committee  
David Emerman, Chair of the Facilities Committee  
Monica Sturgis, member of the Facilities Committee

Council agreed with those assignments.

Mr. Richman stated that committees usually meet the Tuesday after the Monday Planning Commission Meeting each month. If we do not have pending business, we will not meet. Last year Roads and Safety met at 8:00am and Facilities met at 8:30am and he asked if that still worked for everyone. Everyone agreed.

Mrs. Arrietta mentioned that there were two dates that are a little off the normal schedule pattern for the 2021 Committee meetings. The September meeting will actually be held August 31 because of the way the COW meeting falls as the first Wednesday of the month. The December meeting will be November 30, for the same reason stated previously. She stated that for BZA/Planning Commission, there are two holidays that change the normal meeting schedule. The July meeting, which would normally be on July 5, will be a week later on July 12 and the September meeting will actually be held a week earlier, on August 30, because September 6 is Labor Day. Mrs. Arrietta stated that she would send all the meeting

dates to Council tomorrow, as mentioned earlier. Mrs. Kozminski-VanderHart asked Mrs. Arrietta if she would send the meeting dates for the Green and Parks Commissions to Council as well once they have been set. Mrs. Arrietta stated that she would and informed Council that the Green Commission meeting dates have been set; they will be held on the First Wednesday of every other month, at 5:30pm as they have been in the past, with the first meeting being held in February. Mayor Fritz stated that he is meeting with Parks Commission Chair, Bill Janke on Friday to discuss the meeting schedule and Mrs. Arrietta will provide Council with those dates once they are finalized. Mrs. Kozminski-VanderHart asked what the status of Council members on those commissions is because she would be interested in joining the Parks Commission, if there is an open spot. Mr. Stanard stated that he currently serves on the Parks Commission and the ordinance establishing that commission only allows for one Council member officially, but anyone can go and participate at those meetings.

Mr. Emerman requested that while the meetings are still virtual, it would be helpful to know ahead of time when the Roads and Safety meeting is going to be a long one, so that they could just delay the start of the Facilities meeting. If there were residents who want to participate in the meeting, it would be nice to know ahead of time so they are not waiting. Mayor Fritz stated that is a relevant concern and stated that sometimes discussions come up at the meeting that were not anticipated, making it longer. He stated that they could certainly try to get better and try to find out ahead of time if anyone anticipates a longer discussion at the meeting.

Mr. Richman stated that at one time, there was an agenda item on the committee agendas for “resident concerns” and asked that it be added back on to be proactive and let residents know that they can voice any concerns. It also serves as a reminder at the meeting to bring up an issue that a resident may have reached out to a Council member about. Mr. Emerman agreed and stated that perhaps it could be worded more positively such as “resident comments/questions.” A discussion ensued. Mayor Fritz stated that he does convey to Council any comments/questions/concerns he receives from residents but agreed that adding it back on to the committee agendas is a good idea. Ms. Sturgis agreed and stated that having it on the agenda will prompt residents to know that it is an open forum and as Council members, we are a united body. Council should hear what they have to say and to be able to ask them questions. This is a local government operation and should be handled with transparency. Mayor Fritz agreed that we should add it back on as an agenda item to the Roads and Safety and Facilities Committee agendas.

### **Miscellaneous**

Mr. Richman stated that he wanted to discuss “best practices” as it relates to the “miscellaneous” agenda item on the COW and Council meetings. He stated that it should be more for a Council member to share an event they attended or will be attending, to ask a question regarding a point of discussion at that meeting, etc. He stated that he does not want to stifle anyone, but he feels that some matters should be discussed at their appropriate committees. That way any issues can be vetted through the proper channels first.

Mr. Emerman stated that in a time of national turmoil, he is very proud to participate in a civil and peaceful democratic process. He is proud to be part of this Council. Mr. Emerman thanked Council members for their civility and stated that he is looking forward to more great conversations this year. Mr. Richman agreed and stated that he wished all levels of government could work together as well as they all do.

Mr. Spencer made a motion seconded by Mr. Emerman to adjourn the Organizational Council Meeting at 7:55pm

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Mr. Emerman, Mrs. Kozminski-VanderHart, Mr. Richman, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Stanard, Ms. Sturgis

NAYS: NONE

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm.

Attest:

---

Sherri Arrietta, Clerk of Council

---

Stephen Richman, Council President