

**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
**August 13, 2019**  
**VILLAGE OF TERRACE PARK COUNCIL**  
**HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO**

Council met on Tuesday August 13, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. in the Terrace Park Community Building. Mayor Tepe led Council in the Pledge of Allegiance. Members of Council present were Mr. John Gaskey, Ms. Lauren Ingebritson, Mr. Jeff LeMay, Mr. Pax Lindell and Ms. Regina Sharp. In addition, Mayor Tom Tepe, Village Administrator Gerald Hayhow, Solicitor Jeff Forbes, Fire Chief Steve Dronsfield, Clerk of Council Christy Hampton and Chief Fiscal Officer Katie Lyons were present. Council member Judith Lehman and EMS Chief John Maggard were absent.

The Mayor asked if anyone had any corrections, additions or deletions to the July minutes. Council Member Sharp motioned to approve Council Minutes from the July 16, 2019 Council meeting. Voice vote, all voted aye. Minutes approved.

**RESIDENTS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL**

The Mayor asked if there were any residents to address council. Mark Mitchell (215 Oxford Ave) is a new resident and came to Council to express concerns about the amount of mosquito control pesticide companies he sees around the village. He is an environmental scientist and suggested the village investigate more natural methods to control mosquitoes on village-owned property (he and Mark Castator have discussed bat houses or purple martin birdhouses). The thought is if we help reduce the total number of mosquitoes in the area, maybe homeowners will be less likely to pursue non-natural options. Lauren will have her Building and Grounds committee look into it- maybe a good Scout project. Mark would love to help out as needed.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:** He welcomed new Clerk of Council Christy Hampton.

Mayor Tepe also gave brief report on sewer project- MSD contractor has been in Terrace Park this week shooting elevations, getting the lay of the land, if we see them around. Nothing more to report. Any decisions made will be made in a public forum.

He hopes we can reschedule September council meeting so he can attend; while he is not a voting member, he would very much like to be there. Mayor Tepe is hyper sensitive to those that serve the village on Council and the importance of why they moved here: family. School, sports and activities are getting in full swing, so hopefully we can all be flexible so that people can attend council meeting while not missing out on kids' activities.

**CHIEF FISCAL OFFICER:** Budget was submitted August 2 to the county.

**SOLICITOR:** No report.

**CLERK OF COUNCIL:** No report.

**EMS CHIEF:** Absent, no report

**FIRE CHIEF:** No report, but we can expect graduating class of 8 in a few months.

**POLICE CHIEF/VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR:** Hayhow reminded everyone that school is starting at the end of the month so be sure to pay attention to children, speed limits, stop signs and crossing guards.

Maintenance is almost finished replacing damaged parts on the leaf machine (caused by rocks) to be ready for the fall. Leaf pickup will begin in mid-October and it will be well publicized (they will continue until all leaves are gone, usually through mid-December). If residents have leaves now, they can place them in a paper leaf bag and put them at the curb for maintenance to pick up. If you blow your leaves to the front now, they will just kill your grass or blow into a neighbors' yard. If you want them picked up now, put them in a paper bag and maintenance will be happy to pick them up with normal brush pickup. We have one truck that can do leaf pickup, and 2 additional trucks if we would get hit with snow early.

Jeff LeMay wanted to commend and thank all of the police officers, especially Officer Tanner, for the restraint and professionalism shown and for doing such a remarkable job.

**MEMBERS OF COUNCIL OUTSIDE THEIR COMMITTEE:** none

**PLANNING & ZONING:** No report.

**BUILDING AND GROUNDS:**

Council Member Ingebritson had an ordinance to introduce but first gave overview of the ordinance and how the committee reached its recommendation.

- The Village has approximately 3,300 trees on Village-owned property-those trees and the shade cover they provide are a big part of the attraction to our neighborhood. It's very important to the members of council and village administrators to continuously maintain those trees and keep them healthy and beautiful.
- In the 1950s, roughly 500 maple trees were planted (part of the 3,300). At the time, the trees were chosen because they are beautiful, grow fast, and provide good shade. However, they were chosen without regard to the fact that they also age out very quickly. We are now faced with the fact that they are aging out.
- In the opinion of our Village arborist, Mark Castator, these 500 trees are aging out at the same time and must be removed over the next several years to ensure the safety of our families, visitors, homes, and cars.
- We also received a second opinion from former Terrace Park resident and certified arborist Steve Smith of Camargo Landscaping, who is an uninterested third party. Steve confirmed and agreed with Mark's opinion that the maple trees are aging out and need to be removed.
- Historically, the Village has always paid for its trees through a tree assessment. For the past several years, the assessment has been \$0.40 per \$1,000 of taxable value, which is

approximately \$60 per home each year, based on the average assessed home value of \$150,000.

- In 2019, the \$0.40 assessment was insufficient to cover the expense of maintaining Village trees and it is expected to be insufficient for the next several years as we manage the removal and replacement of the 500 aging maple trees. We were short about \$35,000, which we pulled from the General Fund and the streets fund.
- Going forward, the Buildings and Ground Committee does not think that is a responsible way to manage village money. The streets fund will need its money, etc.
- The Buildings and Grounds Committee tried to determine what the best way to make up the deficit, and is recommending that we increase the tree assessment to fully cover the cost of maintaining Village trees. In the past the assessment has been as high as \$1.00 per \$1,000 of taxable value. We don't need to go that high.
- The committee has carefully considered this, especially given the high property taxes we already have. It's important to understand that only 14% of those taxes go to the village and we spend that very carefully and conservatively. If we had another way to manage the trees without increasing property taxes, we would.
- So the Building and Grounds Committee is proposing to raise the assessment from \$0.40 to \$0.70 per \$1,000 of taxable value, which is approximately \$105 per home, up from \$60 per home.
- In the future, when we have dealt with the decline of our maple trees, and they have been replaced by a wider variety of trees that have varying life expectancies, we hope to lower the assessment back to its 2019 rate.
- The committee also will provide our residents with improved services, which will include continuing our strategy of cutting dangerous trees in the Winter, which saves us money, followed by grinding the stumps and replanting with a new tree (saplings will be bigger than they've been when we planted in the fall) in the Spring instead of the Fall, so residents don't have to stare at a stump for many months before it is replaced.

Council Member Ingebritson introduced for a first reading: **ORDINANCE 8-1, 2019  
DECLARING THE NECESSITY OF AND PROVIDING FOR CONTROLLING THE  
BLIGHT AND DISEASE OF SHADE TREES WITHIN PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY  
AND FOR PLANTING, MAINTAINING, TRIMMING AND REMOVING SHADE  
TREES IN AND ALONG THE STREETS OF TERRACE PARK WHICH INCLUDES  
ALL TERRITORY WITHIN AND COEXTENSIVE WITH ITS BOUNDARIES, FOR  
THE YEAR 2020, AUTHORIZING THE OFFICERS OF TERRACE PARK TO DO  
SUCH WORK FOR THE YEAR 2020, PROVIDING FOR THE LEVYING OF AN  
ASSESSMENT UPON REAL PROPERTY IN TERRACE PARK FOR THE COST AND  
EXPENSE OF SUCH WORK.**

Mayor Tepe thanked Lauren and her committee for their work. He reiterated this was not an easy decision to increase the assessment – it was looked at very carefully and critically. This is the minimum amount needed, and although he is not a voting member, he fully supports this. It is good government; we can't continue to borrow from one for the benefit of another because the one that gets short changed will eventually suffer. Mayor Tepe and Lauren also thanked Mark

Castator for his continued hard work, taking care of our village trees as conservatively as possible and alerting council to the need to address them.

The assessment to be turned into the county by the end of September so we'll need to vote on this in the September meeting.

**FINANCE:** No report. Thanks to Jerry and Katie for getting the budget submitted in good order.

**RULES & LAW:** No report.

**PUBLIC WORKS:** No report.

**PUBLIC SAFETY:** Council Member Gaskey updated council on the safety committee meeting from July regarding the crosswalk concern brought forth by resident Abby Reckman. This was with regards to the multiple, sometimes confusing, crosswalks at the intersections of Elm and Park and Elm and Dennison .

The committee met and suggests we:

- Remove the crosswalk that crosses Elm from Dennison (and put some additional fencing to discourage people from crossing there).
- Continue the Dennison sidewalk through the yard over to Park (Hayhow got approval from the Centers (who live at 1 Dennison) for adding the portion of the new sidewalk that falls onto their property.
- Put in a new crosswalk going across Elm from Park.

That way the crosswalks are both at stop signs, and there is less confusion for kids and drivers (than with the 2 crosswalks crossing Elm so close together). Our maintenance guys can do the majority of the work. Hayhow estimates the cost to be around \$2,000 and since everyone was in agreement, work will begin shortly.

Mayor Tepe thanked the committee and reiterated how confusing the current crosswalks there are. This will be a high return for very little. Gaskey thanked the committee for moving quickly.

**CONTINUED BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

Council Member Sharp motioned to adjourn. Voice Vote all voted "aye."

**Respectfully submitted:**

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**Christy Hampton**  
Clerk of Council

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**Thomas M. Tepe, Jr.**  
Mayor