

Mayor Mear called the Special Session of the Village Council to order at 7:00 PM. All joined in the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call of the council was taken with the following council members present; Mr. Dan Pillow, Ms. Jennifer Wiehe, Ms. Jennifer Anderson, Ms. Ann Pillow, Mr. Al Glick, and Ms. Pam Jackson. Also present were Village Clerk Margaret Ann Dozier, Village Solicitor Robert Kelly, and Addyston Interim Police Chief Jacob TenBrink.

Mayor Mear read the following statement and guidelines for the meeting:

12/2/2023

Council Special Meeting Opening Statement to the public. We would like to thank everyone for attending this very important meeting. If anyone in attendance would like to address the council, please sign in.

On Monday, November 20, 2023, the Village Council met in regular session. During that meeting it was brought to the Council's attention that Village patrol officers were wearing out-of-date protective equipment (vest). This was a matter of deep concern for the Mayor and Council concerning the safety of the Village police officers. Village legal counsel advised the Council that the Council should pull all Village officers off the streets until such time as the officers have the proper safety equipment/ protection.

The Village Police Chief tendered his resignation as Chief of Police while Council met in executive session on November 20, 2023. The Village was left with absolutely no police protection for our citizens. The Ohio Revised Code states that a Village must have an active Marshall or Police Chief to have a functioning police department. The Council took swift action and appointed Officer Jake Tenbrink as our interim Chief while we work through this situation.

As a result of the above situations the Council took immediate action and reached out to the Hamilton

County Sheriff's Office (HCSO). We met with them in an emergency meeting on November 21, 2023, and the Council reached an agreement with HCSO to temporarily offer us full coverage service for our Village, 24 hours a day for the next 45 days commencing on November 22, 2023. A member of the Hamilton County Administrator's office sent the Village Council a contract for full service as a part of our review process, not for us to sign into law.

There was no time that the Village did not have coverage. If we did not have an officer that could fill a shift the County was covering any calls that were dispatched in our community. Our Police Department has been struggling to fill vacancies for several years.

Due to multiple factors, some of them being higher wages, benefits and promotional opportunities at other larger agencies have created a real challenge for us to staff our department. The whole Country is having a police Officer shortage. Agencies of all sizes are struggling. We are no exception.

The Council has been aware of the shortages of Police officers and has raised wages over the past 3 years. We created 2 full-time positions in attempts to attract Officers to receive benefits over just hiring part time Officers. The full-time positions helped for a short time. The Police Chief and other Officers moved on to other higher paying positions. We have also dismissed

Officers during their probationary period that was not a good fit for the Village. This is not a meeting to cast blame. This has been a very difficult situation for all of us.

Please understand that if The Village of Addyston enters into a contract with Hamilton County Sheriff's office the agreement is for 3 24-hour cars for Cleves, North Bend, Addyston and Miami Township. This would be a shared service with other communities. That is only 3 cars to cover the entire area of the district. This will drastically change the response time for an Officer dispatched to our area along with many other factors and concerns. We would like to encourage residents to talk with friends and family that live in surrounding communities on how they feel about their contracted services with Hamilton County Sheriff's Office.

What we would really like to do is continue keeping each of you informed on our situation. Your feedback as to how we move forward as a community is greatly needed.

The focus of this meeting is to engage with our citizens for input on how you want us to move forward.

Main questions we would like a response to are:

Would the citizens want us to work on keeping our own department?

Would our citizens want to contract with Hamilton County Sheriff's office or another police agency?

Would our citizens be willing to support a police levy for whatever service our citizens prefer?

The input we receive from our citizens on this matter is very critical for us to move forward as a community. We love our community and will work diligently to do what's best for our community. Currently the Mayor and the Council is looking at all of our options.

At this time, we will move to our citizens for comment. Each citizen will be allotted 3 minutes to address the council. This will allow us to move forward efficiently for time and fairness for everyone to address the council on their thoughts and concerns for how we should move forward.

Mayor Mear opened the floor to discussion and called upon those residents who wanted to speak with the council on their feelings, concerns, and recommendations. See attached list to these minutes. Mayor Mear, the council, and village Solicitor attempted to answer the comments asked of the village council. This meeting was being audiotaped and videotaped. This meeting video can be viewed by logging on the "u-tube Addyston council meetings".

Mayor Mear stated that the village council was not going to enter into an agreement with Hamilton County for Police Protection until the council had researched all its options, and there would be further public meetings concerning the matter. As there was nothing further to come before this special session of the village council a motion was made by Mr. Glick, seconded by Ms. Anderson to adjourn, no discussion and a Roll call vote: Six (6) Ayes motion carried. Minutes prepared by Village Clerk Margaret Ann Dozier.


Margaret Ann Dozier, Village Clerk


Lisa Mear, Mayor Village of Addyston, Ohio