

VILLAGE OF BRATENAHL
10300 BRIGHTON ROAD
BRATENAHL, OHIO 44108
(216) 383-0468

VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING

FEBRUARY 16, 2022
6:31 p.m.

MAYOR JOHN LICASTRO
KEITH BENJAMIN
JOYCE BURKE-JONES
GINA HUFFMAN
TOM McDONALD
ROD TAYLOR

DAVID J. MATTY, ESQ.
NANCY L. MOLNAR, RPR, CLR

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1 quick number, if 20 percent of the workforce in
2 Cleveland continued to work from home, Cleveland
3 would lose over \$25 million a year in revenue.
4 25 million. The impact on the big cities is
5 overwhelming. Now, some communities stand to
6 gain, Bratenahl being one of them, nowhere near
7 those kind of numbers.

8 MR. BENJAMIN: It's like 34,000 at 20
9 percent and like 68,000 at 100 percent.

10 MAYOR LICASTRO: That's right. Those
11 numbers to us, I'd like to have it in my pocket
12 right now, are not as overwhelming, but the big
13 cities stand to lose tens of millions. And, you
14 know, when some communities win big and some lose
15 big, everyone loses. The purpose of the
16 committee is to try to find a way to make
17 something more fair and equitable for a system
18 that is really only exists in Ohio and a couple
19 other states where we have different rates,
20 different credits. Townships don't get taxed. I
21 can sit here and talk all day about the problems
22 the system has and what the potential for losses
23 going forward.

24 What I can't offer you are solutions.
25 We're going to be looking for those. There's a

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1 MAYOR LICASTRO: So move right to
2 Council? Do we need more time? All right.
3 Please rise and join me in the Pledge of
4 Allegiance.
5 (Pledge of Allegiance.)
6 MAYOR LICASTRO: So let's refrain from
7 sidebars during the Pledge of Allegiance.
8 MS. BURKE-JONES: My fault.
9 MAYOR LICASTRO: Would you call the roll
10 for the meeting?
11 MS. COOKS: Mr. Benjamin?
12 MR. BENJAMIN: Here.
13 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
14 MS. BURKE-JONES: Here.
15 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
16 MS. HUFFMAN: Here.
17 MS. COOKS: Mr. McDonald?
18 MR. McDONALD: Here.
19 MS. COOKS: Mr. Taylor?
20 MR. TAYLOR: Here.
21 MAYOR LICASTRO: Thank you. You've
22 heard me talk at length about municipal income
23 tax and the impact of working from home. That is
24 moving forward. We have a meeting of the Mayors
25 Association tomorrow. Just to give you some

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1 group and hopefully make a recommendation to the
2 General Assembly to look at this critical revenue
3 stream. 20 years ago, the most money came from
4 property tax. Now it comes from income tax. So
5 playing with fire.

6 Mayfield Village, where Progressive
7 could lose, they already gave them tax abatement
8 for 25 years. They could lose over \$2 million a
9 year if indeed Progressive, in particular,
10 continues to work, allow their employees. And by
11 the way, it may be as much as \$10 million. So
12 this is going to grind forward. Right now the
13 General Assembly is focused on redistricting.
14 We've all been reading about that. So it's been
15 distracted. We want to get to them before this
16 is on their radar, come up with something fair
17 and equitable.

18 I mean, Keith, how much could South
19 Euclid lose?

20 MR. BENJAMIN: We actually are like
21 Bratenahl. We will actually gain.

22 MAYOR LICASTRO: Shows about \$94,000.

23 MS. BURKE-JONES: Fantastic.

24 MAYOR LICASTRO: But when you look at
25 the big cities it's a loss, Toledo, Cincinnati,

1 Dayton, Columbus, the numbers are overwhelming.
2 I've used this before as well. No one bites into
3 an apple with a rotten core. If Cleveland goes
4 down, don't kid yourself the suburbs will be
5 definitely be affected.

6 We have 29 members meeting tomorrow to
7 discuss this. A lot of people want to be
8 engaged. So I'll keep you posted going forward.
9 Hopefully we can come up with a solution. If you
10 can think of a couple, Keith, throw them my way.

11 MR. BENJAMIN: Well, there's also a new
12 bill that was introduced to lower the gas tax by
13 \$10 per gallon, which would hurt our cost to fix
14 our local roadways.

15 MAYOR LICASTRO: Well, yeah. And look,
16 New York State does a revenue sharing in lieu of
17 an income tax. There's other ways to get it
18 done, but Ohio is different. And everyone who
19 doesn't like change, they want to keep what they
20 have, but COVID has changed this going forward we
21 think forever. Working from home is effective.
22 It works. So the big companies aren't going to
23 be renting all kinds of commercial real estate
24 downtown. Another impact on the large
25 communities. People aren't going to be living

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1 town if they don't work downtown. The impact
2 this has is way more than tens of millions I'm
3 discussing here.

4 MR. BENJAMIN: You might want to have
5 Myron Orfield come in from Minnesota and talk
6 about their revenue tax sharing, because that's
7 what they have.

8 MAYOR LICASTRO: We have a couple
9 studies we're looking at, but tomorrow we're
10 meeting with the Greater Cleveland Partnership to
11 get input from businesses, the business
12 community, who by the way hate Ohio's tax system,
13 which is so convoluted and unique that it's
14 difficult to deal with. We're at the beginning
15 of this, but we need to get to the end relatively
16 soon.

17 Any questions on that?

18 The Mayor's Court report for January,
19 the Treasurer of State of Ohio received \$2,219;
20 the City of Cleveland, \$90; the County Treasurer,
21 \$965.50; the Village of Bratenahl \$18,301.83.

22 Any questions on that?

23 Ms. Cappello left the room. This is her
24 annual usage report, which she's mandated to give
25 us. This is really just for you.

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1 MS. COOKS: It's in their packet.

2 MAYOR LICASTRO: It's in your packet.

3 So if you look at that, understand that this is
4 her obligation to submit this. She has. We're
5 not going to discuss it now. Look at it. If we
6 have a discussion, we can have it in the future,
7 but it's in your packet.

8 Thank you. Any questions for me? Okay.

9 We have a series of resolutions and a couple of
10 ordinances. Let's begin with new business,
11 Resolution 1243. Mr. Benjamin, if you would.

12 MR. BENJAMIN: Resolution 1243, a
13 resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into a
14 NOPEC 2022 Energized Community Grant Agreement to
15 receive one or more NOPEC Energized Community
16 Grants for 2022, to assist in funding related
17 projects and declaring an emergency. I move
18 suspension.

19 MS. BURKE-JONES: Second.

20 MAYOR LICASTRO: Roll call on
21 suspension, please.

22 MS. COOKS: Mr. Benjamin?

23 MR. BENJAMIN: Aye.

24 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?

25 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.

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1 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?

2 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.

3 MS. COOKS: Mr. McDonald?

4 MR. McDONALD: Aye.

5 MS. COOKS: Mr. Taylor?

6 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.

7 MR. BENJAMIN: This is our annual

8 resolution authorizing us to enter into an
9 agreement to receive these funds. We always look
10 forward to receiving grant funds from NOPEC and
11 anybody else. (Laughter.)

12 MAYOR LICASTRO: There are some funds
13 from this that are escrowed that we need to spend
14 in the relatively near future.

15 MR. BENJAMIN: Energy related projects.

16 And with that, I move passage of Resolution 1243.

17 MS. BURKE-JONES: Second.

18 MAYOR LICASTRO: Discussion? There
19 being none, roll call on passage, please.

20 MS. COOKS: Mr. Benjamin?

21 MR. BENJAMIN: Aye.

22 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?

23 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.

24 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?

25 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.

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1 MS. COOKS: Mr. McDonald?
 2 MR. McDONALD: Aye.
 3 MS. COOKS: Mr. Taylor?
 4 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.
 5 MAYOR LICASTRO: Before we go further,
 6 I'm getting ahead of myself. One month I'm out
 7 of practice. Any questions from the audience on
 8 agenda items?
 9 Thank you.
 10 Ms. Burke-Jones, if you would,
 11 Resolution 1244.
 12 MS. BURKE-JONES: Yes. Introducing
 13 Resolution 1244 for suspension, a resolution
 14 authorizing and approving a settlement for joint
 15 mutual release of claims with Shannon Darby and
 16 declaring an emergency.
 17 MR. BENJAMIN: Second.
 18 MAYOR LICASTRO: Roll call on
 19 suspension, please.
 20 MS. COOKS: Mr. Benjamin?
 21 MR. BENJAMIN: Aye.
 22 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 23 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 24 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 25 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.

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1 MS. COOKS: Mr. McDonald?
 2 MR. McDONALD: Aye.
 3 MS. COOKS: Mr. Taylor?
 4 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.
 5 MS. BURKE-JONES: Introducing Resolution
 6 Number 1244 for passage.
 7 MR. BENJAMIN: Second.
 8 MAYOR LICASTRO: Discussion? Mr. Matty,
 9 any comments?
 10 MR. MATTY: No comments, Mayor. The
 11 settlement agreement speaks for itself.
 12 MAYOR LICASTRO: Thank you. There being
 13 no further comments, roll call on passage,
 14 please.
 15 MS. COOKS: Mr. Benjamin?
 16 MR. BENJAMIN: Aye.
 17 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 18 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 19 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 20 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 21 MS. COOKS: Mr. McDonald?
 22 MR. McDONALD: Aye.
 23 MS. COOKS: Mr. Taylor?
 24 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.
 25 MAYOR LICASTRO: Ms. Huffman, if you

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1 would, Resolution 1245.
 2 MS. HUFFMAN: Introduce Resolution
 3 Number 1245, a resolution accepting the proposal
 4 of DS Architects for a feasibility study for a
 5 proposed new Village center and declaring an
 6 emergency, for suspension.
 7 MR. BENJAMIN: Second.
 8 MAYOR LICASTRO: Roll call on
 9 suspension, please.
 10 MS. COOKS: Mr. Benjamin?
 11 MR. BENJAMIN: Aye.
 12 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 13 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 14 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 15 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 16 MS. COOKS: Mr. McDonald?
 17 MR. McDONALD: Aye.
 18 MS. COOKS: Mr. Taylor?
 19 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.
 20 MS. HUFFMAN: Resolution 1245 for
 21 passage.
 22 MR. BENJAMIN: Second.
 23 MAYOR LICASTRO: Discussion?
 24 MS. BURKE-JONES: Yes. I'm wondering if
 25 there is an amount in this. And due to the

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1 question we had during Committee of the Whole
 2 meeting, do we need to have confirmation on that
 3 issue before we pass that or are you willing to
 4 have a \$31,000 contract no matter what?
 5 MAYOR LICASTRO: Ma'am, ma'am, the
 6 proposal in front of us is what we're voting on.
 7 This is not the time to do something off the
 8 cuff. If they want to submit a new proposal or
 9 change it, the time for that is past. We're
 10 dealing with this item on the agenda as stated.
 11 MS. BURKE-JONES: I'm talking about the
 12 amount of money. This is a new something that's
 13 just come up. And if they're willing to -- I'm
 14 just asking a question. If they're willing to --
 15 frankly, if they're willing to roll the dice on
 16 it, fine.
 17 MAYOR LICASTRO: Are you talking about
 18 Ms. Akins participation or DS?
 19 MS. BURKE-JONES: DS. And the \$31,000.
 20 MAYOR LICASTRO: Gentlemen, are you
 21 comfortable with the proposal as stated?
 22 MR. MEYERS: Yes, comfortable with the
 23 proposal as stated.
 24 MAYOR LICASTRO: Thank you. We'll talk
 25 about Jill's participation at the next meeting.

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1 Any other questions? There being none, roll call
 2 on passage, please.
 3 MS. COOKS: Mr. Benjamin?
 4 MR. BENJAMIN: Aye.
 5 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 6 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 7 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 8 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 9 MS. COOKS: Mr. McDonald?
 10 MR. McDONALD: Aye.
 11 MS. COOKS: Mr. Taylor?
 12 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.
 13 MAYOR LICASTRO: Thank you. Mr.
 14 McDonald, if you would, Ordinance 4134.
 15 MR. McDONALD: Introduce Ordinance 4134,
 16 an ordinance confirming Mayor Licastro's
 17 appointment of Matthew Woisnet as a full-time
 18 police officer for the Village of Bratenahl
 19 Police Department, declaring an emergency. This
 20 is for suspension.
 21 MR. BENJAMIN: Second.
 22 MAYOR LICASTRO: Roll call on
 23 suspension, please.
 24 MS. COOKS: Mr. Benjamin?
 25 MR. BENJAMIN: Aye.

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1 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 2 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 3 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 4 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 5 MS. COOKS: Mr. McDonald?
 6 MR. McDONALD: Aye.
 7 MS. COOKS: Mr. Taylor?
 8 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.
 9 MR. McDONALD: Introduce Ordinance
 10 Number 4134 for passage, an ordinance confirming
 11 Mayor Licastro's appointment of Matthew Woisnet
 12 as a full-time police officer for the Village of
 13 Bratenahl Police Department and declaring an
 14 emergency.
 15 MR. BENJAMIN: Second.
 16 MAYOR LICASTRO: Discussion? There
 17 being none, roll call on passage, please.
 18 MS. COOKS: Mr. Benjamin?
 19 MR. BENJAMIN: Aye.
 20 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 21 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 22 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 23 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 24 MS. COOKS: Mr. McDonald?
 25 MR. McDONALD: Aye.

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1 MS. COOKS: Mr. Taylor?
 2 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.
 3 MAYOR LICASTRO: Thank you. Chief, we
 4 can then proceed as stated.
 5 CHIEF LOBELLO: Thank you.
 6 MAYOR LICASTRO: Mr. Taylor, if you
 7 would.
 8 MR. TAYLOR: I'll introduce Ordinance
 9 Number 4136.
 10 MAYOR LICASTRO: 35.
 11 MR. TAYLOR: 35. Hold on. I'd like to
 12 introduced Ordinance Number 4135, an ordinance to
 13 establish annual appropriations for current
 14 expenses and other expenditures of the Village of
 15 Bratenahl during the fiscal year ending December
 16 31, 2022, and declaring an emergency.
 17 MR. McDONALD: Second.
 18 MR. BENJAMIN: Second.
 19 MAYOR LICASTRO: Roll call on
 20 suspension, please.
 21 MS. COOKS: Mr. Benjamin?
 22 MR. BENJAMIN: Aye.
 23 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 24 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 25 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?

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1 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 2 MS. COOKS: Mr. McDonald?
 3 MR. McDONALD: Aye.
 4 MS. COOKS: Mr. Taylor?
 5 MR. TAYLOR: Aye. Ordinance 4135 for
 6 passage.
 7 MR. BENJAMIN: Second.
 8 MAYOR LICASTRO: Discussion? There
 9 being none, roll call on passage, please.
 10 MS. COOKS: Mr. Benjamin?
 11 MR. BENJAMIN: Aye.
 12 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 13 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 14 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 15 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 16 MS. COOKS: Mr. McDonald?
 17 MR. McDONALD: Aye.
 18 MS. COOKS: Mr. Taylor?
 19 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.
 20 MAYOR LICASTRO: Thank you. Mr.
 21 Benjamin, and 4136 is pay claims, please.
 22 MR. BENJAMIN: Ordinance 4136, that the
 23 following claims against the Village of Bratenahl
 24 are hereby directed from the funds and the Fiscal
 25 Officer is hereby authorized and directed to draw

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1 her warrants for payment to wit: The monthly
2 total is \$144,728.69. We discussed this at the
3 Finance Committee meeting earlier this evening,
4 and I move for suspension.

5 MR. McDONALD: Second.

6 MAYOR LICASTRO: Roll call on
7 suspension, please.

8 MS. COOKS: Mr. Benjamin?

9 MR. BENJAMIN: Aye.

10 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?

11 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.

12 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?

13 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.

14 MS. COOKS: Mr. McDonald?

15 MR. McDONALD: Aye.

16 MS. COOKS: Mr. Taylor?

17 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.

18 MR. BENJAMIN: Move passage of Ordinance
19 4136.

20 MR. McDONALD: Second.

21 MAYOR LICASTRO: Discussion? There
22 being none, roll call on passage, please.

23 MS. COOKS: Mr. Benjamin?

24 MR. BENJAMIN: Aye.

25 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?

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1 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.

2 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?

3 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.

4 MS. COOKS: Mr. McDonald?

5 MR. McDONALD: Aye.

6 MS. COOKS: Mr. Taylor?

7 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.

8 MAYOR LICASTRO: I want to thank Council
9 for taking the first step in the process to look
10 at our buildings, look at options, feasibility.

11 It's long overdue. I've made my opinion clear on
12 why I think it's necessary. And I'm glad we are
13 taking the first of many steps to get whatever it
14 is we end up.

15 Any other comments from Council? Anyone
16 from the audience? And keep in mind you we have
17 three minutes. Yes, Mr. Orrall.

18 MR. ORRALL: I was wondering, has there
19 been -- is there any attention being paid to the
20 Community Center as it stands right now for
21 repairs?

22 MAYOR LICASTRO: I think they'll look at
23 that in the feasibility study.

24 MR. ORRALL: I'm talking about repairs,
25 like masonry, things that can actually -- things

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1 that are immediate.

2 MAYOR LICASTRO: We have an ongoing
3 maintenance program as recommended by Mr. Zalar
4 on what our priorities should be.

5 MR. ORRALL: So is that applying to --
6 are we doing anything with the masonry.

7 MR. ZALAR: Not at this point.

8 MR. ORRALL: What about the emergency
9 exit by the locker room, boys locker room.

10 MR. ZALAR: That was a public
11 improvement. That had to do with the ramp and
12 lift. I don't know where that's at.

13 MR. ORRALL: Some of these are
14 dangerous.

15 MAYOR LICASTRO: Mr. Orrall, we
16 appreciate your input. If you could draft your
17 concerns in e-mail, we would certainly like to
18 discuss them.

19 Anyone else? Then moving to a motion to
20 adjourn, please.

21 MR. McDONALD: So move.

22 MR. TAYLOR: Second.

23 MAYOR LICASTRO: Roll call on
24 adjournment.

25 MS. COOKS: Mr. Benjamin?

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1 MR. BENJAMIN: Aye.

2 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?

3 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.

4 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?

5 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.

6 MS. COOKS: Mr. McDonald?

7 MR. McDONALD: Aye.

8 MS. COOKS: Mr. Taylor?

9 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.

10 MAYOR LICASTRO: Thank you. Have a nice
11 evening, everybody.

12 (Meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

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I, Nancy L. Molnar, do hereby certify that as such Reporter I took down in Stenotypy all of the proceedings had in the foregoing transcript; that I have transcribed my said Stenotype notes into typewritten form as appears in the foregoing transcript; that said transcript is the complete form of the proceedings had in said cause and constitutes a true and correct transcript therein.

Nancy L. Molnar
Nancy L. Molnar, Notary Public
within and for the State of Ohio

My commission expires July 15, 2023.

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