

My name is Steve Bush and I am reading my comments because I want to fully document what I have to say. I plan to give you a copy when I am finished and ask that these remarks be included in the official account of this Council meeting.

I have lived in Leesburg with my wife Blythe Pelham since 1998. I first became familiar with the “Friendly Village” while growing up on a farm a few miles away in Fayette County and participating in local activities such as playing on the Babe Ruth baseball team sponsored by Candle-Lite during 1963-64.

For me, the day that the music died with the friendly village perspective occurred seven years ago at a Council meeting. A previous Leesburg mayor suggested in a blustery personal rant about our yard that my wife and I should move out of town. This harassment has continued sporadically since then and reemerged at your last Council meeting on September 16, 2021 when a current Council member engaged in an unwarranted attack and offered yet another unfriendly suggestion that we should move – this time to Portland, Oregon. At a minimum, this inappropriate public behavior continues to impact the mental state of both my wife and I and needs to stop in a way that is clear to everyone concerned.

We are pursuing sound ecological practices to make our yard into a place that is environmentally responsible. While some parties might prefer nothing but lawn or perhaps the mobile home parked on the property by a previous owner, we prefer to acknowledge that life goes on as land uses continue to evolve everywhere. For example, Fairfield High School was located diagonally from our property when we moved in 23 years ago. The soft background noise of school children and buses has been replaced by the harsh sirens of emergency vehicles.

Meanwhile, our property has evolved from a grassy yard that might have been ideal for playing catch to a Natural Landscaping sanctuary. Whisper campaigns, public rants and anonymous complaints are not going to change that reality.

I should also note that we do not intend to be bullied further in attempts to change our yard back to something that might have existed in yesteryear. As has been previously well-documented by both state/federal law and past/present Village Councils, governing bodies cannot legislate what constitutes an ugly yard. Enforcement of any other legal mandates must also be equally applied throughout the community.

I am requesting that in a timely manner (within 30 days) we receive assurances in writing that this is a “settled matter” and will not serve as an ongoing source of recurring harassment. I fully expect that you will not allow this misuse of public office to continue unabated.

Stephen A. Bush

After Mr. Bush read his statement, Mayor Priest said having been a prior council member when this was first brought up, as far as she was concerned, she thought this was a settled matter. The Mayor then said when you look at the (nuisance) letters sent out by the village, Mr. Bush’s property does not have abandoned properties or cars, bags of garbage

and machinery and he is keeping his yard mow. Therefore, Mayor Priest feels personally Mr. Bush is within the guidelines of what we require for properties and as far as she is concerned, this is a dead issue because he is not doing anything outside of the parameters that we (the Village) have set. Mr. Bush asked the Mayor what she was going to do about it other than saying it was a settled matter and what's going to keep this issue from arising again? Mayor Priest stated she was going to personally take care of it herself and that it would not come up again because she has been in touch with the Village Solicitor and she know what action she needs to take and she plans on doing it. Councilwoman Blythe Pelham informed the Mayor, this issue has come up before she was on Council, as previously stated, and every time there is a new Mayor and Council, this is brought up again. Mayor Priest said she guaranteed he would get a letter from her taking care of this issue. Mr. Bush stated he will always be sensitive to people who want to talk to him directly about the property and that was much preferred.

Mr. Bobby Barrett – just observing

Mrs. Dianna Fordyce – informed Council she would like to purchase the property from the Village located behind the Memorial for parking at her new building located beside the Memorial. Council took this matter under advisement.

Mr. Richard Smith – just observing

Mrs. Jay Newland along with Nikki Eyre – approached Council regarding the Luminary. Mrs. Newland stated the main driving force behind the luminaries, Mr. Charlie Newland and Mr. Ron Barber, are no longer a part of the club and they need help putting on the event. The Lions Club needs wagons, drivers, a tractor, photographer and a list of several other items they need help with. In addition, there is a cost involved. The Lions Club requested that 2-3 Council members help this year with the Luminary Event.

*John Michael moved and Richard Tolle seconded to make a \$300 donation to the Lions Club to help with the Luminary expense. Roll call vote 5-0. Motion carried.

Mrs., Kim Pavey – introduced herself and informed all present she was running for a Village Council seat.

Mr. Raymond Friend (along with Joseph Wilson) – advised Council Barn and Cabin Friends bought the lot beside the Post Office and would like to open a Dairy Bar. They currently have a 200-year-old barn they would like to put on that sight. Mr. Friend asked who would own from the sidewalk to the property if he were to construct some parking? Also, he would like to install a drive thru in the alley beside the property and wants to know if it is permissible to make it one-way? Solicitor Beery stated the only requirement for the alley would be for the village to agree to make it a one way. Administrator Worley would be responsible to look at the GIS map for the lot and if he does not object to the driveway cut, Administrator Worley can sign off on this. As far as the parking area goes, Solicitor Beery stated Administrator Worley can approve via a letter.

III. LEGISLATION:

ORDINANCE NO. 21-08

AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH GUIDELINES FOR THE REGULATION OF MOBILE HOMES, MANUFACTURED HOMES, AND TRAILERS IN THE VILLAGE OF LEESBURG.

*Blythe Pelham moved and John Michael seconded to approve Ordinance No. 21-08. Roll call vote 5-0. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 21-10

A RESOLUTION TO SUPPLEMENT APPROPRIATIONS IN THE CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND AND AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT.

*John Michael moved and Rita Smith-Daulton seconded to approve Resolution No. 21-10. Roll Call vote 5-0. Motion carried.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

John Michael of the Personnel Committee reported the committee met on Thursday, October 21, 2021. Those present were Blythe Pelham, Rita Smith-Daulton, Chairman John Michael, and Mayor Shawn C. Priest. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss Utility Laborer Butch Wiget taking a new job from 3 PM – 11 PM. Butch is willing to stay on his job with the village and is willing to work weekends. Wyatt Irvin is on board with emergency calls as needed. However, the concern is Butch keeping his 32 hours a week (average over six months) in order to keep his insurance. The Committee recommends continuing to allow Butch to work with the Village with a minimum of 32 hours per week and reassess at the end of 2021.

V. REPORT OF CITY OFFICIALS:

Report of Police Chief Shane Nolley:

Chief Shane Nolley reported for the month of September 2021, there were 279 calls for service. Hours worked were as followed: Chief Nolley-152 regular, 13.0 overtime; Officer Dawson-168 regular, 20 overtime; Officer Bunner - 156 regular, 28 overtime. There were 1 Traffic Crash Reports, and 11 Offense Reports. Arrest Information: Arrests - 0, Traffic Citations - 2, and Warning Citations - 10. Police vehicle information: Unit 1 - 2017 Police Interceptor – 632 miles driven, Unit 2 - 2020 Police Interceptor – 380 miles driven, Unit 3 - 2015 Police Interceptor – 647 miles driven. Repairs: \$294.49 and Training: \$0.

Additional Information from Chief Nolley:

The Police Department has 91 active case reports.

The departments total reports received for the month of September 2021 were 11 reports, an increase of 1 report from September 2020.

Report of Fiscal Officer Tracy Evans:

Passed around the monthly reports and credit card statement for Council to sign.

Informed Council the Village safety deposit box requires the signatures, of the Fiscal Officer and the Mayor to access. Fiscal Officer Tracy Evans requested Council vote to require just her signature for the box. The main items in the box are the Village financial back-ups which now have to be updated and changed out every quarter.

*Rita Smith-Daulton moved and John Michael seconded to require the safety deposit box to have only the Fiscal Officers signature. Roll call vote 5-0. Motion carried.

Requested Council write off a late tax filing of ??? for Mr.??? who is retired. In the past, Income Tax Clerk Dorothy Vance mailed out tax forms to all

residents and Mr. claimed he did not receive the form. In addition, Mrs. Vance helped him fill out the form and assumed since he did not get the form that he did not have to file.

*Joel Morris moved and Blythe Pelham seconded to write off the tax penalties in the amount of ??????. Roll call vote 5-0. Motion carried.

Report of Utility/Streets Department from Administrator Worley:

Employees completed 96 hours in ground maintenance including mowing, cutting limbs, watering flowers, and helping clean the basement.

Completed 95 hours in sewer maintenance including lift stations, replacing 10" butterfly valve, and physically decanting #2 SBR due to actuator problems.

Completed 20 hours in water maintenance including reading meters, gathering data, and attending meeting regarding the new meters and software system.

Misc. items: The Village owns a small lot on Fairfield Street that we continuously mow and its costing us money; the white house located by the store is mess all the time and Administrator Worley for like for the Village to purchase the property and turn it into a downtown parking lot; the Ad Hoc Committee is scheduled to meet to discuss purchasing new snowflakes for the downtown area.

Report of Regional Income Tax Association (RITA):

Fiscal Officer Tracy Evans reported that \$44,127.61 was collected for the month of September 2021.

Report of Mayor Shawn C. Priest:

Informed Council Highland County Economic Department is starting a workforce development grant for the training center in Greenfield that will be offering different classes. If this program works in Greenfield, they will start on in Hillsboro.

The Highland County Economic Department had engineers come in and quote running a spur from the railroad tracks to the Industrial Park. A huge amount of money is available for this. Mayor Priest will meet with Greenfield City Manager Todd Wilkin and Highland County Commissioner Terry Britton to discuss this further.

Trick or Treat night has been set for Thursday, October 28, 2021 from 6-8 PM.

The Platting Committee has been working on sorting out street and alley names.

Leesburg is adding a lot of new business: Ada Beatty asked the Village to move the mailboxes in front of her house so she can turn her flower shop into a full-time business. Lauren Arnold is opening up a café, Raymond Friend is opening a Dairy Bar, Lannae Greene is opening an ultrasound facility and Josh and Tricia Howland are opening a Deli.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

Regarding the tornado siren – Mayor Priest reported the tornado siren has arrived and the information has been given to the Sheriffs Department. The old siren will be taken off the roof.

Regarding abandoned properties – The barn on Grace Lane has been removed. The barn on the Whitt property will be removed by the end of November. A certified letter has been sent to Joe Turner regarding his property on State Route 771. The vacant lot across from the library has been sold. There has been no progress on the house trailer located by Purtell Drive owned by Amy Winters. Administrator Worley has followed up with shed owned the Balls and there has been no progress.

Regarding the grocery store – Solicitor Beery stated he has filed the nuisance paperwork with the Municipal Court and asked Fiscal Officer Tracy Evans to send a check to the courts for \$135 filing fee.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Priest stated we have Council Members willing to snow if it is allowed. Solicitor Beery stated that Council Members (can volunteer) but cannot be paid.

MISCELLANEOUS

Richard Tolle moved, and Blythe Pelham seconded to adjourn at 7:25 P.M.
Roll call vote 5-0. Motion carried