

## UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF BARNESVILLE'S ELECTED OFFICIALS

### NOVEMBER 5TH ELECTION



On Tuesday, November 5th, Barnesville residents will go to the polls to elect a Mayor, and City Council representatives for Wards 1, 2 and 3.

While it's important to learn about the people who are interested in these positions, it's equally as important to learn about the responsibilities that will be expected of these elected officials. This issue of "Get To Know Your City" will hopefully help to explain the roles of these individuals in greater detail.

### BARNESVILLE CITY CHARTER

Per State Statute, cities may be structured in a number of ways. Barnesville's is a Charter City, meaning that a written document approved by a vote of Barnesville residents sets forth how the City will operate. The 11-page City Charter states that the City will be governed by a City Council made up of a Mayor and six (6) Ward representatives. The Mayor is elected to a two (2) year term and Ward representatives to four (4) year terms. It also sets forth the establishment of an Administrative Code of all the City's ordinances.

The Mayor is recognized as the official head of the City, and, as such, is the Chief Executive Officer of the City and will preside over City Council meetings. The Mayor shall have no vote except in case of a tie when he/she shall have the power to cast the deciding vote.

The Charter provides that there be no less than one (1) regular Council meeting each month. At present that meeting is held on the 2nd Monday of every month beginning at 7:00 pm in the City Council Chambers. It is at that meeting that the official business of the City is transacted including the paying of the bills. In order for the City Council action to take action, a quorum of four Council members must be present. If a quorum is present, generally speaking, the majority rules, except in specific cases where a super majority may be required by State Statute.

### CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Thursday prior to the City Council meetings, all of the Council representatives receive an agenda packet detailing the items to be discussed at the meeting, with printed background material on most of the items. It is common for the agenda packet to be 80-100 pages long as it also includes the minutes from the last City Council meeting, reports from various City boards and all City department heads.

It is expected that all Council members will read the agenda packet prior to the meeting and contact the City Administrator or Mayor prior to the City Council meeting if they have any questions.

Depending on the length of the agenda, the City Council meetings will last from one to three hours. If time sensitive matters arise, there are times when special City Council meetings will be called.

A large part of being elected to the City Council is to be a voice for the residents of their Ward. It is important that Council members make themselves available to citizens so that they are in touch with their viewpoints. In deciding how to vote, Council members are expected to take into regard the collective interests of all Barnesville residents and to vote what they believe to be the common interest.

Council members must share their opinions, listen to the opinions of others and make an effort to see the issue from the perspectives other members may bring. If a Council member holds a view that has not been voiced, it is his or her obligation to share that view during the City Council meeting – not simply before or after the meeting.

A spirit of openness, candor and mutual respect for the input and opinions of others are critical to the Council's ability to govern effectively.

For their service, the Mayor receives \$675 month and Council members receive \$600 per month.



## PORTFOLIO AND COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

In addition to attending City Council meetings, City Council representatives are expected to carry a portfolio of City departments, which involves serving on various committees related to those departments. Depending on the specific committee, there may be one or two Council representatives serving on the particular committee. These assignments requires the Council representatives to attend additional meetings, specific to those areas and to gain an in-depth understanding of those areas by reading reports or talking with City staff in those meetings. Council members then report the committee's recommendations and other activities at the Council meeting.

The Mayor is expected to keep in close communication with the City Administrator, serve as a primary representative of the City at events and meetings and communicate needs and concerns to our state legislators.

The Mayor makes committee/portfolio appointments in January every two years.

### CURRENT PORTFOLIOS, NUMBER OF COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES & MEETING TIMES:

|  |                    |   |
|--|--------------------|---|
| <b>Administration, Finance &amp; Personnel</b> | <b>Two</b>         | <b>5:30 pm</b> - Tuesday preceding Council meeting  |
| <b>Liquor, Ordinances &amp; Buildings</b>      | <b>Two</b>         | <b>5:00 pm</b> - Last Wednesday of the month  |
| <b>Water, Wastewater &amp; Streets</b>         | <b>Two</b>         | <b>9:00 am</b> - Monday preceding Council meeting   |
| <b>Police, Fire &amp; Ambulance</b>            | <b>Mayor + Two</b> | <b>5:00 pm</b> - Monday preceding Council meeting   |
| <b>Telephone, Electric, Cable (TEC) Board</b>  | <b>Two</b>         | <b>4:00 pm</b> - Fourth Monday of the Month   |
| <b>Planning Commission</b>                     | <b>One</b>         | <b>6:30 pm</b> - First Monday of the month<br><i>Studies and makes recommendations to the Council on matters related to community planning and zoning</i>   |
| <b>Park Board</b>                              | <b>Two</b>         | <b>6:30 pm</b> - First Thursday of the month<br><i>Oversees management and operation of public parks and recreational facilities and programs</i>   |
| <b>Economic Development Authority</b>          | <b>Two</b>         | <b>7:00 am</b> - First and third Wednesday<br><i>Responsible for strategic efforts to foster residential and business growth in Barnesville<br/>Members also serve on Marketing, Housing &amp; Business subcommittees, meet quarterly</i> |
| <b>Housing and Redevelopment Authority</b>     | <b>One</b>         | <b>12 Noon</b> - Last Monday of the month<br><i>Oversee the operation of the HRA owned Fairview Apartments facility</i>   |

### THESE COMMITTEES DON'T HAVE SET MEETING DATES, BUT MEET AS NEEDED:

|   |                    |  |
|---|--------------------|--|
| <b>Airport Advisory Board</b>               | <b>One</b>         | <i>Works with other appointed community members on decisions related to the airport</i>    |
| <b>Community Education Board</b>            | <b>One</b>         | <i>Works with school and community representatives on Community Education offerings</i>    |
| <b>Joint Powers Zoning Board</b>            | <b>Two</b>         | <i>Works with township representatives to administer the Joint Powers zoning ordinance</i> |
| <b>Joint Powers Board of Adjustment</b>     | <b>Two</b>         | <i>Meets as needed to hear appeals related to decisions made by Joint Powers Board</i>     |
| <b>Library Board</b>                        | <b>One</b>         | <i>Works with other community members to improve and promote the Barnesville Library</i>   |
| <b>Development Control Board</b>            | <b>Two</b>         | <i>Reviews plans for buildings in the Commercial Park for compliance with covenants</i>    |
| <b>Western Area City County Cooperative</b> | <b>Mayor + One</b> | <i>A regional organization that fosters cooperation between cities and counties</i>        |

## NOVEMBER 5TH GENERAL ELECTION

Barnesville residents will be asked to cast their vote for Mayor and City Council representatives on Tuesday, November 5 at the Senior Citizens Center located at 501 2nd Avenue NE. **The polls will be open from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm.** To vote, residents need to have lived in Barnesville for at least 20 days. Voters who need to register must bring a photo ID or utility bill with them.

Absentee ballots are available now through the City Clerk's office. City Hall will be open until 5:00 pm on Monday, November 4, to accept absentee ballot requests.

Because no one has filed for the City Council in Wards 1 and 2, the winner of those seats will be determined by tallying the names written in by the voters. Even if names are printed on the ballot, voters may choose to write in a name if they feel someone else is a better fit.

Not sure which ward you live in? **The ward map is available at [www.barnesvillemn.com](http://www.barnesvillemn.com).**

Questions about the election process? Contact City Hall at 354-2292.

