

## Village at work despite pandemic

By Gary Budzak

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GALENA — Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been much activity in the village this year.

The village was formally notified about the novel coronavirus by the Delaware General Health District's Jennifer Wilson during the Jan. 27 Galena Village Council meeting, minutes show. "The health department is well aware of the coronavirus, and there is currently no vaccine for it," the minutes read. "There is still flu vaccines available, and it is not too late to get a flu shot."

At the Feb. 24 meeting, Wilson reported there were no active cases of coronavirus in Ohio. Obviously, much has changed since then — for the latest data, see The Gazette's bi-weekly COVID-19 updates on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

Council unanimously approved a resolution authorizing payment to employees and contract service providers during the coronavirus pandemic and declaring an emergency at its meeting on March 18. Mayor Jill Love asked if the BST& G Fire District could decontaminate the village office.

Also at the March 18 meeting, the annual Easter Egg Hunt was canceled, and Love proposed donating the \$400 that was allotted for the event to the Journey Fellowship Church next to village hall.

The Galena Village Hall, itself a former church, is on Harrison Street; while Journey has a Walnut Street address.

Across the road from both buildings, but on Harrison Street, is Ruffner Park. At the May 18 meeting, held via Zoom, the minutes read, "Jeff Dutiel spoke about the reopening of the ball field at Ruffner Park. Guidelines have been put in place to comply with the COVID-19 protocol for baseball leagues. He will have all coaches sign an acknowledgement to abide by the rules, and he will be the one enforcing the guidelines."

The park's website states the ball field "is a great venue for youth baseball teams with ages ranging from 9 through 14," with a season of April to October. It is the home of the Columbus Sharks summer travel baseball team.

At the Aug. 24 meeting, council announced an increase in the village budget of \$11,775.58 from the CARES Act of 2020 Distribution Fund. The village applied for funds in July. CARES stands for the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act.

The coronavirus pandemic has resulted in the postponement or cancellation of several events in the village, such as the much-discussed GalenaFest/Summerfest. There was also much discussion over Beggars Night, and after several times of being tabled, council approved by a 5-1 vote the date of Thursday, Oct. 29, as recommended by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission.

In other Galena news, Administrator Jeff White said former Mayor Tom Hopper was presented with a certificate for his 24 years as a member of the Delaware County Regional Planning Commission.

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