

MINUTES
MARCH 12, 2018
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
7:00 P.M.

Council Members in Attendance: Samuel Crowl
Chris Fahl
Peter Kotses
Patrick McGee
Jeff Risner

Administrators and/or

Other Elected Officials: President Pro Tem Butler
Acting Mayor Eliason

Items Discussed:

- Athens Mold & Machine (tax abatement)
 - Acting Mayor – at the most recent Tax Incentive Review Council it was noted that in 2016 the County entered into an agreement with Athens Mold & Machine – the Ohio Department of Development has indicated that Council can simply ratify the County’s agreement – legislation is needed to affirm the Mayor’s consent to the Rural Enterprise Zone Agreement between the County Commissioners and Athens Mold and Machine (AMM) to include the following: AMM shall renovate the building located at 180 Mill Street to house its office, warehouse and manufacturing operation to permit the expansion of its distribution area, and, in addition, AMM will purchase (\$500,000) in additional furniture, fixtures and equipment – total investment by AMM will be a minimum of (\$1,500,000) up to (\$3,000,000) at the project site – all acquisition, construction and installation will be completed by June, 2019 – within (12) months after the completion date, AMM will create the equivalent of (60) new fulltime permanent jobs, will provide a minimum of (50%) of the cost of employee health insurance, and a minimum payroll on site of (\$2,121,600), with (60) fulltime (minimum 35 hours per week) at an average of \$17 per hour excluding owner’s salary – Athens County will grant AMM a tax exemption for real property improvements made to the project site with a tax exemption amount of (60%) for years 1 through 10 – each identified project improvement will receive a (10) year exemption period – no exemption shall commence after calendar year 2020 nor extend beyond calendar year 2030 – upside to this agreement is that jobs will be created and the City will receive additional income tax
 - Auditor – City’s consent if required because the abatement will reduce the City’s property tax revenue from AMM (second largest revenue in the General Fund) –

is a large single source of revenue – noted that income tax revenue will continue as always – pointed out that many properties in City are tax exempt

-Acting Mayor – a review of AMM will be held at the end of this month

-Fahl – asked about a call back clause, and it would be helpful information to know the project timeline, and how much property tax the City currently receives from AMM

- Gun Violence (gun safety resolution)
 - Fahl – would like to be able to introduce local law that would enact common sense gun safety measurements and would include universal background checks for gun permits, prohibiting the sale of large magazines, increasing the age limit to 21 for long guns, and gun safes for residential housing – unfortunately the City cannot enact local enforcement – hence, a resolution will come forward that will request gun control and safety measures from our state and national leadership – again, this is an erosion of Home Rule in protecting the health and safety of our citizens

-McGee – asked about businesses that sell guns in Athens

-Fahl – WalMart and Dunhams

-Fahl – is pleased that high school students are now expressing their views on the issue of gun violence in schools across the nation

- Protect the Bobcat (resolution)
 - Risner – the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) is proposing to allow a limited trapping season of bobcats – all in the guise of scientific research – in fact, this is a sport – he finds this proposal reprehensible – will offer a resolution of opposition to be sent to the appropriate authorities

-McGee – understands there was to be an initial 5-year review of the bobcat population, and that this trapping will circumvent that through a one-year study – critical that we know how many bobcats are in the area before trapping is authorized

-Fahl – finds it disturbing that there might be an unlimited number of permits processed – ODNR needs to protect our natural resources – concerned about the powerful lobbying efforts toward this endeavor

-Heather Cantino, resident – background is in environmental education – clarified that it wouldn't be a year-long study before the program is implemented, the project is only beginning to collect data this summer and trapping season will start in the fall – there will be non-invasive monitoring – a four-year plan is necessary to understand the population of the bobcat and its viability – developing understanding of population is critical to determine a sustainable harvest – it has been reported that there may be as many as 450 bobcats in the

entire state, and yet in 2017, 94 were killed by vehicles and incidental trappings set for coyotes (approximately 20%) – ODNR’s Bobcat Management Plan talks about 20% being the cutoff, anything above 20% may impact survival of the population, so even without trapping we may be at the edge of viability – views the Bobcat Management Plan as weak – bobcat was endangered until 2012 and threatened until 2014 – Plan needs to be stopped – trapping quota is 20 bobcats per year in southern region with possibly thousands of traps being set – appears to be a sport – according to a National Geographic article bobcat pelts are a lucrative business in Russia and China – bobcats are one of only two native mammalian carnivores to Ohio, the other being the fox – bobcats are not a menace or a nuisance – this is a dangerous Plan, playing with the survival of a species – petitions are being circulated – Council should take a stand in opposition – there has been an extension of the comment period, the public hearing has been pushed back to April 12 in Columbus, and the decision pushed back by 2-3 weeks, to May 2 – bobcats are a major predator of white-footed mice that carry Limes Disease, a public health concern – would like the Council to hold a public hearing

-Kotses – commented that through his work on the proposed Bailey Mountain Bike Trail he is aware that interns from Ohio University were tasked with tracking wildlife along an approximately 30-mile section of the Wayne National Forest– in this forested parcel they only found two bobcats

-Cantino – bobcats have a home range territory of about 15 miles across

-Butler – does not support trapping in Ohio – trapping is inhumane – need more research in determining bobcat population

-Cantino – trapping is barbaric

-Butler – challenged Ohio University to oppose

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Tax Abatement
2. Resolution on Gun Safety
3. Resolution to Protect Bobcat

MINUTES
CITY & SAFETY SERVICES COMMITTEE
MARCH 12, 2018
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Peter Kotses, Vice-Chair
Chris Fahl

Other Council Members: Samuel Crowl
Patrick McGee
Jeff Risner

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Pro Tem Butler
Acting Mayor Eliason
Auditor Hecht

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Zero Waste (compost pilot)
 - Andrea Reany, Zero Waste Program Manager, and Erin Sykes, Zero Waste Program Director, presented recommendations for the City of Athens Curbside Compost Pilot Program (see attached)

 - Kotses – will AHRC be the provider?
 - Reany – yes, adding that she is aware of only one other city in the state that offers curbside compost collection

 - Fahl – asked about end product
 - Reany – food waste is processed into organic soil

 - McGee – aside from the start-up costs – might there be a yearly compost fee to residents if the pilot is successful and the City starts a full service program?
 - Reany – yes, the pilot would provide data for the amount of that fee
 - McGee – there currently are neighborhoods that compost regularly, would they be required to pay a fee?
 - Reany – that is something that could be addressed with implementation of a full-service program
 - Sykes – believes a full-service program will have better participation

 - Crowl – how might selling the soil offset the cost of the program?
 - Sykes – not a lot, would likely not happen

 - Butler – asked where some successful programs are located

-Reany – Minneapolis, MN; Milwaukee, WI; Palo Alto, CA; Kirkland, WA, and Huron, Ohio

-S-S Director – clarified that a full service program would need to be bid out – pointed out that backyard composting can opt-out of paying for curbside service

- Allocation and Critical Infrastructure (CDBG grant applications)
 - Butler – need legislation to authorize the Mayor to submit an application and enter into agreements for both the Allocation Funds and Critical Infrastructure Funds – requires two (2) public hearings – (see attached projects)

-Kotses – questioned whether Kimes Reservoir is currently in use

-S-S Director – it is

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Pilot Program
2. Grant Applications

MINUTES
FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
MARCH 12, 2018
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Jeff Risner, Chair
Samuel Crowl, Member

Other Council Members: Chris Fahl
Peter Kotses
Patrick McGee

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Pro Tem Butler
Acting Mayor Eliason

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Appropriations
S-S Director – requested the following amount be appropriated:
(\$20,000.00) to the Storm Water Fund, 755, T.C. 300, to pay
environmental contractor to respond to the pit of motor oil thought to be in
the storm sewer (\$5,000), with balance for other unanticipated expenses

- Credit Card Policy
-Auditor – (see attached “draft” policies and procedures) – State
legislation has been passed by the House (H.B. 312) and forwarded to the
Senate – City will need to appoint a Compliance Officer -- City may need
to add account lines for credit card expenses

-Risner – can an outside individual be the compliance officer?
-Auditor – possibly – she will check into it
-Risner – asked who has the authority to provide information if a public
records request is made
-Auditor – will likely be through the Auditor’s office

- Residency Requirement (Service-Safety Director)
-S-S Director – legislation is requested to waive the residency
requirement for incoming Service-Safety Director Andrew Stone upon
appointment to the position

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Appropriations
2. Residency Requirement

MINUTES
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
MARCH 12, 2018
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Peter Kotses, Chair
Patrick McGee, Vice-Chair
Samuel Crowl, Member

Other Council Members: Chris Fahl
Jeff Risner

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Pro Tem Butler
Acting Mayor Eliason

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Boogie on the Bricks
Judy Wymer, Event Coordinator – this family music and arts festival will be held on Saturday, June 30, from 12:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. (see attached presentation)
 - Kotses – asked where the two stages will be located
 - Wymer – smaller stage is at Court and Union, intersection can remain open – the larger stage at Court and State is planned to be within the intersection
 - S-S Director – safety staff would like both intersections to remain open

 - Kotses – asked if conversations have been held with the Athens Uptown Business Association (AUBA)
 - Wymer – not at this time – Deputy Service-Safety Director Lucas is facilitating a meeting with AUBA
 - Butler – encouraged that there will be dialogue with AUBA