

**ATHENS CITY COUNCIL: REGULAR SESSION, MONDAY, JUNE 1, 2020,
7:00 P.M.**

Athens City Council met in Regular Session at the above hour. Due to concerns with COVID-19 the following members met via videoconference: Clodfelter, Crowl, Fahl, Kotses, Grace, Risner and Smedley.

Also present via videoconference: President Knisely, Mayor Patterson, Law Director Eliason, Auditor Hecht, and Treasurer McClure.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Crowl announced that the Environment & Sustainability Commission will be meeting this Wednesday evening via Zoom. The Commission has not met for two months and is looking forward to meeting again, virtually.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Treasurer McClure reported on the 2020 Interest Income (see attached). She explained that investment earnings are down across the board and are only at about 15% of the projected amount. The one increase is a Chase CD that just matured with about \$50,000 worth of interest that will come in May. This will put us closer to the projection in June, and there are three CDs due in the Fall from Hocking Valley Bank, so the projection should be close, maybe a little below.

President Knisely welcomed the update and Council will look forward to the next report in September being closer to the on-target projection.

Mayor Patterson reported the following:

- Thanked the Merchants National Bank on Stimson Avenue who returned to the City a check for \$2,138 for property acquisition and an easement associated with the Stimson Project.
- Two solar personal device charging umbrellas purchased through a NOPEC energized community grant are now available in the municipal pool area. These are portable and can be used elsewhere in the City, as needed.
- Plans to send a letter to the State Senate requesting support of Senate Bill 310 to provide coronavirus aid to municipalities.
- A boil order is in effect for The Ridges from 3:00 p.m. today through 4:00 p.m. tomorrow.
- Mayor read a statement condemning the actions of the Minneapolis Police Department in the death of George Floyd (see attached).

ORDINANCES FOR THIRD READING:

0-66-20

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION AND ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR SMALL CITY PROGRAM FUNDS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Kotses moved for Adoption; Smedley seconded. Discussion: Kotses explained this is an opportunity for EPW to apply for a \$2 million Small Cities Grant to be used for construction of a single lane roundabout at the intersection of State Routes 682 and 56/Union Street. If successful, there would be a 5% match or \$100,000 as the City's local share.

Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-67-20

AN ORDINANCE TO RENEW THE EXISTING CITY INCOME TAX OF TEN HUNDREDTHS PERCENT (.10%) PER ANNUM FOR A PERIOD OF TEN YEARS FOR STREET IMPROVEMENTS; AND AUTHORIZING THE QUESTION TO BE PLACED ON THE BALLOT AT THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 3, 2020; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Kotses moved for Adoption; Grace seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING:

0-69-20

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE 2020 STREET PAVING AND REPAIRS PROJECT (#333); AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Discussion: Kotses requested a list of the streets planned for paving and repair.

Mayor responded that the list has been recently modified and will be forwarded to Council Members.

0-70-20

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH THE ATHENS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AS APPLICANT AND GRANTEE, IF FUNDED, FOR SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION TO THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, OHIO DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AGENCY (ODSA) FOR THE PROGRAM YEAR (PY) 2020 COMMUNITY HOUSING IMPACT AND PRESERVATION PROGRAM (CHIP).

0-71-20

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR TO ADVERTISE AND ACCEPT BIDS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT DEWATERING IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT (#320).

0-72-20

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING DESIGN ENGINEERING OF THE CITY SEWER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT (#330).

0-73-20

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 139-19; AUTHORIZING CONSTRUCTION AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING SERVICES, AND PROPERTY ACQUISITION FOR THE KIMES RESERVOIR PROJECT (#324). Discussion: Risner questioned moving forward with this capital item during a time of budget constraints, and asked if this project was absolutely necessary this year.

Grace believes that it is essential to improve/broaden water service to the City's south side. This project has been developing for some time.

Mayor Patterson indicated that this would allow for cycling of that water at a higher rate, and it is also in alignment with future land development of the area.

Risner understands but feels the City is obligated, due to the effects of COVID-19, to review all projects that have an affect on the City's operating budget.

0-74-20

AN ORDINANCE AFFIRMING THE CITY OF ATHENS WILL PICK UP THE STATUTORILY REQUIRED CONTRIBUTION TO THE OHIO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF AFSCME LOCAL 2403 PURSUANT TO INTERNAL REVENUE CODE SECTION 414(h)(2). Discussion: Crawl explained that this documentation is needed to be in full compliance with current regulations.

Auditor Hecht indicated that the City has been operating under these regulations; this is simply the official statement.

0-75-20

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2020 APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE; AND AUTHORIZING AN INTERFUND TRANSFER. Crawl moved for Suspension of the Rules in order to effectively manage the City's budget in this time of emergency; Risner seconded. Suspension of the Rules was approved unanimously. Crawl moved for Adoption; Grace seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-76-20

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE AUDITOR TO REDUCE THE 2020 APPROPRIATIONS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A SOUND FINANCIAL BUDGET. Crawl moved for Suspension of the Rules in order to handle the City's financial emergency; Clodfelter seconded. Suspension of the Rules was approved unanimously. Crawl moved for Adoption; Smedley seconded. Discussion: Clodfelter asked about the status of current employees.

Auditor Hecht clarified that the budget reductions being made at this time are to avoid eliminating current personnel.

The Mayor added, the City will be very frugal with expenditures, and revenues will be carefully tracked into the spring and summer of 2021.

Clodfelter thanked everyone's efforts to save jobs.

Smedley added, capital improvement cuts are not permanent but have only been postponed and will be readdressed when the budget returns to a more normal state.

Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-77-20

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 135-19; REALLOCATING REVENUES FROM THE CITY INCOME TAX; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Crowl moved for Suspension of the Rules, again in order to manage the City's financial emergency; Kotses seconded. Suspension of the Rules was approved unanimously. Crowl moved for Adoption; Clodfelter seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION FOR THIRD READING:

R-05-20

A RESOLUTION TO PLACE THE ISSUE OF RENEWING THE EXISTING CITY INCOME TAX OF TEN HUNDREDTHS PERCENT (.10%) PER ANNUM FOR A PERIOD OF TEN YEARS BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2021, ON THE BALLOT AT THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 3, 2020; AND DIRECTING THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS OF ATHENS COUNTY TO CONDUCT THE ELECTION; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Kotses moved for Adoption; Crowl seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

ONE-READING RESOLUTION:

R-08-20

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE MAYOR AND OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS INSTITUTE A HIRING FREEZE UNTIL A POSITION REVIEW HAS TAKEN PLACE. Crowl moved for Adoption; Grace seconded. Discussion: Risner asked about the need for wage freezes as well.

Crowl noted that a wage freeze at this time would only apply to non-union employees whose wages are set through year-end.

Risner believes City Council should come forward with legislation stating that a wage freeze is currently in effect. He would like to continue this discussion in an upcoming meeting.

Adoption was approved unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OTHER BUSINESS:

Fahl moved to Accept the April, 2020, Credit Card Transaction; Kotses seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

Risner moved the reappointment of Cyrus Moore, II to an additional 4-year term on the Historic Preservation Commission, with an expiration date of June 9, 2024; Kotses seconded. Reappointment was approved unanimously.

Clodfelter moved the reappointments of Alan Swank, Daniel Brown, and Travis Gatling to the Recreation Advisory Board, to serve an additional 2-year term; Fahl seconded. Reappointments were approved unanimously.

Fahl moved the reappointment of Aaron Thomas to an additional 3-year term as an alternate on the Board of Zoning Appeals, with an expiration date of April 30, 2024; Clodfelter seconded. Reappointment was approved unanimously.

Clodfelter shared that she participated in yesterday's very peaceful protest against police brutality in Minneapolis. Two Athens City Police Officers, Officer Holter and Officer Flick did an excellent job communicating with participants. It was a good example of calm policing and de-escalation of a tense situation.

At approximately 8:00 p.m. Grace moved to Adjourn the meeting; Crowl seconded, and the meeting was adjourned.

President of Council

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council