

MINUTES: JUNE 8, 2020
FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance via Videoconference: Sam Crowl, Chair
Jeff Risner, Vice-Chair
Peter Kotses, Member
Arian Smedley, Member

Administrators and/or

Other Elected Officials via Videoconference: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Auditor Hecht

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Appropriations/Transfers
 - Crowl – the following are needed: appropriations of \$29,650 to Clerk of Court Computer Fund, 231, T.C. 500, and \$5,385 to the same fund, T.C. 200, for awards from the Supreme Court of Ohio – also, the Auditor’s Office is requesting to decrease General Fund, 101.102, T.C. 300, by \$1000 and to increase the same fund, T.C. 500, to purchase a desktop scanner

- Municipal Court (grant awards)
 - Crowl – the above grants were awarded for security, \$29,650 award for upgrade of camera and door access systems; \$5,385 award is specifically for the purchase of Tasers

 - Smedley – asked who would be using those Tasers
 - Crowl – these would be for the security staff inside the courtroom, an unarmed officer and bailiff – currently only have a panic button to contact APD

- Prior Year Expense
 - Crowl – need to pay a prior year bill to EnerFusion, Inc. in the amount of \$5317.50 – this is the final payment for the personal device solar charging table canopies – this amount is reimbursable from the Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC)

 - Mayor – deposit was paid in 2019, with this half due upon delivery – full cost is eligible for reimbursement

- Sewer Note (rollover)
 - Crowl – owe \$460,000 for the Sewer Plant upgrades – the Auditor has indicated that the interest rate will not be set until July – Service-Safety Director and Director of Engineering and Public Works recommend paying \$200,000

- Fahl – asked about the current interest rate
- Auditor – it is currently 1.67% -- banks do not like to guarantee an interest rate too far in advance, as they change daily – since Council will not meet in July, this legislation will need to be introduced and adopted in August

- President – asked about the unappropriated balance in the Sewer Fund
- Auditor – it is not healthy, but explained this amount can be rolled into the construction cost and paid from the already funded project – this rollover does not affect the unappropriated balance

- Crowl – asked why last year the City only paid down \$25,000 and this year plans to pay \$200,000
- Mayor – will request an explanation and report back

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Appropriations/Transfers

MINUTES
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
JUNE 8, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance via Videoconference: Peter Kotses, Chair
Sam Crowl, Vice-Chair
Beth Clodfelter, Member

Administrators and/or

Other Elected Officials via Videoconference: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Planner Logue
Deputy Service-Safety Director Chiki
Auditor Hecht

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Extended Uptown Outdoor Seating/Space
 - Kotses – is aware of on-going conversations with the Chamber of Commerce and Athens Uptown Business Association (AUBA) with our City Planner and Deputy Service-Safety Director that, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic state regulations/restrictions, would address the needs of our uptown businesses by allowing them to serve customers' outdoors – a request is being made for use of the City's public right-of-way
 - Planner Logue – at this time many people are not comfortable dining inside restaurants, however do feel more comfortable outdoors (see attached PowerPoint presentation) – the use of parklets in the public right-of-way is an identified best practice/goal of the City to provide additional outdoor space in the uptown area – both the Chamber and AUBA believe this is a viable option
 - Clodfelter – so many businesses are suffering and customers do feel safer being outdoors – this will help our economy and this summer is the perfect time to get started
 - Crowl – is also supportive – has been asked about outdoor dining and the serving of alcohol
 - Logue – he doesn't believe outdoor dining in the public right-of-way would include serving alcohol
 - Crowl – questioned that since the Boogie on the Bricks and Brew Week events are not being held this summer, whether there are a couple of weekends that the City could consider closing the street to promote Athens' restaurants/businesses, and that alcohol could be consumed in the closed area for limited hours

-Clodfelter – asked if the City is only addressing uptown businesses, or whether this includes those businesses in other parts of the City as well

-Logue – other locations are being reviewed by Code Director Riggs – most are easily solved through private off-street parking spaces in order to create outdoor dining – uptown is distinctly different

-Smedley – good project that is needed to really energize the uptown area – asked whether the parking spaces being transitioned from leased monthly to metered spaces in the College Street lot will off-set the number being removed from the streets

-Chiki — the Secure Parking Lot spaces on College Street (34) will actually exceed the on-street spaces being removed and made available for parklets (22)

-Smedley – clarified the sidewalks will not be blocked – understands ADA has been addressed in the plan, noting that the Commission on Disabilities is interested in reviewing this plan to offer feedback – asked if businesses are first come first serve for these parklet spaces

-Chiki – yes, it will be by application and review

-Kotses – asked about the uptown parking trend since March

-Chiki – as expected, has been down the last couple of months – is just now starting to come back online with more people returning to work

-Kotses – questioned whether retail is considering parklets, or is it just for outdoor dining

-Chiki – short-term need is for outdoor dining, but long-term intention is having it available for retail, artwork, beautification

-Kotses – this is a good opportunity for businesses

-Risner – asked about the cost of the permit to the restaurant owner

-Chiki – a \$50.00 application fee and a \$100.00 permit fee – less than the revenue from the parking meter, but does offset administrative costs

-Risner – asked whether there is a penalty if a business rents a space and then does not use it

-Chiki – there is no penalty, but this is a revocable permit – if it's determined that there is no plan for use, it can be rescinded

-Risner – believes there should be a time limit

-Logue – will look into that prior to first reading – even if a permit is secured his thought is that the space continues to be available for public parking until something is actually constructed – business owner cannot just cordon it off for use as their own private parking space

-Clodfelter – asked about transition day and whether the City would put out barriers for safety as the parklet is being created, or whether that would be the responsibility of the business owner

-Chiki – prior to installation there will be parking blocks placed by the City on either end of the outdoor seating area with a flexible bollard on the corners

-Mayor – ADA accessibility is critical for this to work correctly – supports the parklet plan

- Private Tow-Away Zones

-Kotses – indicated that a request has come forward to allow an impound lot outside the corporate limits – ease of accessibility is required by the ORC, but within the corporate limits is not

-Attorney Sky Petty – clients John and Deborah Melville own Athens Towing and Recovery, Ltd. and currently tow for the City of Athens – under the ORC an impound lot can be 25 miles outside the corporate limits – ACC 7.05.13, Impounding of Vehicles, states, “The Chief of Police shall designate the place of storage of any motor vehicle found in violation of this ordinance, using impound lots within the City whenever possible.” – his clients’ impound lot is about 2.1 miles outside the corporate limits on St. Rt. 550 – is available by Athens On Demand Transit, not on a standard route, but can call for service and pay \$2.00 for a ride – for about 20 years his client has been renting a lot on Columbus Road instead of using the lot he owns since the ACC requires the lot to be inside the City limits – is requesting an amendment to allow vehicles to be towed to the lot he owns on St. Rt. 550 – simplest amendment might be to eliminate “using impound lots within the city whenever possible” – the Chief of Police would still have the discretion of the location – could also read that lots within 3 miles of the City limits are allowed – a release from the Police Department is needed prior to retrieving the vehicle from the impound lot, so it could even be a radius from the City Police Department – currently, competitor Auto Tech is 4.3 miles from the Police Department and his clients’ lot is 4.7 miles – a 5-mile radius would also be helpful – doesn’t believe this change will effect anybody except his clients, with no other tow operations adversely affected – the lot that has been rented on Columbus Road is going to be sold and his client may not be able to continue using this lot – if that happens his client will be looking elsewhere within the City limits to put an impound lot – noted that the City will not be losing any income tax revenue from allowing the impound lot outside the City since all tows originate within the City

-Clodfelter – likes the 5-mile radius from the Police Department – added, public transportation is important

-Kotses – easy access to vehicles is needed – a request has been made to Athens Transit making certain that the On Demand service would be viable and affordable for vehicle retrieval

-Smedley – is aware that On Demand has expanded its customer base to all residents, and not to just those with disabilities and senior citizens – it does need to be scheduled in advance – the City also has Lyft available – seems like a reasonable request for change

-Fahl – reasonable accessibility and cost of transportation to the lot are both key

- LPA Agreement
 - Kotses – this is a standard agreement with ODOT for guardrail replacement within the corporate limits on US Rt. 33 – no cost to the City

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. R-O-W Use
2. LPA Agreement