

ATHENS CITY COUNCIL: REGULAR SESSION, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2018, 7:00 P.M.

Athens City Council met in Regular Session at the above hour with the following members present: Butler, Crowl, Fahl, Grace, Kotses, McGee, and Risner.

Also present: President Knisely, Mayor Patterson, and Law Director Eliason.

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES:

Risner moved approval of the minutes of the Regular Session held September 4, 2018; Fahl seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Council Member Crowl: reminded all that it is Pollution Prevention Week and there will be a number of events throughout the City. On Wednesday there will be a tap water vs bottled water taste test at the Alumni Gate. Also, on Wednesday evening the Sustainability Film Series will be showing a film titled, The Devil We Know, about an investigation of finding the chemical C8 near the DuPont facility in West Virginia and the impact it has had on the residents in that area. At the conclusion of the film, there will be panelists speaking about the issue locally. He added, the City of Athens, while upstream from the Ohio River, has been testing its water supply since 2014 specifically for C8, and none has been found.

Council Member Risner received an email from a constituent concerning legislation being presented tonight regarding parking meters and parking regulations. The Mayor has assured him that the concerns of the citizen have been addressed.

Council Member Butler received an email offering support for continuation of the Pilot Residential Parking Permit Program.

Council Member McGee along with other Council Members are in receipt of an email from an alternative company offering new smart technology parking meters at a reduced rate from that presented at the last City Council meeting. He hopes that will be reviewed by the Administration.

Council Member Kotses announced that the next Athens City School District Board meeting will be held Thursday, September 20, at 6:30 p.m. in the Athens High School auditorium.

ORDINANCE FOR THIRD READING:

0-97-18

AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE STEWART MACDONALD BUILDING, LOCATED AT 21 NORTH SHAFER STREET, AS A LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION. Fahl moved for Adoption; Butler seconded. Discussion: Fahl indicated that this is a positive first step in anchoring the area for future economic development. Adoption was approved unanimously.

ORDINANCE FOR SECOND READING:

0-100-18

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING CONSTRUCTION AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE RICHLAND BRIDGE OVER COATES RUN PROJECT (#321).

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING:

0-101-18

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 75-18; AUTHORIZING ENGINEERING, CONSTRUCTION, AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE NORTHWEST BIKEWAY SPUR (PHASE III) PROJECT (#296). Discussion: Kotses indicated that Phase III is that section of the bikeway from Armitage Road to University Estates. The increased cost is for realignment construction to protect the stream and habitat.

Council Member Butler is pleased to support this project. This will continue to enhance our bikeway and trail system.

Council Member Risner would like clarification that the Transportation Fund line can handle the additional cost.

Mayor Patterson has been assured by the Director of Engineering and Public Works that the funds are available.

Council Member Grace also supports this project and believes it will be a great addition to the neighborhood to be able to access the bikeway. She did, however, express concern with the dramatic increase in the City's contribution. It's unfortunate that it comes at a point that we are well into, and really committed, to the completion of this project. She would like to review the details relative to the realignment, the reasons for it, and why it was not discovered earlier in the process.

Mayor Patterson can forward that information to the Council, noting that another reason for the realignment was that trees in the interior needed to be preserved.

President Knisely requested a graphic that could be shared with the public at second reading.

Council Member McGee seconds Grace's concerns. He supports this project as well, and understands that this spur will benefit mainly those living in University Estates, and asked whether the public will use it.

Mayor Patterson responded that while it does benefit the significant population living at University Estates, the bikeway is open to the public. It's a needed asset to provide alternative, active transportation up to University Estates.

Council Member Fahl noted that our bikeway trail system adds to regional connectivity and enhances our tourism and economic development. She also pointed out that there is an active underground spring in the area that further complicates the design.

Council Member Butler pointed out that this project is in line with the City's established Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan. It provides connectivity via walking and bicycling.

Council Member Kotses feels it is important to strive to provide the same services to all parts of our community.

0-102-18

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT TO LEASE/PURCHASE SMART PARKING METERS. Discussion: Mayor Patterson commented on the email mentioned earlier regarding the company offering significantly lower prices. Research by his staff has indicated that there are some features and functionality on the meters currently being piloted on Court Street that this other vendor does not offer. All criteria will be reviewed when contract bids are received.

0-103-18

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CERTAIN SECTIONS OF THE ATHENS CITY CODE TITLE 7, TRAFFIC CODE, CHAPTER 7.05, PARKING REGULATIONS. Discussion: McGee has concern about the three major changes, the increase in rates, expanded enforcement hours, and the removal of additional paid time left on a meter from one vehicle to the next. He understands the City's higher costs in providing these smart meters that will be helpful to citizens by allowing them to pay by coin, card, or app, but would like, if possible, to continue offering the free time paid but not used from one vehicle to the next.

Council Member Risner asked for clarification that all parking revenue from the meters will be receipted into the Parking Enforcement Fund.

Council Member Fahl clarified that these funds are now, and will continue to be, receipted into the Parking Enforcement Fund for future maintenance and management of on and off-street parking.

Council Member Kotses questioned whether staffing levels will need to be increased in order to cover expanded enforcement hours.

Mayor Patterson responded that additional staff will not be needed, as shifts will be altered with current staffing. He added, the smart meters are much more efficient, taking less staff time to monitor.

Council Member Grace has received concerns about changing the enforcement time from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., and how that might impact residents coming uptown to dine. She would like to consider incentives that would encourage parking in the Municipal Parking Garage.

Mayor Patterson plans to explore options for the Parking Garage.

Judith Roman, Northridge Drive, is opposed to the later enforcement time of 8:00 p.m.

Robert Delach, Morris Avenue, pointed out that the City's Parking Study concluded that smart metering is a great idea, as well as the need to encourage parking turnover on the street. He agrees that it is just as important to get citizens to utilize the Parking Garage more often. He would like to see that addressed, possibly offering free parking after hours as an incentive.

He would also like to encourage more bicycle parking in the uptown area. He requested that some of the increased revenue be used to improve bicycle parking.

0-104-18

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING DESIGN SERVICES FOR THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT DEWATERING PROJECT (#320).

Discussion: Mayor Patterson indicated that the City currently uses a belt press to remove the water from the sludge, and is considering a centrifuge/belt press combination process. The lower the moisture content lessens the impact and cost to transport the final product for field application, or to the landfill.

Fahl asked the Mayor to follow up with a report on the amount of sludge transported annually.

0-105-18

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2018 STAFFING LEVELS AUTHORIZED BY ORDINANCE 151-17; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OTHER BUSINESS:

Risner moved to Accept the Auditor's August 2018 Financial Reports; Fahl seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

President Knisely announced that the Community Relations Commission currently has two vacancies for members to serve 3-year terms, and she

encouraged those interested to submit a short biographical statement or resume to the Clerk of Council.

Mayor Patterson announced two open alternate positions to serve on the Housing Board of Appeals. You must be a resident of the City of Athens to be considered for this appointment.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO SPEAK ON LEGISLATIVE ITEMS AND CITY SERVICES NOT COVERED ON THE AGENDA:

John Schlosser, Milliron Street, Governmental Affairs Commissioner of Undergraduate Student Senate, would like to establish a dialogue between City Council and Student Senate, to maintain a good working relationship with both City Council and the City Administration.

Parker Smith, West State Street, Off-Campus Affairs Commissioner of Undergraduate Student Senate, hopes to build a more productive relationship in which to explore areas of collaboration with the City, Ohio University, and students, especially as it relates to safety and protection of student rights both on and off campus. He is also interested in searching for input and ideas related to ways students are impacting the community, and to improve the relationship between students and local residents.

McGee moved to Adjourn; Fahl seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

President of Council

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council