

MINUTES

CITY & SAFETY SERVICES COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 14, 2022

Members in Attendance:

Micah McCarey, Chair
Sarah Grace, Member
Sam Crowl, Member
Alan Swank, Member

Administrators and
Other Elected Officials:

President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Stone
Auditor Hecht

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Fire Code (amend ACC Title 9)
 - McCarey – modify by removing the specific year, and amend to include the following language: “the current Fire Code of the State of Ohio, OAC 1301:7-7”
- Tennis and Pickleball Courts (design & construction)
 - S-S Director – asking to appropriate \$250,000 for replacement of tennis courts and add pickleball courts – APR Director will solicit advice from Recreation Advisory Board Members prior to her first meeting with the design consultant on Friday, specifically, location, attributes and amenities for these outdoor facilities
 - Crowl – asked about timing with solar project in the same area
 - S-S Director – design work will need to be coordinated – solar project is not on our timeline as we will not initially own it – is hopeful that both projects are completed this year
 - Swank – could host smaller tournaments with (4) pickleball courts
 - Risner – asked about incorporating any public art with these projects
 - S-S Director – none has been planned
 - Mayor – these are flat surfaces on the ground, not sure what type of art could be included
 - Risner – could think outside the box

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Fire Code (amend)
2. Tennis & Pickleball Courts

**MINUTES
FEBRUARY 14, 2022
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
7:00 P.M.**

Council Members in Attendance:

Sam Crowl
Sarah Grace
Micah McCarey
Jeff Risner
Solveig Spjeldnes
Alan Swank
Ben Ziff

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials:

President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Stone
Auditor Hecht

Items Discussed:

- Land Appropriation
 - President – this access road is part of the West Union Street Improvements Project (curbs, sidewalks, roadway) – a number of designs for the connector road were considered, and are currently in final engineering stages of the route that was chosen –a resolution is needed to appropriate two parcels of real property
 - Risner – met with Service-Safety Director Stone to discuss appropriating property through eminent domain – there are many steps to this process – a one-reading resolution is the first step in implementing the action
 - Crowl – also attended the meeting with Director Stone – during this meeting he raised a number of questions regarding the project and felt they were all answered satisfactorily and completely – his questions were about the benefit to the public good for the project in general, the possibility of alternative routes instead of acquiring this specific property through eminent domain, as well as how those routes connect to West State Street, and the importance of where that intersection will be
 - Spjeldnes – met with Ed Newman, resident of the west side – he is opposed to this connector road – he expressed concern about increased traffic through the neighborhoods

-Crowl – understands Mr. Newman’s concerns, but believes the overall benefits to the west side in terms of safety and service access outweigh the concerns over additional traffic in the neighborhood

-S-S Director Stone – explained that the one-reading resolution sets out the conditions for appropriating this real property – City has determined that the benefit to the public good outweighs the individual private property rights – there are very stringent regulations when exercising eminent domain actions for public improvements, starting with a third-party, pre-qualified land agent to meet with individual property owners that will be affected by a project – the value of the land to be acquired is appraised, and the property owner apprised and justly compensated – ODOT will not release grant funds to the City until agreements are in place to clear the rights-of-way – there are two parcels (one property owner) that are not clear at this time, a vacant lot next to 355 West State that will be acquired fee simple for permanent ownership, as well as another partial take of a vacant lot behind 355 West State, as well as a temporary take in order to construct a slope – this particular property owner will not respond to the land agent – the resolution being requested will authorize the Administration to file a court action for these land appropriations where the appraised value of the property will be deposited with the court, and at such time in the future, there will either be negotiations outside the court, or the court will determine whether or not that compensation is just – filing this action and making the deposit with the court will functionally clear the right of way so the project can move ahead – the taking is the eastern vacant lot in its entirety, as a warranty deed, and a portion of the rear, or southern vacant lot is included – the house itself is not included, nor is the vacant parcel to the west

-Risner – questioned whether this resolution grants permission for the City to proceed to take the property, or whether the suit is about the offered appraised value and whether it is sufficient compensation to cover the true value of the land

-S-S Director – clarified that once filed with the court, the resolution is only about the value for the taken property

-President – understands that this particular owner has three parcels, two of which are vacant, and the third parcel is where the owner resides

-S-S Director – it is four parcels

-Swank – asked if the City will be cutting through the raised railroad bed

-S-S Director – will not cut through, the finished grade of the top of the railroad bed will remain what it is today – on the northern side the slope will be less severe

-Swank – asked if the entire project hinges on this connector road

-S-S Director – no, if unable to deliver the access road portion in time, would risk loss of the federal ARC money (\$500,000 economic development grant) – conceivably that could be carved out and the City could proceed with all other improvements, however, would like to bid as one large project

-Mayor – commented that returning this type of funding impacts future grants
-Swank – asked about any concern with traffic where Herrold intersects West Union, particularly at Larry’s Dawg House
-S-S Director – this project will make it better, but still not perfect – working with owner to ensure that the design meets their needs
-Swank – a second ingress/egress would be helpful for emergency access – hopes the big tree between 351 and 355 can be saved
-S-S Director – doesn’t believe the tree will be impacted

-Spjeldnes – after speaking with the City Administration summed up the following for her constituents: based on modeling, it is believed that traffic volume will not increase but will balance out; emergency response time will decrease; will provide opportunities for businesses to grow along Herrold Avenue, and possibly Union and State Streets; will increase tax base; important that the West State recreational complex can be accessed more easily, and it could divert traffic from Shafer – she is supportive of this project – feels it is best for the community

-Grace – expressed concern about the safety of park goers should an emergency block the only egress – a vehicular secondary egress can provide a good exit for traffic following events at the complex – believes it will ease traffic on State, Shafer, and Central by diverting some of the traffic to Union

-Swank – noted that the impact on the tax base by removing these parcels is less than \$600

-Robert Delach, Morris Avenue – better pedestrian access to the park should be a part of this project – a sidewalk on the north side of West State would be helpful

-S-S Director – there will be sidewalk improvements on Union and Herrold, but there is no plan to construct a sidewalk on West State, although the right of way is wide enough on the north side, so it is doable
Delach – feels it is important even if it needs to be a separate project

-Ed Newman, Currier Street – all for investment in improving our community – concerned about how this will affect traffic in the neighborhoods on the narrow streets of Central, Shafer and Second that are already difficult to navigate and can be dangerous – questioned whether there is a plan to address the slowing of traffic in this area

- Garbage, Recycling & Composting (recap)
-McCarey – summed up: Garbage Fund deficit was addressed last year with rate changes – discussion of those rate changes highlighted and brought to the

attention an inequity between rates paid by renters vs homeowners – the City is mid-contract with its hauler and will soon be renegotiating our contract services – the rate system is quite complex and we need to be thoughtful about the repercussions of any rate changes at this time, not only with projected revenue which appears to be back on track after the pandemic but, in general, any deficits that may occur through the end of the current contract

-Swank – concerned with rate disparity between homeowner putting out one container and a renter that puts out one container, and yet is charged at the two-container rate, a \$7.00 difference – questioned why a renter should pay more for the same amount of garbage – this is an equity issue – suggested customers pay a rate based on the number of containers at the curb rather than by homeowner or number of renters, with the cost increasing by \$6.82 for each additional container as an incentive to put out less trash – City should charge homeowners and renters the same fee for the same service

-Crowl – always good to take a close look at our fees – agrees the City should incentivize throwing away less trash and doing more recycling and more composting, “pay as you throw” concept – proprietary services should pay for themselves, the City should not be subsidizing them

-Grace – the renter has not been given the option to reduce to one container – questioned who is keeping track of the number of containers – this could create additional complications – asked if this could even be changed mid-contract

-McCarey – long-term goals, 2040 Plan, is to incentivize diverting materials from the landfill, and residents and businesses pay the appropriate amount for the waste being sent to the landfill – again questioned the consequences and concerns of additional rate changes at this time

-Spjeldnes – merits an important discussion with equity in mind – she, too, questioned the tracking and how changes would impact workers

-S-S Director – tracking at location is currently done by the workers – certainly the City wants to incentivize customers to generate less waste, however, the true costs are in the service, not in the quantity going to the landfill

-Auditor – need to remember that the Garbage Fund should be self-supportive – the City should never use general obligation dollars – the fees charged to customers should pay for the service – workers have handhelds for tracking extra waste

-Swank – a renter does not have the option to opt to one container as does a homeowner – again, need to provide incentives for less waste going to the landfill – fewer cans means less labor, and fewer cans means fewer trips – that should

drive down the cost – this can all be talked about for the next contract, but let's take care of this equity issue now

-Auditor -- \$300,000 of CARES Act and ARPA funding was used to shore up the Garbage Fund due to a shortfall – based on the current rates the fund appears to be solvent at this time

-S-S Director – a significant part of that shortfall wasn't from volume of trash, but came from fewer ticket violations

-President – acknowledged that the City is working within a contract period – need to operate within our limited means – Swank's current proposal would need a subsidy of \$50,000 with the new rates – urged working with the Administration and the Auditor's Office, and with approval of the Law Director before returning for further discussion under Committee of the Whole

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Land Acquisition

MINUTES: FEBRUARY 14, 2022

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Members in Attendance:

Sam Crowl, Chair
Jeff Risner, Member
Solveig Spjeldnes, Member
Ben Ziff, Member

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials:

President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Stone

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Parking Meter (note renewal)
 - Crowl – City owes \$290,000 – would like to pay down \$150,000 this year, plus interest

 - Auditor – this is General Fund money – bond counsel will prepare legislation as soon as an interest rate from the Hocking Valley Bank is received – these are short term notes – current interest rate on this note is .15%

 - Crowl – Hocking Valley Bank has been a very good partner of the City

 - Mayor – believes revenue will be sufficient next year to pay off this note

- Appropriations
 - (\$749,483) to FEMA Grant Fund, for transfer
 - Crowl – understands that part of this reimbursement is for a slip repair on the bikeway off Columbus Road from 2018 flooding, and for the repair of a major sanitary sewer line off Columbia Avenue

 - S-S Director – these expenditures were made for specific disasters – City pays upfront with local funds, documents and reports these to FEMA and is then reimbursed

- Transfers
 - (\$7,767.18) from FEMA Grant Fund to General Fund, Mayor
 - (\$332,216.93) from FEMA Grant Fund to the Street Fund
 - (\$1,275.66) from FEMA Grant Fund to the Water Fund
 - (\$408,222.75) from FEMA Grant Fund to the Sewer Fund

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Parking Meter (note renewal)
2. Appropriations/Transfers

MINUTES

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 14, 2022

Members in Attendance:

Sarah Grace, Chair
Sam Crowl, Vice-Chair
Micah McCarey, Member
Solveig Spjeldnes, Member

Administrators and/or Other Elected Officials:

President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Stone
Auditor Hecht

Items Discussed:

- Sunday Creek Horizons (consulting, developing a remote work system)
 - Grace – this is a business opportunity at our Armory site – end of agreement is nearing, and an extension is being requested – on 2/28 Zach Reizes will attend the P & D Committee to present what has been accomplished thus far
 - S-S Director – Reizes will submit documents in advance of the 2/28 meeting – Administration is requesting \$45,000 for continued consulting over the next 4-6 months
 - Crowl – met with Reizes, who is very optimistic in securing funding for the Armory – a number of constituents in his Ward would like renovation of the Armory – this is the right organization, and one that is well positioned to move this project forward –supportive of continuing this work
 - Ziff – has also met with Reizes – shared exciting possibilities for the Armory – interesting funding opportunities – great ideas for revamping the space
 - Swank – asked the Service-Safety Director if he could provide documentable successes, and Sunday Creek’s progress
 - Mayor – as a City Council Member he began working on renovating the Armory, and looking for funding opportunities as early as 2011 – just now getting close to having the Armory become a functional facility, open to the public – credit goes to Sunday Creek Horizons – will apply for FY23-24 State Capital funding – would like to create a hall of honor at the entryway – it is well-suited to become an area to recognize military members, including WWI, WWII, the Korean Conflict, and Vietnam – City has been stewards of this facility since 1997, and has expended \$200,000 – building envelope will be completed with new windows – would like to restore the lower level using a portion of the ARPA funds

-Grace – finding a valuable use for the Armory has been a long-held priority for many in the City

- Shade Tree Commission (amend ACC Title 33)
-Grace – membership of the Shade Tree Commission needs amended to correct a discrepancy in the number of members which should be (7), including two alternates – will also strike gender specific language

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Sunday Creek Horizons
2. Shade Tree Commissions (amend)

MINUTES

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 14, 2022

Members in Attendance: Jeff Risner, Chair
Sarah Grace, Member
Alan Swank, Member
Ben Ziff, Member

Administrators and/or

Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Stone
Auditor Hecht

- Safe Routes to Schools Funds (application to ODOT)
 - Risner – grant funds provide safety measures for children walking to school – the application is due March 4th
 - S-S Director – have had many successes with this program to provide walkability for students attending K-8 schools – funding is for new infrastructure
 - Swank – asked if this can include policy changes
 - S-S Director – there is a provision to allow for some programming
 - Rob Delach, Morris Avenue – programming to encourage safe crossing is important on East State Street – sees opportunity for that need
 - Grace – school does have a crossing guard at the location of East State and Verona
 - Mayor – project must be within 2 miles of the school – must demonstrate the number of students who will be using the infrastructure – will discuss potential projects at the newly formed Sidewalk Ad Hoc Committee
 - Grace – asked about a sidewalk on Madison
 - Mayor – aside from the slope, the City never scored well on this because of the low student count
 - S-S Director – will check again with ODOT
- ODOT's Cooperative Purchasing Program (street salt)
 - Risner – the City has participated in the past
 - S-S Director – ODOT will bid for participating communities – City has achieved better prices as part of this program

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Safe Routes to Schools
2. ODOT's Cooperative Purchasing