

**ATHENS CITY COUNCIL: REGULAR SESSION, MONDAY, AUGUST 16, 2021,
7:00 P.M.**

Athens City Council met in Regular Session at the above hour with the following members present: Crawl, Fahl, Grace, McCarey, Risner, and Ziff.

Also present: President Knisely, Mayor Patterson, Auditor Hecht.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Mayor Patterson reported:

- 2020 Return on Investment Report from the Buckeye Hills Regional Council – for every dollar the City paid in dues to be a member had a \$236.81 return on our investment. That amounts to \$790,120 in funding coming in through various grants and projects with assistance from Buckeye Hills.
- Opioid Settlement – the City could receive from \$98,000 to \$141,000 for treatment.
- The City has three metered-parking zones in the uptown area, the \$1.00 zone; \$.75 zone; and the \$.50 zone. Most of the available vending spaces are in the \$1.00 zone, with the exception of spaces available at the Armory, and those are in the \$.50 zone.
- Police Captain Harvey met with the Athens City School District’s Superintendent and Principals about the bus routes and offered suggestions for some adjustment to their plan.
- Received a letter from John Spofforth regarding art in our community, and requested working with the Ohio Arts Council and applying for funding. The Mayor plans to follow up on funding for art in public spaces.

Dr. Jason Jolley and Brent Lane from Ohio University’s Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service, Center for Economic Development and Community Resilience, received funding through the U.S. Economic Development Administration to assist communities in the Appalachian Region who had considerable distress due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the projects was to assist Athens County/City of Athens in examining a remote working scorecard (see attached presentation).

McCarey is aware of many Ohio University alumni who would like to move back, and asked if during this research they found examples of ways to support people needing assistance in finding remote work sites and housing.

Mr. Lane responded, “no;” this is fresh ground. He added, Ohio is not a magnet State, but a sticky State; people prefer to remain in Ohio, so that suggests that

those compelled to leave would welcome the opportunity to return, and remote working is a way for them to do that

ORDINANCES FOR THIRD READING:

0-87-21

AN ORDINANCE CLOSING A PORTION OF UNION STREET ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 22, 2021, FOR OHIO UNIVERSITY'S INVOLVEMENT FAIR; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Risner moved for Adoption; Fahl seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-88-21

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 37-21; AUTHORIZING THE 2021 STREET PAVING AND REPAIRS PROJECT (#337). Risner moved for Adoption; Crowl seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-89-21

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING A FIREHOUSE SUBS PUBLIC SAFETY FOUNDATION CRITICAL GRANT AWARD TO THE ATHENS CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT. Grace moved for Adoption; Fahl seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-91-21

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF DUGOUTS FOR FIELDS #1 AND #2 AT THE WEST STATE PARK, PROJECT #341. Grace moved for Adoption; Fahl seconded. Discussion: Risner questioned whether this is the most cost effective way to do this, as opposed to the traditional concrete block dugouts currently at the Park.

Fahl expressed concern with flooding in this area; need to provide flow through.

The Mayor indicated that the view ability of the fields using a cinderblock structure would be obstructed. Fields #1 and #2 lack shade. These shade sails will also provide shade for the scorekeeper. He believes the cantilevered shade will provide a level of shelter from the elements, and they can then be removed and stored at the end of each season.

Crowl questioned that fabric can be easily damaged, as opposed to cinderblock, and asked if that may be part of the reason for removing it at the end of the season.

The Mayor responded that removing them will preserve the lifespan of the sail.

Adoption was approved by a 5/1 vote; with Risner voting in opposition.

0-92-21

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF A DUMP TRUCK FOR THE ENGINEERING & PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT. Grace moved for Adoption; Risner seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

ORDINANCE FOR SECOND READING:

0-93-21

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2021 APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE; AND AUTHORIZING THE AUDITOR TO MAKE AN INTERFUND TRANSFER. Crowl moved for Suspension of the Rules in order to allow the Auditor to post these items to the August financial reports; Fahl seconded. Suspension of the Rules was approved unanimously. Crowl moved for Adoption; Fahl seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING:

0-96-21

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ATHENS CITY CODE SECTION 9.11.10, FACE COVERINGS IN PUBLIC SPACES; AND DECLARING THIS ORDINANCE AN EMERGENCY MEASURE. Grace moved for Suspension of the Rules as it is critical to have this in place as soon as possible; Fahl seconded. Suspension of the Rules was approved unanimously. Grace moved for Adoption; Fahl seconded. Discussion: Fahl pointed out that this can be done under the City's local control for public health and safety. We all need to take care of our children under 12 who cannot yet be vaccinated. "It's a mask, please wear it."

Ziff asked if masking includes while seated at a table in a restaurant.

Grace responded that this amendment does not change that exemption in our City Code. She added, there are spaces that are accessible to and frequented by the public, and then spaces like the kitchen, which falls under the authority of the Athens City-County Health Department.

Crowl appreciates that this change is based on the science, the data; this is a public health decision. He highly recommends getting vaccinated if you are able. Only 44% of Athens County residents are vaccinated, so this issue will be ongoing and masks will be necessary to keep us healthy, and to comply with the guidance of the CDC.

The Mayor reported that this aligns the City with the Athens City School District and Ohio University requirements for face coverings when inside. We all need to do our part to reduce the amount of spread that is happening with the Delta variant. The City-County Health Department is seeing an increase in the number of cases in Athens County.

Ziff believes this Ordinance will help those working in the service industry feel safer, and businesses do not want to have to close again and experience yet another loss of revenue.

Adoption was approved unanimously

0-97-21

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ATHENS CITY CODE TITLE 7, TRAFFIC CODE, CHAPTER 7.05, PARKING REGULATIONS, SECTION 7.09.99(L), PENALTIES.

0-98-21

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACCEPT A SOUTHEAST OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL (SOPEC) COMMUNITY GRANT; AND DIRECTING SAID GRANT TO HAPCAP. Discussion: Crowl noted that this \$40,000 grant will be put toward the purchase of an electric bus for our public transportation system.

0-99-21

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2021 APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE. Discussion: Crowl reported that the City typically uses about 1,200 tons of salt during a calendar year. This \$35,000 would purchase 600 tons of salt which would refill the salt storage as we prepare for winter.

RESOLUTION FOR FIRST READING:

R-12-21

A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE AMOUNTS AND RATES AS DETERMINED BY THE BUDGET COMMISSION; AUTHORIZING THE NECESSARY TAX LEVIES, AND CERTIFYING THEM TO THE COUNTY AUDITOR.

Fahl moved to Adjourn; Ziff seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:10 p.m.

President of Council

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council