

MINUTES
FEBRUARY 13, 2016
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
7:00 p.m.

Council Members in Attendance: Kent Butler
Chris Fahl
Peter Kotses
Patrick McGee
Michele Papai
Jeff Risner

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Horan Moseley

Items Discussed:

- State Centralized Municipal Income Tax Collection
 - Risner – the Auditor has pointed out centralized tax would be detrimental to the City – many municipalities are opposed to this – the City is being charged a 1% administrative fee by the State for something the City is already handling effectively, locally, and doesn't need or want State centralization – he is in favor of the City taking a stand by proposing a resolution of opposition
 - Mayor – projected loss of income would be 1% of \$13 million – supports 100% a resolution in opposition -- this centralization continues to erode home rule – questioned why the City should have to send our taxpayer dollars to Columbus, be charged 1% by the State, only to have the tax turned around and sent back to us quarterly, or whatever time period the State determines to return our tax
 - Papai – the City has an elected Auditor to oversee our tax dollars and questioned whether those returns will be audited at the State level – City will lose control and knowledge – supports resolution
 - Fahl – agrees, reemphasizing that this is not the first hit on home rule
- Immigration Ban
 - Fahl – would like to bring forward a resolution in opposition of the travel ban put in place through an Executive Order by our U.S. President

-Cochran – feels this is an important first step in recognizing the importance of diversity and our freedoms – acknowledged that she has received inquiries as early as November about Athens being designated a “sanctuary” city – there are many interested citizens interested in seeing the Council take a stance for the rights of immigrants and refugees, and to declare protections to those who may be unprotected in many situations

-Butler – at a recent Graduate Student Senate get together with City Council, this issue was paramount – he read a letter from the President of the International Student Union thanking Council for supporting international students on campus

-Mayor – supports a resolution – he, too, has received much communication and held many conversations with citizens registering concern with the President’s Executive Order

-Riser – is in favor of a resolution

-Papai – we are a “welcoming” city; an inclusive city

-Kotses – is pleased that we still have the ability to speak out against such national issues; the root of what our country is founded on

-McGee – supports this resolution, as well as the demonstrators showing their dismay and anger

-John Schmeiding, long-time member of the Athens Community Relations Commission – the Commission met today and discussed this issue, and encourages Council to emphasize our commitment toward inclusion, including immigrants, encourage Council to take a stand against religious intolerance and discrimination, against racial profiling and racism, and against hate speech and threats of violence – in the coming weeks, would like Council to think about the specifics – policies that the City can put into place in order to protect people

-Resident – supports Mr. Schmeiding’s remarks

-Fahl – will continue to work with the Community Relations Commission the Administration, University, and Community groups on policies to continue to make the City of Athens inclusive and protective

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Centralized Tax Collection
2. Immigration Ban

MINUTES FEBRUARY 13, 2017

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Members in Attendance: Jeff Risner, Chair
Chris Fahl, Vice-Chair
Kent Butler, Member

Other Council Members: Jennifer Cochran
Peter Kotses
Patrick McGee
Michele Papai

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Horan Moseley

Items Discussed:

- Prior Year Bill
-Risner – need an appropriation for Athens Transit 4TH Quarter fare box – an estimated \$8500 was set aside in 2016 for the 4th quarter payment – due to increased riders, the invoice for the 4th quarter came in at \$13,628.48 – need to appropriate balance to the 2017 Transportation Fund and authorize prior year expense

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Prior Year Bill

MINUTES
FEBRUARY 13, 2017
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Members in Attendance: Chris Fahl, Chair
Jeff Risner, Vice-Chair
Patrick McGee, Member

Other Council Members: Kent Butler
Jennifer Cochran
Peter Kotses
Michele Papai

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Horan Moseley
Police Chief Pyle

Items Discussed:

- Moore Avenue (request to vacate a section)
 - Shawna Bolin, University Planner – Ohio University requests ownership of Moore Avenue (see attached map, highlighted green space) with the ability to relocate utilities in the area, for the future Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine (HCOM) project – the University’s Comprehensive Master Plan 2016, in a collaborative process between the University and the City, indicates a seeded new Green called the “Union Street Green” which creates a new home for HCOM, envisioning a “Knowledge Corridor” – the current streetway appears to be unmaintained (gravel) and is utilized mostly by pedestrians – the road will be needed to help compensate for the scale of the building – recognize that there are homeowners along the westerly portion of Moore Avenue – there is an unnamed alley that can be accessed from Moore to Union; it would not be a dead end
 - Mayor – City has no utilities along Moore Avenue – AEP does have utilities running overhead, as well as communication provider(s)
 - Bolin – understands it is important for pedestrians to walk through this area, and plan to enhance that
 - Fahl – asked about safety services
 - Mayor – no issues

-Knisely – asked about any net loss/gain of pedestrian access and green space

-Bolin – net gain for pedestrian access and net loss for green space (due to building location), however, overall Master Plan in future phases will replace the current green space back into the overall footprint

-Butler – long-term, this project will enhance the City

-Kotses – asked about future pedestrian connection

-Bolin – will connect from the West Green

-Kotses – asked about parking

-Bolin – will be repurposing the West Union Office Center Building across the Street – HCOM will be utilizing current administrator parking in that area as well as the new parking lot (see attached map), and the HRTC parking lot that is also being repurposed as part of HCOM – shifting from one location to another – parking needs will remain the same

-Papai – asked about pedestrian crossing to the HCOM facility from the parking lot across the street – is a safety issue

-Bolin – will plan the “conceptual” project with this factor in mind – looking at getting closer to roundabout to take advantage of the current crosswalks – she will highlight pedestrian crossing as a City concern in the design process

-Fahl – we are a Tree USA City, and asked to include current heritage trees into that design process

-Bolin – will collaborate on best ways to mitigate

- Parade Permits (ACC 7.04.40)

-Fahl – would like to reduce the time to submit an application to 24 hours in advance, and to also eliminate the application fee

-Mayor – the Mayor, after discussion with the Chief, proposes the application submission be reduced only to 7-days to provide enough time to ensure that adequate staffing can be available, with a clause that with the Chief’s discretion, this time period may be waived – it still allows flexibility

-Chief – indicated that the current ordinance allows no less than 3-weeks’ notice

-Papai – asked if an appeals process is provided

-Chief – yes, noting that he has never denied a parade permit

-Cochran – questioned who can serve as a parade marshal

- Chief – parade organizers use own monitors
- McGee – emphasized the need to have sufficient officers to maintain direction, control, and safety
- Mayor – reinforces the need for planning time in order to have those resources available – mutual aid agreements are also helpful

- President – asked about the payment of costs to the City paid by the sponsor for overtime or equipment
- Chief – have never had a problem not collecting – biggest stumbling block for organizers is the liability insurance, which is very important to the City

- Fahl – noted the Joint Police Advisory Council (JPAC) meets the first Thursday of each month – an opportunity for citizens and students to meet with law enforcement agencies, and to bring forward issues and discuss ideas
- Chief – odd months are held at the City Community Center and even months in Baker University Center

- Sidewalk Violations (ACC 7.03.38, 7.03.39, 7.03.50 and 7.09.99 (G))
 - Fahl – sidewalks in the uptown area need to be safe for pedestrians – some changes are needed to the current prohibition of bicycles, skateboards, etc. to provide clarity

 - Chief – need adequate signage (see attached) proposed slogan “Walk Your Bike, Carry Your Board” – change penalty from a minor misdemeanor criminal violation to an administrative violation – noise and nuisance party have been successful models for the administrative violation – number of citations is down, and voluntary compliance is up – would expand enforcement capabilities to include Parking Enforcement Officers and Code Inspectors – a \$20 citation – violations will increase with milder weather

 - Papai – riders on the sidewalks pose a real safety issue to pedestrians

 - McGee – posted signage is important

 - Kotses – likes the idea of an administrative violation, but need to address other components as well – City should be welcoming to all modes of transportation in our uptown area – feels we have a gaping hole in our infrastructure

 - Cochran – recognizes that this is important for enforcement – for clarity, would like all Code sections to be aligned and consistent
 - Chief – admitted that prohibited areas are confusing

- Mayor – clarified that the prohibition we are discussing is only on sidewalks in the uptown area, not streets – can use Big Belly receptacles for informational signage, which would be larger than a standard size sign – very visible
- Butler – agrees with decriminalization
- Kotses – hopes this program is successful, noting that the uptown area is probably one of the most unfriendly places to ride a bicycle in the street
- Fahl – stressed that this is only one part of the planning process, and the City will continue looking at issues that come forward
- Tenant/Occupant Education Form (ACC 29.03.08.1)
 - Fahl – is requesting to repeal this section of the City Code – this educational tool has been in place since 2005 and is not as successful as was hoped – approximately 75% of tenants do not sign this agreement due to privacy issues – the Code Enforcement Office processes thousands of pages of this agreement annually, and each year it becomes recyclable waste, taking weeks of staff time to shred – believes there are better ways to educate tenants about City regulations that are in place when living in our community
 - Butler – agrees, initially, this form was offered with good intentions to educate young adults of their responsibilities when living off-campus – the form was derived from the Neighborhood Associations with good-will – it has proven to be a waste of money, paper, and time – should think about making this information available through the use of electronic forms and social media sites
 - McGee – noted that the form is out of date, includes out-of-date information
 - Papai – would like to know how these issues will be addressed (occupancy restrictions, front yard parking, trash can placement, litter, accumulation of refuse, noise control, nuisance party, and animal control) if this form is repealed – all very important issues in a neighborhood setting
 - Fahl – this is a failed educational process – need to identify ways to handle this in a different manner – could consider a form that is required to be posted inside rental houses, distribute a pamphlet, or using social media
 - President – Ohio University Off-Campus Housing is in the beginning stages of developing a program to educate students beginning their

freshman year – City should communicate and coordinate endeavors with the Off-Campus Housing office – also, part of the intent of this form was to look at over-occupancy, and she asked if that part has been at all effective

-Fahl – has been told by the Director of Code Enforcement that this is not a tool that can be used for over occupancy – indicated, that typically, his office finds out about occupancy concerns through complaints from neighbors

-Mayor – thinks a one-page informational sheet required to be posted in the rental unit would be ideal

-Fahl – questioned whether signage to be posted in the rental units would be legislative or administrative

-Butler – acknowledged how beneficial it is to educate renters of this information, and suggested using the City Source App, the City's Website, and The Government Channel for information dissemination

-Papai – understands this form is antiquated and causes a lot of administrative headaches – she would just like to see some kind of replacement component – it doesn't have to be complicated

-S-S Director – will work on a replacement method and return to committee for further discussion

- Athens Municipal Arts Commission (amend ACC 3.07.50)
 - Butler – AMAC would like to increase its membership by two – will help generate energy, interest, and disperse some responsibility among members – currently have (5) members, plus the Mayor, and or his designee, as well as a Council Member – requesting (4) members from within the City and (3) outside the corporate limits, plus Mayor and Council representatives
 - Mayor – would like to begin to add term limits to Boards & Commissions
 - McGee – asked if AMAC represents only the visual arts, or does it include musicians
 - Butler – musicians are represented on the Commission

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Moore Avenue (vacation)
2. Parade Permit
3. Sidewalk Violations
4. AMAC

MINUTES
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 13, 2017
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Michele Papai, Chair
Jennifer Cochran, Vice-Chair
Peter Kotses, Member

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Horan Moseley

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Boogie on the Bricks (street closure)
 - Judy Wymer, Even Coordinator, presented the attached information – she recognizes the need to maintain the fire lane, asked if, due to equipment setup, the fire lane could be maintained on the right hand side of the street as opposed to the middle of the street
 - S-S Director – that will have to be determined by the Fire Chief – she will ask that he touch base with Judy in advance of the event

 - Papai – asked if the proposed date of June 17th has been coordinated with other City and Ohio University events
 - Wymer – to her knowledge, there are no other events scheduled for this date

- Us 33 Interchange/East State Street (design)
 - Papai – encouraged Council to review the design plans on their shared drive as well as the Transportation Work Session notes from February 6th – the work session reviewed the timeline, paving schedule, and funding sources – paving of East State from Home Street to the east will begin sometime after July 1st of this year, as well as the north side 33 paving from Columbus Road and ramp paving and reconfiguration to East State – south side 33 dual lane ramps will be completed in 2018 – there will be a new pedestrian signal at Home Street to move pedestrians from the west side of Home Street to the north side of East State where there is a sidewalk – can cross back over near CVS

 - S-S Director – will be reviewing possible utilization of TIF funds for this project to offset part of local share

-Papai – added, a very important part of this project is construction of a sidewalk on the south side of East State from CVS to Lowe's

-Risner – asked about any needed infrastructure improvements

-Papai – conduit for fiber

-Mayor – pedestrian crossings will be at all curb cuts and prominently marked for safety

-Papai – there is not enough space for an island in the middle

-Kotses – will retain the same number of lanes, but the lanes will be narrowed – egress from the former Abrio's will be removed – there will be enhanced bus stops integrated into the design

-Butler – applauds the addition of bike lanes

-Mayor – dual lanes on ramps will be a big improvement

-Cochran – this corridor is important for the neighborhoods in this area – hopes design will slow down traffic, and is pleased with the incorporation of active safe modes of transportation with the sidewalks and bike lanes – neighborhood residents would like continued enforcement until these improvements are completed, as vehicles do travel at a high rate of speed – encouraged outreach to the Far East Side Neighborhood Association, possibly at their upcoming February potluck

-Mayor – emphasized, while not able to include refuge islands in the center of the street, 4-ft.wide bike lanes and a 2-ft. wide gutter will shorten the distance of active travel lanes

-Papai – safety measures are paramount in the design engineering

- East State Street (amend)

-Papai – need to amend 0-77-16 to authorize the Small Cities Grant that was omitted

- North Congress Street Sewer Line Project

-Papai – last Wednesday there was a public meeting – this is an aging infrastructure project

-Mayor – there are likely several cross connections between sanitary and storm in this area, and is a much needed correction – the public forum was well attended by property owners

- Papai – stressed that the cross connection is a problem, and really needs to be resolved

- Mayor – noted that several large Sycamore trees will need to be removed
- S-S Director – tree plantings will be part of the completed project

- Active Transportation, ODOT Seminar
 - Kotses – attended ODOT/Ohio Department of Health seminar – transportation that requires some use of movement to get from point A to point B and includes pedestrians, bicycles, and buses – can help active communities become better – main speaker was from Washington, DC, an engineer and Vice-President of Tool Design Group (a leading design group for complete streets) – complete streets are difficult, as they are multi-layered – all need to work together to make City interactive for all modes of transportation – comments and suggestions are welcome from the public to build a continuing database for future improvement areas

 - Risner – could be added to the City Source app

 - President – good idea – Kotses should speak with TGC Director Scott Thompson

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Boogie on the Bricks (close, noise, vending)
2. Amend 0-77-16
3. North Congress Sewer