

ATHENS CITY COUNCIL: REGULAR SESSION, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2021, 7:00 P.M.

Athens City Council met in Regular Session at the above hour. Due to concerns with COVID-19 the following members met via videoconference: Clodfelter, Crowl, Fahl, Kotses, Grace, Risner and Smedley.

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

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES:

Risner moved approval of the minutes of the Regular Session held February 1, 2021; Fahl seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

COMMUNICATIONS:

President Knisely is in receipt of the following:

- Communication from Molly Fitzgerald, Executive Director of the Economic Development Council, reporting that 69 of the 83 businesses in Athens County have received COVID-19 relief through the Developmental Services Agency.
- Application for a new D5I Liquor Permit to Lt. Pizza Co., LLC, dba Pizza Cottage, 951 East State Street, to allow spirituous liquor for on premises consumption only, beer, wine and mixed beverages for on premises, or off premises in original sealed containers, until 2:30 a.m. for a restaurant meeting certain criteria. Responses from City Council to the Division of Liquor Control must be postmarked no later than March 8, 2021.
- **Councilman Risner** received concerns from a constituent in the 2nd Ward regarding affordable housing within the Ward, as well as Code violations being pursued and inspections being conducted in a timely manner.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Treasurer McClure submitted the City's 2020, 4th Quarter Interest Income report (see attached). The final 2020 total was \$129,247.54, a bit short of the projection of \$187,770.00 due to static interest rates. The City did receive accrued interest of \$43,000.00 in January.

Mayor Patterson reported:

- Received an EPA Notice of Violation at the Waste Water Treatment Plant. The corrective action submitted to EPA is that all five operators of record maintain a Class II license. Currently, four are Class II and one is a Class I.

Risner wished to clarify that this EPA violation is for operational procedure as opposed to a spill or accidental discharge of waste into the Hocking River.

Mayor Patterson responded that is correct. He added, the City has not heard from EPA as to whether additional action will be needed, or if there is any penalty.

- February 18th the Black Summit, Communicating and Creating a Community of Social Justice and Racial Equity, will be held from 6:00-9:00 p.m. Moderators will be Dr. Carolyn Bailey Lewis and Brandon Thompson. Those interested can RSVP at: reggie@communityfoodinitiatives.org
- February 23rd, Coming Together Better: Celebrating Black History Month Within Our Community, will be held at 3:00 p.m. on the Courthouse steps.

ORDINANCES FOR THIRD READING:

0-08-21

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF SOFTENING SALT FOR THE WATER TREATMENT PLANT. Grace moved for Adoption; Fahl seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-09-21

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR TO CLOSE STREETS IN THE UPTOWN AREA FOR SPECIAL EVENTS DURING THE 2021 CALENDAR YEAR, AND TO CHANGE REQUESTED DATES OR CANCEL EVENTS AS NECESSARY. Kotses moved for Adoption; Crowl seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-10-21

AN ORDINANCE SUSPENDING THE ENFORCEMENT OF ATHENS CITY CODE CHAPTER 13.04.10, UNNECESSARY NOISE, IN A DESIGNATED AREA. Kotses moved for Adoption; Crowl seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-11-21

AN ORDINANCE SUSPENDING THE ENFORCEMENT OF ATHENS CITY CODE CHAPTER 11.04, VENDING, PEDDLING AND SOLICITING, TO ALLOW VENDING IN A DESIGNATED AREA. Kotses moved for Adoption; Clodfelter seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING:

0-12-21

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING UNNEEDED OR OBSOLETE MUNICIPAL PERSONAL PROPERTY TO BE SOLD BY INTERNET AUCTION.

0-13-21

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2021 STAFFING LEVELS AUTHORIZED BY ORDINANCE 141-20.

0-17-21

AN ORDINANCE GRANTING A SPECIAL RIGHT-OF-WAY PERMIT TO THE UNIVERSITY ESTATES HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, TO ALLOW A GUARD HOUSE STRUCTURE ON UNIVERSITY ESTATES BOULEVARD AT THE STATE ROUTE 682 ENTRANCE.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING:

0-18-21

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2021 APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE. Crowl moved for Suspension of the Rules so the changes can be posted to the Auditor's February financial reports; Kotses seconded. Suspension of the Rules was approved unanimously. Crowl moved for Adoption; Fahl seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-19-21

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 63-20; CONSTRUCTION AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING OF THE STIMSON AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT (#315).

0-20-21

AN ORDINANCE TO ADVANCE FUNDS FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO THE PARKING GARAGE FUND; AND AMENDING THE 2021 APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE.

0-21-21

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 77-20; REALLOCATING REVENUES FROM THE CITY INCOME TAX; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Crowl moved for Suspension of the Rules in order to allow the

reallocation to apply at the earliest possible time; Fahl seconded. Suspension of the Rules was approved unanimously. Crawl moved for Adoption; Kotses seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-22-21

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE AUDITOR TO REDUCE 2021 APPROPRIATIONS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A SOUND FINANCIAL BUDGET. Crawl moved for Suspension of the Rules to allow the Auditor to take corrective action in the first quarter budget; Smedley seconded. Suspension of the Rules was approved unanimously. Crawl moved for Adoption; Risner seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-23-21

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 120-20; AUTHORIZING THE ARTS/WEST FIBER BROADBAND PROJECT (#334). Discussion: Clodfelter understands that ARTS/West is struggling financially under the pandemic and questioned authorizing this additional expenditure from that budget.

Mayor Patterson confirmed that the money is there to appropriate.

0-24-21

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DESIGN AND INSTALLATION OF A GENERATOR TO SERVE BOTH THE CITY BUILDING AND THE LAW ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, PROJECT (#336).

0-25-21

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A CONTRACT WITH THE WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Discussion: The Mayor noted that this contract is predicated upon the availability of space. Jail space is an ongoing challenge that has only been exacerbated by the pandemic.

Grace agrees, available space in our regional jail has been an issue for years.

4. Resolution for First Reading:

R-04-21

A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING DEPOSITORIES FOR ACTIVE MONIES FOR DEPOSIT IN PUBLIC DEPOSITORIES PURSUANT TO OHIO REVISED CODE CHAPTER 135; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Crawl moved for Suspension of the Rules in that the depository designations, as per the ORC, must be in place by March 1st; Fahl seconded. Suspension of the Rules was approved unanimously. Crawl moved for Adoption; Clodfelter seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OTHER BUSINESS:

Smedley announced that Athens County is now under a Level 3 Snow Emergency.

President Knisely explained this means the roads are closed, except to emergency personnel.

Risner moved to Accept the Auditor's January, 2021 financial reports; Clodfelter seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

Risner moved approval of a recent AMAC recommendation to extend the current Poet Laureate Wendy McVicker's term by 11 months, from January 31, 2022 to December 31, 2022; Clodfelter seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

President Knisely noted the wonderful job Poet Laureate McVicker has been doing for the City.

Crowl commented that he is very lucky to live across the street from Wendy, as she often times writes poetry on the sidewalk in front of her home.

Clodfelter has also seen her poetry on the sidewalk, noting that it can really make a person's day.

Smedley expressed appreciation to Ms. McVicker for her ability to adjust to the time, as she has done a lot of virtual programming during the pandemic. Hopefully this extension will give her an opportunity do more in-person venues as things begin to transition back to normal.

Mayor Patterson added, the City's second poet laureate Kari Gunter-Seymour is currently the State Poet Laureate. For being one of the few cities in the state that has an official poet laureate, ours appear to be knocking it out of the park.

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

Chad Kister, Bessemer Road, Nelsonville, Ohio, requested additional information about the spill in the Hocking River.

Mayor Patterson clarified that there is no spill, the violation was simply procedural.

Jen Parsons, Executive Director of the Ohio Valley Museum of Discovery (OVMOD) and Sara Hartman, Co-Founder and current Co-President of the Museum's Board, provided the City Council with an update and exciting developments about the museum.

Parsons shared that OVMOD has a vision to create a new, hands-on interdisciplinary experience for all ages that will ignite the imagination and inspire

creativity. OVMOD is a non-profit discovery museum. Programs feature playful, hands-on STEAM-based (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) learning.

Hartman noted that the museum was founded in 2006 by a group of community leaders concerned about the social and economic struggles of our region's youth. The museum has offered programming in public schools, at local festivals, and in collaboration with other community organizations. In 2011 OVMOD moved into donated space in the Market on State, allowing the museum to grow. In the last year the museum focused on being an educational resource for school partners and families throughout the region.

Parsons explained that during the pandemic the museum launched all of its summer camps online, thanks to support from the Athens County Foundation. They received funding from the Association of Science and Technology Centers to shift their popular discovery lab makerspace youth program to online, meeting with middle and high school students, via ZOOM, throughout the summer.

Hartman shared that a permanent home has been secured for the museum at 67 Columbus Road. The new space will allow for the installation of interactive exhibits, each one infused with a STEAM component and collaborative programming. To realize the museum's vision in this permanent space they are excited to have received an allocation of \$200,000 through State Capital Funding.

Parsons believes OVMOD will draw visitors to the City by filling an indoor, family-centered entertainment void that will complement the many outdoor experiences the region has to offer.

Hartman closed by saying that all of this is possible because of the generous support of our community. Information on OVMOD can be found at www.ovmod.org and on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Smedley asked about the timeline for the redevelopment of the new facility.

Hartman responded that renovations could start quite soon with the contribution from the State funding.

At approximately 8:00 p.m. President Knisely adjourned the meeting.

President of Council

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council