

# **MINUTES**

## **CITY & SAFETY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

### **MAY 9, 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

#### **ITEMS DISCUSSED:**

- New Fire Headquarters (authorization for final design)
  - McCarey – request to appropriate (\$600,000) to General Fund, Fire, and authorize (\$670,000) to capture all costs, to date, associated with Project #346 – also, authorize repayment to the General Fund of these advanced funds from (\$9,000,000) bonds to be issued
  - Swank – asked if the headquarters has already been designed, or does this legislation authorize completing the design
  - Mayor – this will be the detailed, final design
  - Swank – if someone wanted to offer comment on the design, asked about the best way to do that
  - Mayor – suggested reaching out to the EPW Director or Fire Chief
  - Spjeldnes – important to assure community that the floodplain issue has been fully addressed and will not be a problem
  - McCarey – as part of the design, asked about the need of a sound barrier for the near neighborhood, as well as any proposed community art for this project
  - Spjeldnes – understands that sirens will be used only when there is traffic
  - Crowl – has heard concern about traffic coming of highway at a high rate of speed – pointed out that ODOT has plans to reconfigure the 33/Stimson overpass by constructing a roundabout that will reduce the speed onto Stimson
- Disposal of Kubota Mower (EPW)
  - McCarey – EPW would like to dispose of a mower acquired in 2013, used by the Water Treatment Plant – this would be a trade-in of (\$3,000) on a new mower

#### **ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:**

1. Fire Headquarters Design
2. Disposal

**MINUTES  
MAY 9, 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

**Items Discussed:**

- Pay to Stay (a program to address evictions)
  - Ziff – this program is to create a safeguard for renters facing eviction – Ohio is only 1 of 5 states (along with Louisiana, Missouri, and the Dakotas) that can evict a tenant who is one day late paying rent – this program would allow the tenant, until the time of eviction, to pay all back rents and late fees to stay – understands there is a judge in Cincinnati currently refusing to uphold this type of legislation, claiming it is unconstitutional in the State of Ohio – the following is a quote from Zach Frye, a staff attorney at the Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati, “Typically, when we’re talking about a law being enforced, or not, there’s got to be a legal challenge to it, or some case or controversy before the court that decides that issue. That didn’t happen here.” Another quote from Debra Lavey, a Senior Attorney with the Advocates for Basic Legal Equality in Dayton, “The idea that pay to stay could contradict State law is surprising to her, and essentially pay to stay just codifies an equity defense that already exists in Ohio law in landlord/tenant cases that basically says that if a tenant can make a landlord whole then they should be able to stay at their property.” – Ziff believes this will provide good, equitable care to the citizens of Athens
  - Swank – quoted Mayor Nan Whaley of Dayton, “You think about what [eviction] does to kids, they move around, they don’t have access to quality housing, so trying to get stabilization for families, particularly our Black families, is really important.” – this is a policy in the right direction, to protect children – spoke with

a landlord who expressed concern with repeat offenders – Swank doesn't think that will happen on a regular basis

-Crowl – supports

-Spjeldnes – heard a concern about the loss to the landlord – suggested that it might be helpful if the tenant would be required to send notification to the landlord that payment will be late, and reason – relevant to note that she went through the process with the Clerk of Courts – as part of the process the landlord has to give the tenant a 3-day notice for non-payment, then landlord must file for a hearing and there will be attorney fees, both costs to the landlord – in 2022 it took, on average, 20 days to get a hearing – is supportive

-tenant on west side, North Shafer, representing the United Athens County Tenants (UACT), presented the attached letter

-Spjeldnes – would like to define “reasonable” late fees

## **ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:**

1. Pay to Stay

# MINUTES: MAY 9, 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  
Auditor Hecht

### ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- New Fire Headquarters (bond)
  - Crowl – the City’s public safety capital improvements levy was passed by voters – bonds will be issued, not to exceed (\$9,000,000), for financing the costs of constructing a new fire station, making site improvements, and acquiring furniture, equipment and furnishings, and site location
  - Mike Burns, Managing Director, Public Finance, Robert W. Baird & Co., Inc. – discussed interest rate trends as of May, 2022 (see attached) – although higher interest rates may be good for the economy, they are bad for a bond issue – need to get to the market quickly – overall, interest rates are still low, it’s a good time to borrow – potential financing structures (see attached) – even with the interest rate hike, the City is still in a very good position moving forward with this project – expecting another ½ percent increase in June and a ¼ to ½ percent later this year – preliminary financing schedule (see attached) – lock-in interest rates on June 28<sup>th</sup> for the duration of the bonds
  - Risner – asked whether expediting Council readings would be helpful
  - Burns – good idea, but not necessary – process is lengthy, biggest time constraint is preparing a preliminary official disclosure statement, and finalizing the rating presentation
  - Swank – agrees, adoption sooner rather than later would be best – in less than 8 weeks the rates have gone up 60% -- asked if local community members can purchase bonds
  - Burns – yes, any local resident or bank is given first option – it is low yield
  - Mayor – asked if bond rating might be downgraded
  - Burns – believes the City’s AA2 rating will be retained
- Appropriations
  - (\$10,000.00) to Athens Enhancement Fund, for the Athens Arts & Music Festival
    - Swank – asked about the Athens Enhancement Fund
    - Mayor – this is revenue received from the Athens Station lease agreement, not local taxpayer dollars
    - Crowl – this is a chance to support the arts

- (\$500.00) to General Fund, Law Director, for a computer

**ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:**

1. Bond
2. Appropriations

# **MINUTES TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MAY 9, 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

- Small City Program Funds (grant application)
  - Risner – request to authorize submission of an application and agreement for construction award during the State Fiscal Year 2026 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026) for a Columbus Road improvements project – application deadline is June 15<sup>th</sup>
  - Mayor – this project opportunity will include sidewalks/curbs, bike lanes – will improve this final gateway into the City

## **ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:**

1. Small City Program Funds