

MINUTES
CITY & SAFETY SERVICES COMMITTEE
JUNE 10, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Chris Fahl, Vice-Chair
Sarah Grace, Member

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Pro Tem Butler
Mayor Patterson

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Athens Public Transit (bus disposal)
-President Pro-Tem – a request has been made to dispose of a bus that has no working transmission, the air-conditioning does not work, and it will not run due to the throttle body needing replaced – HAPCAP is suggesting that this vehicle be sent directly to a scrap yard
- Franklin Avenue (sanitary sewer repair)
-President Pro Tem – the Administration is seeking an appropriation of (\$45,000) for emergency sanitary sewer repairs on Franklin for the permanent repair of the existing failing 6-inch clay line to stop collapse of the hillside from sink holes
- College Street (sanitary sewer repair)
-President Pro Tem – the Administration is seeking an appropriation of (\$47,000) for emergency sanitary sewer repairs on College for the permanent repair of the lining of the existing failing 8-inch clay line to stop collapse of the street from sink holes (this is the 3rd sinkhole in 2019)
-Mayor – this is an older line and is quite deep – will repair with a cast sleeve liner that alleviate the problem
- Columbia Avenue (sewer repair)
-President Pro Tem – Administration has indicated that this Columbia line is a major effort – the line failure is due to a major slip on private property (the City has a narrow easement for the sewer) – this repair has been approved by FEMA for (\$40,000) in reimbursement as long as the work is completed by mid-October – the cost of the repair is estimated to be much higher (\$350,000) – City is appealing to FEMA requesting a higher amount – if FEMA does not agree, the City will not conduct the major repair at this time, but will instead continue to conduct point repairs when the sewer line fails again

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Bus Disposal
2. Franklin Avenue Sewer
3. College Street Sewer

MINUTES
June 10, 2019
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
7:00 P.M.

Council Members in Attendance: Samuel Crowl
Chris Fahl
Sarah Grace
Peter Kotses
Patrick McGee
Jeff Risner

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Pro Tem Butler
Mayor Patterson

Item Discussed:

- University Estates Development & TIF Agreement
 - President Pro Tem – this is still under review by legal counsel

 - Fahl – this TIF will not impact school financing – will be used to allow the developer to build the infrastructure needed to develop approximately 50, 2 and 3-bedroom affordable housing units – the 3-bedroom units will incorporate principles of universal design – within the TIF agreement there is language stating that concepts of cluster design, zero energy, and solar readiness will be incorporated – the development will be required to go through the City Planning Commission for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) and a recommendation to City Council that will include public hearings and final legislation

 - Mayor – this TIF is a 10-year, 75% capture of increased property valuation to construct public infrastructure which can be cost prohibitive to developers – this is a mechanism of generating revenue to help stimulate that, and could become a model for other developable properties – can help achieve our goal of providing more affordable housing

 - Kotses – questioned when in the process would the City take ownership of those public rights-of-way, and what kind of discussion has taken place with the current neighborhood in that area
 - Fahl – discussion with the neighborhood area is geared to happen during the PUD process
 - Mayor – the City will have oversight during the design and will accept the infrastructure upon completion to City standards

-Fahl – noted that President Knisely questioned putting a time limit on the rental of a unit before it is sold, and why the covenants do not apply during the rental period

-Crowl – the agreement states that the developer agrees to complete the development in accordance with the City's Affordable Housing Commission goals which include, but are not limited to, incorporate concepts of cluster design, zero energy, and solar readiness – he asked for clarification, what we're asking of the developer is not very specific

-Fahl – that discussion will be more in depth during the PUD process

-Kotses – questioned up to \$220,000 being affordable housing

-Grace – that is a price range that has been identified in multiple studies in looking at housing needs in Athens and the surrounding area – it fills a gap that is not currently being met in a price range of \$120,000 to \$220,000 – the \$220,000 is a price cap

-President Pro Tem – the original vision of the University Estates development was that it would offer a wide range of housing needs – the area currently has apartments, condominiums, and upscale residential housing – this development falls into that vision

- Compost Program

-President Pro-Tem – the curbside composting pilot project ends June 30th – if there is a desire to see it continue there would need to be a fee charged to those participating

-Risner – if it is continued as an opt-in program, those participating would likely have to pay a fee that could be as high as \$18 per month – the City's Garbage Fund cannot continue to pay for curbside composting without a fee for the service – the Garbage Fund continues to decline in revenue and could see a deficit in another two years if rates are not increased – at this time, he does not see how the City can sustain this program with any lower fee

-McGee – is in favor of composting, but has maintained all along that citizens should be encouraged and educated on composting in their own backyard

-Crowl – questioned whether this would be an opt-in program, and what the baseline cost would be for those choosing to participate

-Mayor – believes it should be an opt-in program – understands City Council needs to see the data from the pilot project – an increase in householders wanting to curbside compost would drive down the cost to each customer – suggested extending the pilot to allow Rural Action time to put together a presentation

-Grace – it's important to know, of those customers taking part in the pilot, whether they are interested in paying for the service, and how much they would be willing to pay

-Kotses – is concerned that information from the pilot has not yet been received with the pilot deadline only three weeks away – this should have been addressed much earlier

-Risner – agrees with Kotses, this pilot has been in place just short of a year – believes the pilot should end on June 30 – Rural Action needs to present the pilot data to City Council

-Grace – agrees, the pilot project should end, however, there is still the possibility to implement a new opt-in program if there is sufficient interest

-Fahl – also shares Kotses' concern with last minute decision-making – it is not good for the Council or the City

-Rob Delach, Morris Avenue – he has participated in the pilot project – agrees with McGee in educating residents to backyard compost – he is not personally interested in backyard composting, but is willing to pay to have it picked up curbside – noted that the Athens Hocking Recycling Center (AHRC) included curbside composting as part of its bid package – City needs to weigh its options -- encouraged continuation of a permanent program, not the pilot – thinks \$18 per month is high, suggested \$10

-Risner – likes the idea of composting, but it has to pay for itself – he cannot emphasize enough that the City simply does not have the money to subsidize it

MINUTES
FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
June 10, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Jeff Risner, Chair
Sam Crowl, Member
Peter Kotses, Member

Administrators and/or

Other Elected Officials: President Pro Tem Butler
Mayor Patterson

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Appropriations/Transfers
-Risner – request to transfer (\$47,000) from the Sewer Plant Fund to the Sewer Maintenance Fund for the College Street sanitary sewer improvements addressed earlier this evening, and to appropriate (\$3,000) to the Water Fund to add safety lights, utility cap, bed liner and rust proofing to the new water meter truck

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Appropriations/Transfers

MINUTES
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
JUNE 10, 2019
7:00 p.m.

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

Administrators and/or

Other Elected Officials: President Pro Tem Butler
Mayor Patterson

Items Discussed:

- Downtown Redevelopment Districts (DRD's amendment)
 - Fahl – need to amend Ordinance 60-18 to remove parcel 15

 - Grace – asked which DRD is needing amended
 - Fahl – 234 West Washington

 - Mayor – the Ohio Department of Taxation has granted the Depot DRD – will likely grant the 234 West Washington DRD upon removal of this parcel – the Sheltering Arms DRD is more challenging and has not yet been granted

 - McGee – asked how many DRD's the City has
 - Mayor – these are the only (3) that have been requested – also, the Ohio Department of Taxation informed the City of Athens that it is the first City in Ohio to get this far in the process of having active Downtown Redevelopment Districts

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. DRD Amendment

MINUTES
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
JUNE 10, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Peter Kotses, Chair
Patrick McGee, Vice-Chair
Sam Crowl, Member

Administrators and/or

Other Elected Officials: President Pro Tem Butler
Mayor Patterson

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Countywide Transportation Sales Tax (presentation)
 - Jessie Schmitzer, HAPCAP Mobility Manager – presented a proposed Transportation Levy to move Athens County, 5-10-year plan – idea is for this to be a whole encompassing transportation initiative for the entire county – she will be holding 16 public forums in June; (2) in the City to discuss how this sales tax will be used – a countywide survey was taken to collect data: the number one priority expressed by the residents was the need for fixed route services; followed by enhanced door-to-door services with accessible vehicles (Athens on Demand had to turn away 670 people last year, 113 of those in wheelchairs); and extension of service hours – explained that GoBus is to connect rural areas with urban centers, with (5) stops in the County (2) in Athens, (1) in Albany, (1) in Nelsonville, and (1) in Coolville – Athens Public Transit (APT) is our fixed route provider – the current route is sustainable at approximately \$1.5 million, but cannot expand without additional funding – a 6-month pilot was initiated to collect data that will connect Albany and Nelsonville to the line – if successful, the community must still provide a 50% match – to operate this line is approximately \$190,000 annually, so County would need to fund about \$95,000 – Athens currently has a 7% sales tax – proposing an additional .25% (on a \$30 purchase this would add approximately .06 cents)
 - McGee – asked about a fixed route schedule for the proposed expansion, adding that buses seem underutilized, and questioned whether residents are being turned away because they can't get on a list, or if it is just certain instances that Athens On Demand cannot pick them up
 - Schmitzer – the new line being proposed from Albany to Nelsonville will have a bus stop every hour starting around 6:45 a.m. – last year the buses served about 500,000 riders, with only 10-20% being students; it is mostly utilized by residents – riders were turned away from On Demand simply for lack of capacity on any given day; there is no list
 - Crowl – asked how much this .025% levy will provide annually
 - Schmitzer – the estimate is \$900,000 to a million dollars per year

-Kotses – asked, looking forward, what federal and state funding might look like and whether the levy will be used to fill a funding gap, or is it to expand the system

-Schmitzer – likely a little of both – a close eye is being kept on the ODOT funding – this levy could ultimately be our public transportation lifeline, may be a fail safe

-Mayor – not only is this expansion needed to assist residents in getting to their jobs, but also for those in the County to receive specialized medical care that is largely within the City, to attend educational classes at Ohio University and Hocking College; it is a quality of life transportation line – there are so many advantages in moving this forward – encouraged Athens residents to attend the public forums being held at the Athens Public Library on June 17, the first at 10:00 a.m. and the later one at 5:30 p.m.

-President Pro Tem– agrees, that with Athens being the County seat and the location of many public services it is important that public transportation be offered

-Grace – asked who will make the decisions on how the tax proceeds will be spent

-Schmitzer – the County Commissioners – HAPCAP will have a voice and can be an advocate

- Complete Streets

-Kotses – is bringing this forward to discuss the language in the section on “Exceptions” – he has no problem with the proposed language that provides that the exceptions will be determined by the Service-Safety Director

-Crowl – does not have a concern with exceptions being made by the Service-Safety Director, but would like him to provide justification for the exception in an annual report – the exception should be public knowledge and he sees no reason not to ask for that to be provided – believes the Ordinance is lacking that piece – is just asking for transparency on the reasoning behind when an exception is made

-President Pro Tem – believes accountability is needed, and yet doing it in an efficient manner

-Kotses – don’t want to cloud the process by spending additional time and effort in defense of what is a good project

-Rob Delach, Morris Avenue – what the proposed language is missing is the documentation of exceptions; agrees it should be transparent and made publicly available