

MINUTES
CITY & SAFETY SERVICES COMMITTEE
AUGUST 12, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Kent Butler, Chair
Sarah Grace, Member

Administrators and/o
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Auditor Hecht

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- JPAC Barbeque (street closing)
 - Grace – JPAC is the Joint Police Advisory Council, an organization that works to bring together student/community members – this event is a casual, non-confrontational setting to meet with members of our local law enforcement – the streets being closed are Park Place, West Mulberry Street, and a portion of Court Street on Wednesday, September 18 with a rain date set for Thursday, September 19, from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. – actual event time is 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
 - President – expressed the importance of community involvement

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. JPAC Street Closing

MINUTES
August 12, 2019
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
7:00 P.M.

Council Members in Attendance: Kent Butler
Sam Crowl
Sarah Grace
Peter Kotses
Patrick McGee
Jeff Risner

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Auditor Hecht

Item Discussed:

- 2020 Census Briefing
 - Aaron Dages, Partnership Specialist, Regional Census Center – see attached presentation

 - Risner – noted the low response area indicated on the map is almost exclusively Ohio University dormitories – asked about the University’s census involvement
 - President Knisely – agrees that the University/student involvement is essential from the very beginning as part of the Complete Count Committee (CCC)
 - Dages – indicated that County Commissioner Chmiel has already reached out to Ohio University, and he will also be working with University officials

 - McGee – questioned whether students claim their residency here in Athens or at their permanent residence in a different county
 - Dages – the census is very clear the individual is counted where he/she resides 51% of the time

 - Mayor – asked about group quarters
 - Dages – the operations side of the Bureau will be working directly with Ohio University on group quarter counts – they will work to make sure every student is counted

 - Crowl – asked if there is any way to get the permanent population count in the City of Athens

-Dagres – from the Bureau’s standpoint the count is the population, students are considered individuals within your community, using City services
-Crowl – the answer really matters in terms of prospective businesses coming into the area
-Dagres – understands – businesses and the public sector have to plan for the ebb and flow of the transient student population

- Housing Regulations (amend penalties)

-Risner – this is regarding abandoned and nuisance properties – the current penalties are not sufficient to actually motivate corrective action with property repairs – the new penalties will begin with a first time offense as a minor misdemeanor, a second offense within a 2-year period will be a misdemeanor of the fourth degree, a third offense within a 2-year period will be a misdemeanor of the third degree, and a fourth offense within a 2-year period will be a misdemeanor of the second degree, and each calendar day such violation continues shall constitute a separate and complete offense

-Mayor – it is very difficult to get some property owners to come into compliance – he feels that the proposed increased penalties will be helpful

-Butler – believes this change will help improve properties on the West side that have been neglected

-Kotses – asked about the time frame between first, second, third and fourth offenses

-Grace – too, questioned how much time the property owner is given in order to correct a violation before a second offense can reasonably be issued

-Mayor – will report back on the code section outlining the timeline to correct a violation

-McGee – asked about penalties for snow/ice removal violations

-Risner – snow/ice removal would be a different section of the code requiring separate legislation

-President – removal of ice and snow is ACC Section 9.12.19

-Mayor – shared that this idea came from attending the International Town Gown Association

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Housing Regulations

MINUTES
FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
August 12, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Jeff Risner, Chair
Kent Butler, Vice-Chair
Sam Crowl, Member
Peter Kotses, Member

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Auditor Hecht

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Appropriations/Transfers
 - Risner – the following appropriations have been requested:

\$20,000 to the Street Fund for dead and dying tree removal;
\$65,000 to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Revolving Loan Fund for the demolition of condemned, unsafe houses; and
\$500.00 to the Garbage Fund to process refunds

-Auditor – explained that this particular CDBG Fund is program income used for low-moderate income housing improvements – the Service-Safety Director has requested the use of these funds for this purpose, and is awaiting approval – the landowner can then be assessed the cost of the demolition through property taxes, but that process is through a 10-year assessment

-Mayor – noted that blighted properties are a legitimate use of the CDBG funds
- Staffing (amend)
 - Risner – a request has been made by the Administration to add the position of Head Landscaper; to authorize a pay increase for certain employees; and amending the non-union pay grades as needed – understands the Auditor has some concerns

-Auditor – understands that with a recent retirement the Service-Safety Director would like to shift duties to other employees and not replace that position in order to save the City money – these requested changes are to make those adjustments – while she is not opposed to this, the City implemented a new Compensation Plan in 2016 – this Plan initiated a process for these types of changes, that she feels need to be followed – this would include new job

descriptions with justification for the pay raises – noted that raises for employees being promoted are only 5%, not the 10% or 15% being proposed

-Risner – agrees, the requested duty changes are significantly changing the positions

-Auditor – the responsibilities are much greater, and they should be reviewed as to whether a new pay grade would be needed

-Risner – the 2016 Compensation Plan was put together with the idea that these kinds of situations would be few and far between – need to follow through with a review of the changed responsibilities

-Auditor – it would be fairer to the employees involved

-Mayor – will provide job descriptions

-Risner – the 2016 Plan has a 3-5-year review period – a general review needs to happen, and he is amenable to getting that underway

-Mayor – would like to wait until next year

-President – suggested that the change in positions now being discussed take place as soon as all information has been provided – no need to delay this for the entire evaluation next year

-Auditor – agrees, the whole plan needs to be reviewed, but the process that is already in place is suitable to address these requests

- Income Tax (delinquent debt collection)

-Auditor – requested Council authorize entering into an agreement with the Ohio Office of the Attorney General to collect our delinquent taxes – the City will still continue to send certified delinquency letters with response deadlines in place – those who either don't pay or cannot be located will then be forwarded to the State Attorney General for collection – there is no cost to the City; the Attorney General's Office will charge an additional 10% on top of the amount owed for their services – added, the State Auditor expects the City to collect on unpaid debts

- Accepting the Amounts and Rates Determined by the Budget Commission

-Auditor – the County Budget Commission sets the rates for the inside millage for property taxes, and the City must accept those amounts and rates through legislation

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Appropriations/Transfers
2. Delinquent Debt Collection
3. General Property Tax Rates

MINUTES
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
AUGUST 12, 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 Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Auditor Hecht

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Street Paving & Repairs (amend 0-32-19)
 - Kotses – annual paving will take place in the fall – the project remains the same with all streets on the list to be paved – the proposed amendment is simply to reallocate the funds – some monies from larger infrastructure will be unencumbered at this time and replaced with tax dollars collected later this year
 - Auditor – reiterated that this is simply a cash flow issue – tax money comes in regularly, which is the main source of revenue for street projects – by the end of the year all reallocated funds will be returned to those projects
 - Crowl – noted that the total amended amount is \$48,000 less, and asked if certain streets have been cut from the paving list
 - Mayor – does not believe the primary list has been cut
 - Crowl – questioned whether the Ohio University paving would be done before school starts – is concerned about South Green Drive, a major artery for student move-in
 - Mayor – unsure of the timeframe
 - Kotses – will provide clarification on the decrease in the project cost, the streets to be paved, and the timeline for Ohio University paving

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Amend Street Paving & Repairs