

**MINUTES
CITY & SAFETY SERVICES COMMITTEE
AUGUST 22, 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
Service-Safety Director Stone

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Soccer Field Improvements
S-S Director – the City is improving a permanent soccer site that will be leased from Ohio University on West State Street – the southeast corner is very low and lays in water – City has current funding to fill the area with approximately 400 cubic yards of soil and replant this fall, however, funds are needed to improve the storm line and drains – approximately \$25,000 will need to be appropriated from 273, T.C. 500 – hope is that it will be playable in the spring – there are both storm and sanitary lines in the area – this request is specifically for storm, to ensure proper drainage

- Crowl – shared there was concern expressed by the soccer community about the ponding, and some stench – understands that was not sanitary sewage related, that it turned out to be stagnant rainwater

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Soccer Field

MINUTES
AUGUST 22, 2022
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
7:00 P.M.

Council Members in Attendance:

Sarah Grace
Solveig Spjeldnes
Alan Swank
Ben Ziff

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials:

President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Stone

Items Discussed:

- Solid Waste & Recycling (amend ACC Title 5)
 - S-S Director – provided an overview – the amended language brings solid waste and recycling together in our City Code, combining Sections 5.02 and 5.05 into the same chapter since they are interrelated activities – additionally, the licensing requirements will change – the license allows haulers to collect inside the City – will introduce a mechanism whereby licensed haulers must offer recycling services in working toward the goal of recycling at multi-unit housing complexes
 - Swank – added, containers must be off the street by 7:00 p.m. on the day of collection – container size or standardized containers are still being discussed – 5.02.01, rates, will be handled by separate ordinance – ultimate goals are equity and diverting waste from the landfill thereby reducing the City’s carbon footprint
 - Spjeldnes – asked for clarification of recycling in multi-unit housing – may need to incentivize owners to participate – would like to see it as a requirement
 - S-S Director – comes down to assigning cost and enforcement – needs additional analysis
 - President – will be a long-term process, Voinovich School continues to research
 - Swank – would like to roll out at the same time as the new contract in July 2023
 - Spjeldnes – hopes new complexes will be required to recycle

- Fire Station (land acquisition)
 - President – noted that Council Members Crawl and McCarey, as employees of Ohio University, would be recusing themselves from discussion and voting on upcoming legislation

-President – Ohio University approved a resolution for the sale of approximately 10.6 acres of land on Stimson Avenue to the City – the City would then be allowed to develop up to 3 acres to build a fire station, and maintain approximately 6 acres as green space that will be accessible by the public, including University students – the University will reserve the right to develop up to 1-acre of the remaining green space for the purpose of building a connected police station as an extension of the fire station – will retain a right-of-way along the northwestern edge of the land, and will have a right of reversion, at the purchase price, if the City does not commence construction of a fire station within 5 years – estimated value of the land is \$350,000 to \$550,000 (see attached)

-Spjeldnes – asked about the timeline for approval by DAS

-S-S Director – DAS must approve both the appraiser and the appraisal – added, that restrictions will be placed on the warranty deed as covenants – these land restrictions will force down the appraised value of the land – the Athens Soccer Association will be partnering with the Arts, Parks & Recreation Department to use this recreation land for fall soccer – the administration will be asking for legislation to appropriate funds and authorize purchase of the land at the appraised value for a cost not to exceed \$600,000 (a legal description and metes and bounds map will be attached to the ordinance)

-Swank – noted that the appraised value in May was \$2.11 million – appreciates the University's acknowledgement that the City provides fire service to their property – questioned the University's resolution that states the City would be allowed to develop up to 3 acres of the "leased" land

-S-S Director – clarified that "leased" is a clerical error, left in at the time there was discussion of leasing the land – also, the earlier appraised value of \$2.11 million was the County Auditor's valuation – University had no reason to challenge it, as the land is tax exempt

-Swank – asked if the time schedule would be workable with 3-readings of upcoming legislation

-S-S Director – responded that it will – geotechnical borings are moving forward – should have in place a right of entry in October to start receiving soil from the ODOT US50-33 site to be used as fill dirt for the project – added, this will not disrupt the fall soccer season

-Mayor – there will soon be equipment at the location doing geotech site drilling

-Spjeldnes – asked about the timeline for operation of the new fire station

-S-S Director – hopefully by winter of 2023-24, contingent upon the construction market

-Rob Delach, Morris Avenue – asked about restrictions on the undeveloped property

-Mayor – the restriction applies only to building structures – can place benches – may explore a low bridge to protect the bike path during flood events
-Delach – an alternative to a low bridge would be the alternate route that is the old right of way behind the levee, which is a much-needed connection

-Delach – asked about the requested easement by Ohio University, the old railroad right-of-way

-S-S Director – the University would need access to the back portion of the property should their police station be built at the site

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Solid Waste & Recycling
2. Fire Station

MINUTES: AUGUST 22, 2022

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Members in Attendance:

Sam Crowl, Chair
Solveig Spjeldnes, Member
Ben Ziff, Member

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials:

President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Stone

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Appropriation
 - \$14,500 to General Fund, Mayor, to cover City's PERS contribution through year-end
 - Swank – asked about the reason for this appropriation
 - S-S Director – he recently made his OPERS contribution for time during 2020-21 that he was mobilized and deployed to the Middle East – this additional funding is to cover the City's contribution for that time

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Appropriation

MINUTES

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

AUGUST 22, 2022

Members in Attendance:

Sarah Grace, Chair
Sam Crowl, Member
Micah McCarey, Member
Solveig Spjeldnes, Member

Administrators and/or Other Elected Officials:

President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Stone

Items Discussed:

- Rental Dwelling, Short Term Rental, and Housing Permit (amend ACC, rental permit required)
 - Grace – a change is requested by Code Director Riggs to remove “~~for a period of more than six months during any single calendar year~~” from our City Code – current language has created a loophole within our permitting process
 - S-S Director – this is specifically for short term rentals – there have been several compliance issues, making it difficult to enforce – the City has roughly 12 properties permitted for short term rentals – the City’s monitoring software shows about 20 short term rentals that are functioning within the City
 - Spjeldnes – asked for clarification on the last sentence, “Nontraditional (long-term) rentals in hotels and motels are not excluded”.
 - S-S Director – will check with Code Enforcement for clarification
 - Swank – asked if this change will require that all short term rentals be permitted
 - S-S Director – yes, it should – this language would remove the barrier
 - Swank – asked about any increase in the Transient Guest taxes paid to the City
 - Mayor – will check with the Auditor’s Office and provide that amount
 - Rob Delach, Morris Avenue – asked how this would affect University sabbaticals
 - S-S Director – can look into an option for that, if needed
 - Grace – agrees, this could create a barrier – would like to look at options

- Shade Tree Commission (STC)
 - Ziff – STC would like to submit an application for an urban canopy grant through the USDA Forest Service to plant more trees in the City right-of-way that would be owner maintained – can apply for up to \$25,000, with a 50/50 match
 - Spjeldnes – with environmental issues and climate change, having lots of trees is beneficial – however, trees can undermine sidewalks – would like to keep that in mind with these plantings
 - Ziff – will definitely keep that in mind
 - Crowl – care of the trees by the property owners is also important
 - Ziff – STC will provide basic care instructions to each property owner receiving a tree
 - President – pointed out that the grant evaluation criteria asks for proof of a community tree care ordinance – she questioned if the City has that
 - S-S Director – believes the City’s STC and Landscaping Regulations would suffice for grant eligibility
 - Spjeldnes – suggested coordinating this program for use in incentivizing property owners who need to repair their sidewalk with the offer a free tree
 - Delach – questioned regulations covering the removal of trees in the City right-of-way
 - President – should contact the City Administration to request removal
- Title 49, Special Right-of-Way Permit (for a pylon sign at 603 W. Union)
 - Grace – sign request is from Athens Uptown Realty
 - Swank – asked about the height of the sign, concerned about visibility, line of site with vehicles exiting onto Union Street
 - S-S Director – will check
 - Swank – questioned maintenance of the 6x3 green space – this is a high visibility area, and if not well maintained could look weedy and unkempt
 - S-S Director – applicant would be responsible for maintaining

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Rental Dwelling (amend ACC)
2. STC Grant
3. Title 49 Sign