

**MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 14, 2022  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
7:00 P.M.**

Council Members in Attendance:

Sam Crowl  
Sarah Grace  
Jeff Risner  
Solveig Spjeldnes  
Alan Swank  
Ben Ziff

Administrators and/or  
Other Elected Officials:

President Knisely  
Service-Safety Director Stone

**Items Discussed:**

- Safe Reproductive Healthcare  
Council Member Grace presented the draft resolution, which was modeled after the City of Columbus' resolution. Law Director Eliason and Council Clerk Walker and Council Member Grace have all reviewed and edited the draft legislation. The edits made to the resolution reflect the scope of Council authority and the City Administration. There are limitations to what City Council can do, and the language was changed to reflect this.

Arie Faber, Meadow Lane, of Athens Campus Ministry, spoke to the resolution, and made suggestions on changes to Section III, and Section IV C.

Loraine McCosker, Elmwood Place, spoke to the weakness of a resolution, as opposed to an ordinance. She urged the Council to pass an ordinance that speaks to state conditions that have been declared illegal in other states.

Council Member Grace clarified that City Council only has jurisdiction for actions in the city, and no abortions take place in the city of Athens. If a felony occurs, this is the jurisdiction of the County Prosecutor; the city does not have authority.

Council Member Swank asked about Section III, and Council Member Grace clarified that this section refers to rape.

Saraquoya Bryant referred to the TACO, marijuana ordinance addressed misdemeanors. Likewise, she thinks the earlier fracking prohibition ordinance presses the limits of what is allowable in the city limits. She commented that she thinks it is within Athens' rights to declare that abortion is allowable. She hopes that Council will consider an ordinance in the future.

- Land Appropriation

This is a .577-acre parcel of land that was owned by an earlier developer, but the parcel was never recorded. During this time, a lift station was built on the parcel.

The city has approached H2LLC for a utility easement, but they have refused. Service Safety Director Stone indicated that the city will begin a resolution to seek a utility easement. Council Member Swank has spoken to Mr. Hayes, and requested a meeting with the business partners, the Law Director, Service Safety Director Stone, and Council Member Spjeldnes to try to resolve this situation before it goes to Court. Council Member Swank indicated that he has an email from Mr. Hayes stating that he is willing to meet. Service Safety Director Stone indicated that the city made an offer, but Mr. Hayes did not respond.

Council Member Spjeldnes clarified that this is not a taking of the land. Council Member Grace indicated that there is a functioning lift station on the parcel that is needed for the new affordable housing development.

- Transfer of Armory to Community Improvement Corporation

The grant guidelines for the Appalachian Communities have been released with a December 9 deadline, and the city is interested in bringing forward the Armory. Law Director Eliason has provided a copy of the deed, with Service Safety Director Stone indicating that the deed would remain with the Corporation, and revert to the city if the Corporation was dissolved. The request will be approximately \$10 million for the (4) communities (Athens, Logan, Coshocton, and Somerset).

Additionally, Council is asked to issue a resolution that authorizes Athens to serve as the lead applicant and fiscal agent. The other cities will be sub-recipients.

Council Member Spjeldnes asked how the communities would work together. Service Safety Director Stone commented that the spaces will be shared, could provide co-working space to the partner cities, and could offer discounts to those seeking workspace. All the communities are within 70 miles of the newly proposed Intel construction.

The meeting adjourned at 8:26.

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

1. Safe Reproductive Healthcare
2. Land Appropriation
3. Transfer of Armory to Community Improvement Corporation

# MINUTES: NOVEMBER 14, 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  
Service-Safety Director Stone  
Auditor Hecht

### ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- 2023 Budget

Service Safety Director Stone highlighted increases to the General fund totaling a 4.8% increase. The other accounts total a 10% increase, reflecting in part an increase due to the Ohio Department of Transportation. Another concern is accounts 270 & 271, in part because of the part time wages that are scheduled to increase \$1/hour each year for the next several years.

Council Member Spjeldnes asked about increases in IT, and decreases in the Court personnel. The IT costs have increased in part because of outsourcing. The reduction in Court costs may be due to several personnel openings, which Auditor Hecht confirmed. Court activity is down also, and there may be reduced need for staff.

Auditor Hecht offered to meet with Council Member Spjeldnes to review what the city spent in 2022, and compare with what the administration is proposing for a 2023 budget.

Service-Safety Director Stone indicated that Departments are not to list any item over \$50,000 unless it is contained within an existing project, knowing that new projects over \$50,000 need Council authorization for a bid.

Council Member Swank asked about Revenue projections, which Auditor Hecht will have towards the end of the year. If revenue is less than the budget, then the Auditor will inform Council and City administration so that the budget is balanced.

Service-Safety Director Stone indicated that the city will receive an additional \$1.2 million in ARPA funds next year.

- Income Tax Mix

The city has a number of accounts that receive initial funds from the levies, which total approximately 13%. Of the remaining, there is a proposal to reduce the general fund from 73% to 72.5%. Street funds would be reduced from 18% to 17.5%. This would provide 1% additional to the Recreation Fund from 5 to 6%, which would provide approximately \$130,000 in funds per year.

Council Member Swank asked if reduced memberships and reduced hours has affected Recreation Dept revenues. In response to the agreed lease of \$15,000

for the Farmer's Market, Safety Service Director Stone reported that this amount is what the costs are estimated to be, and can be re-evaluated next year. Auditor Hecht confirmed that revenue for the Recreation accounts as of October are at 97% at the 10<sup>th</sup> month.

- Elected Officials (salaries)

Council Member Crowl thanked the Mayor for the Ohio Municipal League salary information, and the Clerk of Council for the previous ordinances.

Acting Mayor Knisely commented that the Municipal League indicates that Athens is about in the middle of the mix of other cities the same size and that previous ordinances for Athens have been in the 2% range.

Mary Abel, Strathmore Street, Athens asked about current salary for all elected officials, which Council Member Crowl provided, noting that not all of the positions are full time.

- Allocation of Funds (amend ACC 17.01.013 to add 1/1/23 Public Safety Levy)

Auditor Hecht requested this agenda item so it can be added to the tax code for the new public safety levy.

- Appropriations

\$11,000 to Transient Guest Tax (TGT) – the City brought in more TGT revenue than anticipated – this appropriation is needed to pay the additional funds for payment to the Athens County Convention & Visitors Bureau.

The Committee adjourned at 9:14.

**MINUTES**  
**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**  
**November 14, 2022**

Members in Attendance:

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

Administrators and/or Other Elected Officials:

President Knisely  
Service-Safety Director Stone

**ITEMS DISCUSSED:**

- Lot Split (Pleasant Hill Road)  
-Grace explained that this lot split is within the three-mile limit of the city, and highlighted the Planning Commission recommendation

This needs to be handled as a major subdivision, with a minor subdivision. It involves three acres in the front, with seven acres in the back, and contains an easement.

The lot has been inspected by the City County Health Department, and has been signed off by that agency.

Council Member Swank asked about the process, and if each lot split is handled on its own merits. The fact that the property requires an easement for the back division, it requires Council approval. He questioned whether approval of the easement through this property would set a precedent. Service-Safety Director Stone said he did not believe this would set a precedent.

The meeting adjourned at 7:34.

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

1. Lot Split (Pleasant Hill Road)

# MINUTES TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 14, 2022

Members in Attendance: Jeff Risner, Chair  
Sarah Grace, Member  
Alan Swank, Member  
Ben Ziff, Member

Administrators and/or  
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely  
Service-Safety Director Stone

## ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Ad hoc Committee on Pedestrian Accessibility (update)  
-Summary of Community Output & Presentation (attached)

Dianne Bouvier, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee presented their third update, including a survey, with 784 responses to the survey and focus groups, and individual walkabouts, from which the Committee identified themes and priorities.

Poet Laureate Wendy McVicker presented a poem she composed about sidewalks.

Committee participant Stephanie Hunter explained the themes: Safety, Proximity, Accessibility, Connection, Ease.

Council Member Spjeldnes identified the survey result rankings, and highlighted comments from senior citizens and those with disabilities. She also summarized the key findings from the survey.

Next steps will be to draft the final plan, and present recommendations to Council in December.

Council Member Swank asked how and when the financing for such plans will be presented, and Council Member Spjeldnes said that this will be developed in conjunction with the city, and will be presented later. Council Member Swank suggested the Ad Hoc Committee meet with the Far East Side Neighborhood Association.

Council Member Ziff thanked the Committee, as did Citizen Loraine McCosker. The Committee ended at 7:26.

