

MINUTES
CITY & SAFETY SERVICES COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 8, 2021
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance via Videoconference: Sarah Grace, Chair
Chris Fahl, Vice-Chair
Beth Clodfelter, Member

Administrators and
Other Elected Officials via Videoconference: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Auditor Hecht
Interim Service-Safety Director Pyle

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- ARTS-West Project (amend 0-120-20)
 - Grace – this amendment is needed to change the fund lines for the fiber broadband project authorized last year – CARES Act funding was used to provide virtual programming during the pandemic

 - Interim S-S Director – last year \$120,000 was authorized to be spent from the CARES Act Fund – less than \$40,000 was expended for equipment – the amendment is needed to change the expenditure fund line for the remaining balance to the correct account now being used for this project, which is Recreation-ARTS West

- Washington County Jail (contract)
 - Grace – this agreement is approved by City Council on an annual basis to allow our law enforcement officers to house inmates in the Washington County facility in the event there is no space in our regional jail in Nelsonville – the current contract expires the end of March

- City Hall – Law Administration Building (LAB)
 - Grace – the Administration would like to go out to bid for a single generator that would serve both buildings – the most recent power outage caused significant technical issues with lasting delays from downed servers, highlighting the need for resiliency of our local government

 - Mayor – this is the second time within the last few years that both buildings have had to close due to a power outage — City servers and computers take a hit with abrupt power outages, leading to added cost for not only staff time but also the

impact to electronic equipment – looking at a diesel generator that will power both buildings in their entirety – cost has always been an issue in making this decision – the City is fortunate to use refunded BWC monies to cover the cost of this purchase

-Kotses – asked if the generator will be portable should it be needed in the future if APD changes locations

-Interim S-S Director – it is not portable per se, but could be relocated if necessary

-Grace – keeping power to these buildings will always be a good idea

-Mayor – clarified that while APD may relocate sometime in the future, the Auditor, Tax Administrator, and Law Director also reside in the LAB Building – all tenants of the building need to know they have the security of a backup generator when needed, as well as the City Building that houses many administrative offices and the court system – this is a critical piece of infrastructure that, again, has been lacking for a long time

-Interim S-S Director – if the Southeast Regional Operations Center is developed for APD and FD services, likely the current Fire Department HQ generator could be relocated to the new location

-Auditor – expressed concern with the loss of information that can happen with a sudden power outage

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Amend 0-120-20
2. Washington County Jail
3. Generator

MINUTES: FEBRUARY 8, 2021
FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance via Videoconference: Sam Crowl, Chair
Jeff Risner, Vice-Chair
Peter Kotses, Member
Arian Smedley, Member

Administrators and/or

Other Elected Officials via Videoconference: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Auditor Hecht
Interim Service-Safety Director Pyle

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Staff Vacancies
 - Crowl – City Council has requested to review any vacancies the Administration would like to fill as City revenues decline during the pandemic – currently there are three vacant Maintenance Tech (MT) positions, and the Administration would like to hire into two of those open positions – one of the former MT’s transferred into the position of Street Labor Supervisor – there are nine positions currently open in EPW
 - Mayor – has been diligent in 2020-21 in looking very closely at staffing vacancies – is being as fiscally conservative as possible – requesting to fill only critical vacancies
 - Risner – is concerned that as the pandemic stretches into this year that if open positions stay vacant for a long period that there will be a loss of institutional knowledge – despite financial woes, understands the need to fill crucial positions that could affect the health and safety services to our residents
 - Mayor – assured there is adequate seniority still in place to transfer knowledge – the City is not in a position of brain-drain
 - Interim S-S Director – is cognizant of the issue stated by Risner – with the vacancies being brought before Council, the Administration is pushing right to the edge of if a position isn’t filled the City could suffer, through attrition, some lack of knowledge
 - Kotses – asked if the percentage of open positions is higher now due to the pandemic
 - Interim S-S Director – it is about twice what the City would normally carry – also, the time span in carrying open vacancies is a lot longer
 - Crowl – one of the two Solid Waste Inspector positions is open due to a transfer by one employee into an Arts, Parks & Recreation position, and there is a request to fill that position by mid-March – revenue is generated by this position through trash/litter citations

-Clodfelter – asked if the Solid Waste Inspector is the same as the Litter Control Officer

-Interim S-S Director – they are the same – added, having only one inspector the City can only cover every other weekend in the uptown residential areas – there tend to be more parties and waste in the spring – the waste is not only unsightly, but can be a health concern

-Crowl – this position is also very critical with student move-out in the spring

-Crowl – with the sad loss of our City Electrician Ray Gerren, the Administration would like to hire his replacement

-Smedley – is confident that these positions are necessary, and supports hiring into these positions

- Appropriations/Transfers

-Crowl – a final appropriation of \$13,000 is needed in the Street Rehabilitation Fund to cover hand railing not yet installed as part of the Richland Avenue Improvements Project

-Clodfelter – seems expensive for hand railing, and asked for clarification

-Mayor – it is a custom rail to fit with the project

-Interim S-S Director – this customized railing is of substantial length and is for two stairways

- Parking Meter (note renewal)

-Crowl – parking revenue since last March is down due to the pandemic – will need to appropriate \$14,100 to the Parking Garage Fund as well as advance a transfer from the General Fund of \$100,000 to the Parking Garage Fund in order to pay this note renewal – a payment schedule will be established beginning next year to pay down at least \$5000 each year until the interfund transfer is repaid

-Auditor – this note is payment for 2019 Parking Garage renovations

-Kotses – knowing that monthly parking rates in the Parking Garage were recently increased and are now in effect, questioned what forecasting in this budget stream looks like in the near to long-term future

-Auditor – difficult to forecast with so many unknowns – however, with the return to campus of some Ohio University students, revenue is increasing this year – is hopeful that will continue

-Mayor – anticipates seeing an uptick as the COVID-19 vaccine continues to roll out – revenue will also be predicated upon Ohio University's method of instruction in the fall

-Interim S-S Director – the new rates and increased number of monthly rental spaces, approximately 81, will be helpful

- Income Tax Revenue (allocation)

-Crowl – last summer, the City removed the 1% revenue allocation that normally went to the Transportation Assistance Fund because HAPCAP received \$2 million dollars that would cover our match through 2020 – at that time the 1% was transferred into the General Fund, increasing it from 73% to 74% -- the City will now need to reverse that action by returning the 1% allocation to the

Transportation Assistance Fund and returning the General Fund allocation to 73%.

- Reduce 2021 Appropriations
 - Crowl – the Auditor has requested authorization to reduce 2021 appropriations through the end of April, as needed to maintain a sound financial budget

 - Auditor – explained that the City’s appropriations cannot exceed our certified resources – due to the pandemic revenues are anticipated to be lower, and she would like this authority to make needed adjustments through the end of the first quarter of this budget year

- Stimson Avenue Improvements Project
 - Crowl – request to amend Ordinance 63-20 to remove the \$800,000 authorized expenditure from the Issue II Fund, add that same amount to the authorization to expend from the Street Rehabilitation Fund, and decrease and increase the 2021 appropriations

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Appropriations/Transfers
2. Parking Garage – Transfer from General Fund
3. Income Tax Reallocation
4. Reduce 2021 Appropriations
5. Stimson Project

MINUTES

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 8, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance via Videoconference: Peter Kotses, Chair
Sam Crowl, Vice-Chair
Beth Clodfelter, Member

Administrators and/or

Other Elected Officials via Videoconference: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
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ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Residential Parking (72-hour permit)
 - Kotses – this conversation started about three years ago as a community initiative searching for solutions to keep from moving their vehicles every 24 hours due to the Citywide 24-hour parking regulation – the 72-hour permit only applies to certain streets – a request was recently received from a resident on the City’s west side questioning whether an additional street could be added – the 72-hour program was designed specifically for streets that didn’t have off-street parking available at every residence – understands that Captain Harvey is not opposed to the idea of expansion – there are about 12 permits issued annually
 - Smedley – outside of the specific request to add a street on the west side, she thinks it would be valuable to talk about the process for evaluating the program – is it something the Council would like to consider expanding, and what would the process entail – what would be the criteria for excluding certain streets – before saying yea or nay on a particular street it seems important to have a more formal and systematic approach moving forward – she would also like to consider discussion on the advisability of changing the current Citywide 24-hour parking regulation to 48-hour parking in a singular location – understands that Captain Harvey would be open to lengthening that to 48 hours
 - Clodfelter – the 24-hour parking limitation has been an active discussion recently on social media, west side Facebook page – is pleased City Council is having this discussion
 - Mayor – the current streets with 72-hour parking were identified through a pilot program – believes Citywide continuous 48-hour parking is worth exploring to

offer relief – will need to stage-in carefully so as not to allow the return of storage parking, especially on some of the City’s narrower near-uptown streets

-Crowl – read into the record a chat from a Ward 1 resident, “This is a big concern amongst west siders. I’d like to see 48 hours for parking rather than 24 hours, and exceptions for some with a 72-hour permit.” – this same chat indicates the need to avoid storage parking – understands finding the right balance will not be easy

-Smedley – based on staffing levels and response times, Captain Harvey doesn’t believe 72-hour parking Citywide would work, however 48 hours would be doable – on-street storage parking in some neighborhoods could still be addressed with a 48-hour period, offering some relief to residents – could be a happy medium for now – would then like to revisit expanding streets for the 72-hour parking permit

-Fahl – might want to consider a zoning parking overlay, excluding those outer-most neighborhood streets from the restrictive hours that would also free up enforcement

-Kotses – asked whether the City purchased the vehicle and license plate reader discussed last year that would assist in enforcement

-Interim S-S Director – unfortunately, that was one of the budget lines reduced by the Auditor last year due to the financial constraints attributed to the pandemic – it was also not budgeted for this year

-Grace – questioned whether chalking the pavement might become a problem with reliability of enforcement under the longer time periods – agrees, finding a balance that will work to eliminate storage parking and provide ample parking for residents is tricky – residents on her street are in favor of keeping the 24-hour parking regulation as rental units, housing many people with several vehicles and few off-street parking spaces poses a problem, as well as houses with no off-street parking being a concern – the 72-hour permit process and who and how many residents per household should receive a permit is also challenging, but believes permitting is a good option that appears to be underutilized – this is a complex issue – she would be in favor of looking at zoning and/or expanding the streets under the 72-hour permit regulation

-Mayor – agrees moving forward with a smart, methodical, staged approach

-Auditor – suggested a review be done by a Transportation sub-committee – providing more convenient parking, even for a few residents, is helpful as long as it does not encumber parking enforcement