

**CITY OF READING, OHIO
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – REGULAR SESSION
MARCH 03, 2020 - 7:30PM**

CALL TO ORDER

President of Council Pro-Tem Randy Fischesser called the meeting to order at 7:30PM.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Mr. Fischesser led those in attendance in a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Council Members Present: Mr. Powell, Mr. Gertz, Mr. Lynd, Mr. Albrinck, Mr. Fischesser & Mrs. Eadicicco. Motion made by Mr. Gertz, seconded by Mr. Lynd to excuse Mr. Lindeman. Motion carried by voice vote.

OTHER CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Treasurer Mel Gertz, Auditor Sabrina Smith & Clerk of Council Carla Kacher.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made by Mr. Powell, seconded by Mrs. Eadicicco to enter into Executive Session for purpose of discussing pending litigation and impending litigation. Motion carried by voice vote. Executive Session began at 7:31 p.m. Motion made by Mr. Gertz, seconded by Mr. Powell to come back from Executive Session at 7:55 p.m. Motion carried by voice vote.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION –

Bob Ashbrock (221 Walnut) Addressed the proposal by MSD of the new sewer lines. Is concerned that any plans of expanding the fieldhouse and/or pool would impede such development with the current plans of MSD. Asked consideration before any vote be taken.

Dan Bronner (617 Dottie Court) – With the City owning the stadium why wouldn't the city either sell or give it to the school? The school should qualify for all kinds of grants. If the City doesn't allow the school to use the property what is the plan for the property? He's heard that the school would be interested in obtaining the property. If the City is planning on keeping it, what are the plans on repairing the space? Response: Mr. Gertz addressed the issues listed and gave history of who has use the stadium, how much money it made in the past. Agrees that the students shouldn't have to put up with the conditions. Would like to look into solving all these problems – is willing to float a bond. Would like to see us enter into a real lease agreement with the school since they are the only tenant. Mr. Gertz is willing to explore all options. Mr. Gertz would love to see us sell to the school, even at a long-term agreement but is not in favor of giving it to the school. Ms. Smith – agrees that if the school owned the stadium there would definitely be more grants for the school to obtain and utilize towards repairs of the stadium. Also feels we need to be mindful that if some entity would like to purchase the land the City shouldn't turn down that opportunity. Mr. Lynd wanted to point out that the reason the school is the only tenant was at the School's request.

James Shelton (302 East Benson St) – Would the City be willing to give up Butch Bemmes Field? It is his opinion that there would not be enough residents in town to support selling it to the school for a profit. Mr. Gertz commented that he believes otherwise.

COMMUNICATIONS – None.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE: Anthony Gertz

- Do not have certification from the Budget Commission yet. Anticipates that it will be here in the next 10 days. We are not permitted to operate in deficits. We submit in July our projected revenue and expenditures will be for the following year. We have to have that before we can appropriate the monies for the year.

UTILITIES, LANDS & BUILDINGS: Don Lindeman

- No Report (Absent)

ZONING, PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT: Dave Powell

- Reached out to the Safety Service Director in regard to the incorrect rates that were being applied and asked for an update on how much this error cost us.

LAWS AND CONTRACTS: Katie Eadicicco

Next Committee Meeting will be on Thursday, March 5 at 6:30 p.m. and we'll be discussing the contract regarding the stadium.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY: Randy Fischesser

My committee met last week with Chief Owens to discuss some proposed capital projects that came out of their officers summit.

The purchases discussed were:

1. SCBA Fit Tester unit - this is used annually for required personnel testing. They have had to borrow one from other departments in the past. Applied for a grant, but was denied. \$12,000
2. Lucas Chest Compression Device - Hands free CPR device provides consistent compressions, frees up a person on the scene, and personnel safety during transport. Grant application pending; but denied in the past. \$16,000
3. Body Armor - For use during active shooter and other violent incidents - Rescue Taskforce Response. \$8,000
4. Turnout Gear - Needed to equip new full-time FF-Paramedics. \$17,000
5. Portable Radios - For new full-time FF-Paramedics. \$4,700
6. Mobile Data Terminals Connection and Equipment - Replaces existing obsolete 800 MHz equipment that will be discontinued effective 6/2020. Grant application pending. \$12,000

Chief Owens also informed us that they have been awarded two additional grants; \$3,000 from Factory Mutual for smoke detectors and \$2,765 from Ohio EMS Grant that is used for bi-annual ACLS training and various other supplies.

I continue to work on the issues with the crosswalk by the library. I would like to thank Mrs. Eadicicco for forwarding information on a grant that may be available for this project. I will be getting with Administration to look into applying for this next week.

Finally, there has been constant discussions and updates regarding the Corona virus (Covid-19). The good news is that as of this evening, only one person is currently being tested for the virus, but the results have not come back yet. The best thing we can do to protect ourselves is basically the same thing we should be doing to ward off the flu. That is: wash hands regularly with an antibacterial soap or cleanser, don't be touching your eyes, nose, or mouth, avoid handshaking, keep away from sick people if possible, and stay home if you yourself become ill.

SERVICE: Dennis Albrinck**- STAFFING**

The Service Department presently has 14 full-time employees plus Darrell Courtney, Chief of Public Works. The minimum optimum number of employees for the Serviced Department is 16 plus the Chief of Public Works based on the formula of 2 drivers for each of the 7 snow routes (14) and 2 mechanics (2) and the Chief of Public Works. This allows for coverage of all the routes in the event of a 24 hours or longer snow event. This allows for a good level of service by the Service Department.

There were three retirements in 2019 (Bill Stone, Richard Huneck, and Steve Greiner). Retirements during 2020 include Kevin Knizner in June (definite) and possibly Rob Huneck.

There is an immediate need to hire another mechanic since Mark Elrod is the only true mechanic to service the 72 vehicles and pieces of equipment the mechanic(s) service. We have an individual on the list who has been tested, has been interviewed, and is qualified.

Jeff Wright (PT) and Jim Wright (seasonal) work in the Parks.

VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

The following is a list presented by the Service Department for vehicle wants and needs:

1. Three more people (personnel)
2. Mini Excavator \$66,000 - we do rent when needed @\$300.00 per day. Need an attachment to be used as Motrim.
3. (2)One ton dump trucks completely dressed out with plows and spreaders to replace 30 and 69 that are 18 years old and are rusted out and 30 has a dump bed that does not work. Cost \$82,000 per truck.
4. ½ ton pickup truck to replace 15 that is 17 years old and rusted out. \$25,000.
5. One small S-10 Pickup for the parks with an extended cab and a 6 foot bed to replace just sent to auction. Cost \$25,000.
6. Street Sweeper- \$250,000. We could rent or contract out service.
7. Mulcher- \$60,000. We have one that is 13 years old.
8. Listening device for water department \$4000.
9. New mower for parks \$10,000. One we have, parts not available
10. Power head for tap machine for water line- \$1000.00.

11. Direct tap machine \$2000.
12. Air compressor (\$14,000) with new hammers (\$1200). Old one worn out. (Purchased 2/2020)
13. One ton roller for asphalt patches and rolling the baseball and soccer fields. \$14,000.
14. Pull behind valve turner. \$65,000.
15. Backhoe Buckets (1 and 2 foot). Have 16 inch on both hoes
16. Need to look at tar wagon (15 yoa) and the Hot box.

RECREATION: Tom Lynd

- At the Jan 21 committee meeting the 2020 Parks “wish list” was discussed and new water fountains were on the list. Been talking to Safety Service Director Patrick Ross for new drinking fountains in the parks and where the money can come from. There’s an opportunity for \$21,000.00 and an ordinance was in the process of being drafted. The Parks department would like to meet again to discuss different options for the \$21,000.00 for the Parks. Committee Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 10 at 6:30 pm to discuss new Parks priority list.
- Pool sign-ups May 2, 9, and 16.

NEW BUSINESS - NONE

REPORTS OF OFFICIALS

MAYOR: Robert “Bo” Bemmes

- No Report (Absent)

SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR: Patrick Ross

- Bolser Drainage report- cost estimate and planning for new storm sewer system was not done because independent review of system behind school abutting Bolser Drive showed a net decrease in water runoff. If council also wants a storm water infrastructure estimate, I can get that, but thought since the effect after construction was less water, the study did not call for a storm estimate. Reminder that this will have been the second independent review of the school’s construction and plans. Also reminder that the school was shut down twice by SSD when they did not comply with what JMA said.
- Notified last week that our application for Ohio Public Works for Thurnridge Drive was approved. The total estimate for this is \$2,000,000...of this amount 1 million is grant, the other million is loan. The estimate includes repaving and widening from Hunt to Fuhrman Road. Widening length approximately 2 feet, until a survey is completed, cannot say if widening will be on one side or both. Majority of trees in right of way will need to be removed. I recommend inviting residents of Thurnridge Drive to a special meeting within the next month to inform them of the project plans and hear input on the widening and necessary tree removal. Included in the project is also curbs and water main and spot sidewalk.
- We also have \$425,500 in grant and \$425,500 in loan to repair the box culvert on Hunt Road.
- Provided Councilmember Gertz prelim and engineering costs to complete sidewalks on the West side of Reading Road from Emcor/Viox to North. Am also looking into potential grant funds to pay for this
- In midst of replacing several outdated computers in offices and procuring estimate for replacement of two servers in general office. Auditor Smith, myself, and I are looking into alternatives for finance and payroll software.
- Civil Service exam to replace Chief Snow will be March 14 done by Ohio Association of Police Chiefs Assessment. Civil Service will also hold a panel March 16. Hope to announce new chief in April.
- Authorized purchase of an air compressor for approximately \$13,000. Piece of equipment is vital for road maintenance and price was going to increase had purchase been delayed. Notice was given to Law Director, Finance Chair, and Service Chair.

Response: Mr. Gertz thinks the report is disingenuous in relation to the drainage analysis. It is Mr. Gertz belief that Mr. Ross didn’t do what was directed. The goal was not just to find out if the water was more or less but what it would cost to fix this drainage issues in this area. What size sewer would it take and what is that cost? Mr. Gertz commented that he is not looking for a fight but rather he’s looking for accountability. Mr. Lynd commented that he believed the report was “horrible.” He was disappointed to read the report since he was one of the Councilman who voted for it. Mr. Fischesser agreed.

LAW DIRECTOR: Dave Stevenson

- No Report.

TREASURER: Mel Gertz

- February Financial Update: 1,290,370.00 (8.4 % ahead of 2019)

AUDITOR: Sabrina Smith

- Working on investigation of new software equipment and working with the SSD to secure software quotes and best move for the City. Also, working on the 2018 and 2019 audit. This will be a process until the end of May.

READING OF RESOLUTIONS: None.

READING OF ORDINANCES

(1) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE AUDITOR TO TRANSFER \$34,211.51 FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND FOR HALF OF THE STATE'S PORTION OF THE HOMESTEAD AND ROLLBACK PAYMENTS FOR 2016 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Motion made by Mr. Gertz, seconded by Mr. Lynd to suspend the second and third reading. Motion passed by a 6-0 roll call vote. Motion made by Mr. Lynd, seconded by Mr. Powell to adopt the ordinance. Motion passed by a 6-0 roll call vote.

ORDINANCE ADOPTED

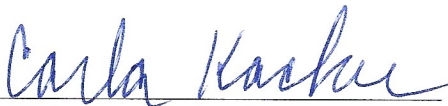
ORDINANCE NO. 2020-13

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Gertz – (1) Asked for prayers for Frank Schmidt. (2) Jim Burns (Greater Republicans of Cincinnati) was present this evening but had to leave early. He had planned to ask residents to evaluate Issue #7 and vote "No" This issue would raise the current sales tax from 7.0 to 7.8%. Cost the average resident in Hamilton County over \$100 a year. This will make this more difficult for the City of Reading to be competitive with bringing new businesses to the City.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was declared adjourned at 8:09 pm.

X 

CARLA KACHER
Clerk of Council

X 

RANDY FISCHESSER
President of Council Pro-Tem